Upcoming QAS Events
Join Us! Everyone Is Welcome!

Upcoming Programs . . .

The Quittapahilla Audubon Society holds its programs in the Chapel of the Lebanon Valley Home at 7:30pm every fourth Wednesday of the month from September through April (with the exception of November and December). Due to the holidays, the programs are held another week in these two months. Programs are free and open to the public. They are designed for a general audience and children are welcome when accompanied by an adult.

Lebanon Valley Home is located one half mile east of the intersection of Routes 422 and 934 at 550 East Main Street, Annville, PA. There is limited parking in front of the Home with additional parking available on the adjacent streets. Please use the main entrance at the end of the covered walkway in the front of the Home. The Chapel is handicap accessible.

September 23, 2015 – Adventures of our QAS Campers

Our 2015 camp scholarship recipient, Lizzy St. Clair, will share her experiences from camp.

October 28, 2015 – Bog turtles in your back yard

Bog turtles are the smallest turtle in Pennsylvania, and are federally listed as threatened. These secretive turtles are rarely seen outside of their wetland habitats, which are becoming smaller and more fragmented. Learn about the turtles and the conservation efforts that are in progress to protect these tiny creatures with George Gress, who works as a Fire Specialist and Land Steward for The Nature Conservancy, and manages the Conservancy’s bog turtle projects.

Naturalist George C. Gress is a Fire Specialist/ Land Steward for The Nature Conservancy in Pennsylvania, where he has been employed for over 20 years, prior to which he served as a volunteer for the organization. A member of the Conservation Stewardship team that maintains The Nature Conservancy’s preserves in PA, he manages the Conservancy’s bog turtle program in Pennsylvania, and serves on the prescribed fire crew for the chapter’s prescribed fire program. An avid nature photographer for more than 35 years, his photographs have been published in newspapers, periodicals, reports, brochures, newsletters and calendars.

November 18, 2015 – Caught in the SNOWstorm

The winter of 2013-14 saw the largest invasion of snowy owls into the eastern United States in perhaps a century – and...
marked an unprecedented opportunity to learn more about these mysterious Arctic hunters. Author and researcher Scott Weidensaul will share the story of Project SNOWstorm – how a huge, collaborative research effort focused on snowy owls came together in a few frantic weeks, funded with the help of people from around the world, and has continued to make discoveries and unexpected insights into the life and ecology of this great white raptor ever since.

Author and naturalist Scott Weidensaul has written more than two dozen books on natural history, including Living on the Wind: Across the Hemisphere with Migratory Birds, a Pulitzer Prize finalist. His forthcoming book, The Peterson Reference Guide to Owls of North America and the Caribbean, will be published in the fall of 2015. In addition to writing about wildlife, Weidensaul is an active field researcher whose work focuses on bird migration. He is a co-director of Project Owlnet, and for nearly 20 years he has directed a major effort to study the movements of northern saw-whet owls. Weidensaul also co-founded Project SNOWstorm, which uses cutting-edge tracking technology to study snowy owls, and is also part of a continental effort to understand the rapid evolution, by several species of western hummingbirds, of a new migratory route and wintering range in the East. (Snowy Owl Photo by James Fiorentino)

December 9, 2015 – Member’s Nature Slides and Digitals

Join us as members share their favorite slides and digital photos with the group. This is our holiday social, so please bring a plate of holiday treats to share after the program. Drinks will be provided.

And Our Field Trips at a Glance . . .

Please join us for as many of our field trips as your calendar will allow.

October 4, 2015 – Swatara State Park

Observation of flora and fauna via a walk to Bordner Cabin by Sand Siding Trail. Meet Sunday 2:30 PM at Trout Run Trailhead parking lot. Leader Fritz Heilman, 273-0487.

October 11, 2015 – Hammer Creek

Observation of flora and fauna via a casual walk adjacent to the Hammer Creek. Meet Sunday 8 AM at the Pumping Station parking lot off route 322. Leader Fritz Heilman, 273-0487.

October 18, 2015 – Hawk Mountain Sanctuary

Leave Sunday 9am from McDonald’s (east side of Lebanon) and spend late AM/ early PM at the hawk watch lookout (return n/l than 4 PM). This is the peak migration time for accipiters. Bring lunch, water, and dress for the weather and wear hiking boots. Note: there is a $7.00 trail fee for non-members. Leader Jim Fiorentino, 269-0675.

