



# Seven Mountains AUDUBON

## 2023-24 Newsletter

The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow, throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education, and on-the-ground conservation.

To support this mission, Seven Mountains Audubon seeks to provide experiences, develop camaraderie, and share information to promote understanding and appreciation of wild birds and the ecosystems they inhabit.



Black-and-white Warbler photo by Brent Bacon

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to Seven Mountains Audubon. We began our new year of First Saturday Bird Walks on 8/5/2023 at Wayne and Nancy Stahl's farm in Mazeppa, enjoying the sight of hummingbirds and butterflies in a luxurious pollinator garden that the Stahls created by converting an old swimming pool. Wayne shared step-by-step photos documenting the conversion process. After touring the garden, we walked along a nearby field that contained a variety of beautiful wildflowers, and participants were transported by hayride to a drop-off site to explore the edges of a more distant field, near a wood line.

Our schedule of fall bird walks appears on **page 3**. Because 9/2/23 falls on Labor Day weekend, September's "First Saturday" bird walk will be on 9/9/23 at Montour Preserve. In October, everyone is encouraged to participate in a special Pennsylvania Society of Ornithology "Spotlight on Union County," a 4-day birding event, described on **page 4** and online. Later this fall, be on the lookout for announcements regarding this year's Christmas Bird Count. Last year we were fortunate to have Judy Peeler become our official compiler for the Count, and we were also fortunate to have Dr. Deepak Iyer from Bucknell assisting her in that endeavor.

Our monthly third-Wednesday educational programs will begin September 20 at our **new location: the East Buffalo Township Municipal Building, 589 Fairground Road, Lewisburg**. Details begin on **page 5**.

Over the past year, Seven Mountains members brought table displays and bird-related activities to R. B. Winter State Park's Winterfest and Summerfest and to the Lewisburg Art Festival, the Earth Day event "Joy to the Earth" in Selinsgrove, the fall and spring Lewisburg River Walks, a seniors' program at the Miller Center in Lewisburg, and a Scout River Ecology Day organized by the Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association, as well as conducting fall and spring trash collection days along a portion of Furnace Road. We encourage membership participation in these and other Chapter activities as they are announced. We welcome your suggestions for Bird Walk locations and educational meeting topics, and we also request and encourage members to become First Saturday Bird Walk leaders. To make suggestions or to volunteer, email me a

We are grateful for the active participation in the Seven Mountains Audubon Facebook Group with daily additions of many birding photos. Finally, we encourage you to bookmark, explore and study the many image- and information-rich birding websites and smartphone apps including:

- American Birding Association – [www.aba.org](http://www.aba.org)
- Audubon – [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)
- Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's All About Birds – [www.allaboutbirds.org](http://www.allaboutbirds.org); eBird – [ebird.org](http://ebird.org); and Merlin – [merlin.allaboutbirds.org](http://merlin.allaboutbirds.org)
- Larkwire – [www.larkwire.com/birdsong/the-basics](http://www.larkwire.com/birdsong/the-basics)
- LycoBirds – [www.lycobirds.com](http://www.lycobirds.com)
- YouTube – [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) - Search for any bird or birding related question; also the excellent series *Let's Go Birding Virtually Live* with Sparky Stensaas; and [Pennsylvania Society of Ornithology's](http://PennsylvaniaSocietyofOrnithology.org) PSO Educational Series



Bald Eagle photo by Bill Tyler

Good Birding!

Bill Tyler, President, Seven Mountains Audubon

## SEVEN MOUNTAINS AUDUBON: WHOOOO'S A MEMBER?

Membership in Seven Mountains Audubon is automatically included in National Audubon Society membership, based on member zip code, at no extra charge. Members receive renewal notices directly from National Audubon. A portion of your membership dollars will help support SMA's local activities, such as those described in this newsletter. To join or renew your membership, navigate to <https://act.audubon.org/a/join>



If you are on the Seven Mountains Audubon member list from National Audubon, you will receive monthly email reminders of events, and we will attempt to keep you updated on last minute cancellations, etc. **For members and non-members, the best way to keep abreast of events—all of which are open to everyone—and updates is to check our website or Facebook page:**

<https://sevenmountainsaudubon.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/7mountains/>

Nonmembers may join our email list by contacting Bonnie Ingram, Membership Chair, .



