

# Northeast Pennsylvania Audubon Society

## Eco~Notes

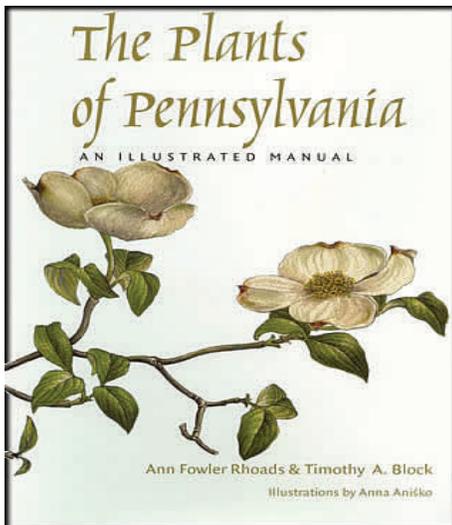
Spring 2013

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Photo by Georgette Pascotto

### Native Plants in the Landscape

Sue Thompson, proprietor of a local native plant nursery, will speak about native plants and how they can be used creatively in our landscapes on Saturday, March 9, at 2 pm at the PPL Learning Center, Route 6, Hawley, Pennsylvania.



Some people might describe native plants as those frequently seen in our landscape. In fact, a native plant is one that existed in a particular location before human immigrants arrived. A plant native to one region of North America is not native to another region unless it originated there without help from us. To find out if a plant is native it's necessary to know its botanical name. A plant may have many common names, especially when it is native to different regions. For example, the botanical name *Amelanchier alnifolia* refers to the serviceberry, also known as juneberry, saskatoon, and shadbush, among other names. Information on native plant species can be found by looking up their botanical names in a variety of readily available resources such as books, the internet, and printed materials from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

There are many reasons to include native plants in your landscape. Native plants have a built-in capacity to handle stress, native plant species require less maintenance, native plants meet the nutrient requirements of native wildlife, and native plants are colorful and attractive! Also, by preserving our native plants, we protect gene pools and biodiversity necessary to sustain and protect all plant and animal species. Recent research from Dr. Doug Tallamy (University of Delaware) states that 90% of our native insects are specialists that feed on three or fewer families of plants. These insects rely on native plant hosts and cannot eat the exotic plants during the reproductive cycle. A reduction of native plants means fewer insects that the birds can feed their young.

Many affordable and lovely native plants exist that will meet your gardening and landscaping needs. One last thing: It is best not to take native plants from the wild. Buy nursery-propagated native plants. This allows our landscapes to continue to flourish with the plant life that is native and natural!

—Sue Thompson

#### 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, paper, or ink. Go to our website, [nepaaudubon.org](http://nepaaudubon.org), to sign up.

#### 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.

## Could your cat be part of the problem?

That's a question all pet owners should ask themselves if they believe their house cats need to be outdoors and part of "nature." A birder and former cat owner myself, I've come to understand the importance of a recent study by the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and the Fish and Wildlife Service. It reports that feral and unleashed house cats in the United States destroy an average of 2.4 billion birds and 12.3 billion mammals a year, most of them native mammals like shrews, chipmunks and voles rather than introduced pests like the Norway rat.

These are unbelievable numbers, but the evidence is there. To protect our birds and other wild creatures, we need to keep our cats indoors, training them as kittens, and providing them with the things they need and like. Free-roaming, or feral, cats are a growing problem due to the Trap-Neuter-Release programs in many of our communities. Feral cats must hunt in order to survive. Feral cats are also a source of rabies and toxoplasmosis, a serious blood disease that is transmittable to humans.

If you love birds and your cat, check this link to the American Bird Conservancy "Cats Indoors" campaign for more information on what you can do: <http://www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/cats/index.html>. You can find more information at our website, [www.nepaaudubon.org](http://www.nepaaudubon.org).

This is something we all need to participate in for the good of the planet and our enjoyment of nature.

