



TERN OF EVENTS



Presque Isle Audubon Society Membership Newsletter

March 2009

Issue 09:02

Our mission is to promote the conservation and protection of wildlife, plants, soil, and water in relation to human activity, to initiate and carry out plans and activities which would contribute to the conservation and protection of these natural resources; and to provide opportunities to become more aware and appreciative of our physical and biological environment.

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH

The month of February was filled with many events dealing with conservation issues and I hope that you got to participate in and enjoy at least one of them in addition to our monthly program.

A good number of people attended the February PIAS Meeting/Program. Jeanne and Chuck Kern brought a goodly amount of suet and a number of beautiful books to sell, very inexpensively, I might add. Both items were a big hit with those attending and the supplies dwindled quickly. It was good to see everyone socializing and enjoying themselves. Then I had to break the news that our speaker called and wasn't able to make the trip to Erie that evening. Needless to say, there was much disappointment displayed since the very interesting program, "What's in a Name" was the big draw for the evening.

We held our monthly meeting which included voting on the Amended and Board Approved By-Laws. Two major changes that were made include lowering the number of Executive Board Members that would make up a quorum (from 10 to 7) and being able to conduct business by electronic means. The members present voted unanimously to accept the new by-laws as written. They will be posted on our website for all to review.

Instead of sending everyone off after the meeting, the Vice President, Mary Birdsong and the Program Chair, Susan Smith and myself decided that PIAS would pay the admission fee to the movie that was playing that night as part of the Wildlife Film Series on the Big Green Screen. Almost everyone trekked over to the theater to enjoy "White Wolf and White Bird".

Now you know about our experiences at the February meeting but there are some other items of interest to you in the PIAS news. Members should be pleased that the Executive Board voted to continue our presence at the TREC for the next five years. Having a presence there has made it possible for our members to work with other environmental groups and to plan events such as the birding festival that would otherwise be quite difficult.

We had a lively group of PIAS members present at the Great Back Yard Bird Count at the Stull Center on February 14. Pat Howell and her Education Committee always plan a successful bird count day. See article on page six. (Cont. on p 2)

MARCH THINGS TO DO!

March 10, Tuesday - Regional Science Consortium Free Program, "Prioritizing Habitats for Conservation" with visiting scientists Christopher Tracey and Peter Woods. 7:00 at the TREC. For more information call 814-835-6975 or visit www.RegSciConsort.com.

March 11, Wednesday - Conservation Committee Meeting, 5:00pm at Quinn Firm

March 20, PIAS Monthly Meeting and Program: The Wonders of Peru. (See p 4)
Social at 7:00 Meeting and Program at 7:30

March 24, Tuesday - Birding Festival
Committee Meeting at 6:00 pm at the TREC

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THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

There is a press release describing the 2009 Festival of the Birds at Presque Isle printed on page 7 of this newsletter. That information hopefully will pique some interest and be the impetus for many to register for the event.

One of the great things about last year's festival was the cooperation and involvement of MANY of our members. Not only did those who volunteer help us to carry out our plans, but they also provided the friendly atmosphere that was commented on by festival participants from far and wide. I'm sure that you suspect by now that I would be asking for more volunteers this year, so here it is! WE NEED YOU! Joao Tavares will be asking for food donations again and you will hear from him personally. Lisa Danko is lining up our volunteers and she will send her message to you via email and in the next issue of the TOE.

Besides volunteering, you can contribute to the success of the festival by becoming a sponsor. There four levels that you can choose from and these are listed on page 7. One of the benefits affiliated with being a sponsor includes **one registration to the festival** (Two for the Red-Headed Woodpecker Level) along with **your name being listed in the Festival Program Booklet**. If you choose a level of \$250 or up, you will also receive an ad in that booklet. Many of our board and festival committee members have chosen to be a Yellow Warbler sponsor at \$125. You might want to think about doing the same. You'll get all the benefits of a full weekend registration, including meals!

~Janet Price, President

The *Tern of Events* is published by the Presque Isle Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society and a member of Audubon Pennsylvania serving northwestern Pennsylvania including Erie and Crawford counties.

Address: 301 Peninsula Dr., Suite 8
Erie, PA 16505

Phone: 814-860-4091

Website: www.presqueisle.org/audubon



GETTING READY FOR DINNER

LOCAL BIRD RESEARCH MAKES NATIONAL HEADLINES!

