



TERN OF EVENTS

PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
NOVEMBER 2013 ISSUE 13:09

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

Those who are too smart to engage in politics are punished by being governed by those who are dumber. ~Plato

Probably not exactly how I'd have put it and almost certainly not exactly how Plato himself put it, but it is amazing to me how true this quote rings almost 2500 years later. I've only recently began my involvement in politics starting back in 2004 volunteering by doing phone work for the presidential campaign. Before that I voted and that was the extent of my involvement. I won't say for whose campaign I was working in 2004 but I can say that I still shake my head in disappointment when driving through Ohio. Yes, I still blame them.

Two years ago, while serving as secretary on the executive board of my state professional association, we were in the midst of trying to update our licensure bill which left me up to my elbows in information about the legislative process. One board member who was involved in our national professional organization came back from her first meeting and shared that several people had asked her what is wrong with the Pennsylvania legislature as we'd been fighting for these updates for many years already and had gotten virtually nowhere. Our lobbyist happened to be present at that meeting and informed us that PA is renowned for its very slow legislative movement. As I write this, however, that bill is closer than ever to becoming a reality. What made the difference? Grassroots efforts including letter writing, emailing and personal meetings by individual members of the organization with their

representatives made the difference. The association switched gears from trying to fight the battle themselves with money, lawyers and lobbyists to engaging the membership (Cont., P. 2)



NOVEMBER THINGS TO DO!

- November 2, Saturday** - Brews for Birds, a PIAS event held at the Tom Ridge Center from 6:30-10:00pm (Page 5)
- November 5, Tuesday** - Festival of the Birds Committee meeting 6:00pm at the TREC
- November 12, Tuesday** - PIAS Board meeting, 7:00pm at the TREC
- November 13, Wednesday** - Strategic Planning Committee meeting at 6:00
- November 13, Wednesday** - Tamarack Bartending Event: Bel-Air from 5:00- 8:00
Contact Susan Smith ssbirding@gmail.com
- November 15, Friday** - PIAS Monthly Program: Field Ornithology Experience at Hog Island by Michele Rundquist Franz
Place: Trec, Room 112
Social: 7:00 pm
Program: 7:30 pm (Page 6)

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

Phone: 814-860-4091

Website: www.presqueisleaudubon.org

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

and having them take the fight to their representatives on a more individual and personal level. That is what I'm here to ask of you. Of course, this is not about the bill for my professional licensure, but another house bill that, as an organization devoted to the conservation and protection of natural ecosystems and their inhabitants, we must be concerned about.

House Bill 1576, somewhat deceptively named, the Endangered Species Coordination Act, was introduced by Representative Jeffrey Pyle who represents parts of Armstrong and Indiana Counties. Of note, Curt Sonney, the representative from my district (District 4) is listed as a co-sponsor of the bill. Passage of the bill would severely limit the capacity of state wildlife conservation and natural resource agencies, such as the PA Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission, to list and protect rare plants and animals in Pennsylvania.

Here is a brief outline of the bill and its potential impact on wildlife and wilderness in PA.

1) No Commonwealth Agency can list a species (plant, animal, fish) unless it is already listed on the Federal Endangered Species list. (*This strips the PA Game Commission and the Fish and Boat Commission of their independence and ability to list a Pennsylvania species or trout stream on an endangered or threatened list unless it is on the Federally Endangered list.*)

2) Any recommendations for placing a species on the endangered list must be sent to the Independent Regulatory Review Committee (IRRC) and to the Senate and House of Representatives with jurisdiction over the Commonwealth agency for purposes of this act. (*This creates an extra level of bureaucracy that will significantly slow the process of placing an already threatened or endangered species on a list denying them the protections they need without prior approval of a politically derived commission.*)

3) A centralized database of listed species will be created. (*There is no funding allocated for this within the bill and it will add an even greater burden on the already stretched budgets of conservation agencies.*) (Cont. on P 3)

THE BIG SIT Saturday, October 13

This was the second annual "Big Sit" (a synchronized, global bird census) conducted from The back porch of my Waterford, PA, home overlooking a vista of multi-habitat wetlands, cattail marsh, shrub lands, forest, and fields. During a Big Sit, participants must stay within a 17-foot diameter circle while they census birds during a 24 hour period that runs from midnight to midnight. Our observation circle was centered on the elevated deck of my house. Our team was called the "Swamphens" and this year included: James R. Hill, III, Zoe Tarbell, Jerry McWilliams, Suzanne Winterberger, Roger Donn, Susan Smith, and Janet Price.



