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About the paper: *Valley Views* is printed on a Neenah paper made from 50% sugar cane (bagasse) and 50% recycled paper.



# Valley Views

Fall 2022

September, October, November

Newsletter of the Greater Wyoming Valley Audubon Society

## From the President by Bonnie Yuscavage How Much Is Enough?

Those of us that have multiple hobbies don't often get those moments when they cross, but that happened to me when an article at *Smithsonian* magazine's website caught my eye. Ornithologist and author Tim Birkhead provided the publication with commentary based on his most recent book "Birds and Us: A 12,000-Year History from Cave Art to Conservation." History and birds? Now this was an article that was right up my alley!

Since I have not read Birkhead's book, I will not review it or recommend it here (Although I suspect it will show up on my Christmas list). Instead, I do recommend that you read his very interesting article entitled "How Bird Collecting Evolved Into Bird-watching." Birkhead takes the reader on a journey through several millennia as man's penchant for learning about birds created cultures of hunting and collection of specimens. It was not until the 20th century when better optics were invented and naturalists advocated for observation that the practice became obsolete.

We are fortunate that specimen and plume hunting, the catalyst for much of the bird preservation movement, have disappeared, replaced instead by the birding forays of backyard birdwatchers, school children, and serious, and even competitive, birders. This should have been a help to the decline of all species, yet we find bird populations in peril. Birkhead's most poignant statement is this: "The irony of all this is that as the number of people interested in birds has boomed, the number of birds worldwide has steadily declined, in large part due to habitat loss and overexploitation."

Think about that for a moment. So many of us extolling the benefits of birds in our lives. So much time watching birds. So much money spent on birding supplies and optics. And yet, many North American resident birds and international migrant birds have declined by more than 50%. Grassland birds have lost habitat due to changes in agricultural methods and housing development.

Continued on page 6

# Greater Wyoming Valley Audubon Society

Bird Seed Fundraiser

Proceeds benefit the GWVVAS and Nature Programs

Wild Birds Unlimited Nature Shop is happy to support the Greater Wyoming Valley Audubon Society and offer to you the best bird seed you can buy! WBU Seed Blends are designed to attract the broadest assortment of birds to your bird feeders. There is **no filler** in our seed blends to waste your money. At Wild Birds Unlimited YOU get what the birds want to eat and the freshest seed you can buy. All orders are due by September 30, 2022. Make checks available to GWVVAS.

Please mail or drop off your order form with check at:

Wild Birds Unlimited

50 1/2 Dallas Shopping Center Dallas, PA 18612

Seed order pickup: Friday, October 14 and Saturday October 15 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Sunday, October 16 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

With a purchase or \$20 of more receive FREE FLYING START COMBO

This includes Flying Start Pin Feeder along with 3 stackable (Naturally Nuts, Nutty for Nuts & No Mess). A \$14.97 value!



## Off the Science Desk

My summer evenings are often spent on my back porch with a refreshment in hand and eyes pointed upward. The crepuscular sky with the cooling air might have the last flight of swifts, or a pair of doves turning in for the night in a dense white pine. When I was a kid in rural New Jersey, bats were part of this scene. Lots of bats. We would toss pebbles in the air to watch bats quickly turn to inspect them.

Now the night sky is almost entirely devoid of bats. In 2006, the fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (called Pd to save time), was first detected in the states. This fungus causes White nose syndrome, which is associated with bats that rouse from hibernation in winter. Unfortunately, the result is that bats will increase their metabolism and, since there is not a food source, they starve to death. This fungus is so pervasive that it has completely obliterated Northern Long-eared Bat populations where these two species interact and other bat species have been reduced by 90%.

In a recent issue of *Conservation Biology* (DOI: 10.1111/cobi.13803), a team led by Pennsylvania Game Commission biologist Greg Turner reports on the effect of passively cooling caves and mines that bats use as hibernacula. They simply (not necessarily easily or cheaply) altered the entrances to caves to promote the inflow of cooler air and the outflow of warmer air and the result was an average decrease of 4°F. Except for the Tricolored Bat, populations increased in the cooled hibernacula. This is a very encouraging result and suggests that humans can help bats at the population level. Hopefully, we will have a future with children marveling at the ability of a bat to chase a tossed pebble.

Jeffrey A. Stratford, PhD



## GWVVAS ONLINE

Visit our website [www.gwvas.org](http://www.gwvas.org) for information on birding hot spots and sightings, a calendar of events, environmental position statements, and a list of officers, directors and committee chairs.

Follow our group's Facebook page @gwvas.org to keep up on current information and bird news.