By Joan Howlett

Small songbirds were outfitted with light-level geolocator tracking devices in Erie and Crawford Counties and, for the first time, their travel was tracked to the tropics and back, something only done previously with large birds such as wandering albatrosses. The geolocators detect light, allowing researchers to estimate the birds' latitude and longitude by recording sunrise and sunset times.

Bridget Stutchbury, a professor and research ornithologist from York University, Toronto, conducted the research with her graduate students at Hemlock Hill Biological Station near Cambridge Springs where she resides with her husband, Gene Morton, and her two children during the spring and summer months. She also collaborated with John Tautin, Executive Director of the Purple Martin Conservation Association, Scott Tarof, a post-doctoral fellow, and Patrick Kramer, a Ph.D. student and former PIAS Treasurer, at a purple martin colony on Edinboro Lake.

Fourteen wood thrushes and twenty purple martins were banded and outfitted with the tiny geolocators in the summer of 2007. Wood thrushes and purple martins were used because they represent two songbird extremes. The wood thrush is a woodland bird and flies at night while the purple martin favors grasslands and is a diurnal flier. Both species have long-established study populations here in northwestern Pennsylvania and are large enough to carry the geolocators without undue stress. The geolocators weigh only half a gram and measure a half-inch long and a quarter-inch wide and are mounted on the birds' lower backs by very thin teflon straps looped around their legs.

Seven of the wood thrushes returned to Hemlock Hill, although they were only able to catch five of them to retrieve data. Only two purple martins returned. Despite the low return rates some exciting discoveries were made. The purple martins stopped in the Yucatan Peninsula of

Mexico for three or four weeks before continuing on to their wintering grounds in Brazil. One of those birds took 43 days to fly to the Sao Paulo area of Brazil but only 13 days to return in the spring, suggesting that prolonged stopovers are common on the fall migration to the south but migration is much more rapid returning north in the spring. The solar data indicated that the wood thrushes from Hemlock Hill did not scatter widely over possible tropical wintering grounds but stayed in a narrow band of tropical forest in eastern Honduras and Nicaragua suggesting that that region is important to the overall conservation of wood thrushes.

Stutchbury points out that identifying songbird wintering areas and migration routes is critical for predicting consequences of deforestation, pesticide use, and climate change in tropical regions. During the summer of 2008, the researchers continued the study attaching geolocators to an additional 20 purple martins and 30 wood thrushes. They are looking forward to the birds' return this spring.

Some of the information in this article was taken from (1) the original paper by Stutchbury et al., "Tracking Long-Distance Songbird Migration by Using Geolocators," published in the scientific journal, *Science*, 13 Feb. 2009; (2) an article in the *New York Times* by Cornelia Dean, "Tracking the Flight of Birds, With Tiny Backpacks," 12 Feb. 2009; (3) an article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* by Don Hopey, "Migratory Songbirds at Long Last Leave a Trail," 13 Feb. 2009; and (4) an article in *USA Today* by Randolph E. Schmid (AP), "Scientists Flabbergasted by Speedy Birds," 12 Feb. 2009. The project was funded by the National Geographic Society, the Purple Martin Conservation Association and the Natural Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada.



BIRD SIGHTINGS FROM JANUARY 23 TO FEBRUARY 17, 2009

The following birds of note were reported from Erie County.

White-winged Scoter—1; Jan. 23; Sunset Point, Presque Isle S.P.; J.M. 2; Feb. 9; Sunset Point, Presque Isle S.P.; J.M. 1; Feb. 13; foot of east Ave.; B.S.



WHITE-WINGED SCOTER

Red-necked Grebe—1 grounded; Feb. 6; Erie; fide S.D.

Rough-legged Hawk—1 light; Feb. 16; Washington Twp.; T.W.

Iceland Gull—a least 7; Feb. 10 to 17; Lakeview Landfill; J.M.

Lesser Black-backed gull—1; Feb. 16; Dobbins Landing; S.K.

Glaucous Gull—at least 6; Feb. 10 to 17; Lakeview Landfill; J.M.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker—1; Jan. 31; Fairview Twp.; Barbara Wyler



YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER

White-winged Crossbill—1 roadkill; Feb. 2; Harborcreek; S.D. 4; Feb. 11; Millcreek Twp. West of TREC; G.S. 1 male; Feb. 14; Edinboro; D.S. 1 female; Feb. 15; Waterford; S.S.

Common Redpoll—3; Feb. 8; Union City; D.P. 100+-; Feb. 14 & 15; north pier & Fry's landing, Presque Isle S.P.; J.M., B.C., resp.

