



TERN OF EVENTS

PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
MAY 2015 ISSUE 15:04

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

I devoted my five previous articles to educating members about the most significant threats to birds as identified by several bird conservation and education groups including the American Bird Conservancy (ABA), National Audubon Society (NAS) and Cornell University. The threats I discussed were certainly not exhaustive but rather identified by these organizations as the five most lethal threats: free-roaming cats, balloons, structure strikes, and habitat destruction on the breeding and wintering grounds of migratory birds. While these threats are widespread and robust, they are also tangible and apparent if one only takes the time to observe. This means that steps can be taken now to fight the devastation they are wreaking on birds and small animals. Although individually small, the results of these steps should be observable and measurable.

My next series of articles is going to deal with an even more overarching but less easily proven and measurable threat to bird populations, climate change. Yes, there are still some who deny it is even occurring. Using the framework from the National Audubon Society's (NAS) Birds and Climate Change report I will discuss several recognized birds of concern that breed in this region. This initial article will, however, serve to introduce readers to the report itself and its application to conservation efforts with future articles to deal more specifically with the climate threatened and endangered birds. (Cont. on Page 3)

MAY THINGS TO DO!



- May 5, Tuesday** – Festival of the Birds Committee Meeting at the TREC at 6:00PM
- May 8, 9, 10 : Friday, Saturday, Sunday** – Seventh Festival of the Birds at Presque Isle (Page 5)
- May 15, Friday** – PIA May Program and Elections 7:00PM –at the Niagara Boat Launch (Page 5)
- May 16, Saturday** – Weed Warrior Work Session: Meet at the Stull Center at 9:30AM
- May 19, Tuesday** – PIA Executive Board Meeting At 7:00PM in Board Room at the TREC
- May 22, Friday** – Weed Warrior Work Session: Meet at the Stull Center at 10:00AM
- May 29, 30, 31: Friday, Saturday, Sunday** – Allegany Nature Pilgrimage (Page 2)
- May 30, Saturday** - Weed Warrior Work Session: Meet at the Stull Center at 9:30AM

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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

NOTE: VOTING FOR OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON MAY PROGRAM

NOMINEES FOR PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON OFFICES FOR 2015-2016

President - Michele Rundquist Franz is currently serving as President and Education Chair of PI Audubon and has been on the committees for the Festival of the Birds and Strategic Planning.

Vice-President - Paul Burroughs has previously served as President and is currently serving as Vice-President of Presque Isle Audubon.

Treasurer - Kel McDonald is currently serving as Treasurer for the organization and was an active member of the Strategic Planning Committee this past year.

Secretary - Drew Mortensen is Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee and has served as an active Trustee for PI Audubon this past year.

Trustee - Dave Gustafson has served as Treasurer and Trustee and has been on the Audit Committee for PI Audubon.

Trustee - Katie Andersen works full time at Wild Birds Unlimited where she serves as the Store Naturalist. She has been involved in the Biggest Week in American Birding for the past several years.

Allegheny Nature Pilgrimage

Join us at the 57th Annual Allegheny Nature Pilgrimage

Friday - Sunday, May 29, 30, and 31, 2015

For more information go to alleghenyaturepilgrimage.com

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

The NAS Birds and Climate Change report is a comprehensive synthesis of data derived from the Christmas Bird Count and Breeding Bird Atlas melded with climate and climate change models from several sources in Canada and the US. By analyzing this data, scientists at the NAS have developed models to predict how avian populations might be affected by climate change based on the availability of suitable ranges over the next 65 years. The researchers compared historical ranges of 588 species and the climate conditions (temperature and precipitation patterns) that have existed over time in the ranges of each, comparing data from the CBC and BBA against pertinent temporal climate data in respective ranges. Using this data, they developed a model to forecast how bird species might be distributed in the US and Canada based on climate estimates through 2080. Applying the predictive models to the 588 species, an estimated 314 species of birds will suffer a decline in range significant enough to render them threatened or endangered! And, remember, this report addresses only climate change and its effect on bird populations. One still has to take into consideration and address the current threats to birds not to mention possible changes in sea and lake levels and habitat changes created by climate change.



WALK FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

The report does not specifically incorporate habitat or sea level rise in its predictions but does recognize that if the habitat is not suitable for the birds they won't be present and

that any conservation effort must include this information in conjunction with their climate science data to be of value. Wow! Sound complicated!? This is just my very whittled down synopsis of the report. I strongly encourage you to read the report yourself which is only 35 pages in its current format. It is available on line at the National Audubon website. For those of you reading this in print, I will include links to the report at the end of this article or you can request the report from the National Audubon Society by calling 1-800-274-4201. Much of the October 2014 Audubon magazine is devoted to this information as well.

