



THE CONOCOHEAGUE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Naturally

NEWSLETTER OF THE CONOCOHEAGUE AUDUBON SOCIETY

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President's Notes — Debby Hook

Cancelled through June: Due to the novel coronavirus COVID-19, all scheduled Conococheague Audubon activities are cancelled **through the end of June**.

We are planning to have our April board meeting, rescheduled for May 14, take place via Skype. Details for that meeting and for our scheduled July 16 meeting will be forthcoming.

Birding at home: Have you run out of things to do at home? Don't forget about National Audubon's "Joy of Birds" activities page at <https://www.audubon.org/joy-of-birds>. It includes award-winning photos, baby birds, funny bird behavior, live streaming at an Audubon sanctuary and some relaxing sounds of nature.

PA Audubon has also begun a series of virtual field trips hosted by chapters from around the state. Each Wednesday at noon, PA Audubon will air a new field trip. Enjoy watching from home. Here is the link: https://audubon.zoom.us/j/9121212121/register/vpQkce6trj4oOQbUmF_wbhxFiZoQjRBKwW. You must pre-register at the website above to tune in. If you miss any broadcast, the field trips will be available for viewing at <https://pa.audubon.org/chapters-centers/virtual-field-trips>.

The year ahead: Our 2019-2020 activity year may have been cut short in March by the coronavirus, but you can count on CAS officers and directors to remain at work.

Beginning May 11, our new leaders will step in to continue the threads of planned activity for the 2020-2021 season. Here are the officers for the next two years:

President: Terri Kochert, whose enthusiasm is extremely contagious! The key player in finding ways to reach young folks, Terri will lead us through the next two years of lively activity.

Vice President: Ken Higley, a relatively new member who will give up his seat as a director to take on the job of learning through doing. At home, Ken is a serious woodpecker-watcher and feeder!

Recording Secretary: Rhetta Martin, whose dedication continues alongside an extremely busy career. You'll find her working in our native garden spring through fall, and just ask her about warblers.

Corresponding Secretary: Valerie Barnes, our chapter's keenest administrative eyes and ears for a decade or more, has graciously agreed to revisit this post for the next two years. And yes, there was a single Pine Siskin at her feeder this winter!

President's Notes, continued on page 3, column 1.



Louisiana Waterthrush seen at Heisey Rd. April 2. (cropped)
Photo credit: Jefferson Shank

Save the Date!

Global Big Day
May 9, 2020

Nature Film Schedule
September 17, 2020: *Return of the Clouded Leopards*

November 19, 2020: *In Search of the Jaguar*

January 21, 2021: *Last Stand of the Great Bear*

March 25, 2021: *Saving Songbirds*

Coming This September: Return of the Clouded Leopards

— Terri Kochert

As I write this article from the safety of my home, I trust you all too are healthy and safe from this Coronavirus. Because we as Americans are a hopeful people, we are trusting life will continue after this never-experienced-before threat.

In that spirit of hope, I would like to introduce to you a new “bonus” nature film this fall. As you know, we had to cancel our third nature film of the year. I am happy to announce that we have re-scheduled National Geographic’s *Return of the Clouded Leopards* for September 17, 2020, at 7:30 PM at CAMS South auditorium.

As usual, we will have a musical group performing at 7 PM for your listening pleasure. As always, we will have door prizes and a drawing for a new pair of binoculars for one fortunate youth that evening. The film is free, but we welcome donations to continue the good works of Conococheague Audubon Society.

After the September showing, we will present three more nature films in November, January, and March. In our new Nature Film season, you will see *Return of the Jaguar* on November 19, 2020; *The Last Stand of the Great Bear* on January 21, 2021; and *Saving Songbirds* on March 25, 2021.

Though at first look it appears we will be seeing two “big cat” films one after the other, the stories are quite different, the cats are different, and the locations are half-way around the world apart, too. You will enjoy each film, I’m sure. The *Return of the Clouded Leopards* takes place in Nepal. It’s truly the story of the determination of one strong-willed veterinarian who endeavors to accomplish what seems impossible.

After rescuing two clouded leopard cubs, he not only weans them, but trains these young ones to fend for themselves in the wild. They are released into the wild after much intense labor, use of high-tech equipment, and much patience. The question is, “Are his efforts successful?” The answer is a resounding “yes!” It is one of the first-of-its-kind of endeavors to have two hand-weaned cubs survive on their own in the wild.