Hoary Redpoll—1; Feb. 14 & 15; north pier & Fry's landing, Presque Isle S.P.; J.M., B.C., resp.

Contributors: B.C.-Ben Coulter, S.D.-Steve Danko, S.D.-Sue DeArment, S.K.-Scott Kinzey, J.M.-Jerry McWilliams, D.P.-Donna Peters, G.S.-Gloria Shaker, D.S.-Don Snyder, S.S.-Sam Stull, B.S.-Bob Sundy, T.W.-Tom Wasilewski, B.W.-Barbara Wyler
~Jerry McWilliams (Bird Records Chairman)
814-868-3059 jerrymcw@aol.com

PIAS MONTHLY PROGRAM, MARCH 20 "THE WONDERS OF PERU"

Last summer (08), seven of us, Jan & Denny Lutz, Sam Stull and Barb Mitchell, Ruth Swaney, and Barb Helser and her son Carl, went on a trip to the beautiful country of Peru. (See picture below)



The slide program will document our trip from the highlands near in the city of Cusco to the famous Inca ruins of Machu Picchu, the cloud forest, down into the lowland jungle near Manu National Park.



MACHU PICCHU

NEW PIAS MEMBERS

We want to welcome the following new members into our Chapter.

Erie: Virginia Byers, Anne Hornyak, Helen Daugherty, Cheryl Lacoce, Bruce Raimy, Alice Stewart Rebecca Wellejus, Angel White, John Linden, Kristen May, Principal Holy Family School

Bear Lake: Helen Eddy

Cambridge Springs: George Dietrich

Cochranon: Barbara McCarthy

Conneaut Lake: Mandy Eury, Rebecca Lash, Carol West

Corry: Ellis Miller, Peggy Piper

Edinboro: Arla Gwynn, Robert Kraus, Thomas Parker, James Conway, Leslie Brozell

Fairview: Donald Nixon

Girard: David Peterson

Linesville: Robert Smolensky

McKean: Joyce Harrison

Meadville: Mary Culver, Meadville Public Library

North East: Valarie Laufenberg

Saegertown: Terry Howard

Spartansburg: William Scouten

Titusville: Benson Memorial Library, Larry Wensel, Erma Bean

Townville: Bruce Hanna

Venango: Carol Schojack

Warren: Tina Vaughan, Charlotte Brown, Warren L. Associates

West Springfield: C. Anne Youngs

I hope I didn't miss anyone, but if I did, just let me know.

Just a reminder, when you join National, you are automatically a member of the Presque Isle Audubon Chapter. Everyone is welcome to our membership meetings and field trips.

~Ron Intrieri, Membership Chair

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NOTICE TO ALL PIAS MEMBERS

Any member who has changed an address since last summer should read this announcement.

Since the transition to the new membership system, some members who live outside their Chapter's assigned Zip code territory but were previously assigned to our Chapter, no longer appear on the Chapter rosters. This reassignment is an error, not a result of a change in policy. Any member in the Northwest Pa. area who joins National will be assigned to the Presque Isle Audubon Chapter, unless they request otherwise. If you live outside this area, you may have been assigned to a different chapter. This error will not affect many members. Members who have been removed from our membership list and want to be reassigned to it should contact me. I can put you back on the membership list for our area.

~Ron Intrieri, Membership Chair

ronrxi@roadrunner.com

Or contact in writing to:

Tom Ridge Environmental Center
301 Peninsula Dr, Suite 8
Erie, Pa 16505

PASTORES' FEEDERS ATTRACT MORE THAN BIRDS: DEER, O'POSSUM, TURKEY



AN O'POSSUM WAS INVITED TO THE PARTY



DEER LIKE BIRD SEED TOO

THE 12th GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT FEBRUARY 13-16

This citizen science project sponsored by National Audubon and Cornell Lab of Ornithology has been growing every year! Last year bird enthusiasts of all ages in every province and state across North America submitted over 87,500 checklists, totaling more than 11 million birds of 635 species. This "snapshot" is giving scientists a large volume of data about our bird populations. Each year they can see patterns and changes in bird ranges.



WATCHING THE BIRDS AT THE STULL CENTER

This was PIAS's 7th year for doing a workshop during the 4-day count. On Saturday morning, Feb. 14, about 33 people met at the Stull Center at Presque Isle State Park to participate in the GBBC. Some were there to learn more about winter birds at their feeders. Others wanted to learn how to submit their bird tallies to GBBC. And some were there just to enjoy watching birds with other bird lovers. During the morning we found 16 species at the feeders and on the bay to submit on the web site.