Nov. 15, 2015 – Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area Conservation Trail & Surrounding Areas

Observe the resident and migratory bird life on this walk via the Conservation Trail and Visitor Center grounds. A possible walk out to Willow Point may be included. Meet Sunday 9 AM at the visitor center parking lot. Leader Jim Fiorentino, 269-0675.

December 13 – Middle Creek WMA Conservation Trail & Surrounding Areas

Same details as Nov. 15.

December 19, 2015 – Christmas Bird Count (CBC)

QAS thirty-sixth annual CBC. Event includes walking and driving to count birds within prescribed area. Contact Fritz Heilman, 273-0487.

January 1, 2016 – Lebanon Valley Rail Trail

Start the New Year off birding! Observation of local wintering birds via about a two mile/two hour walk on the rail trail. Dress for the weather and meet Friday noon at the Speedway Gas Station corner of Evergreen and State Drive. Leader Jim Fiorentino, 269-0675.

QAS Annual Bird Seed Sale

Look for the sale flyer in your mailbox in September or early October for this event – the 37th annual QAS bird seed sale which will be held on November 7th! We will again provide the same great variety of high quality bird seed at competitive prices. All profits will support local QAS projects for youth and environmental education.

When you receive your flyer, please invite friends, neighbors, and other bird lovers to also take advantage of this sale. The birds (and the squirrels) thoroughly enjoy the seeds!

Also, volunteers are needed to unload the seed on Friday, November 6. Please call Jim Logan at 273-8438 if you are willing to help. Thank you!
Welcome to our new QAS members . . . Hope to see you at many of our events!

A Word from QAS President Jim Fiorentino

As I begin my 4th year as President of QAS, I would like to again take the time to thank all past, present, and incoming board members, the banquet committee, anyone who donated an item for the silent auction (we had some wonderful items this year), our guest speaker – Fred Habegger, and all of the guests who attended the 32nd annual QAS banquet at the Friendship Fire Hall on May 27th.

Cecelia, Rosemary and Jo Ann, our new banquet committee, did an excellent job even after encountering a few bumps along the way in having everything set up and ready to go and as usual. The food at the Friendship Fire Hall was excellent and Fred’s program – By the Babbling Brook – was both entertaining and well received by everyone in attendance.

It was especially gratifying to recognize and present National Audubon Society and QAS Service awards at the banquet to both Vera Freed for 10 years as a board member (not in attendance – the award will be given at an upcoming program) and to Karen Light for over 25 years of service as a banquet chairperson and committee member! Thank you both for your service and commitment to Audubon and QAS (in particular)!

With the banquet now behind us, I’m very much looking forward to the excellent schedule of programs and field trips that are scheduled for the 2015-16 season. There should be something on the field trip/program schedule of interest to almost every one of our members. We have field trips specifically for birding, insects, trees, wild flowers, a day trip to John Heinz NWR, and a tentative fall weekend trip to Chincoteague NWR. Some of the trips have a limited sign up and cut off dates…be sure to check the schedule at our website QASAudubon.org and sign up early to reserve your spot on any of those trips.

In closing, I offer my personal thank you to Linda Van Tassel for reciting the QAS traditional Banquet Invocation (at the request of the late Dr. Bauer) and all present Board members and Officers for their continued service and commitment to Audubon and QAS.

Again thank you to everyone and good birding!

Check out the QAS Grant Program!

The grant applications are online. We accept them year-round! Check out the QAS website if you or someone you know has a project that may qualify for a QAS Grant!

QAS Needs You!

If you can give a little bit of your time to QAS, please consider becoming a board member, an officer, or a committee chairperson. Your help will be welcome in any capacity – even if you only have a little bit of time to help. The reach of QAS is only limited by the abilities and contributions of our members. You can talk to any officer or board member anytime about your interest in volunteering. We would love to welcome you to the QAS team!

On the Web

If it’s raining outside (and you don’t have time to look for a fallout), check out these links:

Whether you are a birder, an amateur entomologist, a botanist, or just a naturally curious person, there are new websites waiting out there to be explored. Share some of your favorites with us by emailing your links to qas@qasaudubon.org. We may share one of your links in a future newsletter.