Come see the many obstacles the veterinarian overcomes, as well as the life-threatening obstacles for the cubs. It should be another exciting evening at our Conococheague Audubon nature film night.



Clouded Leopard

Photo credit: Animal Sport.org

Charitable Contributions

— Donna Hocker

The Conococheague Audubon Society (CAS) Board of Directors/Executive Committee has approved the following charitable contributions for the 2020-2021 season. CAS can do this because of your generous contributions. Our new charitable contributions are:

- ◆ sponsoring teachers’ scholarships to attend nature workshops at the Tuscarora Wildlife Education Project (TWEP) in Mercersburg
- ◆ giving an appreciation gift to the owner of Heisey Road Orchard near Shippensburg, a site of some field trips
- ◆ sponsoring a new native garden area at Rhodes Grove Camp & Conference Center near Mari-on

Our continuing charitable contributions for 2020-2021 are:

- ◆ Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art, Millersburg
- ◆ PA Audubon
- ◆ National Audubon
- ◆ TWEP
- ◆ Norlo Park Foundation
- ◆ National Audubon’s Christmas Bird Count
- ◆ Community Cloud Forest Conservation (CCFC) in Guatemala

Total charitable contributions are \$1,375.00.

The Executive Committee also approved a charitable contribution of \$875 from this year’s budget for the Michaux habitat restoration project, providing native plants and seeds for restoration in Michaux State Forest.

Fantastic Offer for FREE Birding Software for Everyone!

— Valerie Barnes

Peter W. Thayer, founder of Thayer Birding Software is making a wonderful, generous offer:

During these difficult times, I have made the decision to offer this birding software **to anyone for free**. Use this software to learn about the amazing birds in your yard and in your country. Watch videos of bird behavior, hear their songs and take hundreds of fun quizzes on the birds of North America. Use the ID Wizard if you are not sure of a bird's name. Compare two birds side-by-side. Stay Calm. Stay Safe.

If you like, use the promo code "PeteThayerFree" to change the price from \$49.95 to \$0.00 for the download.

To download the software, visit <http://www.thayerbirding.com/> and select either the Mac or Windows version.



Note: This is the software Conococheague Audubon Society uses at our annual Beginning Birders' Workshop. In addition to the quiz feature we use, information about each species includes classification, identification tips, sounds, habitat and behavior, range map, abundance maps, photos and videos, similar birds, related birds, and links to on-line references. The package also provides excerpts from The Birder's Handbook by Paul R. Ehrlich, David S. Dobkin, and Darryl Wheye.

Take advantage of this generous offer! Tell your friends and family!

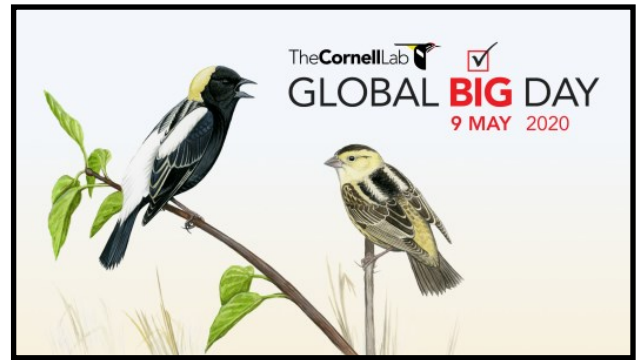
President's Notes, continued from p. 1.

Treasurer: Donna Hocker, who keeps a tidy spreadsheet and, without fail, gets the numbers to add up every month. Donna also tracks our field trip species numbers with the same precision.

With President Terri Kochert at the helm, I will step into the duties of **Immediate Past President**. The past two hustle-bustle years have been a tremendous learning experience for me, and it's been a great honor to be a part of this birding community. Thank you all for supporting and volunteering.

New directors: Each year we elect two directors to a three-year term, keeping a six-person board at all times. Taking seats for the years 2020 through 2023 are **Eric Martin** (Returning to a well-worn chair, he is a tireless native plant gardener, field trip leader and film poster deliverer.) and **Ron George** (photography and gardening are his interests and he has been involved in the Christmas Bird Count for about 25 years).

These two incoming leaders join our 2021 team, **Conway Bushey** and **Marguerite Fries**; and our 2022 team, **Janet Tice** and **Bob Kochert** (replacing new VP Ken Higley). I thank all six of our directors who work to make our chapter a real unit.