Have a great shot of a backyard bird or a stunning sunset? We're on Instagram @gwvas.audubon and we'd love to share your photos.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Seed Type	Bag Size	GWVVAS Price	Number to Pickup	Number on Storage*	Total Quantity	Total Amount
Deluxe LM Seed Blend – Black oil, safflower, striped sunflower, millet (Great for classic style feeders)	20 lb	\$25.99				
Choice Blend – Black oil, sunflower chips, peanuts, striped sunflower and safflower (Best for tube feeders)	20 lb	\$30.99				
No-Mess-No Millet Blend – Sunflower chips, chopped tree nuts, peanuts (No shells = 100% edible)	20 lb	\$36.99				
Safflower (NOT a favorite of squirrels)	20 lb	\$27.99				
Black Oil Sunflower	20 lb	\$24.99				
Nyjer/Thistle (loved by all Finches)	5 lb	\$12.99				
Add PA Sales Tax 6%						
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>						

Migrants rapidly are losing habitat for food and shelter in countries where polices about conservation have been lax. Pesticides reduce food sources needed to fill the bellies of nestlings. Climate change, exacerbated by human activity, presents multiple challenges to those species that we hold dear.

There are those who might argue that they are just birds and not people and that a decrease in numbers doesn't really affect them. In reality, these loses, like the sentinel canary in the coal mine, are reflections on the state of the world we all live in. We do not live in a bubble. We share the same air, water, and land...good and bad.

We, therefore, need to be the examples and step up for bird conservation. We cannot continue to enjoy birds without being their stewards. If we are feeding birds, we need to be planting a few pollinator plants in our yards no matter how small. If we enjoy reading about birds, we need to be talking about their threats, especially to our legislators. If we are birding, we all need to be adding our observations to eBird to help scientists learn about their behavior and numbers. It's free and easy. If you truly love something, you put the effort in to protect and nurture it. Those of us that love nature the most need to be setting the bar higher for conservation.

### Thank You!

Our past president Bob Wasilewski has worn many hats in the chapter. Most recently, he has been the chapter's newsletter editor and managed our website. Bob has decided to retire, and we thank him for his many years of service in these three positions. His dedication has been outstanding, and he has been an important ally to the environment within the chapter and in his partnerships with other organizations. Thank you, Bob!

Our new newsletter editor is Elisabeth Ford, who comes with a background in journalism and a commitment to positive change in environmental policy. Welcome, Liz! It's great to have you as part of the team. The website is being managed by Bonnie Yuscavage.

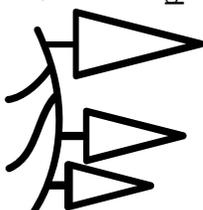
### The Pollinator's Patch



So many gardeners, intrigued by planting native plants in their yards, believe they are limited to spring planting. Gardeners have enough to do in the spring! Don't hesitate to plant in late summer into autumn. Fall days are cooler and require less water to get plants roots establish. Those planted in fall are often blooming in the warmer months. New to planting natives? Purple Coneflowers, Black-Eyed Susans, Red Columbinas, Wild Geraniums (Cranesbill), Butterfly Weeds, and any of the pretty Monardas (bee balm) make great additions to the native pollinator patch.

### 2022 Nature Camp Scholarships Recap

The GWVAS is happy to announce that our chapter awarded \$1007 in full or partial scholarships for children to attend nature camp programs this summer. We provided a half scholarship to a 14-year-old girl to attend the Women Empowered by Science Camp program at Wilkes University, ten children attended camps at Frances Slocum State Park, and eight children attended camps at Bear Creek Camp. Congratulations to each of our 2022 Nature Camp Scholarship recipients and their families!



Thanks to generous donations during our annual Appeal drives, gifts designated specifically for nature camp scholarship and our Chickadee Challenge fundraiser, GWVAS awarded these scholarships to deserving local youngsters to explore nature, enrich their appreciation for the natural world, and learn while having fun. Investing in our children's educational experiences is an honor, and we are grateful to be able to do so through our Dr. Sid Curran Memorial Nature Camp Scholarship program. Thank you, GWVAS members, for your continued financial support of our chapter so that we can provide these incredibly worthwhile scholarships to area youth again this summer!

Deb Petroski, GWVAS Treasurer

### Welcome New Members!

The GWVAS family invites all new members to join us at our membership meetings, field trips, and special events. All of these events are designed to be fun and educational, especially for those just starting to learn about birds.

