



TERN OF EVENTS

PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
MARCH, 2014 ISSUE 14:02

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

I've given you, well... almost a month, February, to prove to me that you do not deserve the title of my least favorite month. So far, you're blowing it big time! I had some running around I wanted to do today, but I'm not even going to go out of the house until I absolutely have to! In the meantime, I'll mark time watching my feeders as I tend to my indoor chores. When those are done I guess there is always the Olympics, but I have yet to find a sport that can hold my interest. In my quest for entertainment during this long and frigid winter's day (after my 5 turns at Candy Crush were all used up) I found myself wondering what Olympic Bird Watching might look like and how it might be scored. Really! Just to prove to you how bored I am, I came up with a few ideas I'd like to share with you--you, my least favorite month. Of course, the event would take place mid-May because that is my favorite month, when bird migration is at its peak. As I see it, Olympic Bird Watching (OBW) would be scored more like figure skating than like a race. While in competitive bird watching (think: The Big Year) the "winner" is the competitor who ends up with the highest number of bird species, I think it's more exciting to give some credit for style, technique and, wait for it...sportsmanship! Non-birders may ask, there is no athleticism involved in bird watching, why should it be an Olympic sport? Oh, contraire! Those people have never hiked the path to Gull Point in two feet of snow in a near blizzard OR in 90 degree heat lugging a scope, bins, cameras and other provisions (you go Plover Patrol!!). I can see it now, the judges sitting along the path at Pine

Tree Trail for leg one of the individual, pair and team bird watching events, pensively filling out their score sheets as the announcers in hushed voices ply their narratives. "Hmmm, pair Birdsong/Plyler definitely get style points for the cool scope and those Marmot coats, certainly a plus. They got a barred owl here earlier in the year but it's not likely they can pull that off today. And in the team competition, we have the Mortensens. Having those shorties on the team will certainly be an advantage as they move closer to the skulkers habitat. (Cont. on Page 2)

MARCH THINGS TO DO!



- March 12, Wednesday** - Strategic Planning Committee meeting, 6:00 pm at the TREC
- March 18, Tuesday** - PIAS Board Meeting at 7:00 pm in the Board Room
- March 21, Friday** - PIAS General Meeting in Room 112 at the TREC
7:00 pm - Social
7:30 pm -Program: Skye's Spirit Rehabilitation Center. Room 112 at the TREC. (Page 6)
- 6th Festival of the Birds - May 9, 10, 11** (p 7)
More information at presqueisleaudubon.org

2013-2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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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.

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Erie, PA 16505

Website: www.presqueisleaudubon.org

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

Maybe they'll get a Connecticut. That would certainly be a coup and inch them closer to the gold. The visiting birders from Allegheny and Bucks counties are giving the local competitors a run for their money. They're up here so often that home team advantage is a moot point. Speaking of "moot" points, are teams given credit for Mute Swans? No, they are a non-native and will not count toward scores in today's event.

Here come a few of the birders in the individual's competition down the trail now. Look at Shawn, he's racking up a nice tally but that camera is really slowing him down. That's probably the nine thousandth picture he has taken of a yellow warbler! Mike is certainly closing in and has loads of experience that will keep him in the running. I bet he's hoping a Kirtlands flies out in front of him now! He looks like he might have something in his bins..Whoa, Katie just swept in and got his bird! She's definitely a contender here and her mentors in Ohio, (yes, the KKs) have been training her well. Closing in on Mike and Katie I see Roger, he's probably been down here since last night scouting for the event. In fact, some say he lives here. Wait, I see another of the teams coming now...It's Team Janet, Ruth, Joao, Delores, Pat, Diane, Carol, Julie, etc... The team that often claims they are "no experts" but work together to come up with some pretty sweet scores! Most have been trained by the renowned birding coach, Jerry McWilliams! Watch out for them, they should rack up lots of sportsmanship points.



Julie

Well, the Pine Tree Trail leg of the event is about
(Cont. on Page 3)

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

complete and soon we'll move on to Fry's Landing. The judges for that leg are there now and tell me that the local Cooper's Hawk has been on the prowl. The competitors are going to have to work hard in this venue. Let's get down there and see what Fry's Landing has in store for these fine birders..."

Well, February, the sun is starting to shine now, the snow has stopped and the wind has died down. I apologize for being so down on you. It seems you gave us all (all the individuals, all the pairs and all the teams of birders that flock to Presque Isle through wind, snow, sun and calm) some nice birds this year. You gave me a life bird, the long-tailed duck and have offered better looks at scoters than I could have ever imagined. And, now the titmice are singing their cheeva, cheeva song, the chickadees their pheobe song and the cardinals their exuberant birdy, birdy, birdy and we know that Spring is nearing. So, thanks, February. It's been real.

