



TERN OF EVENTS

PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2017 ISSUE 17:04

To conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the enjoyment and benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity in northwestern Pennsylvania.

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH



When asked why we watch birds, many self-identified birders will describe the joy of seeing a part of nature that is beautiful and complex, and yet simple and sometimes drab. Others may say that it is the seemingly endless variety of species that keep us looking and searching. For me though, the question has a vivid personal historical answer.

When you last invited someone to go birdwatching, were you actively considering the potential for changing their life? Probably not, however for many of us that is exactly what happens. Think back to before you were a birder. Chances are that your life was pleasant enough and you didn't recognize a gaping need to use binoculars. Then, after hearing a friend talk about birding, you were invited to go out, and whether by trickery, genuine interest, cajoling, or a seemingly temporary lapse of judgement, you agreed. Hopefully, with a challenge, a bit of luck, and a

few good laughs, you enjoyed your outing and were turned on to the prospect of birding.

The role of friends and family in the life of a birder is significant, and usually they are the starting point for a lifelong passion. So, if you haven't lately, call a few friends or relatives and invite (or cajole as the case may be) them to come out with you on a local expedition...

(Continued on Page 3)

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER THINGS TO DO!



MONARCH BUTTERFLY

September 15, Friday – PIA General Meeting and Program at the TREC in Room 112 7:00p Program: Jeffrey Hall's Patagonia followed by a social. (See Page 2)

September 19, Tuesday – Executive Board Meeting in the Board Room at the TREC at 6:00p

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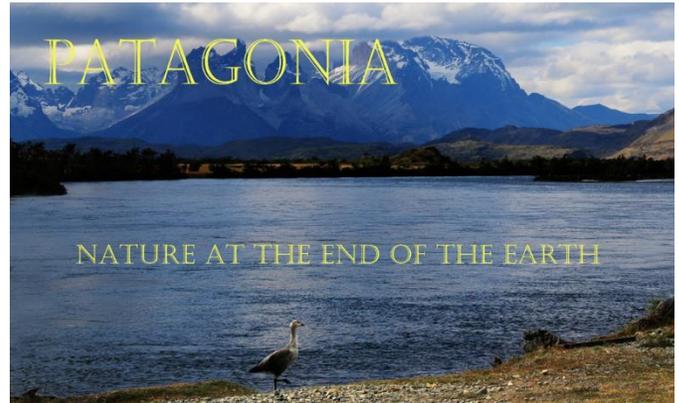
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The *Tern of Events* is published by the **Presque Isle Audubon Society**, a chapter of the National Audubon Society and a member of Audubon Pennsylvania serving northwestern Pennsylvania including Erie and Crawford counties.

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

Website: www.presqueisleaudubon.org

PIA PROGRAM FOR SEPTEMBER FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 JEFFREY HALL'S PATAGONIA



PATAGONIA: NATURE AT THE END OF THE EARTH

“The word ‘Patagonia’...lodged itself in the Western imagination as a metaphor for The Ultimate, the point beyond which one could not go.” (Bruce Chatwin, *Patagonia Revisited*.) The Patagonia region of southern Chile and Argentina has long been a lure for those who seek adventure or solitude or natural wonders. Vast plains, snow-capped mountains, and iceberg-laden glacial lakes are the setting for an almost startling variety of wildlife: Guanacos (the wild ancestors of llamas), flamingos, rheas, parakeets...The Straits of Magellan and Tierra del Fuego host penguins, albatrosses, petrels, and more. This presentation will survey many of the highlights of “the uttermost part of the earth.”

This will be Jeffrey Hall's third visit as a presenter to Presque Isle Audubon Society. He is current President of Bartramian Audubon Society and is also active in Seneca Rocks Audubon Society. Jeffrey's articles and photos have appeared in *Living Bird*, *NJ Audubon*, *Cassinia*, *Underwater Naturalist*, and many other publications, as well as on the PSO “Birds of Pennsylvania” webpage. A retired teacher, he serves as an instructor at the Institute for Learning in Retirement at Slippery Rock University.

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

Presque Isle is a wonderful place to bird, however, to pique the interest of friends with a new locale, here are a few favorite local hotspots:

- State Game Lands 314 (PA/OH border on Lake Erie) – Owls and eagles



- Miller's Ponds Area (South of Pymatuning Spillway) – Shorebirds, cranes, and hawks
- Fairview Business Park (Just off Fairview Rt. 90 exit) – Ducks, shorebirds, and the occasional (extremely rare) Sedge Wren.