## MONTHLY BIRD WALKS FOR FALL 2023

**NOTE: THIS SCHEDULE FEATURES MANY DEPARTURES FROM OUR FIRST-SATURDAY TRADITION.**

Check our [website](#), [Facebook page](#), and the [Daily Item](#) for details, updates, and weather cancellations.

Northern Cardinal with Fall Leaves  
Photo by Bill Tyler

DATE	LEADER	LOCATION	TIME
Sat. Sept. 9	Bill Tyler	Montour Preserve	8 a.m.
Fri. Oct. 13- Mon. Oct. 16	Union County Spotlight	Various – see p. 4	
Sat. Nov. 4	Bill Malone	Turtle Creek Park Union Co.	8 a.m.
Sat. Dec. 16	TBA	Christmas Bird Count	TBA

## PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY SPOTLIGHTS UNION COUNTY!

In April 2023, Joe Gyekis of the Pennsylvania Society of Ornithology reached out to Seven Mountains Audubon with an idea: "As part of a long-term effort by Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology to feature birding activities in all 64 counties of the state, we're going through some of the least frequently eBirded counties and helping to organize/advertise birding walks on different weekends. Generally these events run from Friday to Monday, involving both organized group outings . . . and independent birding across the county." He noted, "These events can be especially strong when we have a nice alignment with a local bird club or organization that helps to organize walks and tell the local community about the event."

Seven Mountains Audubon is pleased to help facilitate the first Union County Spotlight by hosting or co-hosting the outings listed below. All are welcome to join these walks and/or to participate by birding on their own during the four-day Spotlight period (12:15 a.m. Friday, Oct. 13– 11:45 p.m. Monday, Oct. 16) and contributing to the Spotlight eBird trip report <https://ebird.org/tripreport/151387>. For more information and updates, see the PSO Facebook Event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/742522911065828>

### **Spruce Run Road in Bald Eagle State Forest**

Friday October 13, 2023, 8:00 to about 10:00, depending on birdiness

Trip Leader: Brent Bacon

Drive and stop to get out and bird stop-by-stop in the fall foliage, looking for fall migrant forest birds. The starting point would be on Spruce Run Road, as it enters the state forest at the small parking area at the first point here:

<https://goo.gl/maps/dvGLYSqraX3HcPkUA>

You could save these coordinates in Google Maps: 41.032199, -77.009983 or use [this link](#) to navigate to the spot.

No bathroom facilities available.

### **R. B. Winter Bird Walk**

Saturday October 14, 2023, 8:00 to about 10:00 am

Trip Co-Leaders: Kay Cramer and Joe Gyekis

Meet at the larger parking lot by the Nature Center at R.B. Winter State Park at 8 am.

<https://goo.gl/maps/oNsPf7guqMbd1D6>

We will walk in the main park area and along Rapid Run Nature Trail, which is at most a fairly flat 1.3 mile loop, but if the birds keep us busy, we might not go that

far. <https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/pennsylvania/rapid-run-nature-trail>

We hope to find fall migrants, forest specialties, and generally enjoy the peaceful environs.

Bathroom facilities are available at the parking area.

### **Dale's Ridge Trail**

Sunday October 15, 2023, 9:00 am to about 11:00 am, depending on birdiness

Trip Co-Leaders: Deepak Iyer and Joe Gyekis

Meet at the main parking lot at Dale's Ridge beside the bridge and walk along Buffalo Creek and up the side of the bluff, looking for fall migrants as we always do in October! Walking speed will be slow, birder speed, but one part is fairly steep, it's OK if people just join for the easy part along the creek, and if birding is busy, we might not even scale the slope at all. However, if we're ambitious and conditions encourage it, the hawkwatching can be good from the powerline cut as the day warms.

<https://linnconservancy.org/trails/dales-ridge-trail/>

# SEVEN MOUNTAINS AUDUBON MEETING & PROGRAM SCHEDULE 2023-24

**NEW LOCATION:**  
East Buffalo Township Municipal Building  
589 Fairground Road  
Lewisburg, PA

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays at 7:00 PM, September – May

Programs are free and open to the public, and everyone is welcome. We will continue to stream in-person presentations on Facebook Live, and two presenters will join us via Zoom. Check our website or Facebook for updates or changes:

<https://sevenmountainsaudubon.org/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/7mountains/>

## **Sept. 20 - Birds, Beasts, and Beauty: The Bountiful Islands of Papua New Guinea**

Travel to the South Pacific through Linette Mansberger's photographic presentation of her 2022 trip to Papua New Guinea. The program will include a tiny bit of geography, a little bite of history, and a bounteous amount of beauty from this island country located just below the equator.