ONE OF MANY TREE SPARROWS SEEN

We're hoping that many of the people attending, as well as all of you, counted birds over the 4-day event and submitted checklists online. By going to www.birdcount.org you can see the results. You can look at the reports for a single species, or you can type in your town to see all the species reported. It's also easy to go back and look at the changes over the 12 years. Be sure to explore all the other parts of the web site to see the wealth of information and bird photos, thanks to all of you "citizen scientists".



FUTURE "CITIZEN SCIENTISTS"

Thank you to Jean Joyce, Linda McWilliams, Delores Tavares, Joao Tavares, Michele Franz, and others for their help.



JOAO AND DOLORES TAVARES

A special thanks to Cheryl and Frank Zalik at Wild Birds Unlimited for providing door prizes and Bob Sonnenberg from Whole Foods Co-Op for bringing and brewing our coffee.

-Pat Howell, Education Chair



The 2009 Festival of the Birds will be held May 8, 9, 10 at Presque Isle State Park and the Tom Ridge Environmental Center in Erie, PA. This event is hosted by the Presque Isle Audubon Society and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

This year's Festival will include a variety of birding field trips on Saturday and Sunday, beginning at 7:00 a.m. Workshops begin at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday and will include Nature Photography, Birding 101 and many more. On Sunday afternoon a special free program will be hosted for children and families, which will include an art show, Live Raptors, Fledgling Artists Workshop and films. No registration is required for the Sunday afternoon programs.

This event coincides with International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) on Saturday, May 9. IMBD is a day set aside as a time to explore the natural habitat migratory birds use to rest, nest or spend the winter. The Festival gives newcomers to Presque Isle the opportunity to appreciate the resources available at this beautiful State Park.

A few of the comments received from last year's participants include: "It was a great experience," "I'm so happy I came," and "Do it again!"

The Presque Isle Audubon Society's newsletter, the *Tern of Events*, is published monthly, except in July and January. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication. All published material subject to editing.

Send submissions to Janet Price, editor, via jrplkm@aol.com or 418 E. 36th St., Erie, PA 16504. If you have any questions, call Janet at 814.825.8394.

Printed on recycled paper.

There were 133 species of birds identified and recorded at last year's Festival. Some of these included the Red Headed Woodpecker, Black Throated Blue Warbler, and the Bald Eagle. Many of the 150 participants also added to their "Life Lists" because of the unusual and abundant variety of bird species located at Presque Isle State Park.



REGISTRATION DESK FOR THE 2008 BIRDING FESTIVAL

Registration forms will be available at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center or on our web page at www.presqueisle.org/audubon. Pre-registration is \$90/person for the weekend or \$50/day. Special rates are available for students and children. This event is limited to 150 participants so early registration is recommended. **Act 48 credits available.** For more information contact:

Karen Torney kmt1515@gmail.com

Linda Donati CDBirdz2@aol.com

BE A BIRDING FESTIVAL SPONSOR

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER - \$1000

BALTIMORE ORIOLE - \$500

BLACK-THROATED BLUE - \$250

YELLOW WARBLER - \$125

Choose your sponsor level, write a check for that amount and send it to Janet Price at the address below. See the website for more details.

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Chapter Only Membership Application**

Chapter only membership includes membership in the Presque Isle Audubon Society ONLY and the chapter newsletter *Tern of Events*.

Individual membership \$10.00/year

Name _____

Address _____

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Email Address _____

Please indicate your preference:

_____ Paper copy of *Tern of Events* OR

_____ On-line *Tern of Events* with email notification

Please return this form with your check payable to the Presque Isle Audubon Society to:

Ronald Intrieri, Membership
Presque Isle Audubon Society
Tom Ridge Environmental Center
301 Peninsula Drive, Suite 8
Erie, PA 16505

National Audubon Society Membership Application

Please enroll me as a New member in the National Audubon Society. Membership includes membership in BOTH the National Audubon Society and the local Presque Isle Audubon Society. National members receive *Audubon Magazine* (6 issues per year) and the monthly newsletter *Tern of Events*.

Introductory membership \$20.00

Renewals \$35.00

Students and seniors \$15.00

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Address _____

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Please mail this form with your check payable to the National Audubon Society directly to:

National Audubon Society
Membership Data Center
P.O. Box 51101
Boulder, CO 80322-1001

Renewal members will receive a coupon mailed to them by National. Please write the code number U157XCH on your renewal application.