



# TERN OF EVENTS

PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER  
OCTOBER 2015 ISSUE 15:08

*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

Here I sit, struggling to come up with a topic for my article this month. Not unlike any other month really, except maybe when I do a series and have a "line up" of topics for my next few Perch articles. Sure, I still have to do the research and the writing, but the topic is already at hand, and as anyone who writes on a regular basis can tell you, coming up with the topic can sometimes be the hardest part. Sometimes (often), I say to myself, "I just want to go birding! Why do I put myself through this every month?" Then I reply to myself (Yes, I am that crazy.), "Blame it on the birds!" It is, after all, their fault that I feel compelled to write and tell people about my experiences in the field; disappointments and triumphs, how amazing birds are as they fly thousands of miles non-stop during migration, the challenges they overcome as they do so, the dangers they face every day just trying to survive, the obstacles we've created for them in the name of progress, as well as the good we've accomplished to try and remove or lessen the impact of some of those obstacles. Yes, birds inspire me to write and get involved in things I might not have under any other circumstance. Darn them!!! Recently I was thinking, "What will happen to the birds if Donald Trump is elected President of the USA?" and so, I entered this into my Google search engine: "Donald Trump +birds". I waded through a few of the "hits" I got and then came up with this: *"Greetings from Donald J. Trump*

*I am both proud and excited to share with you Trump International Golf Links, in The Home of*

*Golf, Scotland. When I saw this piece of land I was overwhelmed by the imposing dunes and rugged Aberdeenshire coastline.*



**DONALD TRUMP ON THE DUNES**

*I knew that this was the perfect site for Trump International, Scotland. I have never seen such an unspoiled and dramatic sea side landscape and the location makes it perfect for our development..."*

**What?!?! In other words, he saw this beautiful and unspoiled piece of land and decided that he just had to SPOIL it! And that he did.**

(Cont. on Page 2)

## OCTOBER THINGS TO DO!

**October 10, Saturday** – Sanctuary Tour of Laura Olson from 9:00 – 11:00AM (Website)

**October 16, Friday** – PIAS General Meeting and Program: Room 112 at the TREC.

7:00PM – Social

7:30PM - Program: **Neighborhood** Nestwatch: Getting Up Close and Scientific with Pittsburgh's Birds by Bob Mulvihill (Page 5)

**October Anytime:** Volunteer to Help Lisa Danko, our Education Chair (Page 5))

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

**Website:** [www.presqueisleaudubon.org](http://www.presqueisleaudubon.org)

## THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

This was a great disappointment for a small group of local residents, several of whom had been living on adjacent properties for 30 years or more. Trump and his organization offered multiple times to purchase their homes (offering less than market value) and each time they refused, a claim that Trump refutes. Trump denied that his organization pushed for compulsory purchase orders from the local government [**compulsory purchase order (CPO)** is a legal function in the United Kingdom and Ireland that allows certain bodies which need to obtain land or property to do so without the consent of the owner] but the locals had letters from Trump International that demonstrated otherwise.

In the end, the residents stayed but only after Trump International bulldozed large piles of dirt around several of the properties obstructing their view of the sea and landscape (and golf course) but primarily to hide the homes from view of the golf course.



The land that Trump ravaged to create his golf course is/was comprised of ever changing natural dunes, and it had been designated a site of special scientific interest (SSSI) by the Scottish Natural Heritage organization.

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## THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

*Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are those areas of land and water (to the seaward limits of local authority areas) that Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) considers to best represent our natural heritage - its diversity of plants, animals and habitats, rocks and landforms, or a combination of such natural features.*

Additionally, that particular stretch of land was home to some of Scotland's rarest birds including seven species of endangered birds such as Skylarks and breeding waders, particularly Lapwings and Redshank.



**REDSHANK**

Initially, the local government of Aberdeen rejected Trump's proposal to purchase and develop the land, but in an unprecedented turn, the government of Scotland stepped in and basically forced the local government to accept the proposal; and so the destruction began.