—Barbara Leo

## Scholarships Available

**College Scholarship.** The Northeast Pennsylvania Audubon Society offers a \$4000 scholarship to a graduating senior who will be pursuing a degree in an environmental field at an accredited two- or four-year college or university. The scholarship is awarded in increments of \$1000 per year for each year of the degree program. The application form for this scholarship is available on our website, [www.nepaaudubon.org](http://www.nepaaudubon.org), and is due by April 30, 2013.

**Camp Scholarships.** Three summer-camp scholarships are available for teens ages 14 through 17 to attend the Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens, June 23-28, 2013, at the Hog Island Audubon Camp. This will be an intensive 6-day, 5-night program with some of the best known birders and ornithologists leading sessions on field identification, bird-song recognition, and conservation practices. The program is offered for ages 14-17 only. This year, we have a volunteer to drive the recipients to and from camp. An official background check has been

completed on this individual.

The program includes the opportunity to observe Audubon's seabird conservation field research in action, and is the only Hog Island program that lands participants on Eastern Egg Rock during the puffin breeding season. Visit <http://projectpuffin.audubon.org> to learn more.

For more information and an application form go to [www.nepaaudubon.org](http://www.nepaaudubon.org). Applications are due by April 1, 2013. Call MaryAnn at 570-226-4288 with questions.



Find lots more great information about birds, the environment, and upcoming programs at [www.nepaaudubon.org](http://www.nepaaudubon.org). Join us on **Facebook** (search Northeast Pennsylvania Audubon Society) and follow us on **Twitter**: @AudubonNEPA.

## Welcome New Members

Rae B. Albeck	L. F. Cuevas	Anthony Fino	David Kellerman	Lisa D. Popa	John Smith
Mary Belford	Ralph Curtis	Herbert Flavell	Kathryn Klepadlo	Susan Porter	Nancy Stowell
Brian Bianchi	Janice Davis	Gloria Frechen	Annamae Kuklis	Lydia Ritchason	Carolyn Stringfellow
Marianne Bienick	Patricia Day	Nancy Fritz	Therese Lapoint	Marie Ross	Bill & Clara Stubbs
Donald Boone	Lee Anne Dayton	Paula Gannon	Melissa Leonhardt	David Seese	Penny Tooley
Jayne D. Brabrooke	June Dolle	Sheldon Goldstein	Janet Loewe	Virginia Shupp	David Trently
John Braun	Susan Dunning	Richard Hacker	Thomas Majernick	Joe Shyna	Jan Tvaryanas
Irene Brzycki	Mary Eloise Dwyer	Denise Hart	Rita Maushart	Mr. & Mrs. Gino Silvestri	Melissa White
Alfred Cookson	Syvia Eisenberg	Rick Hooper	Eileen E. Owens	John L. Singletary	Nora Worden
Joan Cooley	Paul Ferraro	Patricia Kandrovoy	Steve Polc		

## Field Trip to the Basha Kill Wetlands, May 4

"Great Blue Heron" by Matt Zeitler. Original in color.



The Basha Kill Wetlands, about a half-hour's drive above Port Jervis, NY, is a special place of beauty and adventure. The 3,000 acres are home to more than 200 species of birds, 30 varieties of fish including the prehistoric bowfin, and many plants, reptiles, amphibians, mammals and insects. It is the largest freshwater wetland in southeastern New York and is a peaceful place for bird watching, wildlife viewing, wildflower observation, fishing, boating and photography.

In May many wildflowers are in bloom, including lily-of-the-valley, red trillium, early azalea, lady's slippers, white anemones, wild geraniums, and white dogwood.

May is also the time for bird migration. You may see scarlet tanagers, ruby-throated humming birds, catbirds, Baltimore orioles, over 30 species of warblers, bald eagles, herons, and osprey. Dragon flies and damselflies can be seen, yellow water lilies bloom in the water, little goslings swim behind their parents, American bitterns call in evening, wood ducks are nesting, yellow warblers and redstarts take spider webs to build their nests. You may hear

the whiny call of the peewee and "cher TEA-cher TEA-cher" call of the oven bird from the forest floor.

