

# Pennsylvania Audubon Council

2080 LINGLESTOWN RD, STE 201, HARRISBURG, PA 17110

# DRUMMER

Friday, May 14, 2021



## PENNSYLVANIA AUDUBON COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

The Pennsylvania Audubon Council met at 7:00 PM on Wednesday April 21, 2021. The program featured a panel that included:

- Peg Rooney, President of the Audubon Colorado Council
- Jacqueline Augustine, President of the Council of Ohio Audubon Chapters
- Marcy Boyle, past president of the Audubon Council of New York State
- Bill Heck, former National Audubon Board member for the Mississippi Flyway North
- Sally Jeffords, National Audubon Board member for the Atlantic Flyway North

Both Sally Jeffords and Bill Heck have had an association with the New York and Ohio Councils. Jim Bonner, Executive Director of the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania, served as the moderator for the panel discussion.

We learned that each Council was an independently organized not for profit entity with the governing boards comprised of chapter representatives from each of their respective states. Each of the Councils existed for decades dating back to the 1970s and 1980s. The Ohio Council had an extended hiatus and is now reestablished. All of the Councils have regular meetings of the boards on a quarterly or even monthly basis and convene general Council meetings or gatherings at least twice each year. The budgets of the Councils are relatively small with major expenses for participation in Council meetings or gatherings borne by the chapters. The Colorado chapters help to support a lobbyist in Denver.

Each Council reported a strong working relationship with the Regional Audubon Offices in which their Councils operate. The Audubon Council in New York cited that the relationship is defined in a memorandum of understanding between the Council and Audubon NY. The Colorado and New York Councils have advocacy as the major focus of their work with extensive chapter involvement in the prioritization of conservation issues. The Ohio Council indicated an emphasis on chapter strengthening activities as part of their work. The Ohio and New York Councils cite participation and support from the majority of chapters in their states. Colorado reported that all ten chapters in Colorado participate in their Council.

Each panelist encouraged the formative efforts of the Pennsylvania Audubon Council. Jim Bonner noted that the perspective and information that was provided in the discussion will be helpful as the chapters in Pennsylvania move ahead to create a strong voice for chapters through the Council.

## **SPOTTED LANTERNFLIES** **Responding to the Challenges Posed by Control**

**Lehigh Valley Audubon Society** has taken the lead on an issue impacting birds and other wildlife in areas infested with Spotted Lanternflies. In 2020, Pennsylvania Wildlife Rehabilitators (PAWR) saw a 4-fold increase in wildlife bycatch on glue tape wrapped around trees intended to trap Spotted Lanternflies (SLFs). PAWR asked Audubon for help to stop the practice. There are several effective wildlife-friendly techniques to reduce SLFs now available, but use of the indiscriminate glue trap has proliferated and is growing exponentially with the spread of the insect. While birds represent the majority of the wildlife victims with over 30 species represented. Bats, squirrels and even hawks and owls are also trapped.



We'd like this Campaign to serve as a model for how our Council Chapters can collaborate to make a difference. This new threat began in Pennsylvania and needs our collective promotion to contain it. In order to facilitate chapter participation, LVAS has been working with Northeast Pennsylvania Audubon Society and Wyncote Audubon Society to prepare materials for communication. We have published a webpage <https://www.lvaudubon.org/bird-bycatch> with an overview of the project and we're adding links to additional sites and resources.

We need the support of the Audubon Chapters in Pennsylvania to alert their members to this issue and alternatives that are safer for birds, bats, and beneficial insects. To follow up, the Council will issue a "model" Action Alert that outlines how Chapters can help. **Karen Campbell, Lehigh Valley Audubon Society**, has formed a Spotted Lanternfly Working Group with support from **Stephanie Uhranowsky, Northeast Pennsylvania Audubon Society**. They welcome support from representatives of our sister chapters to join this working group. Interested individuals should contact Karen Campbell at [campbellkm@ptd.net](mailto:campbellkm@ptd.net).

