



The Mountain Chat

Newsletter of the Mountaineer Chapter of the National Audubon Society • Volume 32, No. 2 • Fall 2007

13th Annual Bird Seed Sale

Mountaineer Audubon will once again offer for sale seed to area residents. This is our major fundraiser for the year to support programs, education efforts and conservation projects. Last year monies raised went towards sponsoring campers to Oglebay's Junior Nature Camp outside Wheeling (see www.juniornaturecamp.org), helping to sponsor in Elkins the dramatic presentation "A Sense of Wonder" about Rachel Carson's life, and contributing funds to the National Aviary's Dr. Steven Latta's avian research in Latin America (see www.aviary.org - Conservation & Field Research – People).

Some seed prices have gone up this year, but Southern States in Sabraton has worked hard to give us the best prices they can get. Be sure to utilize them for purchases of feeders or additional seed you might need during the feeding season. They also have a nice selection of perennials and plants for the fruit and vegetable garden in the spring.

Ordering Details

Last date to order – Wednesday, October 17

Pickup date – Sunday, November 18

Pickup locations: Southern States in Sabraton (10am – 3pm), Adrian's Market (Old Rt 40), Hopwood, PA (1pm-3pm), Meadowbrook Mall (parking lot beside Outback Steakhouse), Clarksburg, WV (1pm-3pm)

Complete the order form on page 3, fill out a check to Mountaineer Audubon and send to: Susan Olcott, 305 Paul Davis Rd, Independence, WV 26374

Be sure to indicate where you will pick up your order. If you have any questions, call Susan Olcott at 288-2999.

Dragonfly and Butterfly walk at Reedsville

The third annual Reedsville rail trail dragonfly and butterfly walk held on July 14 was an interesting and exciting time for viewing these summer insects. Susan Olcott, WV Odonata Atlas project leader, explained the difference between dragonflies and damselflies as well as demonstrating netting techniques. Gary Felton stepped in to identify butterflies Susan wasn't familiar with.

Mountaineer Audubon Website in Development

Want to check out where a field trip is meeting? Or what the topic at the next monthly program meeting is? But you lost your newsletter or postcard? Help is finally on the way. Mountaineer Audubon is developing a website that will list programs, field trips, information on the bird seed sale, contact information, birding and conservation links and other information for the public. The site is www.mountaineeraudubon.org. Designers LeJay Graffious and Mike Breiding hope to have content up and running in a month or so.

Events Calendar

Mountaineer Audubon holds its monthly programs on the second Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the training room at the Public Safety Building on the corner of Spruce and Walnut Streets. All are free and open to the public. Before the program, you are invited to join the speaker and board members for dinner at 6pm at the Mediterranean Deli on High Street.

October 9 Nature in Winter. WV DNR biologist Susan Olcott will present a program on how plants and animals prepare for the winter – from losing leaves and growing longer fur to preparing to freeze solid and dealing with the new challenge of climate change.

November 13 Progress Towards Restoration of a Fallen Giant: the American Chestnut. WVU researcher Bill MacDonald will be speaking on recent work on the reintroduction of the American chestnut tree to eastern forests.

January 15 A Visit to the Crystal Desert. Ellen Hrabousky, a professor at WVU, will present her experiences in Antarctica including the truly extraordinary bird life.

February 12 The WV Birding Center at Jackson's Mill. Bird bander and avian enthusiast Joey Heron will be speaking on plans to create a birding center in West Virginia housed at Jackson's Mill. Although still in its infancy, the center hopes to provide a geographically central home to birding endeavors with classes, banding research and festivals to compliment other birding institutions in the state.

March 11 – to be announced

President's Message

As the summer's heat begins to fade and the crickets start their annual songs, I know that migration is underway once again for those winged creatures that are able to fly south for the winter.

Chief among the migrants, of course, are the songbirds. Almost 70% of the bird species that breed in West Virginia leave in September and October, returning in April and May. Virtually all the warblers, tanagers, swallows, hummingbirds, thrushes, some sparrows and hawks and others call more southerly latitudes their winter home, leaving resident species to cope with winter's cold and snow. A morning walk right now may produce mixed flocks of birds fueling up on insects before they continue their journey south.