So, what's it all mean to us? It just seems like some scary science unless you can apply the information to make decisions about moving forward with conservation efforts, no? Well, that is exactly the purpose of the report according to the scientists at the NAS. The maps and prioritizations were developed to inform conservation programs and suggest which species are most likely to be impacted by climate change. In the case of Presque Isle Audubon, we are developing a strategic plan in which one major focus will be on saving important bird areas and significant habitat. By utilizing the data made possible by the NAS Birds and Climate Change report we will be more knowledgeable about how to utilize our financial, intellectual and physical resources to make the most significant impact on our IBAs, PIA sanctuaries and the region we serve. The climate prioritizations are designed to be used as a tool to identify areas of high conservation value for the birds of today and the future. As many of you probably know, Presque Isle State Park is one of 86 important bird areas in Pennsylvania and 1 of 8 served by the PIAS. By applying the prioritization maps developed out of this research in conjunction with other information (habitat loss, predation, fragmentation, etc.) we can determine which species that breed in our area are at the highest risk of climate threat or endangerment. This should assist us in determining the best use of our resources towards conservation for these species.

(Cont. on Page 5)

BIRD REPORT

The following birds of note were reported from March 16 to April 18, 2015 from Presque Isle State Park unless noted otherwise.

Red-throated Loon—1; March 29 to April 9; east of Dobbins landing; m.ob. (See below)



Red-necked Grebe—1; March 28; vista 1; m.ob. 1; April 8; Misery Bay; J.M.

Eared Grebe—1; April 6; foot of East Ave.; B.G.

Snow Goose—over 450 total; through April 1; mostly along Lake Erie; m.ob.

Cackling Goose—5; April 2; Presque Isle Hawk Watch over TREC; J.M.

Eurasian Wigeon—1 male; March 31; Edinboro Lake; R.S. (See below)



Surf Scoter—1; April 1; Lake LeBoeuf; J.H. 2; April 8; Presque Isle Bay; J.M.

American Bittern—1; April 9; Niagara Pond; J.M.

Great Egret—up to 7; April 2 to 9; head of Presque Isle Bay & inland ponds; m.ob.

Black-crowned Night-Heron—2; March 28; south pier; fide S.T. (See below)



Turkey Vulture—3687 (record one day high for the county); March 29; Presque Isle Hawk Watch over TREC; J.M., R.S.

Sandhill Crane—total of 11, periodically through the period; Presque Isle Hawk Watch over TREC; R.S., J.M., J.S.

Thayer's Gull—up to 2; March 16 to 18; east of Dobbins landing; J.M.

Iceland Gull—up to 15; through April 9; Presque Isle Bay; J.M.

Lesser Black-backed Gull—total of 20; through the period; Presque Isle Bay; J.M.

Glaucous Gull—total of 20; through the period; Presque Isle Bay; J.M.

Long-eared Owl—2; April 11; pines; R.D.

Short-eared Owl—up to 3; April 10 & 11; Gull Point; R.D., R.S.

Northern Saw-whet Owl—1 or 2; March 25 & April 2; pines; R.D., R.S., resp.

Common Raven—1; March 17; near Edinboro; J.H. 2 (one carrying a large stick); March 18; near Edinboro; D.S.

Common Redpoll—up to 36; April 7 to at least April 12; Northeast; T.L.

Contributors: R.D.-Roger Donn, B.G.-Bob Grubbs, J.H.-Jamie Hill, T.L.-Tim Lyons, J.M.-Jerry McWilliams, R.S.-Robert Scribner, D.S.-Don Snyder, J.S.-Jerry Stanley, R.S.-Russ States, R.S.-Ruth Swaney, S.T.-Shannon Thompson, m.ob.- many observers.

~Jerry McWilliams, Bird Records Chair
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THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

I understand that this is a lot to digest, but I hope that I was able to provide a foundation for my next few articles that will deal much more directly with some of the birds that breed in our area that are climate-threatened or climate-endangered. I think that it will help people realize the potential devastation of climate change to bird populations when we put "a face on it" even one with a beak, which is what I aim to do next month when I will talk about the forecasted fate of the wood thrush in PA.



WOOD THRUSH

Resources:

Website with many helpful links-
<http://climate.audubon.org/>

Full Birds and Climate Change report-
<http://climate.audubon.org/sites/default/files/Audubon-Birds-Climate-Report-v1.2.pdf>

Summary of the Birds and Climate Change report-
<http://climate.audubon.org/article/audubon-report-glance>

~Michele Rundquist Franz
President of Presque Isle Audubon

PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON MAY 2015 PROGRAM

Friday, May 15

Meet at the Pavilion at the Niagara Boat Launch at 7:00PM

Why spend time indoors in May, when there's all those lovely birds to look at? So instead of our regular indoor monthly program, we will be celebrating spring songbird migration at our monthly program on Friday, May 15. Meet at the pavilion at the Niagara Boat Launch on Presque Isle State Park at 7:00 pm. A short meeting will be held to elect next year's officers and then we will take a short field trip into the area to see what birds can be found. Light refreshments will be available. Come dressed for the field and bring an extra layer-just in case!



MOURNING WARBLER

SEVENTH FESTIVAL OF THE BIRDS AT PRESQUE ISLE

MAY 8, 9, 10

Friday, Saturday and Sunday

For more information go to
presqueisleaudubon.org

FEEDING BIRDS ISN'T JUST FUN!