*"The vast shifting dunes at Foveran Links, Menie, were once one of the few remaining examples of true wilderness in the UK. This dynamic landscape, a wonder of the world, has, however, been stabilised and sterilised, bulldozed and flattened" - a quote from Sophie*

Gerard, award winning photographer whose series, "The Dunes", an exploration of landscape and community, chronicles the destruction of the Aberdeen landscape by the avarice of Trump and a complicit Scottish government.



**DUNES**

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds actually issued a press release when Mr. Trump was given the go-ahead saying that Scotland's green policy had been sold down the river by this decision. Not a single expert was standing up and saying that it made sense to tamper with this very unique sand dunes system, despite Trump's frequent remarks that he had the full support of environmentalists and that no one was opposed to his plan except the few local residents who lived nearby.

I cannot possibly explain in one article the events of the entire timeline so I strongly encourage you to watch the documentary "you've been trumped". It is available online to view at no cost. Perhaps in the future PIAS can show it at TREC. While these events took place several years ago (the film was completed in 2012) there really is no more important time than now to demonstrate what lengths Donald Trump will go to get what he wants.

(Cont. on Page 5)

## BIRD REPORT

The following birds of note were reported from August 18 to Sept. 30, 2015 from Presque Isle State Park.

**Red-throated Loon—1; Sept. 20; Sunset Point (Waterbird count); J.M. Record early in the county by about two weeks. (Below)**



**Western Sandpiper—1; Sept. 13 to 19; Gull Point; C.E., R.D., resp. (Below)**



**Red Knot—up to 3; August 30 & 31; Gull Point; R.D.**

**American Golden Plover—1; Aug. 26; Gull Point; R.D.**

**1; Sept. 5-8; Gull Point; R.D.**

**2; Sept. 19; Gull Point; R.D.**

**4; Sept. 28; Gull Point; D.S.**

**Lesser Black-backed Gull—1; Sept. 14; Gull Point; R.S. (Below)**



**Willet—1; August 22 & 23; Gull Point; R.D. 1; August 31; Gull Point; R.D.**

**Stilt Sandpiper—1; Sept. 13 to 19; Gull Point; C.E., R.D., resp. (Below)**



**Contributors:** R.D.-Roger Donn, C.E.-Carl Engstrom, J.M.- Jerry McWilliams, R.S.-Robert Scribner, D.S.-Don Snyder

~Jerry McWilliams, Bird Records Chairman,  
Presque Isle Audubon Society  
814-240-8594

## PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

So, what's currently happening at Trump's "best golf course in the world"? Well, in what I find to be a giant ironic twist, Mr. Trump is fighting a proposed wind farm slated to be built off the coast from his golf course, saying (**get this!!**) it will spoil the view! Additionally, he has threatened to forgo upgrades to the golf course development if the windfarm is built. To add to the irony, Trump has said of the proposed wind project: *'They are very bad for tourism and the environment and certainly for the birds. Thousands of birds are being killed by these monsters.'*

Hmmm. Maybe I've been unfair to The Donald? Naaah! So, I return to the question that started my research for this article. "What will happen to the birds if Donald Trump is elected President?" Clearly, it seems as if he cares about what happens to birds, but only if it serves his megalomaniacal purposes.

~Michele Rundquist Franz, PIAS President

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY



Lisa Danko, our Education Chair, is looking to create a call list of volunteers to help her throughout the year for children's educational events. The need is for a smiling face and your time will be minimal. This is just a call list! Contact Lisa at 898-0284 or email her at [lsdanko@hotmail.com](mailto:lsdanko@hotmail.com)

## OCTOBER PIAS PROGRAM

Friday, October 16

7:30 at the TREC

Neighborhood Nestwatch: Getting Up Close and Scientific with Pittsburgh's Birds

By Bob Mulvihill



In 2013, in his role as Ornithologist at the National Aviary, Mulvihill brought the Smithsonian Institution's Neighborhood Nestwatch project to Pittsburgh. The project studies the impacts of urbanization on eight common songbird species: Northern Cardinal, American Robin, Song Sparrow, Black-capped or Carolina Chickadee, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, Carolina Wren, and House Wren.



**NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD**

The project has grown to include 150 backyards within 50 miles of downtown Pittsburgh, each of which is visited once every summer by ornithologists from the National Aviary. Bob will talk about this and other bird-related research and conservation projects of the National Aviary. ([www.aviary.org](http://www.aviary.org)).

## COUNTING BIRDS MATTERS

By Janet Price, Editor

A citizen science project that is important to me is Project Feeder Watch operated by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada. It's important to me because I love birds and am concerned about their existence in the future. This interest has prompted me to write this article. In it I want to explain what Project Feeder Watch is and how to participate in it. I hope that, if you're interested in birds at all, you'll read on and consider being an active participant.

### What is Feeder Watch?

Project FeederWatch is a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. FeederWatchers periodically count the birds they see at their feeders from November through early April and send their counts to Project FeederWatch. FeederWatch data help scientists track broadscale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance.

Anyone interested in birds can participate. FeederWatch is conducted by people of all skill levels and backgrounds, including children, families, individuals, classrooms, retired persons, youth groups, nature centers, and bird clubs. Participants watch their feeders as much or as little as they want over two consecutive days as often as every week (**less often is fine**). They count birds that appear in their count site because of something that they provided (plantings, food, or water).

New participants are sent a Research Kit with complete instructions for participating, as well as a bird identification poster and more. You provide the feeder(s) and seed. Then each fall participants receive our 16-page, year-end report, *Winter Bird Highlights*. Participants also receive the Cornell Lab newsletter.

There is a \$18 annual participation fee for U.S. residents (\$15 for Cornell Lab members). Canadians can participate by joining Bird Studies Canada for CAN\$35. The participation fee covers materials, staff support, web design, data analysis, and the year-end report (*Winter Bird Highlights*). Project FeederWatch is supported almost entirely by participation fees.

### How to Count...

**1. Sign up** – If you have not yet signed up, join today at [feederwatch.org](http://feederwatch.org). During the season, it takes a few weeks from when you sign up for your kit to arrive with your ID number and for your ID number to be activated in Your Data.

**2. Select your count site** – Choose a portion of your yard that is easy to monitor, typically an area with feeders that is visible from one vantage point.



PREPARED FOR PROJECT FEEDER WATCH

**3. Choose your count days** – Select two consecutive days as often as once a week (**less often is fine**). Leave at least five days when you do not count between each of your two-day counts.

**4. How to count** – Watch your feeders as much or a little as you want over your selected count days. Record the maximum number of each species visible at any one time during your two-day count.

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## COUNTING BIRDS MATTERS (Cont.)

*Keep one tally across both days. Do not add your counts together!*

**5. What to count** – Please count all of the individuals of each species in view at any one time.



**Name the species. How many of each?**

**But do not count** birds that simply fly over the count site, such as Canada Geese or Sandhill Cranes....



**OR THIS SNOWY OWL.**

**Do not count** birds seen on non-count days.

**6. Report your counts** – Submit counts through the Your Data section of our website.

OK. If you've read this far, I applaud you but go on for a little longer.....

Some individuals who have never participated in Project Feeder Watch say that it's too long a commitment and they don't know if they'll be able to or remember to count every week. Well, you don't have to count every week – **less often is fine**. When I'm away from home for a few days or many days I don't worry about tallying the birds. I resume a counting schedule when I return. No Problem!

FeederWatch participants often stop counting their birds because they believe that their counts are not important. Typically they are seeing the same birds every week, or they are seeing very few or no birds. While some FeederWatchers see amazing birds, a wide variety of species, or large numbers of birds, most FeederWatchers see low numbers of what might be characterized as "predictable" birds. *These counts are the heart of FeederWatch.* Focusing on the extreme cases would provide a biased view of bird populations, and ignoring the common birds could be a major mistake. While we are all thrilled by unusual sightings and high counts, it's the everyday observations of common birds that are so important for monitoring bird populations.

In conclusion, if you count birds in your area, you'll be adding your piece of the puzzle to the big picture. You can make a difference.

I would be glad to discuss this undertaking if anyone is interested in doing so. Contact me at [jrplkm@aol.com](mailto:jrplkm@aol.com) or call me at 825-8394.

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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](mailto: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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**National Audubon Society  
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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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