~Michele Rundquist-Franz, PIAS President

ADVOCATE'S ALLEY HB1576 Update

It now appears that House Bill 1576 will come up for a final vote in the state House on March 11, 2014. That means that this is our last opportunity to kill this harmful piece of legislation. According to Scott Weidensaul, the only reason that this bill was not rammed through and voted into a law has been the incredible outpouring of opposition from the PABIRDS and Audubon Action communities. While we are up against some powerful forces with deep pockets, we've made our own voices heard and have stopped the bill from becoming a law, so far.

According to Scott and his contacts, the gas industry is pulling out all the stops to push their agenda through the passage of this bill including withholding funding to representatives that won't agree to vote for the bill. This bill is said to be perhaps their biggest priority and they will make those who oppose it pay a price.

At the time of this writing, we are 10-15 votes away from stopping the passage of this bill and

even representatives who said they were against it may be reconsidering in the face of threats from the industry. We cannot let this happen for the sake of Pennsylvania's wildlife and natural ecosystems!

If you do not want to see this bill passed please contact your legislators!! If you've done so already, do it again by email or phone just to let them know you're touching base and keeping track. My own representative is actually a co-sponsor of the bill, but I have written him again letting him know in no uncertain terms my opposition of the bill and that I will not only speak through my letter but also through my vote.

Contact information for the legislators in your district can be found here:

<http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/findyourlegislator/index.cfm>

Thanks!

~Michele Rundquist-Franz, PIAS President

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Presque Isle Audubon Society welcomes all new members as well as membership renewals into our chapter.

Erie: Lois Smith, Philip Katen, Gail Bodner, Mary Linda Jacky, E.J. Metcalf, Patty McMahon

Cambridge Sps: Joanne Anderson

Edinboro: Maryann Kiehlmeier, Jan Kinch

Harborcreek: Jason Lymangrover

Freedom: Georgia Wahl

Meadville: M. Mason, Anthony Dividio Jr, Barbara Wykoff

West Springfield: MaryJo Haranin

West Sunbury: Tom Clark

Warren: Karen Weyant, Rosemary Gourley

Renewals for Chapter members: Robert & Doris Allen, Karen Frazier, Marion Gallivan

See you at one of our monthly meetings.

~Ron Intrieri, Membership Chairman
membership@presqueisleaudubon.org

BIRD SIGHTINGS

The following birds of note were reported from Jan. 15 to Feb. 19, 2014 from Presque Isle State Park unless noted otherwise.

Red-necked Grebe—1 or 2; Feb. 2 & 12; north pier; D.H., K.A.

Surf Scoter—1 or 2; through the period; channel; m.ob.

White-winged Scoter—151; Jan. 20 to 22; channel; J.M. Record single day high count in Erie County. Up to 48 remained through the period; m.ob.

Thayer's Gull—up to 2; Jan. 29 to Feb. 11; Lake View Landfill; J.M., J.F.

Iceland Gull—total of 6; through the period; Lake View Landfill & Presque Isle; J.M.

Lesser Black-backed Gull—total of 3; through the period; Lake View Landfill & Presque Isle; J.M.

Glaucous Gull—total of 12; through the period; Lake View Landfill & Presque Isle; m.ob.

Herring X Glaucous Gull—1; Feb. 3; Lake View Landfill; J.M.

Black Scoter—1; Jan. 14; channel; J.M.



Black Scoter

Snowy Owl—total of 12; through the period, throughout the county; m.ob.

Long-eared Owl—1; Jan. 18 to 24; near B-trail; R.D. 1 road killed; Feb. 10; Erie; fide A.D.

Short-eared Owl—1; Jan. 11 to 23; Gull Point; R.D.

Northern Saw-whet Owl—1; Jan. 7 & 8; B-trail; R.D.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker—1; through the period; Erie; A.B.N. (fide B.P.Z.). At a feeder.

Northern Shrike—total of 5; through the period; throughout the county; m.ob.

Long-tailed Duck—up to 12; Feb. 1 to 19; channel; J.M. 2; Feb. 12; Lake View Landfill; Jason Fidorra, J.M



Long-tailed Duck

Common Raven—1; Jan. 3; Wattsburg; M.W. up to 3; Jan. 28 to at least Feb. 12; Lake View Landfill; J.M., J.F.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet—1; Jan. 5 (late); Pine Tree Trail; J.M.

