

Northeast Pennsylvania Audubon Society

Eco~Notes

Summer 2010

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Photo by Georgette Pascotto

Scholarship Winner Has Gone Far

Carissa Gigliotti was awarded the Audubon Society Scholarship in 1996 while a senior at Western Wayne. Here she tells what it has meant to her.

After I was awarded the Audubon scholarship, I attended Juniata College, where I earned a Bachelor of Science in environmental studies in 2000.



Since then, I have held a variety of jobs in the environmental field. I served for two years as an AmeriCorps member doing environmental outreach in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, and mentoring middle school students in St. Louis, Missouri. I worked as a field instructor at an environmental

education center in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park in northeast Ohio. I was a habitat restoration coordinator in St. Louis, where I worked with volunteers, including members of the local Audubon Society, to restore an urban bird corridor. This is an achievement that I am very proud of because this flyway is now usable by both birds and people and serves as a valuable teaching tool. While in St. Louis, I also coordinated outreach for a native prairie

restoration project with the goal of bringing in local stakeholders to save a last-of-its-kind ecological gem. In 2005, I earned a Master's degree in environmental policy from Bard College. As part of my graduate internship and thesis research, I explored the barriers to outdoor education in the era of No Child Left Behind. Currently, I live in State College with Daniel Haeusser, my husband of five years. For the past two years, I have worked as a Certification Specialist at Pennsylvania Certified Organic. Through this position, I am able to assist a wide variety of growers and producers with the process of organic certification.

On behalf of my family, thank you again for investing in my education through the Audubon Society scholarship. Juniata College was a perfect fit for me, and I attribute much of my professional success to the foundation its liberal-arts education gave me. However, I might not have been able to attend Juniata had it not been for the extra financial assistance I received from the Audubon Society. In addition to the financial assistance, this extra boost of support from folks who believed in me even though we had never met certainly helped encourage me as I studied and pursued my passion for nature in the environmental field.

—Carissa Gigliotti

Board's Annual Election of Officers

Your chapter's annual election will be held at the July 5th board meeting at the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce Building, Commercial Street, Honesdale. All members are encouraged to attend to vote for the new slate of officers. Nominations will be accepted from the floor. Elections start at 7:30 PM. Members are welcome to stay for the board meeting after the elections. We will vote for president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and three directors. If you have questions or comments, please call us at (570) 253-9250 or e-mail us at audubonworks@gmail.com.

The 25th Annual Audubon Art and Craft Fair is coming soon! See page 3 for more information and a discount coupon.

Our Mission Statement

Our goal is to conserve and restore our environment to benefit humanity as well as birds and other wildlife through education, action, and advocacy.

Message from the President: (C)Rude Awakening

As I write this in mid-May, one of the largest environmental disasters in US history is going on. The oil rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico should throw plans to initiate new off-shore drilling off the Atlantic coast, parts of Alaska, and the eastern Gulf of Mexico into serious question. With a huge natural gas drilling era looming over us here in northeast Pennsylvania, it would behoove us to learn from the debacle in the Gulf. There are disturbing revelations emerging about this disaster. Here are a few that I have heard about:

- Some of the survivors of the explosion were immediately sequestered by their employers and coerced to sign statements claiming no injuries, and that they did not see what happened. Meanwhile, BP, which has accepted responsibility for the spill, says it is not their fault. They blame Transocean Ltd. personnel, from whom they lease the rig. Haliburton, which cemented the casings around the well just before it blew up, is also being scrutinized. The courts are beginning to fill with lawsuits.

- There were permitting irregularities. Oil rig operators are required to submit a detailed “blowout scenario,” but a 2008 rule change issued by the Minerals Management Service (MMS) within the Department of the Interior exempted some drilling projects in the Gulf, allowing BP to avoid filing a plan for handling a major spill due to an uncontrolled blowout at its Deepwater Horizon project — exactly what happened on April 20th. Good news: to rid the MMS of rampant corruption, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar has initiated reforms, including retirement of Chris Oynes, the top Interior Department official who oversaw offshore oil and gas drilling for the MMS, during which time sex and drugs were given as favors from industry. Oynes came under fire for being too close to the industry officials he regulated.