- |                  |                        |                  |
|------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Linda Kellow     | Tracy Stockage         | Sue Gannis       |
| Joan A. McGregor | Bernadine Betkoski     | Walter Yeager    |
| Eberhard Faber   | Shelby Gardner         | Frank Lukash     |
| Nancy Simpson    | Kathleen McHugh        | Eileen Schneider |
| John Thalenfeld  | Daniel Mandrillo       | Patricia Cole    |
| Claire P. Morris | Dillon Hinkley         | Joanne R. Shafer |
| C. Hirschmann    | Sally Jones            | Helen Schaefer   |
| Gail Reimard     | Aggie Elisabeth Walton |                  |

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Deadline for submissions is the 1st of February, May, August, and November, and can be mailed or e-mailed to elisabethford84@yahoo.com.

Editor: Elisabeth Ford

**When does my membership expire?**  
Here's where to look:  
On your Valley Views mailing label in upper right. Example: Exp 10/18 (mo/yr)

You can renew as a sustaining member and never have to worry about expiration dates. Visit [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org) and click on membership.

## Field Trips

To register and for directions, please contact  
John Dickinson at 570-239-4369.



- September 10:** Forty-Fort Recreation Fields and River Levee, near the Wyoming Valley Airport. This area will give us a good chance to see migrating songbirds and waterfowl. Over 200 species have been reported from this area. We will meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot adjacent to the levee.
- October 15:** Plymouth Flats. The flat is probably the most productive birding area in Luzerne County. We will look for migrating waterfowl and songbirds. The flats often attract rare birds, so we will keep our eyes out for surprises. We will meet at the intersection of Flat Rd. and Route 11 at 8:30 a.m.
- November 12:** Harveys Lake. The lake is usually the best place to see ducks in fall migration and with some luck, we might spot one of the resident Bald Eagles. We will meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission boat launch parking lot.
- December 3:** Frances Slocum State Park. The park is always a good place to observe winter birds, including any vagrants such as Redpolls or Pine Siskins. We will meet in the parking lot by the environmental center at 8:30 a.m.

## Monthly Meetings

The monthly programs of the GWVAS will be held virtually at 7 p.m. through the winter using ZOOM. They can be easily viewed on any device with internet access by clicking the link on our website [www.gwvas.org](http://www.gwvas.org) under EVENTS. They will be posted approximately a week before the meeting date. If you need assistance, please reach out for help.

**September 19:** Hawk Mountain. We will have an overview of the world's first refuge for birds of prey, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, including its conservation history, raptor identification, and migration information.

**October 17:** Monarch butterflies. Mike and Laura Jackson will share their experience and commitment to helping the Monarch butterflies, and teach us more about what we can do in our own pollinator gardens.

**November 21:** Enjoy Pennsylvania's State Parks and Forests. Marci Mowery, President of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation, will take us on a virtual tour through the state's landscape, which offer something for everyone, from birdwatching to paddling, picnicking to quiet contemplation.

## GWVAS Sweatshirt Sale

Be GWVAS proud and warm in your GWVAS sweatshirt! Don't go fall birding without one! Gildan® - Heavy Blend™ hooded sweatshirt with your choice of zipper front or pullover style. The GWVAS owl will appear on the back and "Good Birding" on the front in white.

Color choices: grey, light blue, navy

*(As the supply chain still has some challenges, please provide a second and third choice in the event that the supplier has difficulties)*

Orders are due on September 22, 2022

and may be picked up at the front of the Back Mountain Shopping Center (near Burger King in Shavertown)

On October 8th from 2-4



Cost \$35 for Pullover and \$40 for front zip (Please add \$2 for Adult 2XL and \$3 for Adult 3XL)

Send checks payable to GWVAS, with order blank to:

GWVAS, PO Box 535, Dallas, PA 18612

\*\*\*\*\*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone or email \_\_\_\_\_

Pullover or Front zip? \_\_\_\_\_ Quantity \_\_\_\_\_ Size \_\_\_\_\_ Color 1st choice \_\_\_\_\_

Color 2nd choice \_\_\_\_\_

Color 3rd choice \_\_\_\_\_

## Audubon Membership Application

### Not For Renewal

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and the Greater Wyoming Valley Audubon Society. My membership will include quarterly issues of *Valley Views* and bimonthly issues of *AUDUBON* magazine.

NEW MEMBER SPECIAL -- ONE YEAR INTRODUCTORY OFFER -- \$20

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks payable to : **National Audubon Society**

Amount Enclosed: \$  Chapter Code: U13

Send application to: Greater Wyoming Valley Audubon Society

P.O. Box 535, Dallas, PA 18612