Hermit Thrush—1; Feb. 14; near Leo's; J.M.

Gray Catbird—1; Jan. 10; east end of Sidewalk Trail along Misery Bay; J.M. 1; Feb. 15; near Leo's; M.F.

Lapland Longspur—1; Feb. 19; Gull Point; R.D.

Chipping Sparrow—1; Jan. 1 to 7; Waterford; J.H.

Common Redpoll—2; Jan. 7; near beach 11 parking lot; S.S.

Contributors: K.A.-Katie Andersen, A.D.-Ann DeSarro, R.D.-Roger Donn, J.F.-Jason Fidorra, M.F.-Michele Franz, J.H.-James Hill III, D.H.-Deuane Hoffman, J.M.-Jerry McWilliams, A.B.N.-Al & Bonnie Notarione, S.S.-Susan Smith, M.W.-Mike Weible, B.P.Z.-Bob & Pam Zelenak, m.ob.-many observers

~Jerry McWilliams,
814-240-8594 jerrymcw@aol.com

PIAS HOSTS CITIZEN SCIENCE EVENTS
Christmas Bird Count
Great Backyard Bird Count

"Citizen Science" seems to be the new buzz phrase in bird conservation circles these days and there are a few great reasons why. Now more than ever everyday people are networking with each other and scientists to gather information at a level that would be far too expensive and time consuming to be accomplished by scientific bodies alone. In our case, the information and data being collected relates to birds. How apropos since it has been posited by some that the term "citizen science" was coined by Rick Bonney of Cornell's Lab of Ornithology in the late 1970s.

Two prominent Citizen Science projects that PIAS has been participating in for years are the Christmas Bird Count and the Great Backyard Bird Count. The Christmas Bird Count began as a kinder, gentler alternative to the Side Hunt and was the brainchild of Frank Chapman in 1900! That's right, this year marked the 114th Christmas Bird Count (CBC).

CBC

The Presque Isle Audubon Society has been a participating "circle" in the CBC since the mid-1960s. This year the PIAS held our CBC on December 14, 2013. Despite the not very cooperative weather, including occasional dense snow and frigid temps, I think it's safe to say that a fun time was had by all, probably even Ruth Swaney whose car ended up off the road. Although we had hoped for a species count in the 80s we ended up with a total of 74 species with an additional six count week birds (These are birds that are seen 3 days on either side of the circle's official count date. They are noted as being seen but their numbers do not count in the official total.) We set a couple of records in 2013 which is always nice. We recorded record high counts for 4 bird species including Northern Pintail (19), Long-tailed duck (31), Bald Eagle (4) and...drum roll please....Snowy Owl (2)!! We had a total count of 18471 birds, not too shabby for a blustery day of birding. For a complete report of the event including the final tally refer to the PIAS website. Results for the 1758 bird counts that took place

across the world will be posted on the National Audubon website after they are reviewed.

GBBC

The PIAS welcomed the opportunity to collaborate with DCNR this year for the Great Backyard Bird Count which was held at Presque Isle Shelter 2 on February 15, 2014. Another frigid day of bird counting was made a little nicer by the warmth of the fireplace and fine friends.



Because the focus of this count is "backyard" birds, we remained in the shelter and counted birds in the area including at feeders that had been placed outside the shelter. PIAS members provided education about bird identification and explained to participants how they could conduct a count from their own backyard. Our total species count for the GBBC was only 11 with the highlight being a bald eagle that flew over early in the morning. Because the lake has been frozen over we did not get some of the gulls that usually fly over and add to the count. The information gathered from this event has been uploaded to Birdsource.org for placement into their GBBC database.

Thanks to all the PIAS and DCNR volunteers that helped out with these events this year! If you've not participated in one of these events, please consider doing so. It really is a great time as well as a wonderful opportunity to be a Citizen Scientist and make a difference for the birds and other wildlife!

~Michele Rundquist - Franz

**PIAS MONTHLY PROGRAM
SKYE'S SPIRIT WILDLIFE
REHABILITATION CENTER**

Join PIAS as we welcome Skye's Spirit Wildlife Rehabilitation Center from Harrisville, PA. Robert and Maryjane Angelo will introduce us to their residents such as a red tail hawk, barred owl, American kestrel, skunk and opossum.