We had an excellent birding day. The day started off at 58 degrees F. and rose later in the day to the mid 70s. It sprinkled rain lightly off and on, periodically throughout the day, but we kept birding. It drizzled harder the last hour or two of daylight, but we kept dry under the roof overhang of the deck and kept birding until dark. We used binoculars and spotting scopes to scan the horizons and distant landscapes. To assist our count; we also employed an amplified listening station with an outdoor microphone, amplifier, and indoor speaker. This allowed me to listen for and hear night bird sounds from the comfort of my bed. This sound system helped us pick up a few nocturnally vocalizing bird species, such as Great Horned Owl, Mallard, Wood Duck, Great Blue Heron, and Canada Goose. We ended up seeing and/or hearing 52 species, surpassing last year's

total of 50. The bird activity level was extremely high and we saw thousands of birds, including an immature Bald Eagle that flew past twice, a juvenile Osprey that landed in the tree right in front of us and 300 Canada Geese that came and went all day long.

There was so much bird activity that we all were constantly lifting our binoculars for a better look. Lots of delicious food and drink was enjoyed by all and the birding camaraderie was great!

~Jamie Hill, Big Sit Coordinator

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

4) Species in the centralized database will be removed after two years unless the agencies redesignate them in accordance with this act. *(Another undue burden placed on the conservation agencies.)*

5) Any designation of a Pennsylvania endangered species shall be made only when the species is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range *(This leaves out protection for such birds as the osprey, short-eared owl, peregrine falcon and common tern which are not in danger of extinction or threatened in a significant portion of their range but are threatened in PA).*

6) Any part of a stream may not be designated as a wild trout stream unless the IRRRC approves it as such. *(Stripping the independent Fish and Boat Commission of this responsibility and requiring approval of a politically derived commission).*

7) Field surveys or other activities to determine or evaluate the presence of species or their habitats, are not required unless acceptable data exist indicating the presence of a listed species in the area *(So, if there is a rare flower or endangered animal in the area in question that has yet to be found, too bad! We didn't know about it so it doesn't count!).*

8) Location of threatened and endangered species will be made available to persons who request said information. *(Potentially placing the listed animals at risk for poaching or other black market activities.)*

(Cont. on P. 7)

BIRD SIGHTINGS

The following birds of note were reported from Erie County from September 22, 2013 to October 25, 2013.

Cackling Goose —3; Oct. 6 to 9; Fairview Business Park; M.V.

Red-necked Grebe—total of 6; Oct. 14 to 23; Sunset Point (waterbird count, WC); JM.



RED-NECKED GREBE

American Golden Plover--total of 12; Sept. 22 to Oct. 12; Sunset Point (WC) and Gull Point; R.D., J.M.

Western Sandpiper—1; Oct. 15; Gull Point; D.M.

White-rumped Sandpiper—total of 6; Oct. 13 to 23; Gull Point; R.D.

Stilt Sandpiper—1; Sept. 28 & 29; Gull Point; R.D.

Long-billed Dowitcher—1; Sept. 27 -30; Gull Point; R.D. 1 or 2; Oct. 1 to 6; Gull Point; R.D.

Little Gull—2; Oct. 19; Sunset Point (WC); J.M., R.D., J.F.

Lapland Longspur—1; Oct. 25; Sunset Point (WC); J.M.

Orange-crowned Warbler—1; Oct. 1; SGL #190, Waterford Twp.; M.W.

Clay-colored Sparrow—1; Oct. 12; Asbury Woods; B.G.

Nelson's Sparrow—1; Sept. 23; Gull Point; R.D. 1; Oct. 20 & 21; Leo's landing; S.T., D.M., resp.

Short-eared Owl—1; Oct. 24; Gull Point; R.D.



SHORT-EARED OWL

Rufous Hummingbird—1 adult female; to at least Oct. 24; Edinboro; S.W.. Banded by B.M. on Oct. 24.



RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD

Contributors: R.D.-Roger Donn, J.F.-Jason Fedora, B.G.-Bonnie Ginader, J.M.-Jerry McWilliams, D.M.-Drew Mortensen, B.M.-Bob Mulvihill, S.T.-Shannon Thompson, M.V.-Mark Vass, M.W.-Mike Weible, S.W.-Suzanne Winterberger.

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

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The following people, both renewal and new, are members of the Presque Isle Audubon Society. When you join National Audubon, you are automatically enrolled as a member of our local chapter.

Erie: Rebecca Humphrey, Stephen Raj, P. Vybiral, Fred Gribbin, Margaret Pierce, Susan Smith, Faye Markovich-Fox, Jeanette Girosky, Carol Comstock

Cambridge Sps: Wendy Giliberto, Frances Marks, Gerry Hoffman

Cochranon: Corey Simpson

Conneautville: Tina Bennett

Corry: Nancy Mitchell, Melissa Tomcho

Edinboro: Thomas Parker

Fairview: Christine Kalicky, Kara Onorato

Jamestown: Sherry Krygowski, Elizabeth Ceremuga

Meadville: Jon Alderman

North East: Margaret Walsh

Warren: Sherry Griffiths

Summerville, SC: William Anonie

Renewal Chapter members: Kel & Janet McDonald

~Ron Intrieri, Membership Chairman

membership@presqueisleaudubon.org

BREWS for BIRDS

When: Saturday, November 2, 2013

Where: Tom Ridge Environmental Center

What Time: 6:30-10:00 pm

How Much: \$20 donation

Who Benefits: bird research (banding) at Presque Isle and Erie Bluffs State Parks

- ❖ Music by Salmon Frank
- ❖ Beer from Meadville's Voodoo Brewery
- ❖ Wine from Blue Iris Winery
- ❖ Appetizers, Games, Prizes, Silent Auction

Tickets available: Wild Birds Unlimited in Village West, Erie, at the Audubon PA offices at 301 Chestnut St in Meadville or at the door.

ERIE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE NATURE PHOTO CONTEST

All 152 photos submitted to ENWR for the 14th biannual contest were judged, and the winners presented with awards, on Sunday Oct. 20th at the Refuge office in Guys Mills, PA.

The winners are as follows:

Wildlife Category:

Alex Lenhart, first place

Nancy Hunt, second place

Alex Lenhart, third place

Plant Category:

Tim Lyons, first place

Elizabeth Miller, second place

Mary Mulligan-Haines, third place

Landscape Category:

Ron Oswald, first place

Larry Slomski, second place

Char Oswald, third place

Best Photo on the Refuge:

Ron Oswald

Best Student Prize:

Arnold Johnson the 5th.

Judges for the contest were Mike Saletra, Tim Kirk and Nancy Apple, all from the Meadville Council of the Arts.

Presque Isle Audubon and Friends of ENWR co-sponsored the contest; they thank all who submitted beautiful photographs and invite everyone to participate in 2015. All submitted photos will be on display at the Refuge office in Guys Mills until November 1; call ahead of time for open office hours.

NEEDED!!!!

Chair for Birding Festival Committee

The FOB committee needs a person who has access to a computer to volunteer to chair the Pre-Registration Committee. Duties related to this position include recording registrants' names, addresses, email, phone numbers, the type of registration and related fees. This person will also notify registrants that their fee is accurate and that they have been accepted. Please contact Janet Price at jrplkm@aol.com if interested.

2013 PIAS BANQUET REPORT

A good time was had by all !!!

Following a warm welcome by our president, Michele Franz and a lovely invocation by Carolyn Baxter, Jeanne Kern extended heart felt thanks to her committee, the Woods for displaying the fund raiser at their Bayfront Gallery and to Jan Lutz for her generosity donating the fund raiser and the Sycamore branch drawing for the banquet program cover.

The fund raiser, "Stretching," an original water color by Jan depicting a grizzle bear at Denali National Park in Alaska, was won by Stephen Wood of the Bayfront Gallery.

He stated that he had enjoyed the painting at his gallery for 6 weeks and graciously requested that we draw another name. The second name was Pat Nemenz who had purchased her ticket at the Bayfront Gallery.

