



TERN OF EVENTS

PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
APRIL/MAY 2017 ISSUE 17:03

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

Although fairly mild, this winter's been a bust for me as far as birds. I do have an overwintering brown creeper but seeing him just makes me anxious and worried, so small, and how many bugs could really be around to feed on? I did finally get my bird "fix" when we went to Florida this past February. Even February in Florida is quiet by Florida standards for birds. I did get an opportunity to go to a few places I've been wanting to bird down there; one was Merritt Island and, although I'd loved to have been there a month later, it did not disappoint. We saw a nice flock of roseate spoonbills on the way in, but of course, did not stop to take any photos thinking there would be more elsewhere on the park where we didn't have to pull over on the road and potentially obstruct traffic. Nope. Very cool to see nonetheless, even if fleeting. We drove the Black Point Wildlife Drive and got nice views of a few waders including this tri-colored heron which were numerous along the drive.



What bird is more numerous than house sparrows in Erie? Right! White ibis in Florida.

This lucky bird caught a crab for breakfast and with that beak, how could he miss?



Unfortunately, we only had a few hours to spend at Merritt so we definitely will go back, especially since my sister now lives only 45 minutes from there! (Cont. on Page 2)

APRIL/MAY THINGS TO DO!

- April 11, Tuesday** - Festival of the Birds Committee Meeting at the TREC at 6:00p
- April 13, Thursday** - Mourning on Earth Day by John Rossi at the TREC at 7:00p (Page 6)
- April 21, Friday** - PIAS General Meeting 7:00PM - Program followed by Social. Jennifer Miller, Winner of 2015 Duck Stamp contest (Page 5)
- April 30, Sunday** - Raptor Experience in Room 112 from 10:00a - 2:00p (Page 7)
- May 5,6,7** - Friday, Saturday, Sunday - Festival of the Birds at Presque Isle (Page 7)
- May 16, Tuesday** - PIA Executive Board meeting in the TREC board room at 6:00p.
- May 19, Friday** - PIAS General Meeting 7:00PM - Program followed by Social. PIA Members - Photos and Experiences From their trip to Ecuador (Page 5)

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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.)

While near Orlando we decided to take my mom and niece to Gatorland. This may sound like an unlikely birding spot, but once you get past all the touristy exhibits there is a really cool boardwalk that is basically surrounded by rookeries. We were able to watch, up close and personal, great egrets working on nests while others rolled eggs in nests just a few feet off the boardwalk. The males were displaying as well. While high overhead this wood stork landed in a snag over our heads and spread its wings to dry off.



When we left the east coast on our way to the Gulf coast we stopped at Circle B Bar in Lakeland, FL, another birding and wildlife hot spot that's been on my "to go" list. Have you seen the pics/video on Facebook and other social media of the giant alligator crossing the path recently? That was at Circle B Bar. Although we did not cross paths with that guy we did see some cool birds including this red-shouldered hawk. They're right up there with white ibis as far as relative numbers there in FL but still cool. My hubby was quite patient as the sun kept coming in and out as I tried to get a semi-decent shot of this bird. Interestingly, there were a few photographers there and they had little interest in the hawk and, in fact, were looking in the total opposite direction. I put my bins up to check out what they were ogling and, lo and behold, we were about 40 feet away from a bald eagle nest which was about another 40 feet up in a tree but well-obscured by branches and leaves. As I was watching the red-shouldered hawk I heard a familiar raucous call that I'm sure anyone who's been to Florida a few times can identify, the boisterous limpkin. (Cont. on Page 3)

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

This one wasn't wading as I usually see them, apple snail in bill, but walking along a lower branch on the same snag as the red-shouldered hawk was perched in.



After visiting Circle B Bar we continued our trip southwest to our destination on the gulf coast. This is where we spend most of our time when in FL. We visited some of our favorite spots including Sawgrass Lake Park and Boyd Hill Nature Preserve in St. Petersburg. Although it was midday before we arrived at Boyd Hill, we did see the roseate spoonbill that the volunteer at the front desk told us had been hanging around. This is probably the pinkest roseate spoonbill I've ever seen.



Of course, none of our trips to Florida would be complete without a visit (or three) to Fort DeSoto Park in Tierra Verde, FL which is only 20 minutes from where we usually stay. This year was the quietest I've seen Fort DeSoto, but I had a blast watching the butter butts (yellow-rumped warblers) at the fountain that was built there just a couple of years ago by the local Audubon chapter. It was so much fun my husband and I have plans to build a similar one in our yard this summer. Here are a few shots

of the yellow-rumped warblers and other visitors to the fountain.