What We Can Do to Help Protect Our Own Area:

- Let us make sure we don't have foxes guarding our hen house: no former industry people in positions of policy-making and regulation of that industry.

- Toughen our protective laws—especially to eliminate exemptions that “fracking” enjoys under a 2005 amendment to the federal Clean Water Act.

- Make sure that protective laws are properly enforced. That means vigilance on our part, and adequate funding and staffing of the regulating and oversight agencies, ideally by a tax on the corporations extracting our common wealth (a severance tax). All other states with a gas industry, except New York, have such a tax.

- Don't let financial windfalls coming our way cloud our judgment about what is most important: clean air, abundant clean water, and a safe habitat for us and the flora and fauna that share this beautiful place with us.

—Katharine Dodge

Welcome New Members

Suzanne Imran-Ahmed

Ulysses S. Arnold

Joan Austin

Brian Barland

Tom Benson

Grace Bohr

Rebecca Bollinger

Jayne D. Brabrooke

Raymond J. Bush

John R. Carlucci

Livia T. Clark

M. Eggleston

Wayne Ferree

Gayle Field

Jerome E. Giles

Susan Gordon

Peter G. Gregory

John & Carol Haase

Elizabeth Hamlet

H. Hillier

Robert E. Hinkley

Cheryl A. Horvath

Jay Jenkins

Jemille Kearney

Stephen Knopick

Timothy J. Kopp

Mary L. Lasky

Edna Llewellyn

Margaret Mayers

Alice McAfee

Pauline Meinzer

Beverly Murphy

James C. Nolan

Lorraine Ondrako

Marie Ostrowsky

Jeanne B. Peffer

Fred W. Pfeifer

Joe Pivovarnik

Joseph Polansky

Jane Prettyman

Hilda Rauch

Jack Rhinevault

S. Rothman

David C. Rubin

Mark A. Sackadorf

Patricia Salerno

Mrs. A. Shelko

Helen Simon

Christine Slocum

Diane Spry

Palma Toscani

Midori Yamanouchi-

Rynn

Ingeborg H. Yeich

Volunteers Lead Bird Walks

NEPAS volunteers led successful bird walks at two local Earth Day events. About 40 visitors participated in our bird walks at the PPL Environmental Learning Center on Saturday, April 17. Led by Kathy Dodge, Barbara Leo, and Joan Thirion, hikers were treated to 27 species of birds, including osprey, tree swallows, bluebirds, red-winged blackbirds, a sharp-shinned hawk, a pair of common loons, a brown creeper, a double-crested cormorant, a yellow-bellied sapsucker, and a Carolina wren.

On April 24, we led bird walks for the first time at the Pocono Environmental Education Center in Delaware Gap National Park. While MaryAnn Lunniss staffed the information table, Chris Fischer and Joan Thirion led 29 new birders on Two Ponds Trail. A variety of wildflowers were spotted, including wood violets, trout lilies, wood anemones, may-apples, skunk cabbages, wild strawberries, and Hercules' club. Among the birds identified were a northern parula, ruby-crowned kinglets, a bald eagle, and an eastern towhee. The iridescent blue-green tree swallows added to the delight of the day.

—Joan Thirion

Migratory Bird Day 2010

On May 3rd, The Wayne County Commissioners declared May as International Migratory Bird Month in Wayne County. Barbara Leo, Conservation Chair for NEPAS, told the commissioners about the importance of the forests, farmlands, and the riparian areas along the Delaware River in Wayne County in providing vital habitat for our returning neo-tropical migratory birds. She pointed out that many species, including the tiny ruby-throated hummingbird, the scarlet tanager, the wood thrush, and the black-throated green warbler, make the nonstop 600-mile journey across the Gulf of Mexico to breed and raise young in Wayne County. It was the first time that some of the commissioners had heard of the importance of the county to these bird species.

