



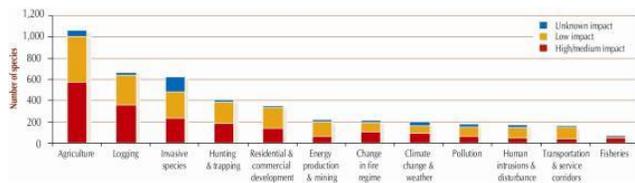
TERN OF EVENTS

PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
NOVEMBER 2014 ISSUE 14:08

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

The Main Threats to Globally Threatened Birds Worldwide ~BirdLife International



Wow, do the birds have anything going for them? Let's face it, the alarming decline in bird populations is multifactorial and the sheer number and diversity of threats makes the problem a daunting one. Many of us probably ask ourselves, with all this going against the birds, what can we possibly do as individuals or even small groups to stop the destruction and give the birds a fighting chance. "Really, what difference could I make?" I am starting to see this as the parallel to what those "on the other side" are doing to rationalize their inability to create a positive change or at least have a less negative impact on the decline in bird populations. I've seen several of the bad actors and even some of the "good guys" point out that *[insert stressor of your choice]* is responsible for only ____% of the bird deaths per year. Basically saying, why should I bother to make my actions less detrimental to birds and other wildlife when those guys over there are causing way more problems than me?!" They then go on to claim, "Even if we stopped or changed doing what we're doing the birds would still be on the decline." Take, for instance, the following excerpt from an article

recently run in the Minneapolis Tribune about the "overly emotional" reaction to the decision not to use "bird friendly" glass in the new massive football stadium.

The addition of one glassy building in Minneapolis won't appreciably alter the mortality rate of the North American bird population...those collisions would barely register on a very long list of ways in which humans routinely interfere with nature.

(Continued on Page 2)

NOVEMBER THINGS TO DO!



- November 11, Tuesday** – Festival of the Birds Committee Meeting at the TREC at 6:00PM
- November 12, Wednesday** - Cocktails and Hawk Tales Happy Hour Event, 5-8 pm at the Bel-Aire Clarion Hotel (Page 7)
- November 18, Tuesday** – PIAS Board Meeting: 7:00 pm in the Board Room at the TREC
- November 21, Friday** – PIAS General Meeting and Program: Room 112 at the TREC
7:00PM – Social
7:30PM - Program: "From Billions to None: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction" (P 7)
- Bird Quiz Answers** (Page 3)
- December 20, Saturday** - Christmas Bird Count

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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

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

This sounds callous, but individual bird deaths from collisions are almost meaningless as long as bird populations remain constant. To say it another way, a bird escaping death by collision is almost sure to die soon from something else, whether storm, poison, starvation or some other danger. "People keeping their cats indoors would have a far greater impact on bird survival than whatever happens with the stadium," said University of Minnesota ornithology Prof. Robert Zink (one of those said "Good Guys", although I'm not certain of the entire context of his statements as I was unable to find anything more about his opinion of the stadium.)



Anyone who accepts such claims should pause and remember the passenger pigeon (whose population was once in the billions) that became extinct with even fewer stressors than the bird populations of today. Because there are so many threats and stressors the fight to protect birds is a difficult one to wage. With that in mind, I'd like to devote each of my next five Perches to talking about different ways you and I can make a difference in protecting our birds and their habitats.

This month, I'd like to talk about some fairly simple steps to improve the chances of survival for birds in our own backyards and neighborhoods. I started out calling this piece "Killer Cats and B-a-a-a-d Balloons", but have
(Continued on Page 3)

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

softened my tone somewhat so as not to offend. That, I think, is one necessary step to educating the masses about the very destructive practice of letting cats roam freely. People are quite ardent about their pets and tend to be turned off when you tell them that dear little Sylvester is a murderous beast. Really, that's not how I see it. I actually see THEM as murde...ill-informed but well intentioned pet owners.