I've even seen ibis and egrets at this fountain, but not during this visit. It is a source of fresh water in an area surrounded by sea. Here a yellow-rumped warbler sticks almost its whole head in to enjoy the fresh water.



So, now we're back in Erie and pleased that some of the early local migrants have arrived, like red-winged blackbirds and turkey vultures. I've also recently heard that phoebes have hit Crawford and southern Erie County. These will tide me over until May when things really pick up. I hope that these photos tide you over as well until we can all get out, including down to Presque Isle, to get our birding fill. I'll end my story with a cool group of Nanday parakeets which are originally from South America and now have a significant feral population in southern Florida and elsewhere in the U.S.



~Michele Rundquist Franz, President of PIAS

BIRD REPORT

The following birds of note were reported from Presque Isle S.P., unless noted otherwise.

Snow Goose 1; Jan. 29; Fairview Business Park; D.M.

Surf Scoter 1; Feb. 19 & 20; Vista 1 and Beach 11; R.S., M.F.

White-winged Scoter up to 2; Jan. 28; foot of East Ave.; B.G., T.N.

Great Blue Heron 131 (high count); Jan. 29; Niagara Pond; S.T.

Sandhill Crane 13; Feb. 24; TREC; R.D. and 8 on Feb. 25, Long pond: P.B.Z. 18; March 3; Girard Twp.; T.W.

Thayer's Gull 1; Jan. 30; Niagara boat launch; J.M. (See below)



Iceland Gull 2; Jan. 27; Lake View Landfill; B.C., J.M. up to 5; Jan. 29 to Feb. 11; Presque Isle Bay; S.T., M.F. (See below)



Lesser Black-backed Gull total of 10; Jan. 24 to Feb. 17; Presque Isle Bay; J.M.

Slaty-backed Gull 1; Jan. 27 to Feb. 26; Lake View Landfill and off vista 2; J.M. First county record. Probably second state record. (See below)



Glaucous Gull total of 8; Jan. 24 to Feb. 19; Lake View Landfill and Presque Isle; J.M.
Snowy Owl 1; Jan. 21 & 27; Gull Point; R.D.
Common Raven 1; Jan. 28 to Feb. 2; Lake View Landfill; B.C.
Common Grackle—1; Jan. 25 to present; Erie; J.P.
Baltimore Oriole 1; Jan. 30 to at least Feb. 1; Fairview; K.M.. Second county winter record.
Common Redpoll 1; Jan. 29; Pine Tree Trail; M.B. (See below)



Contributors: M.B.-Mary Birdsong, B.C.-Ben Coulter, R.D.-Roger Donn, M.F.-Mike Fialkovich, B.G.-Bob Grubbs, K.M.-Karen Mead, J.M.-Jerry McWilliams, D.M.-Drew Mortensen, T.N.-Ted Nichols, J.P.-Janet Price, R.S.-Russ States, S.T.-Shannon Thompson, T.W.-Tom Wasilewski, P.B.Z.-Pam & Bob Zelenak

~Jerry McWilliams, Bird Record Chair
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APRIL PIAS MONTHLY PROGRAM
By Jennifer Miller
April 21, 2017 in Room 112 at the TREC

“Art Meets Conservation”

Explore how visual art and conservation can benefit one another in this talk by Federal Duck Stamp artist Jennifer Miller. Jennifer will describe her experiences with the Federal Duck Stamp and share her passion for reaching out with her work to inspire the public to care about the natural world. Jennifer will be giving a talk and visual presentation, as well as having a display and examples of her work. Learn how a love of nature can blossom into a creative passion!

About Jennifer

Jennifer Miller's love of the outdoors from an early age developed into a life-long passion for the natural world. Though having received no formal education, she has always been driven by studying birds and recreating them in her artworks. By studying wildlife and then combining it with her vivid imagination, Jennifer is also a renowned fantasy artist. She has created many fantasy paintings and illustrations for publication, including several novel covers.



JENNIFER PAINTING SWANS

She also enjoys sculpture, as well as crafting hand-made jewelry with precious metals and gems. Along with her artistic pursuits, Jennifer is active in conservation and paints to raise awareness. Most notably, she won the prestigious Federal Duck Stamp competition

for the 2015-2016 duck stamp. Jennifer lives in a rural setting in Western New York, along with her husband Brian, three parrots, a rescue pigeon, and a delightful flock of chickens.