—Barbara Leo

Eco-Notes by E-mail

Eco-Notes is available by e-mail. It appears in the same colorful, easy-to-read format as the paper version, but without the cost, the paper, or the ink. Go to our Web site, nepaaudubon.org, to sign up.

We Cleaned Up!

Marge Brion, our Adopt-a-Highway Coordinator, oversaw the collection of 12 bags of litter and 2 bags of recyclables on April 24th. There was less litter than in years past. Twelve Audubon volunteers picked up the two-mile stretch of Route 191 heading north from Lake Ariel. We thank Marge for her long-time commitment to running this project, and Sharon Lang, Phyllis Terwilliger, Betty Truncale, Barbara & Theresa Hutchins, Kevin & Olivia Funk, Ashlyn Anderson, Bob Campbell, and Kathy Dodge for their hard work this year. A breakfast at the Liberty Restaurant in Lake Ariel was hosted by Audubon following the pick-up.

Olive Baldwin Remembered

NEPAS has received two generous donations in memory of Olive Baldwin, a resident of Honesdale for many years. Mrs. Baldwin, who passed away at the age of 96, was a life-long bird lover, and her family decided donations to the local Audubon chapter were an appropriate way to honor her memory.

Don't Miss the Art & Craft Festival!

The 25th annual NEPAS Art and Craft Festival takes place on July 17 and 18 at the Wallenpaupack Middle School in Hawley. In addition to famous wildlife artists and superb craftspeople displaying and selling their work, we'll celebrate this special year with outstanding wildlife shows and other activities. The Binghamton Zoo, the Pocono Snake and Animal Farm, the Delaware Valley Raptor Center, and the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation will all present programs. There will be bird and wildlife displays, and craft activities for children. Refreshments and food will also be available.

This will be our best Art and Craft Festival ever, so mark your calendars. **Clip the coupon below to save \$1.00 on admission.**

—Jim Sanders



JULY 17–JULY 18
10:00 am to 5:00 pm
www.audubonfestival.com
\$1 OFF ADMISSION WITH THIS AD!

NEPA Audubon Society
PO Box 711
Honesdale, PA 18431



Nonprofit Org.

U.S. Postage

PAID

Honesdale, PA 18431

Permit No. 114

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Phone: (570) 253-9250

E-mail: audubonworks@gmail.com

Web: www.nepaaudubon.org

The date on the address label is the date your national and/or local chapter Audubon membership expires. National Audubon will send you reminders well before your national membership expires.

Editor: Marileta Robinson

Contributors: Katharine Dodge, Carissa Gigliotti, Barbara Leo, Jim Sanders, Joan Thirion

Photo, page 1, by The Green Center Staff

Mark Your Calendars

Saturday, June 19, 8 AM: "Birds & Blooms," Floyd Schnakenberg Memorial Walk at Browning Beaver Meadow. See wildflowers and breeding birds at our Browning Beaver Meadow Sanctuary. Bring binoculars and sturdy shoes. Call Joan at 570-228-1704 for more information.

Sunday, June 20, Noon: Canoe/kayak trip on the Delaware. Covered-dish supper following the trip. Limited number of boats available. Reserve early. Call Pete at 570-253-9250.

Monday, July 5, 7:30 PM: Annual elections. All members encouraged to attend. Wayne County Chamber of Commerce Building in Honesdale.

Saturday, Sunday, July 17 & 18, 10 AM to 5 PM: Annual Audubon Art & Craft Festival at Wallenpaupack Middle School complex. Our 25th year!

Saturday, August 7, 5 PM: Annual Installation of Officers picnic in Lake Ariel. All members welcome. Please bring food! Call 570-253-9250 for directions.

Saturday, Sunday, September 18 & 19: Renewable Energy & Sustainable Living Festival in Kempton, PA. Want to carpool to this fabulous event? Call 570-253-9250.