Artwork by Luke Seitz
Image used with permission from Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Global Big Day

— Valerie Barnes

The Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology is no longer sponsoring the Pennsylvania Migratory Bird Count. So, this year, why not keep up your spring counting tradition by participating in Global Big Day?

Global Big Day, sponsored by Cornell Lab of Ornithology, is on **Saturday, May 9, 2020**. Last year more than 35,000 people from more than 175 countries around the world submitted more than 92,000 checklists via eBird, reporting more than two-thirds of the world's species in just one 24-hour period.

Visit <https://ebird.org/news/global-big-day-9-may-2020> to learn more. You might stay at home, go out on your own, or go out with your household to visit your favorite nearby counting spots. Bird safely and follow the COVID-19 safety recommendations.

To submit your full report, do so via eBird at <https://ebird.org>. We would love to hear about any excitement the day brings. You can email ConAudubon@outlook.com about highlights of your day.

Year In Review

— Debby Hook

Last June and July, children's voices lent a sweet, new note to the start of our year as Terri Kochert imparted bird awareness to a total of 85 summer campers at Wilson College and Shippensburg University. Our chapter's participation in these elementary camp programs was an effort to expand scholarship opportunities into new avenues.

The highlight of a year of planning was the June 7 ribbon-cutting ceremony for our newly-installed **interpretive sign** picturing dozens of birds seen along the Chambersburg section of Cumberland Valley Rail-Trail. The sign sits at the western end of the pedestrian bridge linking the rail-trail to Fort Chambers Park. A grant from Audubon and sponsorships from local businesses helped fund this educational enhancement to a well-used downtown walkway.

Youth outreach in the form of **contests** with cash prizes brought small-but-encouraging success. Five teenage boys attended our November meeting to reap their rewards for taking winning photos of birds or keeping accurate bird-sighting lists for the year. The project will continue for another two years as we evaluate its merit.

For area schools, we bought a total of 31 **Audubon Adventures** in the Classroom kits, spending about \$550 to reach students in Chambersburg, Shippensburg, and Waynesboro area school districts, as well as in two private schools. To help offset these costs, members are invited to sponsor a classroom for \$45 a year. Please contact treasurer Donna Hocker (dlhocker@yahoo.com or 717-401-0604) for more information..

Our 60th Chambersburg **Christmas Bird Count** included 55 participants in the field and 28 at their feeders. We counted 61 species (35 of them at feeders) and 15,143 birds (1,213 of them at feeders).

The **January nature film**, "Climbing Redwood Giants," drew a larger-than-usual audience of 204 people. This crowd followed a disappointing 83 attendees at the November film, "Counting on Birds." We cancelled the third scheduled film in March as the global coronavirus COVID-19 crept closer to central Pennsylvania. Still, an anonymous gift helped our films to profit by about \$1,100 for the year.

Have you seen folks sporting **colorful T-shirts** with our name and logo emblazoned on them? We added T-shirts this year to our line of items for sale, which brought in about \$30 so far this year.

There's still time to order a T-shirt from Donna Hocker (dlhocker@yahoo.com or 717-401-0604). We must request 12 shirts, pre-paid, for each order we send in. Find costs, colors, sizes and other details at the CAS website, <https://www.conococheagueaudubon.org>. We also have a supply of baseball caps, \$15 each, available in the office. Our colorful cardinal logo adorns the caps. Call Donna to arrange for purchase.

Anticipated outreach in at least four spring events fell through in the face of the COVID-19 health threat. The bluebird trail was also abruptly halted just as we'd gotten started in March, and we have cancelled the remaining scheduled events, encouraging members to keep their birding skills honed through indoor, solitary or family pursuits.

While we are disappointed that what would have been our 12th annual workshop will not take place at Caledonia State Park in June, your chapter leaders trust that all of you will remain healthy throughout the summer, and we look forward to seeing familiar faces in September.



Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, April 2, near Heisey Rd.