JENNIFER WITH MILDRED

MAY PIAS MONTHLY PROGRAM
May 19, 2017 in Room 112 at the TREC
"Ecuador's High Altitude Birding and Galapagos Sea Level Experience"



Join us as we share our South American birding experience. With over 350+ species of birds including many Hummingbirds seen as we traversed from the Andes to the Pacific Ocean. Lisa and Steve Danko, Cheryll Hodges, Diane Kallor, Ruth Swaney, Joao and Delores Tavares did the Tropical Birding tour of the Andes (foothills and high altitude) from October 20 to 29, 2017. They stayed in Quito until October 31st when they departed for a three day cruise of the Galapagos. Steve and Lisa Danko will share their photos and experiences during the program.

MOURNING ON EARTH DAY
By John Rossi
April 13 at 7:00PM at the TREC



Join us for this free presentation on Thursday, April 13 at 7:00 PM at the TREC (Tom Ridge Environmental Center) in Room 112. John Rossi is an Associate Professor of History at the Behrend College, Pennsylvania State University and Conservation Chair of the Lake Erie Group of the Sierra Club Pennsylvania Chapter. He will give a talk entitled “Mourning on Earth Day”. Today America’s air, water, birds, fish, othr wildlife, and public lands face unprecedented challenges. Find out what is threatened and why, along with what you can do about it.

This event is Co-sponsored by the Lake Erie Group of the Sierra Club and Presque Isle Audubon Society.

**59TH ANNUAL ALLEGANY NATURE
PILGRIMAGE
June 2,3,4, 2017**

This event is an annual outdoor learning experience. It combines fun with a variety of nature oriented activities. This traditional weekend of natural history welcomes both the seasoned naturalist and the inquisitive beginner. Don’t you deserve a weekend in the woods? For more information go to: www.alleganynaturepilgrimage.com and read <https://www.buffalorising.com/2017/03/allegany-nature-pilgrimage-now-in-its-59th-year/>

NOMINEES FOR PIA OFFICES - 2017-2018

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BIRDING ETHICS



I’ve been birding at Presque Isle a lot recently along with many others and the topic of birding ethics came to mind as I was eagerly trying to spot and identify birds. Some of the points of birding ethics listed by the American Birding Association as well as the Audubon Society were forefront in these lists. The first ethical behavior that should guide every birder and photographer is this: **avoid causing unnecessary disturbance or stress to birds.**

Here a few more specific guides to follow.

- *Don’t get so close to a bird or its nest that you cause it to fly or display stressed behavior.
- *Avoid sharing the locations of various birds especially those nesting. Think of the impact that a parade of visitors can cause those birds. For example, repeatedly walking to a nest can leave both a foot trail and scent trail for predators.
- *Do not move or remove anything around the nest, as it may be providing both essential camouflage and protection from the elements.

There are more “rules” than these few but I believe if birders and photographers at least follow the above, a significant difference will be made in our treatment of those birds we love to watch.

~Janet Price, Editor

RAPTOR EXPERIENCE
Saturday, April 30, at the TREC

Visit the Tom Ridge Environmental Center on Sunday, April 30, 2017 between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm for a raptor experience. Live birds from Tamarack Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center will be present.



SAW WHET OWL

Educational table displays and children's activities will be presented by DCNR and the Audubon Society. There is no fee or registration for this event and all ages are welcome

You are welcome to visit Jerry McWilliams in the southern most parking lot of the Tom Ridge Environmental Center as he and some of his assistants spot and identify the many kinds of raptors on their migratory route to summer habitats. A kestrel is one of the smaller raptors that he might see passing by. (See below)



FESTIVAL OF THE BIRDS AT PRESQUE ISLE
May 5,6,7, 2017

The registration table will be open from 6:00a on Saturday morning for those arriving Sat.

There is still time to register for this year's festival but you'd better hurry since there are limited slots available. We limit our registration numbers so that those attending won't be "lost in the crowd".

The reception on Friday evening is open to all volunteers, registrants, field trip and workshop leaders, committee members and sponsors so don't miss out on renewing old friendships and making new ones.



We feature some new field trip and workshop leaders that will provide our regular attendees with different approaches and topics.

There will be a new pontoon ride offered each day along with the regular lagoon rides. This new tour goes into the bay and to Gull Point, weather permitting. How exciting!

Our keynote speaker is Scott Weidenasul. Look in your welcome bag for his book, *Return to Wild America*.

Go to our website for more information and to register: www.presqueisleaudubon.org

The Presque Isle Audubon Society's newsletter, the *Tern of Events*, is published every other month: February, April, June, August, October and December. 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.

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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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Membership includes membership in BOTH the National Audubon Society and the local Presque Isle Audubon Society. National members receive *Audubon Magazine* (4 issues per year) and the monthly newsletter *Tern on Events*. Please include your email address to receive the on line version of our chapter's newsletter.

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