Photo provided by Linette Mansberger: Brehm's Tiger-Parrot



## **Oct. 18 - Are You a Birder, Bird Photographer, Or Both?**

Dr. Patrick Dorion will give a talk about bird photography, sharing some of his own photos. He will mention the difference between taking photos for documentation and artistic pictures. For those interested he will give a brief presentation of the equipment needed as well as preferred settings to use.

## **Nov. 15 - Black Bears in Pennsylvania**

Warden Sheldon Helm of the PA Game Commission will speak to us about black bears, their biology, and their interactions with the human population. He will discuss what individuals can do to prevent unwanted interactions with black bears, especially as related to the feeding of wild birds.

## **Dec. 20 - Annual Holiday "Show and Tell"**

Bring your photos, slide shows, memorabilia, and bird-related stories; a little bird suggests that we celebrate Seven Mountains Audubon's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday! Contact Bill Tyler to discuss your technical needs.

## **Jan. 17 - Ecology and Conservation of the Eastern Hellbender Salamander**

Dr. Peter Petokas, a research scientist working in association with The Wetland Trust, will describe hellbender behavior and life history, status of populations throughout the Susquehanna River watershed, description of the hellbender reintroduction project in the upper Susquehanna River watershed, the use of new technologies in field ecological and behavioral research, and the pathway to the designation of the hellbender as the Pennsylvania state amphibian. Learn more at <https://www.thewetlandtrust.org/hellbender-recovery/>.

## **Feb. 21 - Palmyra Atoll: A Paradise in the Pacific (Zoom)**

Take a virtual journey to Palmyra with Matt Miller, Director of Science Communications for The Nature

Conservancy and editor of *Cool Green Science*, who visited the atoll as part of a fish research project in 2021. Palmyra Atoll is a cluster of islands 1,000 miles south of Hawaii, but unlike many Pacific islands, it historically has never had human inhabitants. The site of a small naval base during WWII, today it is jointly managed by The Nature Conservancy and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Palmyra is an atoll with immense seabird nesting colonies, healthy coral reefs, 12 land crab species including the gigantic coconut crab, sea turtles, sharks, manta rays and more. This diversity was threatened by the presence of invasive rats, eradicated in 2015. Matt will share stories of conservation and hope from Palmyra, today one of the most pristine island ecosystems anywhere in the world.

### **March 20 – A Trip to the Galapagos**

Jill Largent will share photos and highlights of her visit to the Galapagos Islands in Summer, 2023. More details to come.

### **April 17 - Iconic Canadian Wilderness Rivers: Alsek, Tatshenshini, Wind, and Nahanni**

Bucknell Professor of Biology Emeritus Warren “Abe” Abrahamson writes, “I’m looking forward to sharing images and memories of these incredible wilderness journeys. The Alsek & Tat run from the Yukon into British Columbia and finally into Alaska. The Wind runs north to the Arctic Ocean in Yukon and Northwest Territories, and the Nahanni flows in the Northwest Territories.”

### **May 15 – Presence in Nature (Zoom)**

Take off your blinders, open your eyes, and tune in your ears.

Whether you're meandering through a forest, canoeing a river, or traipsing across a desert ridgeline, every step you take is being carefully observed by countless creatures both above and below. With that in mind, there's no denying that our very presence in nature affects the lives of all plants and creatures. How exactly does our behavior impact them, though? The short answer: it depends. When we slow down and prioritize the experience at hand over any specific outcome, we not only reduce disturbance, but often enjoy an altogether richer experience in the natural world. In this virtual event, naturalist and photographer **Ian Adrian** will explore the connection between beautiful birding experiences, prettier pictures, and a kinder, less-damaging way of experiencing the natural world.



## **Feed Your Birds with Native Plants!**

by Kay Cramer

If you are going by the Lewisburg Community Gardens on River Road and North Front Street, keep an eye out for the Bird-Friendly Blooms native plant garden that faces River Road. Seven Mountains is a charter member of Bird-Friendly Blooms (BFB), a joint project started in 2020 with the Lycoming and Appalachian chapters through the PA Audubon Society.