QAS Camp Scholarships — Gary Kinkley & Rosemary Spreha

At the March QAS Board Meeting, one scholarship application was approved. The 2015 scholarship recipient is: Lizzy St. Clair

You may recall the Miss St. Clair received a QAS scholarship in 2012 as well to attend Audubon’s Hog Island Camp. This time, Lizzy has been awarded $500 to attend Penn State University’s Science Camp. Come to our September meeting to hear about Lizzy’s camp experience!

QAS is always looking for qualified local students to attend nature-related summer camps. Scholarships are available for students in first through eleventh grade. Anyone interested in attending summer camp and applying for a QAS scholarship needs to choose a camp appropriate to their age group and submit a scholarship application to QAS. Updated applications will be available next fall (for the 2016 Scholarship) online at www.QASAudubon.org.

How Much Do You “like” QAS?

QAS is on Facebook! Please stop by and “like” us. We are always adding content about meetings and field trips as well as links which may interest QAS members. In addition, you can still sign up for the QAS-Announce mailing list to receive e-mail reminders for our public meetings, field trips, and other announcements of interest. Just go to our website at www.qasaudubon.org!

Sponsors Always Appreciated for Audubon Adventures for Classrooms

Each year, students in classrooms in Lebanon County and the Hershey/Hummelstown area benefit from reading Audubon Adventures. This activity helps them to improve their informational reading skills and broadens their awareness of the environment. The classroom kits are provided by our local Quittapahilla Audubon Society and are sponsored through donations.

If you would like to continue making this valuable resource available to local children, please complete the form below and mail it to QAS. A label indicating your sponsorship will be placed on the Audubon Adventures kit.

AUDUBON ADVENTURE SPONSORSHIP FORM

Yes, I wish to sponsor an Audubon Adventures classroom for a donation of $45. I understand a label indicating my sponsorship will be placed on the kit. Your Name: ___________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________

City: __________________________ State: ______ Zip Code: ________________

Mail to: Quittapahilla Audubon Society
        PO Box 123
        Palmyra, PA 17078

April 11, 2015 – Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area – Fritz Heilman

Here are the highlights from our field trip to Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area for the observation of migrating waterfowl and other migrating and resident birds.

We had eight participants on this approximately three hour visit featuring cool and windy conditions. We saw about 35 species of birds, including about 50 snow geese, several northern shovelers, a pair of black ducks,
several American wigeons, and Canada geese nesting. On the pond to the west side of Hopeland Road, just below the visitor center, we observed American coots, ring-necked ducks and a pair of buffleheads. Other birds sighted included one immature and two adult bald eagles, a male harrier (aka the gray ghost), two eastern meadowlark in the field to the east side of Hopeland Road (just opposite the great-blue heron rookery), a dozen or more great-blue herons at the rookery, one great egret at the pond in front of stop three, a lesser yellowlegs, and numerous tree swallows.

Returning to the visitor center, we checked the feeders on the east side and found, among the usual suspects, a close front view of a red-bellied woodpecker (we could actually see the slight red on the belly). Also of note, a cabbage white butterfly was spotted, the first butterfly observation for me this year. (Photo by Fritz Heilman)

April 18, 2015 – Ferncliff (Barton Hollow)
Spring Wildflowers  – Fritz Heilman

Here are highlights of this past Saturday's field trip to Ferncliff (Benton Hollow) for the observation of spring wildflowers. First, I must say thanks again to Jim Logan Sr. and Jim Logan Jr. for coordinating and leading this trip. This has become our rotating location annual field trip to observe the first major flowering of plants in the new year. We had 13 participants on the approximately 2 1/2 hour visit to this preserve of the Lancaster County Conservancy. Among the plants observed (and we must have seen around 30 species) were Virginia waterleaf, stinging nettle, spring beauty, dutchman's breeches, false hellebore, early saxifrage, round-leaved yellow violet, dwarf ginseng, Susquehanna Trillium, blue cohosh and Virginia bluebells (Mertensia). Bishop's cap (miterwort) was observed but not yet blooming. Also we looked for putty root (one of about 54 species of orchids in Pa.), or rather the single overwintering leaf of this plant, but we could not locate it. We traversed the narrow path leading up the slope, through a carpet of wildflowers - a path that brings one to the top where Virginia bluebells abound, and a high overlook of the Susquehanna River is found. What a beautiful location for a spring walk! (Photos by Fritz Heilman)


Here is a recap of our trip to John Heinz NWR. We had 4 participants attend the trip. We left at 6am and returned by 4:30pm. The weather started out very cool but quickly got warmer, and when the sun peeked out, the birds became very active. I have attached a list of the species we saw – a total of 69 for the day! Highlights included over 30+ rusty blackbirds (a life bird for 3 members on the trip) and good looks at 2 great horned owls, palm warblers, a northern waterthrush (sitting up in a tree), blue-gray gnatcatchers, and several species of swallows. We also had a very good scoped look at a young eagle popping it head up and down in the nest. All in all a very good day.