Maryjane Angelo

Skye's Spirit Wildlife is a non-profit wildlife rehabilitation center in its fifteenth year, dedicated to the care, rehabilitation and release of injured, orphaned and displaced Pennsylvania wildlife. They take all animals with the exception of raccoons, skunks, coyote, fox and groundhog and care for an average of 1,000 animals yearly with a release rate of 73%. Maryjane and Robert Angelo are helping the center to grow yearly by adding new exhibit enclosures for educational wildlife and also adding new rehabilitation enclosures to house the ever growing number of animals needing care yearly. They are working to make it a place where scouts, school children and the public can visit indigenous wildlife and learn how to help it and the environment in their daily lives. Read more about their work at www.skyes-spirit.com

~Mary Birdsong, Program Chair

**HAWK MIGRATION ASSOCIATION OF
NORTH AMERICA CONFERENCE**

The Hawk Migration Association of North America is excited to present its 2014 Conference "40 Years - Connecting Hawks and People" hosted by Braddock Bay Raptor Research in Rochester, New York on April 25-27, 2014. The conference will commemorate HMANA's 40th anniversary and will be held during peak raptor migration season at one of North America's premier spring hawk watch sites.

The majority of the conference program takes place on Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27, at the Rochester Airport Marriott Hotel. At this location conference participants will get to participate in a variety of fascinating and exciting scientific presentations and panel discussions, with topics ranging from using GPS to track migrant birds to cutting edge identification workshops. There will be ample time allotted each day to provide opportunities for birding at Braddock Bay and beyond. Pre-conference activities will start April 24 and include field trips to The Roger Tory Peterson Institute, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge and birding hotspots along the shore of Lake Ontario. **BBRR and HMANA are extending an invitation to Presque Isle Audubon members** to attend at HMANA member rates during the early booking period. All Presque Isle Audubon members need to do upon registration is choose member rate, and enter their Presque Isle Audubon affiliation when prompted to do so. More details about the HMANA Conference, including registration information, can be found on the conference

website <http://conference.hmana.org/>



LET'S PICK IT UP PA! MARCH 1st TO MAY 31st

Everyone wants to live, work, and play in a clean and green community . . . and it's up to everyone to make it possible and improve the overall quality of life for us all.

Join Pennsylvanians across the state - and Americans across the nation - for the Great American Cleanup. You can participate in the 2014 Great American Cleanup of PA by cleaning up litter and trash along our roadsides, streams, beaches, parks, forests and neighborhoods. Additional events include holding recycling events for hard-to-dispose of items like tires and appliances, creating or enhancing green areas by planting plants, bulbs, and trees, removing or painting over graffiti that devalues your neighborhood, and other activities that help beautify your community.

I'm hoping our PIAS members will seriously consider taking part in this venture. If you have a suggestion for a project from the above list, please let me know. In the meantime, I will try to organize an event and let you know what it will be and when it will occur. We can have more than one event as the cleanup lasts until the end of May. So think Spring and get involved!

~Janet Price, Editor

EDITOR'S NOTE

Unfortunately, three of our trustees have had to resign from the Presque Isle Audubon Board of Directors: Suzanne Loss, Ruth Swaney, and Robin Diles Cuneo. We are sorry to lose them and want to wish them the best while thanking them profusely for the work they did while serving as trustees. Meanwhile, three of our Audubon members have agreed to complete their terms of service and they are as follows:

Janet Price for Suzanne Loss 2011-2014

Dave Gustafson for Ruth Swaney 2012-2015

Lisa Danko for Robin Diles Cuneo 2013 - 2016

Welcome back to the Board!!!!

6TH FESTIVAL OF THE BIRDS - 2014

You are invited to attend any or all the special activities planned for the next Festival of the Birds to be held on **Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, May 9, 10, 11**. A major part of this festival is experiencing the annual wonder of migration. There will be numerous field trips scheduled so that you can enjoy the great variety of birds that stop over. This year not only will a **"Chinese Auction"** be part of the festivities, there will also be a **"Silent Auction"** featuring larger prizes such as a special gift basket from **Wild Birds Unlimited** and a new **Keurig Coffee System**. We are looking for donations of new items (big or small), gift certificates, or themed gift baskets. If you can contribute, know a merchant who might (& be recognized) or have questions please contact **Diane Kallor** at 456-2528-H, 602-6460-C, jkallor@neo.rr.com or **Ron Interieri** at 899-6023 before April 15. Your generosity and support are greatly appreciated!!

The Presque Isle Audubon Society's newsletter, the *Tern of Events*, is published monthly, except in January and July. 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.

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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 \$15.00/year

Name _____

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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.**

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Do you require a 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**

Please enroll me as a new member in the National Audubon Society which 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 local chapter newsletter. **Please include your e-mail address to receive the online version of the newsletter.**

Introductory membership \$20.00

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