### **FEDERAL BIRD SAFE BUILDING ACT**

The Federal Bird Safe Building Act of 2021 has been reintroduced in both the Senate (S. 791) and the House of Representatives. The goal of the act is to ensure that any construction projects of Federal buildings incorporate mitigation measures the minimize bird mortality due to collisions with glass and the buildings themselves. This act will apply to new construction as well as major renovations. The act addresses window treatments and lighting among other features important to protecting birds. It is technically an example of "revenue neutral" legislation as its provisions relate to already funded construction and renovation projects.

There is optimism that this legislation may finally be adopted in this current legislative session. It may become part of the infrastructure package that Congress will hopefully consider and pass in some form. The Council is working with our chapters and Audubon to secure the cosponsorship of our two state senators and our Congressional delegation. We will keep you informed on specific measures we can take to garner the support of those who represent our interests in Washington, D.C.

## **UTILITY SCALE SOLAR Time to Prepare Our Chapter Network for the “Next Era”**

**Laura Jackson, Juniata Valley Audubon Society, and Judy Stepenaskie, Wyncote Audubon Society,** provided an update on their work with the Renewable Energy Working Group (REWG). They shared information on the major initiatives for the construction of utility scale solar projects and cited the Brookhaven Project, a large NextEraEnergy installation that is moving forward in Adams County. The REWG has worked to develop a “mission statement” and have diligently researched information to include in a forthcoming resource guide for chapters. There are challenges ahead for municipalities as more projects are proposed and constructed. Audubon chapters will need to be in position to ensure these projects follow bird friendly guidelines. They are also working closely with Val Peckham and Kelly McGinley at the Mid-Atlantic Audubon office as well as NAS.

Governor Wolf has announced a plan to purchase 50% of all electricity used by PA government buildings from solar energy arrays to be built on farms across six counties including Columbia, Juniata, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and York, by 2023. The Hershey Company is also planning to build two large solar farms. The Renewable Energy Working Group to recommend best practices for siting and designing these facilities that are bird and pollinator friendly. The group also recommends brown fields, industrial areas, parking lots, buildings and other sites rather than farmland. The Renewable Energy Working Group welcomes more chapter representatives to the group. Please contact Laura Jackson for more information:  
[jacksonlaura73@gmail.com](mailto:jacksonlaura73@gmail.com)

### **ESTABLISHING CONSERVATION PRIORITIES FOR PENNSYLVANIA: The Importance of the Chapter Voice!**

A process and procedure to identify and prioritize conservation issues of concern were among the many ideas shared by the Council leaders on the panel of the April 21<sup>st</sup> Council Meeting. The Audubon chapters in the state are integrally involved with this process. In New York, there is yearlong involvement of chapters that includes opportunities for input and at the chapter board level. This culminates in the adoption of policy and position statements for each of the conservation issues by the Council. This process is repeated on an annual basis in New York.

The Pennsylvania Audubon Council has scheduled a meeting for **7:00 PM on Wednesday, June 16, 2021** to begin this process for our Pennsylvania Audubon chapters. Interested representatives from chapter conservation committees, advocacy committees and other chapter board or committee members are invited to register and participate. The goal for the meeting is to use a brainstorming process to generate those conservation and advocacy issues of greatest concern. We will focus on the identification of Federal issues and then issues of importance in the Pennsylvania. This will be a ZOOM Meeting that will include breakout and general discussion. This is the opportunity to hear from our many interested and informed chapter leaders! This will be the first of a series of sessions that we hope will serve as a model to focus the advocacy work of our chapters and Council. More detailed information on registration and programing details will be forthcoming.

**PENNSYLVANIA AUDUBON COUNCIL**  
**Organizational Update**

The Pennsylvania Audubon Council is preparing to launch its social media presence. We are building a website and will alert chapters when it is launched. We anticipate the website will open with some completed sections while other sections are under construction. The website will include general information, archived material from Council meetings, links to conservation issues, and other advocacy resources. We will keep you posted!