Seriously though, as a cat owner and birder, I take the ongoing and often contentious debate over how to decrease the number of birds (and other small mammals) killed or injured by free-roaming cats to heart. The simplest and most obvious answer is to keep your cat indoors, as I do. Unfortunately, the estimate for numbers of cats that are exclusively kept indoors is less than 35%. I think in a majority of cases it's a combination of ignorance and guilt that prompts people to let their beloved cats roam free. "I can't leave Fluffy inside, she cries to get out and I feel so bad." Did you notice that she's crying to get out when she sees a bird on your deck rail that she'd just love to have for supper? Really, I think Fluffy will get over it! The tufted-titmouse on the other hand, will probably regret your decision. So, as with any of the threats and stressors to birds, education is the key. Let your friends and neighbors know that in the US, free roaming cats kill up to an estimated 1.4 to 3.7 BILLION birds in a year. That's certainly a large number and hard to grasp for many, so to bring it closer to home, in one study a free roaming cat was monitored and found to have killed 1600 small animals including birds over an 18 month period. So if this cat were in your backyard it would be killing an average of ~3 small animals per day, some of which would be birds. Perhaps your neighbor is not a fan of birds, poor thing. Cats themselves are in much more danger when left out of doors. You should let your neighbor know that the life expectancy of an outdoor cat is 2-5 years due to exposure to the elements, cars and wild animals and that cats that live indoors can live

comfortably for often up to 15 years. Not comfortable talking to you neighbor about this. I've ordered some "Cats Indoors" brochures from the ABC that we will have available to you at the next meeting: Slip it under their wiper blade, drop it on their stoop, mail it to them, whatever it takes.

Aside from keeping your cat indoors, other steps have been tried to reduce the feral cat population including Trap, Neuter and Release (TNR) for which you can find numerous articles "for" and "against" on the internet; placing bells on feral and outdoor cats (at least one study showed that cats with bells killed more birds than ones without); declawing (again, mixed results). So, the options are few and, to date, the best option and most successful option is keeping cats indoors.

I had mentioned that I was going to call this article "Killer Cats and B-a-a-a-d Balloons", I got through only half without taking up the whole Terns of Events so next month I'll tackle the issue of B-a-a-a-d Balloons, including one successful campaign by a group of devoted individuals in Ohio, including Kim Kaufman and the folks at Black Swamp Bird Observatory (with the help of social media) to stop a massive balloon release and turn it into an educational and giving opportunity.

~Michele Rundquist Franz, PIAS President

BIRD QUIZ (ANSWERS)

Real Names: Scrub jay, Brown creeper, American coot, Bank swallow, Great knot, Sage thrasher, King rail, Chicken hawk.

Fake Names: Gull-winged delorean, Flat-footed booby, Nose-ringed parakeet, Long-haired catbird, Pot-bellied plover, Double-dipped scaup, Pipe-billed grebe, Swallowed-tail kite

BIRD SIGHTINGS

The following birds of note were reported from Sept. 23 to Oct. 26, 2014 from Presque Isle State Park, Erie Co., Pa. unless noted otherwise.

Snow Goose—1 white; Oct. 19; Waterford; J.H.



SNOW GOOSE

Harlequin Duck—1; Oct. 24; Sunset Point (Waterbird count, WC); J.M. First October record in Erie County.

Red-necked Grebe—total of 8; Oct. 18 to Oct. 26; Sunset Point (WC); J.M.

Parasitic Jaeger—total of 4; Oct. 4 to Oct. 24; Sunset Point (WC); J.M.



PARASITIC JAEGER

Rufous Hummingbird—1 adult female; from about Sept. 28 to at least Oct. 14; Albion; M.W.L.. It was captured and banded by B.M.



RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD

Great Egret—1; Oct. 18 & 19; Fairview Twp.; K.M.

Wilson's Warbler—1; Oct. 19; Siegel Marsh; M.W.. Late Erie County record by about ten days



WILSON'S WARBLER

Pine Siskin—16 (high count); Sept. 28 (record early by at least two weeks); Erie bay side; M.W.. First record for September in Erie County.

(Continued on Page 5)

BIRD SIGHTINGS (Cont.)