69 Species
Canada Goose  10
Mute Swan  2
Wood Duck  24
Gadwall  4  seen by all on bird tour – photo's taken
Mallard  8
Green-winged Teal  8
Bufflehead  1  female
Horned Grebe  1
Double-crested Cormorant  20  flyovers – seen from pipeline area
Great Blue Heron  3
Great Egret  2
Green Heron  2
Black Vulture  2
Turkey Vulture 2  
Osprey 3  
Cooper's Hawk 2  
Bald Eagle 3  
Red-tailed Hawk 2  
American Coot 1  
Greater Yellowlegs 1 heard calling & flyover  
Ring-billed Gull 2  
Caspian Tern 3  
Forster's Tern 1  
Mourning Dove 5  
Great Horned Owl 2  
Great Horned Owl 1 on nest, one in the area of the 2nd nest sitting in tree  
Chimney Swift 6  
Red-bellied Woodpecker 1 heard only  
Downy Woodpecker 2  
Hairy Woodpecker 1  
Northern Flicker 1  
Eastern Phoebe 2  
Eastern Kingbird 1  
Warbling Vireo 1  
Blue Jay 2 heard only  
American Crow 1  
Fish Crow 7  
Northern Rough-winged Swallow 4  
Tree Swallow 400 low estimate  
Bank Swallow 6 mixed in with tree swallows  
Barn Swallow 12 several seen while crossing bridge  
Carolina Chickadee 4  
Tufted Titmouse 2  
House Wren 2 1 heard calling only  
Carolina Wren 5 4 heard calling only  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 42 they where everywhere  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet 5  
Hermit Thrush 1 on pipeline cut area  
American Robin 100 conservative estimate  
Gray Catbird 2 1 heard calling only  
Brown Thrasher 1  
Northern Mockingbird 1 in parking lot area  
European Starling 2  
Northern Waterthrush 2 one heard calling only  
Black-and-white Warbler 1  
Common Yellowthroat 4 1 heard singing only  
Yellow Warbler 15 many heard singing - low estimate  
Palm Warbler 16  
Yellow-rumped Warbler 6  
Eastern Towhee 6 3 heard calling only  
Song Sparrow 5  
Swamp Sparrow 1  
White-throated Sparrow 4  
Northern Cardinal 3  
Red-winged Blackbird 50 conservative estimate  
Rusty Blackbird 25 all along trail in marsh area - low estimate  
Common Grackle 1  
Brown-headed Cowbird 46 low estimate  
House Finch 2  
American Goldfinch 4  
This report was generated automatically by eBird v3 (http://ebird.org/pa)

2015 QAS Birdathon – Fritz Heilman

Thanks again to all who sponsored the annual fund raiser – the “Birdathon.” This year we raised $317.50! I also want to thank my team member Jim Fiorentino for assisting with this effort at our Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area location. Our total species count for the day was 70. If you want to field a team or sponsor mine next spring, please get in touch with me. Our traveling trophy for the winning team could end up on your mantle!

June 21, 2015 – Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area – Jim Fiorentino

Here is the checklist from our walk at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area. We had 49 total species on a very cloudy day, but many species seemed to be moving. We had a very good surprise seeing a Greater Yellowlegs near Stop 1. Bobolinks are still being seen everywhere, but we were unable to locate the Blue Grosbeaks. Here is the eBird report for the trip:

46 species (+1 other taxa)  
Snow Goose 5  
Canada Goose 22  
Wood Duck 3  
Mallard 2  
Ring-necked Pheasant 2 just past stop 3 along pin tail drive – reported there may times  
Wild Turkey 1  
Great Blue Heron 3  
Green Heron 3  
Turkey Vulture 3  
Bald Eagle 1  
Killdeer 2  
Greater Yellowlegs 1 yellow legs, slightly upturned dark bill, neck & chest gray/brown specked, back was grayish streaked
Mourning Dove 1
Red-bellied Woodpecker 2
Downy Woodpecker 1
Northern Flicker 2
Eastern Wood-Pewee 1
Willow Flycatcher 3
Eastern Phoebe 2
Great Crested Flycatcher 1
Eastern Kingbird 4
Blue Jay 1
American Crow 5
Tree Swallow X
Barn Swallow 5
Carolina/Black-capped Chickadee 1
Tufted Titmouse 1
White-breasted Nuthatch 2
Eastern Bluebird 9
American Robin 6
Gray Catbird 25
Northern Mockingbird 1
European Starling 5
Northern Cardinal 18
Indigo Bunting 4
American Goldfinch 18
This report was generated automatically by eBird v3
(http://ebird.org/pa) (Photo by Lou Ruttkay)

July 26, 2015 – Lebanon Valley Rail Trail
– Jim Fiorentino

Here is a listing of species from our Lebanon Valley Rail Trail field trip. We had 3 participants on the 2 1/4 hour walk, and we had a total of 23 species. There were a lot of young birds around which made IDing several of them flying around in the trees a challenge at times.

All in all, it was a good summer mid-morning trip!

23 species (+1 other taxa)
Red-tailed Hawk 1
Killdeer 2 heard calling in nearby fields
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon) 4
Mourning Dove 11
Red-bellied Woodpecker 2

Downy Woodpecker 4
Blue Jay 5
American Crow 3
Tree Swallow 3
Barn Swallow 5
Carolina/Black-capped Chickadee 5
Tufted Titmouse 7
House Wren 2
Carolina Wren 3
Wood Thrush 1
American Robin 5
Gray Catbird 25 low estimate
Brown Thrasher 1
Northern Mockingbird 3
European Starling 5
Northern Cardinal 18 low estimate
Indigo Bunting 4
Common Grackle 2
House Finch 1

This report was generated automatically by eBird v3
(http://ebird.org/pa)

August 9, 2015 – Butterflies, Dragonflies, and Their Habitat – Fritz Heilman

Here are the highlights from our visit to Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area for the butterfly and dragonfly field trip. We had eight participants on about a two hour visit to first observe the butterflies at the garden adjacent to the visitor center, then observation of dragonflies and damselflies at the two ponds on the far eastern edge of the management area – the second pond, hidden from the road and at about a three minute walk to get there, was the better site to observe.

Butterfly numbers and species variety was low – we hope that is not in any way attributable to gypsy moth and west nile insecticide spraying, but that is at this time undetermined.

However, we did have butterflies to observe, and the variety was increased when we checked the wildflower meadow in the front of the building (and note that the hummingbirds were also visiting the feeders at the garden by the visitor center).

Butterfly and moth species observed included:
Tiger Swallowtail – male and dark form of the female
Cabbage White
Great Spangled Fritillary
Pearl Crescent
Red-banded Hairstreak
Monarch
Snowberry or Hummingbird Clearwing
Ailanthus Webworm Moth

Dragonfly species observed included:
Common Green Darner (male) – constantly patrolling the pond
Eastern Amberwing (male)
Common Whitetail (male)
Widow Skimmer (male)
Blue Dasher (male) – generally perched on pond edge vegetation
Eastern Pondhawk (male and female)

Plant species observed included:
Wild bergamot (Monarda fistulosa) – at end of flowering
Joe-Pye weed (perhaps Eupatorium fistulosum) – at start of flowering
Common arrowhead (Sagittaria latifolia) – in flower at edge of pond
Bur-reed (Sparganium sp.)
Horse-nettle – nightshade family – in flower

I would add a few notable facts about dragonflies – they have the finest vision in the insect world; larvae (also called nymphs or naiads) take anywhere from several months to several years to reach metamorphosis; adults live about a month or two; and they have superb flight ability – all four wings can be moved independently allowing them to move straight up, down, forwards or backwards! (reference: Dragonflies And Damselflies Of The East by Dennis Paulson, 2011 edition).

*Note: If you visit the two ponds on the eastern edge of Middle Creek, do not park on the grass on the eastern side which is flatter (we had permission yesterday only by the land owners to park there). (Cicada Photo by Adam Centini)

August 15, 2015 – Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area – Jim Fiorentino

Here is the checklist from our walk at Middle Creek. We had 41 species total. There were 2 of us on the walk so we walked the meadow and edge of the woods in and around the visitor’s center and then walked out to willow point. We also did a quick drive thru the tour road. There were a lot of young birds around making IDing some of them a challenge.