BFB was created to encourage local homeowners to use native plants, supporting local birds and pollinators that are in steep decline here and worldwide. Research by Douglas Tallamy, noted entomologist and birder, shows the dependence of birds, especially during nesting season, on insects as food. Native plants support the insects vital for successful nesting and survival of native birds. Some plants also directly support birds, such as hummingbirds that use nectar and goldfinches that eat seeds.

(continued)



BFB garden in August, 2023 - photo by Deb Slade

Without a serious commitment to bringing back beautiful native plants to less welcoming non-native gardens, the declines in bird numbers are expected to continue.

The Lewisburg Community Garden (LCG) has supported our Bird-Friendly Blooms demonstration garden on their grounds. Bonnie and Galen Ingram, Sabrina Kirby and Kay and John Cramer put in the first plantings of flowers and shrubs in fall 2021. These were supplemented by many more native flowers and shrubs



Bonnie Ingram prepares to sell native plants near the garden on a rainy Saturday in May, 2022.

during our spring plantings in 2022 and '23. Deb Slade lovingly sustained the young plants with consistent watering. For the LCG, this was a symbiotic relationship, with flowers attracting pollinators and birds that help pollinate and enliven the Garden habitat.

But where to get real native plants? Seven Mountains has partnered with Steve Kidd of Perennials Gardens Nursery. With decades of experience in raising and selling native plants, Steve's expertise is an invaluable resource for this project. Besides his beautiful nursery in New Bloomfield, Steve also sells plants at the Farmers' Market in Lewisburg.

There is now a movement to replace non-productive lawns with vibrant native gardens. If you are doing this, or want to, think about listing your property with Dr. Tallamy's initiative, the Homegrown National Park ([homegrown national park.org](http://homegrownnationalpark.org)). Even if you add only a few native plants, your Bird-Friendly Blooms garden will bring solace to birds and pollinators, as well as to their human admirers. Join us!



## Seven Mountains Audubon Board

The Seven Mountains Board of Directors welcomes its newest member, Jessie Sauder, and we look forward to her input and participation. The Board meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every other month at 7 p.m., currently on Zoom, to plan Chapter activities such as outings, informational programs, outreach events such as those mentioned in the President's Message, and collaborations with other organizations. Meetings for the 2023-24 fiscal year are scheduled for September 13<sup>th</sup>, November 8<sup>th</sup>, January 10<sup>th</sup>, March 13<sup>th</sup>, May 8<sup>th</sup>, and July 10<sup>th</sup>. All members are welcome to attend: just request a Zoom link from Kay Cramer, Secretary

Board members serve 2-year terms (renewable) and are typically elected at the annual meeting (coinciding with our monthly educational program) in May. The current Board, with roles and contact information, is listed below. We welcome your constructive input. The Vice-President position is currently vacant; please consider this opportunity to become more involved with our Chapter. To learn about the role and duties of VP and/or to bring forward your ideas and suggestions, please contact Board President Bill Tyler

## Board Members 2023-24

Bill Tyler, President  
Kay Cramer, Secretary  
John Peeler, Treasurer  
Bonnie Ingram, Membership  
Brent Bacon, Social Media  
Michael McGuire, Webmaster  
Sabrina Kirby, Newsletter  
Linda Elton, At Large  
Bill Malone, At Large  
Bob Reyda, At Large  
Jessie Sauder, At Large



Board Member & Friend at Snow Fest



### SPECIAL THANKS:

*For leading field trips in 2022-23 (as weather permitted):* Brent Bacon, Kay Cramer, Bill Malone, Michael McGuire, Lauri Shaffer, Bill Tyler

*For presenting educational programs in 2022-23:* Mike Anderson, Greg Grove, Michael Kuriga, Linette Mansberger, Karol Pasquinelli, Lauri Shaffer, Joe Southerton

*For participation in Furnace Road cleanups:* Linda and David Elton, Bill Malone, John & Kay Cramer, Sabrina Kirby, John Peeler, Allen & Joanne Schweinsberg, Bill Tyler

### ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER....

This annual newsletter is distributed by email only. Savings on postage and duplication help to support our programs. We hope that family members or friends will print a newsletter for those who prefer a paper copy. Current and past newsletters are also available online:

<https://sevenmountainsaudubon.org/newsletters/>.



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