Golden Eagle –1 imm; Oct. 15; flying over Rt. 97 near landfill; J.M. First October and second fall record for the county.

Little Gull—2; Oct. 4; Sunset Point (WC); J.M.

Common Raven—1; Oct. 5; SGL #157; M.W. 1; Oct. 11; Union City; D.P.



COMMON RAVEN

American Golden Plover—2; Sept. 23; Gull Point; R.S.

White-rumped Sandpiper—1; Oct. 5; Sunset Point (WC); J.M.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper—1; Sept. 23; Gull Point; R.S.

Contributors: J.H.-James Hill III, M.W.L.-Mike & Wendy Lipinski, K.M.-Karen Mead, J.M.-Jerry McWilliams, B.M.-Bob Mulvihill, D.P.-Donna Peters, R.S.-Ruth Swaney, M.W.-Mike Weible

~Jerry McWilliams, Bird Record Chairperson
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Erie, Pa. 16508
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PIAS MONTHLY PROGRAM FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21

“From Billions to None: The Passenger Pigeon’s Flight to Extinction”

A film produced and written by David Mrazek and Joel Greenberg.

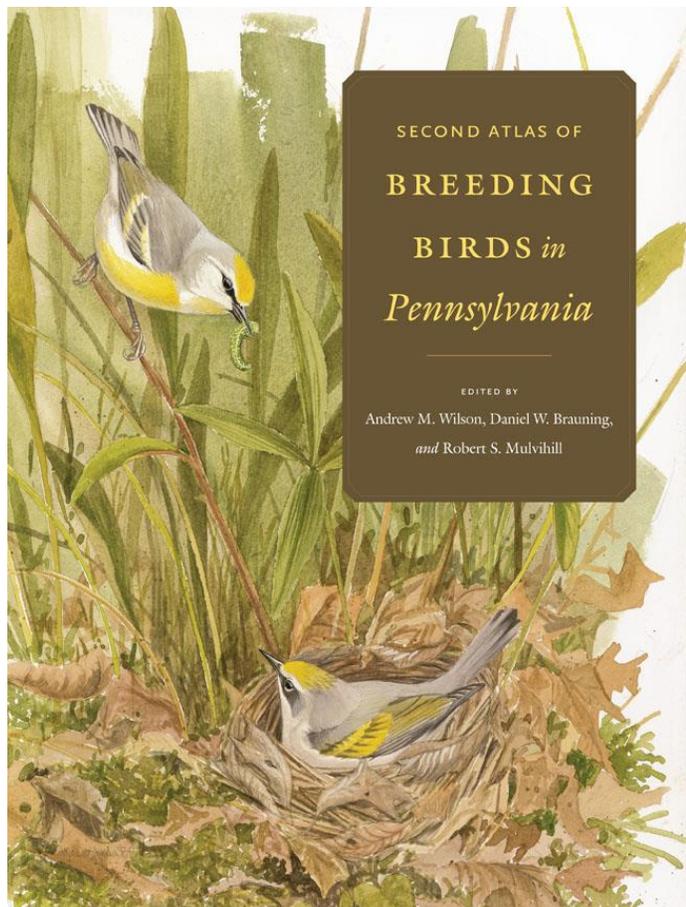


Passenger pigeon

According to the website: “Billions to None reveals the compelling story of the unlikely extinction of the passenger pigeon. For centuries, the sleek long-distance flyer was the most abundant bird in North America and perhaps the world. Then, in a matter of decades, it was hunted to extinction. On September 1, 1914, Martha, the last passenger pigeon in captivity, died in the Cincinnati Zoo, marking the end of the species.

This award-winning film follows naturalist and author Joel Greenberg, *A Feathered River Across the Sky: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction*, (Bloomsbury USA, 2014), scientists, artists and teachers who are drawn to this literal teachable moment, and its striking relevance to conservation challenges today. The “De-extinction” movement, and the plan to bring back the passenger pigeon, is briefly explored. Highlights include breathtaking CGI animation of massive flocks, as well as astonishing aeriels captured by remote control quadcopters equipped with GoPro cameras.”