The highlight was seeing two first of the year fall warblers – a Black & White in the oaks near the visitor’s center and a female American Redstart along the trail to Willow Point.

Good Birding!

41 species (+1 other taxa)
Canada Goose 19
Mute Swan 1
Wood Duck 3
Mallard 5
Double-crested Cormorant 3
Great Blue Heron 3
Great Egret 1
Green Heron 1
Turkey Vulture 1
Red-tailed Hawk 1
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon) 3
Mourning Dove 5
Ruby-throated Hummingbird 1
Red-bellied Woodpecker 2
Northern Flicker 1
Eastern Wood-Pewee 2
Willow Flycatcher 1
Eastern Kingbird 1
Blue Jay 5
American Crow 11
Tree Swallow X
Barn Swallow X
Carolina/Black-capped Chickadee 2
Tufted Titmouse 1
White-breasted Nuthatch 1
Carolina Wren 1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 3
Eastern Bluebird 5
American Robin 18
Gray Catbird 7
European Starling 8
Black-and-white Warbler 1 in oak trees at visitor center parking lot
American Redstart 1 along willow point trail near first bench Field Sparrow 3 Song Sparrow 2 Swamp Sparrow 1 Northern Cardinal 2
Indigo Bunting  3
Red-winged Blackbird  1
Eastern Meadowlark  5
Brown-headed Cowbird  1
American Goldfinch  21
This report was generated automatically by eBird v3 (http://ebird.org/pa)  (Photo by Lou Ruttkay)

Conservation Contributions

At the May Board Meeting, your QAS Board approved the following contributions:

- The Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art’s Northern Saw Whet Owl Research Project received $400.
- The Lebanon Valley Conservancy’s Tundra Swan Program received $500.
- Bat Conservation International received $300.
- The Lebanon County Envirothon received $600.
- The Pennsylvania State Audubon office received $300.
- Paddle without Pollution received $200.
- The Elk Restoration Program received $100.

Nestboxes at the Lebanon Landfill – Fritz Heilman

I have been on occasion assisting Richard Light (thanks Richard) with his monitoring of the 59 bluebird boxes plus a few barn owl and kestrel boxes at the Lebanon Landfill grounds. This has afforded me the opportunity to take make many great observations and to take a few unique photos which I am sharing here.

Starting with one of the kestrel boxes (actually this box is a round PVC pipe section with a removable top and a ventilated bottom). The first photo shows both adults staying warm and keeping the eggs/young warm as the morning was quite chilly and windy as well. The female is at the top of the image. The second image is a view of the eggs on June 3rd shortly before they hatched. The third image shows the young kestrels huddled together with a dead mouse their parents brought.

The next image is of a very different sort of raptor. It is a young black vulture (one of two) in the hay barn where the nest was!

Since this is a bluebird trail, here is an image of bluebird young soon to fledge and a female bluebird on the nest in a PVC pipe section.
There are so many online resources for building your own nest boxes for cavity-nesting birds – you can create your own mini-trail at home!

**BP Oil Spill: 5 Years Later – from the National Audubon Society**

Five years ago, on April 20, 2010, the BP Deepwater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico exploded, killing 11 people, spilling more than 4 million barrels of oil, and killing at least 800,000 birds. BP’s grossly negligent actions caused both a human tragedy and the largest environmental disaster in our nation’s history, and the region, its people and its vulnerable wildlife are still feeling the effects. Audubon staff and members took immediate and unprecedented action. We established an emergency volunteer response center to monitor beaches and estuaries, and to locate and identify birds and wildlife injured or damaged by the millions of barrels of oil spilled. In the end we received over 30,000 requests to volunteer and we deployed thousands of them to the front lines to help recover and save wildlife affected by the spill. The disaster brought out the best in Audubon’s staff and members.