The book "The Best of Birds and Blooms" for attendees was won by Jim Baxter, who said he enjoys the magazine.

Mary Birdsong, PIAS Program Chair, introduced our speaker Ephraim Zimmerman, who gave a most informative program about "Clearing Invasive Plant Species at Gull Point."

Upon leaving for the banquet, Chuck Kern discovered that he had either lost or misplaced his only remaining set of car keys. Our good neighbor drove us to the banquet but it was too late and Chuck's nature-oriented centerpieces were left at home.

We hope to see all of you at next year's banquet.

~Jeanne Kern, Banquet Chair



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BUY, BYE CALENDARS

Yorktown Giant Eagle has been added to the locations at which our PIAS calendar will be sold. The others are Asbury Woods Nature Center, Fairview Hallmark and the Nature Shop at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center. Remember, this is the last meeting before the holidays at which to purchase it at \$4.00. This quality, full color all-bird calendar is a useful, inexpensive gift for all.

I must tell you, however, that this is the last year for the PIAS calendar. Thank you for your support.

~Jeanne Kern, Sales & Marketing

PIAS PROGRAM AND MEETING

Michele Rundquist-Franz is an experienced birder and bird photographer who is known for her dynamic compositions and keen eye. She is president of our chapter and is also the chair of the education committee. She serves on the Festival of the Birds and the strategic planning committees. When she's not birding, she works as a speech language pathologist and for Aegis Therapies at Golden Living Center in Erie. She earned her bachelor's degree in English from Mercyhurst College and her master's in Speech Language Pathology from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania.



Michele will be sharing highlights and many pictures from the week she spent in Field Ornithology at Audubon's Hog Island Camp.

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

Yet another unintended but potentially devastating result of this legislation is the threatened loss of \$27 million dollars in federal wildlife restoration grants which represents nearly a third of the PA Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission budgets. The federal grants require that the commissions have independent authority over species conservation programs and how the grant money is utilized. If this bill becomes law, the agencies will no longer be independent authorities and therefore not meet the requirements outlined in the grants.

So what can we do about it? Get involved, engage with our own representatives, tell them how we feel and what we'd like them to do. Call, write, visit! They are, after all, representatives, representatives of their constituency; that means you and me. The following is the letter that I have written and sent to Representative Curt Sonney. Feel free to use it as a model for your own letter.

Representative Curt Sonney
4457 Buffalo Road
Erie, PA 16510
Re: House Bill 1576

Dear Representative Sonney:

As a constituent in your district concerned with the protection and conservation of natural resources and wildlife in our wonderful state, I am writing to ask that you reconsider your co-sponsorship and support of HB 1576, the Endangered Species Coordination Act. The act takes the responsibility for listing endangered species in PA out of the hands of our state

conservation and resource agencies, the very people we employ and trust to protect our wildlife and their habitats. The bill also adds a layer of bureaucracy that will slow the placement of any at risk species in PA on the endangered species list thereby delaying the protection they need and deserve. At the same time, permit applications for mining, oil and gas drilling, and timbering would be approved, without any on-the-ground check for their impacts on the PA endangered species. This is unacceptable.

Finally, as I'm sure you are aware, the U.S. Interior Department has reviewed the bill and has expressed serious concerns that, if the bill becomes law, Pennsylvania may lose its eligibility in two federal wildlife restoration funds that make up nearly a third of the PA Game Commission and Fish & Boat Commission's budgets. Another unacceptable consequence of this proposed legislation.

Thank you for your kind and thoughtful consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,
Michele Rundquist-Franz

I sincerely hope that you join me in trying to strike down this dangerous legislation. The threatened wildlife, pristine habitats and sensitive ecosystems of Pennsylvania deserve and need all the protection we can afford them. While a hand written or typed letter or even a phone call might be more effective there is an email form letter on the National Audubon Society website that you can use by going to this URL: <https://secure3.convio.net/nasaud/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=1519>.

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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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.**

E-mail address _____

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail address _____

Chapter Code C3ZU150Z

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

**National Audubon Society
Chapter Membership Data Center
P.O. Box 422250
Palm Coast, Fl. 32142-2250**

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