SPECIAL OFFER



The *Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania* is available at a special discount of 25% off the list price, particularly to Audubon Chapters, until December 15.

This beautiful book presents stunning photographs, detailed maps, and compelling descriptions for nearly 200 nesting bird species. Two thousand dedicated birdwatchers – including many Audubon members – contributed the data which provides a comprehensive understanding of the distribution of each species and shows in detail the changes in distribution since the first Atlas.

This book may be ordered by:

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For each of these methods - reference the "WS14" discount code for 25% off, and reduced shipping.

We are all excited for you to see this book and bring to a close a decade-long chapter in Pennsylvania's bird study. Thanks again for your support and contribution to the project. This, like the first Atlas, will have a valued place among your bird books.

Daniel Brauning, 2nd Breeding Bird Atlas Dir.
570-433-3022

PROJECT FEEDER WATCH 2014-15

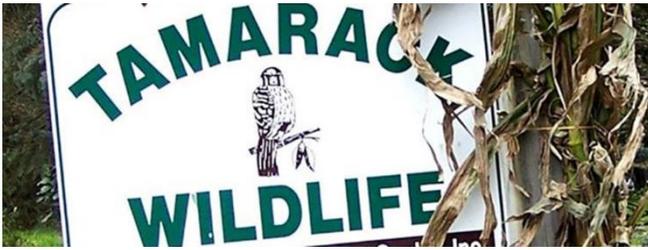
Anyone in the United States and Canada with an interest in birds and a feeder to watch is welcome to join. Help scientists monitor winter bird populations while you learn more about the birds in your neighborhood. To join, contact the FeederWatch office in your country.

UNITED STATES

Cornell Lab of Ornithology
159 Sapsucker Woods Road
Ithaca, NY 14850
1-800-843-2473
feederwatch@cornell.edu
www.feederwatch.org

CANADA

Bird Studies Canada
P.O. Box 160
Port Rowan, ON NOE 1M0
1-888-448-2474
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www.birdscanada.org/pfw.html



**Tamarack Wildlife Rehabilitation & Education
Center, Inc.**
www.tamarackwildlife.org/

What: Cocktails and Hawk Tales Happy Hour
When: Wednesday, Nov. 12, 5pm - 8pm
Where: Bel-Aire Clarion Hotel
2800 West 8th Street
Erie, PA

~ BOGO appetizers ~ drink specials ~ Silent
Auction ~

All proceeds from the auction, tips and
donations will help fund:

- Mouse school for baby owls
- Food for wildlife patients
- Medical supplies
- Veterinary services
- Flight conditioning facility for eagles &
hawks

Guest bartenders:

Pete Sitter
Ray Massing
Michelle Rundquist-Franz
Cynthia Murphy
Larry Slomski

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The PIAS welcomes all of the new members into our chapter. Any member of National Audubon is also a member of our local chapter. Join us at one of our monthly meetings, which are held on the 3rd Friday of each month.

Erie: David Arduini, Judith Alstadt, Leo Flynn, Marilyn Walker, Nishant Koradia, Bill Nagy, John Matz, Patricia Sample, and Karin Mentz

Albion: Carol Kumburis

Cochran: Patricia McDaniel

Girard: Mary Bulter

Lake City: Jenny Hess

McKean: Ed Blenner

Meadville: Elizabeth Simmons, Mary Barnes

North East: Jill Fisher, Jack Airhart

Union City: Dianne Palmer

Warren: Magda Fanaritis, Alan Merkle

Waterford: Ruth Pflueger

Thanks for the following Chapter only members for their renewals:

Donna Nicholas, Jerry McWilliams, Kathryn Eisert, and Mari & Mark Harrison

~Ron Intrieri, Membership Chairman
membership@presqueisleaudubon.org

2014 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Meet at the ranger station between 7:00 AM and 7:30 AM to sign up and get assignments. Bring your lunch and eat with other birders at the ranger station at noon. Dinner and results later.

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 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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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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