Our policy staff immediately went to work with the five Gulf States, the Obama Administration, and Congress. Ultimately, through our collective efforts and those of other partners, the RESTORE Act was passed and signed into law by the President in July 2012. This landmark legislation set aside 80 percent of any Clean Water Act penalties that BP pays to restoring the ecosystem in the Gulf of Mexico (as opposed to sending the fines to the general treasury). Per the legislation, a stand-alone federal agency was set up to select and oversee restoration projects. Unfortunately, with billions of their dollars at stake, BP continues to employ stalling tactics in the courts and a massive PR campaign that paints the Gulf as just fine. A final penalty—which could be as large as $14 billion—has yet to be levied. We continue to urge BP to end their stalling tactics and pay what they owe to the region and to the American people.

In a more positive development the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) received $2.6 billion in criminal fines from BP and has begun funding major restoration activities in all five states through its Gulf Environmental Benefits Fund. Audubon is working closely with NFWF to identify the best restoration projects for birds and wildlife.

Five years after the spill there are many reasons for hope. Congress, the Administration, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation are working hard to restore and repair the damages caused by BP. Unfortunately, BP has been less cooperative and has yet to fully own up to their negligent actions. Restoration of the Gulf and the wildlife and local economies that depend on it will be years in the making, but Audubon will never relent in ensuring a positive outcome for the region’s people and the environment. (Photo by Vickie Caligure / Audubon Photo Awards)

**The Pennsylvania Lumber Museum – Brenda Reigle**

The Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, in Galeton (Potter County), Pennsylvania, has recently opened its updated visitor center, which provides improved visitor access, community meeting space, and a changing exhibit gallery. The Lumber Museum is administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in partnership with the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum Associates.

The new core exhibit, “Challenges and Choices in Pennsylvania’s Forests,” explores the growth of Pennsylvania’s lumber industry, the devastation and revival of the state’s forests, and current public and private efforts to maintain a “working forest.” The artifact-rich exhibit also includes a significant section on the Civilian Conservation Corps, its impact on the state parks and forests of Pennsylvania, and the personal stories of men whose lives were changed by their enrollment in the CCC. “Challenge Silhouettes” represent multiple perspectives from the past and present, inviting visitors to consider their own role in the ongoing story.

Low-tech interactives define unfamiliar terms and concepts; simulate activities such as guiding a log raft downriver, chopping a notch in a tree with an ax, and cutting down a tree using a crosscut saw; and ask visitors to share their thoughts on ways to sustain healthy forests that balance economic, recreational, and environmental needs. The exhibit uses historic and contemporary images to create a sense of immersion in the forest and to humanize the story of the lumber industry, the rise of professional forestry, and the involvement of government agencies in forest management. “See It Here” and “Go See It” labels connect exhibit content to other interpretive venues at the Lumber Museum (including the recreated logging camp, sawmill, CCC cabin, and...
Sustainable Forestry Trail) and to several state parks within an hour of the museum.

**LEAVE A LEGACY FOR QAS**

You, as a member or friend of QAS, can leave a legacy that will help save the special areas you have explored and loved long after you are gone. Remember Quittapahilla Audubon Society, your LOCAL Audubon connection, through a bequest in your Will or through a gift annuity that will specifically support QAS programs while paying you a monthly income for life. To learn more about how you can make a bequest and create a permanent legacy in your name or in someone’s memory, as well as tax benefits for planned giving options, please contact your attorney or financial advisor.

In supporting a cause that you hold dear, you can have peace of mind that your time on this planet has mattered.

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**Chapter-Only Membership Application Information**

Quittapahilla Audubon Society offers a local Chapter-Only membership that differs from the current National Audubon membership in these ways:

1. The annual fee of $20.00 will go directly for QAS activities only.
2. The membership period runs from July 1st to July 1st, regardless of when you join.

You will receive the chapter newsletter informing you of upcoming events, but you will not receive the Audubon magazine. If you are interested, please issue a check to QAS for $20 and mail to: Chapter-Only Membership, c/o Jim M. Logan, Chairman, 810 Hill St., Lebanon, PA 17046. Do not mail to the National membership address in Palm Coast, FL.

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**QAS Winter Newsletter Deadline**

If you have an item or article you would like to submit for inclusion in the next issue of the QAS Newsletter, please send them to Gary Kinkley by November 27, 2015. Articles may be emailed to cathartesaura@live.com or mailed to him at 3 Clark Road, Annville, PA 17003. Comments are also welcome. This is your chapter and your newsletter, and we want to hear from you!
Quittapahilla Audubon Society

Your local Audubon chapter,
working to
preserve nature and the environment,
invites you to join us for
our programs and field trips.