- DM, president@presqueisleaudubon.org

TIPS AND REMINDERS FOR HELPING BIRDS DURING THE FALL AND FOR MIGRATION



Chickadee Checking out a New Home

- ✓ After the last broods of birds have fledged, clean out all your birdhouses, removing old nests.
- ✓ Prepare your birdfeeders for the migration season. Clean them using a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water. Rinse well.
- ✓ Fill your birdfeeders. Summer residents need to fatten up before they head south, other winter residents will recognize the welcome mat and stick around.
- ✓ While the weather is still comfortable, install netting, such as fruit-tree netting, in front of windows near feeders to prevent birds from crashing into the window.
- ✓ Set up roosting boxes to provide shelter for birds during the winter.
- ✓ Think of and then sign up for Project FeederWatch and become a citizen scientist by counting the birds that come to your feeding stations from November to April. **Go to feederwatch.org for all the information you'll need to sign up.**

BIRD REPORT

The following birds of note were reported for June through July 19, 2017 from Presque Isle S.P. unless noted otherwise.

Redhead—1 male; July 3; Gull Point; J.M.



REDHEAD

Snowy Egret—1; June 9 to 12; Gull Point; M.B.



SNOWY EGRET

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron—1 imm.; July 2; Gull Point Trail; M.B.. First July record in the county and only the second summer record.



YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON W/ YOUNG

Piping Plover—up to 4; through the period; Gull Point; M.B.



PIPING PLOVER WITH YOUNG



ONE PIPING PLOVER WITH 6 LEGS!



PIPING PLOVER CHICK

Continued on Page 5

BIRD REPORT CONTINUED

**American Avocet—2; June 23; Gull Point; M.B.
4; July 2; Gull Point; M.B.**



AMERICAN AVOCET

**Whimbrel—1; June 8; Gull Point; MB 1; June 13
to June 19; Gull Point; M.B. 1; July 7; Gull
Point; T.L.**



WHIMBREL

Marbled Godwit—1; July 7; Gull Point; M.B.



MARBLED GODWIT

**White-rumped Sandpiper—1; June 20; Gull
Point; M.B. 2; June 24; Gull Point; M.B.**



WHITE RUMPED SANDPIPER

**Laughing Gull—3; June 2; Gull Point; M.B.
1; June 6; north pier; J.M.**



LAUGHING GULL

**At least one Peregrine Falcon chick fledged in
late June; Erie lakefront; M.B.**

**Contributors: M.B.-Mary Birdsong, T.L.-Tim
Lenz, J.M.-Jerry McWilliams**

~Jerry McWilliams, Bird Record Chair

814-240-8594 jerrymcw@aol.com

QUESTIONS FOR MARTHA

Dear Martha,

I've been wondering for a while now if all birds have the same number of feathers. I kind of equate feathers on birds like hairs on humans, but I don't know if that is a proper analogy. I would think that bigger people have more hair follicles so does the same thing go for birds? Or is it that smaller birds just have smaller feathers, not fewer? I know it seems like a silly question, but just something I've been pondering. Thanks for any information you can provide.

Sincerely,

Wondering in Wesleyville

Dear Wondering,

Great question, not silly at all! In general, larger birds have more feathers than smaller birds. Larger birds also have larger feathers and vice versa, but not enough to make up the difference in size. Most song birds have between 1500 and 3000 feathers, birds of prey, like bald eagles have between 5 and 8 thousand feathers. Birds that require "waterproofing", like a swan, can have up to 25,000 feathers with a majority of the feathers appearing on the neck and head. So, how do scientists know how many feathers are on differing species? Well, there have been some plucky people out there who have actually counted the number of feathers on bird specimens. In 1936, WAY before Google, a scientist named Alexander Wetmore gathered all the articles he could find relating to people counting bird feathers and, while he found a few articles, he decided to conduct his own studies with specimens that were available in the US National Museum. He employed an assistant to do the tedious work of plucking and counting and came up with the following results: Wetland compiled a lengthy list of the Siebrecht/Montroy (named for the assistant who plucked and counted the feathers) feather counts for particular birds. A mourning dove had 2,635, a yellow-bellied sapsucker 2,242, an eastern hairy woodpecker 2,395, an eastern wood peewee 1,495, a brown creeper 1,408, a migrant

shrike 2,179, an oven bird 1,849, a red-eyed towhee 2,235, and so on. The smallest bird, a ruby-throated hummingbird, had 940.