Others besides birds migrate south. Monarch butterflies follow the warmth, with millions following the Appalachian ridges south each year. Red, silver-haired and hoary bats also head south to cooler, as opposed to cold, areas to hibernate beneath leaf piles on the forest floor. Dragonflies, especially the large late summer darner species, swarm above hayfields feeding on hatches of small insects before heading south.

Meanwhile, residents prepare for winter. Start looking for winter feeding flocks of chickadees, titmouse and others after the breeding territories break down for the year. Diets switch from the abundant summer insects to seeds, buds, fruit and whatever dormant insects and spiders they can find. Asian ladybugs make their annual pilgrimage into our houses. Bats find cool underground spaces with high humidity to survive hibernation. Dragonflies survive the winter as eggs or larva in ponds, streams and rivers. As we alter our daily pattern from summer holidays and gardening to school and work, nature also prepares for the change of season. Enjoy!

Sue

Mountaineer Audubon Chapter Membership Application

Enter or renew my my membership (family or individual) to the Mountaineer Audubon chapter. *I understand that this category of membership does not include membership in the National Audubon Society.* I will receive information on all chapter activities, and have voting rights in Board elections.

I'd like to join, renew or extend my current membership. My \$15 payment is enclosed.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Make check payable to Mountaineer Audubon Society and mail to: Mountaineer Audubon Society P.O. Box 422, Morgantown, WV 26507-0422

Field Trips

October 6 (rain date October 13) – Songbird Migration Monitoring - We will car pool to Jackson's Mill, Lewis Co., to see a migration monitoring station run by certified bird bander Joey Heron. He will demonstrate banding techniques and talk about issues facing migratory birds. Bring your cameras to capture close-up views of brilliant hooded warblers, scarlet tanagers and others. Meet in the WVU Coliseum parking lot on the south end (near the Arboretum) at 8am. Wear sturdy walking shoes and bring a light weight lawn or camp chair to sit on if you wish, drink and a snack. Nets are set on fairly level ground, but, depending on the number of vehicles, we may need to walk up a small hill with a gravel road to the net area. Contact Susan Olcott for details at 288-2999. Joey Heron will be netting every weekend in October. To arrange to go down on your own, contact him at 203-5251 or 363-5553.

December 15 – Morgantown Area Christmas Bird Count. Come join us in the field and forest, or from your own backyard feeders, for a day of identifying and counting birds. The CBC is an Audubon tradition started in 1900 by Frank Chapman with 25 counts and 27 observers across North America. It now lays claim as the oldest and largest wildlife survey in the world with over 50,000 participants surveying over 1800 count areas in North, Central and South America. Contact coordinator LeJay Graffious (304)379-4492 to sign up. Beginners welcome. For a list of birds seen last year and other information, go to www.frontiernet.net/%7ELejay/.

Late February Sunday afternoon – Winter Bird Walk – Join Alan Clark to search out winter residents and visitors around Masontown and Hopwood, PA. Past species included short-eared owls and woodcock. Meet for late lunch at Eat-N-Park at Uniontown mall at 1:00 PM and plan on leaving there at 2:30 if you want to join us post-lunch. Contact Alan Clark (714)437-2524 in early February for the exact date and details.

April and May Bird Walks

Prickett's Fort State Park – April 19 & 26 and May 3. 8am, meet at the Visitor's Center.

WVU Arboretum – April 22 & 29 and May 6, 13 & 20. 7:15am, meet at the Arboretum parking lot.

National Audubon Society

A gift membership to Audubon will be enjoyed for the entire year. Please note our local chapter code with any membership application. First year dues of \$20.00 include local chapter membership.

National Audubon Society Chapter Membership Application

- YES, I'd like to join. Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and the Mountaineer Chapter. Send Audubon magazine and my membership card to the address below.
- Please send a gift membership to the national Audubon Society and the appropriate local chapter to the person and address below.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS _____

Please make checks payable to the National Audubon Society
Send this application and your check to:
National Audubon Society
Chapter Membership Data Center Y51
PO Box 51005 7XCH
Boulder, CO 80323-1005

Mountaineer Audubon Board Members

President	Sue Olcott	304/825-6787
Secretary	vacant	
Treasurer	Bill Kennell	304/296-4853
Program Committee Chair	vacant	
Fundraising Committee Chair	Kay Beamer	304/296-7169
Publicity Committee Chair	Alan Clark	724/437-2524
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Newsletter Editor	Sally Wilts	304/379-7567

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