The Basha Kill is a magical place in the spring. Join us when we go there on May 4, 2013, for a real treat. The last time we went, we found 5 active nests and many birds. Come see what we discover this time. Call Bob at 570-676-9969. For more information visit <http://www.thebashakill.org>.

—Bob Campbell

**Good exercise, good fellowship, good food, and a good feeling**—what more could you ask? Join us to pick up litter along Route 191 near Lake Ariel, PA, on Saturday, April 13, at 9 a.m., and enjoy a delicious breakfast afterwards. Call Marge at 570-253-9599 to sign up.

**CORRECTION:** PLEASE NOTE THAT THE DATE FOR THE BUS TRIP TO BOWMAN'S HILL WILDFLOWER PRESERVE HAS BEEN CHANGED FROM MAY 11 TO **MAY 18**.

### Volunteers Needed for Spring Migration Bird Count

The 2013 Pennsylvania Migration Count will be held on Saturday, May 11, 2013. Although similar to the Christmas Bird Count, the Pennsylvania Migration Count is county-based. We are presently seeking volunteers to help cover Wayne County. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. While observations can be made over a 24-hour period, it's up to you to decide how much time you want to contribute. Results from the count are compiled across the state and published in *Pennsylvania Birds*, our state ornithological journal. If you are interested in participating, please contact Chris Fischer at [cfischer17@gmail.com](mailto:cfischer17@gmail.com) for more information.

—Chris Fischer

### Celebrate Earth Day

The annual Pike-Wayne Earth Day celebration will be held on Saturday, April 20th, from 10 am to 3 pm at the PPL Environmental Learning Center next to the dam at Lake Wallenpaupack. Now in its 15th year, this free event is open to all. Enjoy bird walks led by NEPA Audubon members throughout the day. This year's event focuses on species diversity. There will be opportunities to take on the personalities of mammals, birds, insects, plants, or amphibians using simple costumes or masks that volunteers will help you make. (You are also welcome to come already dressed as a particular species.) There will be lots of other fun activities and entertainment. We hope to see you there! Visit the Earth Day Festival website for updates: <http://pikewayneearthday.wordpress.com>.

—Kathy Dodge

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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: Marge Brion, Bob Campbell, Kathy Dodge, Chris Fischer, Barbara Leo, MaryAnn Lunnis, Sue Thompson, Chris Weigand, Matt Zeitler.

### *Mark Your Calendars*

**Saturday, March 9, 2 PM** NATIVE PLANTS IN THE LANDSCAPE. Learn how invasive plants affect our landscape and how native plants can be used creatively on your property. PPL Environmental Learning Center, Route 6, Hawley, PA. Call Sue at 570-253-4006 for information. Free, no registration required.

**Saturday, April 13, 9 AM** NEPAS ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY LITTER PICK-UP. Join us in a clean-up along Route 191 near Lake Ariel. Free breakfast afterwards. Call Marge at 570-253-9599 to sign up.

**Saturday, April 20, 10 AM-3 PM** EARTH DAY CELEBRATION. A day to honor Mother Earth with programs for all ages, including short bird walks by NEPA Audubon members (we provide the binoculars). PPL Environmental Learning Center, Route 6, Hawley, PA. Call Kathy at 570-253-9250.

**Saturday, May 4, 8:30 AM** FIELD TRIP TO THE BASHA KILL AREA. Join a carpool to explore this beautiful wetland sanctuary near Port Jervis, NY. Call Bob at 570-676-9969.

**Saturday, May 11, 6 AM** INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY. Join a team to look for returning migratory birds. No need to be an expert to participate. Contact Chris at 470-446-9597 or [cfischer17@gmail.com](mailto:cfischer17@gmail.com).

**Saturday, May 18, 7 AM-9:30 PM** BUS TRIP TO BOWMAN'S HILL WILDFLOWER PRESERVE. Guided tour of this 134-acre preserve. Shop at the preserve's Spring Native Plant Sale and Gift/Book Store. Bus to New Hope for lunch.