Wow! My eyes are hurting just thinking about plucking and counting the feathers from a hummingbird.

So, I hope you are no longer left "Wondering" and are now "Knowing" that larger birds have more feathers than smaller birds.

Thanks for asking!

~Martha

MYSTERY OF THE DEAD CROWS



About 200 dead crows were found near Topeka, KS and there was concern that they may have died from Avian Flu. A Bird Pathologist was hired to examine the remains of all the crows and he confirmed the problem was definitely NOT Avian Flu, to everyone's relief.

However, he determined that 98% of the crows had been killed by impact with trucks, and only 2% were killed by an impact with a car. Kansas then hired an Ornithological Behaviorist to determine the disproportionate percentages for truck versus car kill. The Ornithological Behaviorist determined the cause in short order.

When crows eat road kill, they always set up a look-out crow in a nearby tree to warn of impending danger. His conclusion was that all the lookout crows could say "Cah" but none could say "Truck".

Have a nice day!

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We are looking forward to the cooler days of Fall, but in the meantime we can still enjoy a lot of birding. Our new members and renewal members are the following.

Erie: Casey Main, Betty Cornman, Tiffany Marini, Annette Carroll, Camille Wagner, Mathew Phillips, Ashley Stewart, Alison Gray, Lew & Judy Vespoli, Barbara Meleski, Kathy Coffaro, Donna Logan, Sandra Reilly, Phillis Kitchen, Mike Plyler, Dan Hill, Angela Hetrick, Cheryl Holly, Shannon Thompson

Albion: Rebecca Shoemaker

Aliquippa, Pa: Lorena Hamara

Cherry Creek, NY: Bonnie Bowen

Conneautville: Tom Thompson, Adam & Anna Lisa Troyer

Edinboro: Terry Darcangelo, Mary Gall, Daniel Mathewson, Lizabeth Dilla, Tim banks

Fairview: Drew Mortensen, Tiffany Kolenda

Girard: Jeanne Meeder, William Felege

Jamestown: Sandra Holowenko

Meadville: Ellie Leveto, Harry Stoll, Chris Lundberg

North East: Catherine Zawadzki

Spartansburg: Joel Cook

West Springfield: C. Humphrey

Trafford: Karen Rose Cercone

Titusville: Linda Feely, Marge Deets, Mark & Susan McDowell

If you have any questions about your membership, or you need to make corrections, contact me at membership@presqueisleaudubon.org

~Ron Intrieri, Membership Chair
membership@presqueisleaudubon.org

IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM NATIONAL AUDUBON

National Audubon has changed the way the local chapters get credit for membership. Renewal members can still send their membership check directly to National Audubon, or they can join online if they want. This has remained the same as in the past. New members can also send their membership payment directly to National, but to make sure our chapter gets credit, send the membership check to the local chapter. We will send them on to National.

Presque Isle Audubon,
Tom Ridge Environmental Center,
301 Peninsula Drive, Suite #8,
Erie, PA 16505

The Presque Isle Audubon Society's newsletter, the *Tern of Events*, is published every other month: February, April, June, August, October and December. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication. All published material is 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.

PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON SOCIETY
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301 PENINSULA DRIVE, SUITE 8
ERIE, PA 16505

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**Presque Isle Audubon Society
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 \$15.00/year

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Chapter only members, both new and renewal, will receive the online version of the *Tern of Events* unless they specifically request the paper copy. **Please provide your e-mail address for the online version of our newsletter or indicate that you want the paper copy.**

E-mail address _____

I still prefer the paper copy _____

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

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

**National Audubon Society
Membership Application**

Renewal members can join as they have in the past, either by sending their membership check directly to National Audubon, or they can join online. New members are encouraged to send their first check to membership at the local chapter so we can get credit for new members. The address is at the bottom of this application.

Membership includes membership in BOTH the National Audubon Society and the local Presque Isle Audubon Society. National members receive *Audubon Magazine* (4 issues per year) and the monthly newsletter *Tern of Events*. **Please include your email address to receive the on line version of our chapter's newsletter.**

**Introductory Membership \$20.00
Renewals \$20.00**

Name _____
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City _____ State _____ Zip _____
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Chapter Code C7ZU150Z

Please mail this form with your check payable to the National Audubon Society directly to YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER.

**Presque Isle Audubon
Tom Ridge Environmental Center
301 Peninsula Drive, Suite #8
Erie, PA 16505**