One in every three adults in the United States reportedly feeds the birds in their backyards. This action by so many people results in a three billion dollar bird seed industry. Another eight hundred million dollars are spent on bird feeders and related items such as bird baths, bird houses and shepherd hooks. I am one of those millions of people who derive great enjoyment from watching the wild birds as they visit my feeders. I feel real excitement when I can watch the vivid blue of the jay, the fat orange chest of the robin, the yellow patches of the goldfinch and the red tint of the house finch as they bustle for food. Maybe you find the same exhilaration yourself and maybe you know some others that do, too.



GOLFINCHES AT A FEEDER

I was curious as to why we spend so much time and money pursuing this hobby so I proceeded to ask a few individuals that question. The most common answer was that feeding the birds helped them and it made the bird feeders feel good. Some admitted that it helped the birds get through the winter while others just liked to watch them, especially when they got up close. One was keeping a bird list and drawing them to the feeder helped her get to check off some new ones. One liked the fact that the birds that flew in provided entertainment for her cats.

I went further and searched the literature to see if there were any other reasons and found these.

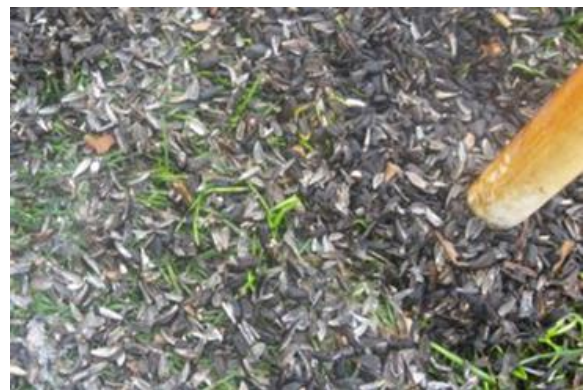
Bird feeders in the back yard result in an enjoyable atmosphere. Many birds will also eat insects so they will help keep bugs down as well. Our contribution of food during harsh and severe winter weather may be the only source of needed energy for the birds. It is an excellent form of relaxation and serves to relieve stress.

As ever-growing human populations use more and more of the land for their own purposes, yards and city parks become important bird habitats. Feeding and watching birds gives families the opportunity to practice conservation right in their own yards. Children can learn and enjoy the wonders of nature right from the kitchen window.

Feeding and watching the birds in my backyard is a lot of fun but this practice involves a lot of responsibility. Through articles and talking to people, I found out how important it is to follow the “intelligent feeding” guidelines as endorsed by WildCare, the Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. “Intelligent feeding” involves actions such as:

Making sure the food is quality. (Food should be nutritious and appropriate for the birds.)

Making sure that the feeders and area around the feeders is clean. Accumulated hulls and spilled seed can make a dirty mess under feeders. Clean up old bird seed and hulls from under bird feeders to prevent the growth of bacteria. (See below)



(Continued on Page 7)

FEEDING BIRDS ISN'T JUST FUN (Cont.)

Disinfect birdfeeders every two weeks and empty and clean birdbaths daily.

Use a no-mess birdseed or sweep under feeders to discourage hungry skunks and other critters. (See Below)



I imagine there are many of us who could admit to neglecting one or more of the practices suggested above. If this is true, let us resolve to do better for our feathered friends. Maybe it will take a little more time but what we derive from birds at our feeder far outweighs the time it would take to provide them with quality feeding conditions and a better quality of life.

~Janet Price, Editor

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We are glad to welcome the new National Audubon members into the Presque Isle Audubon, as well as our renewal members. When you join the National Audubon, you are automatically a member of our local chapter.

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.

Printed on recycled paper.

Thanks for joining, and hope to see you at one of our membership meetings.

Erie: Polish Sharpshooters Club, Dan Hill, William Ferguson, J. Gregory, L. Peterson, Marie Jarema, Jeanette Girosky, Carol Allen, Joseph Leone, Patricia Mitchell, William & Sondra Marshall, Carol Knepper, Elise Gardner
Centerville: Fred & Cindy Bryant
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Girard: MaryEllen Camp, Lori Freeman, Daniel Beck
Meadville: Iva Gatts, Karen Richter, Jessica Miller
North East: David Hickey
Spartansburg: Leslie Baker
Titusville: Dolores Mandziara

Chapter Only members: Virginia Zahner, Don & Sherry O'Day, Candy & Bill Felege, Kristy White and Laura Fullerton

~Ron Intrieri, Membership Chairman
membership@presqueisleaudubon.org

SPRING 2015 BIRD BANDING SCHEDULE

Monday: Erie Bluffs
Tuesday: Fry's Landing
Wednesday: Niagara Boat Launch
Thursday: Erie Bluffs
Friday: Fry's Landing
Saturday: Niagara Boat Launch

Typically we open nets at 7am and band until 2pm. We don't band in the rain or during very windy conditions.

PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON SOCIETY
TOM RIDGE ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
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

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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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**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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Mail this form with your check payable to the National Audubon Society directly to:

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