Photo credit: Jefferson Shank



Horned Lark, taken April 6 at family farm

Photo credit: Jefferson Shank

Out on the Links — a collection of web links for your house-bound viewing pleasure

From Audubon:

- Bird Guide App <https://www.audubon.org/app>
- Audubon for Kids <https://www.audubon.org/get-outside/activities/audubon-for-kids>
- Activities and DIY <https://www.audubon.org/get-outside/activities>
- Joy of Birds <https://www.audubon.org/joy-of-birds>

From Cornell Lab of Ornithology:

- K-12 Education <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/k12>
- Bird Academy <https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/>
- All about Birds Guide <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/>
- Bird Cams <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/cams/>
- Merlin Bird ID App <https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/>
- Environment for the Americas shop <https://www.environmentamericas.org/shop/>
- Bird Song Opera <http://volkerpannes.de/portfolio/bird-song-opera/>
- Houston Zoo Animal webcams <https://www.houstonzoo.org/explore/webcams/>
- Hanover, PA Bald Eagle cam <https://hdontap.com/index.php/video/stream/hanover-bald-eagle-nest-live-cam>
- San Francisco Bay Osprey cam <https://hdontap.com/index.php/video/stream/golden-gate-osprey-1>
- Ramona, CA Barn Owl cam <https://hdontap.com/index.php/video/stream/ramona-barn-owls>

Conservation Something New in the Air

— Russ Martz,
former CAS president and conservation chairman

The Industrial Revolution of 1848 brought about the introduction of power-driven machinery. It brought comfort, health and convenience, but we need to understand, identify, and correct the problems created by these wonders – machines powered by oil, a fossil fuel from deep within the earth.

When we changed our main form of transportation from the horse to the car, no consideration was given to the change in the waste product – horse manure versus carbon dioxide, the waste produced by the burning of gasoline. Since carbon dioxide (CO₂) is invisible, sanitation workers in the cities were delighted.



Today, however, billions of cars burning billions of gallons of gasoline produce billions of tons of carbon dioxide, CO₂. Yes, green plants use carbon dioxide for photosynthesis to make our food. But green plants are unable to use all that excess CO₂. It would be like people who keep jamming food into their mouths; they don't need the food, but they keep jamming it in anyway.

When plants are overloaded, that excess gas is combined in the "laboratory," which is the air we breathe. And it is a heavy load; burning just **one** gallon of gasoline produces about 20 pounds of CO₂. All this excess CO₂ has been building up over the last century, warming up the atmosphere that surrounds the earth.

We can change the future of atmospheric warming through science, which has developed solar energy or power from the sun. Solar panels can transmit energy as well as store electricity. We continue to learn more efficient ways of using solar energy that can help clear the air of CO₂. We have to keep asking questions; there is no dumb question! Asking questions teaches us new ways to think about energy.

Changes appear to be constant, necessary, beneficial, and painful for many forms of life – including humans. As we change to cleaner forms of energy, the planet will benefit. Painful changes will happen gradually as we shift away from fossil fuels and not so many workers will be needed in oil fields and coal mines. But better jobs will be created in the electrical field and new technologies will emerge to make our lives even more convenient. Change is a cycle we can influence and embrace.

MEETINGS – Free, held in the Community Center at Norlo Park, 3050 Lincoln Way East, Fayetteville.

FIELD TRIPS – Free, most take place on Saturdays. Contact the leader in advance if you plan to go. Times listed are departure times; please arrive early. If you cannot go on a scheduled trip, contact leader for a potential mid-week option on his/her scouting trip.

FILMS – Free, all begin at 7:30 p.m. in Chambersburg Area Middle School South, 1151 E. McKinley St., Chambersburg, PA. Pre-show musical entertainment begins at 7 p.m.

CAS WEBSITE: www.conococheagueaudubon.org

Newsletter Editor - Jane Bussard (717-401-3210)
janenbussard47@gmail.com

Send all newsletter articles and photos to the editor.
Send all mailing changes to conaudubon@outlook.com.

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CONOCOCHÉAGUE AUDUBON OFFICERS:

President	Terri Kochert
Vice President	Ken Higley
Recording Secretary	Rhetta Martin
Corresponding Secretary	Valerie B. Barnes
Treasurer	Donna Hocker
Immediate Past President	Debby Hook

Directors: Conway Bushey, Marguerite Fries, Bob Kochert, Janet Tice, Ron George, Eric Martin

Not Everything is Cancelled!

—Terri Kochert

Despite COVID-19, the two youth contests are still in full swing. The bird photos and longest bird lists are to be turned in on Oct. 12, 2020, at 6:45 PM, prior to our Norlo Park Community Center meeting and program, *Birds of Ecuador*, led by Bob Keener. Youth and families are invited to stay for this thrilling adventure to Ecuador.



Short-eared Owl

photo credit: Dale Gearhart

Peeping Screamer?

Here is one more link, this one to a barn owl nest in Mifflin County:

<https://www.shaverscreek.org/conservation-and-research/tizen-science-projects/>

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Conococheague Audubon
P.O. Box 20
Fayetteville, PA 17222