

ATLANTIC CURRENTS

Newsletter of the Atlantic Audubon Society
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Editor: E. Pristow

As we close the books on our fourth year it is well to briefly review for the members what has been accomplished since a small nucleus of dedicated people first joined together as the Stockton Bird Club in September of 1973. The initial aims of the club were to work for the preservation of the Pomona Heronry and to provide an opportunity for some group enjoyment of birding. When it became obvious that a wider base of support was needed within the community, the decision was made to seek affiliation with National Audubon as a local chapter. In September, 1974 we received our charter as the Atlantic Audubon Society, inaugurating a period of rapid growth which culminated in our winning the Whittell Challenge Grant for the greatest percentage growth of a chapter in the Mid-Atlantic Region.

As our support increased, our efforts in other areas became more dominant with such endeavors as bird identification courses, birding field trips, flower walks, programs on many subjects, and finally into action on environmental issues including preservation of Least Tern colonies, testimony at meetings and hearings, as well as written comments on the recent CAFRA report. Our financial stability has improved considerably since our shaky beginnings with an adequate program including checking and savings accounts, an appropriate bookkeeping system. We also are currently serving as custodian of the Marine Mammal Fund which was set up to handle money donated for care of stranded mammals. All of this is due to all of you who have so loyally renewed your Audubon memberships each year, and we thank you.

As we begin our fifth year as a chapter in September, we ask that each of you continues your support, and we strongly urge that you actively participate in the many activities of the chapter. The more hands available, the lighter the load for each of us. As George Bassett, our third president begins his stewardship and calls on you for help, please try to give him the support needed to keep us growing and expanding our activities.

SUMMER FIELD TRIP

August 5th is the date set for a field trip to Jeffers Landing Natural Area led by George and Carolyn Bassett. For the ambitious ones, bring your bicycles and meet at the Bassetts' home at 8 AM. Address is 328 Poplar Ave., Linwood. Group will cycle to Jeffers Landing (about 4 miles on level ground). The lazy folks can meet at Jeffers Landing at 9 AM and both groups will join at that point. The return cycle trip by way of the Scullville-Steelmanville Road goes through lowland woods and stops will be made to look at some of the flora and fauna along the way.

Directions to Jeffers Landing: Jeffers Landing Road goes south from Rt 559 (also known as River Road) in Scullville. There is a blinker light at the corner. If you have any questions, call George and Carolyn at 927-9095.

ADVANCE NOTICE

It's time to put some dates on your fall calendar - yes, it will soon be meeting time again. Dates are as follows:

September 27 October 25 November 15

A definite program schedule will be announced in September, but plans call for programs on Marine Mammals, Pine Barrens, Audubon Sanctuaries, and other goodies as well as our famous members night in January. Field trips will be announced in September.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

The following people have volunteered to take on some tough jobs. Please offer your help any where you can.

Education: Mark Pokras (temp.)	Finance: Elizabeth Hess
Conservation: John Williamson	Field Trips: Fred Hamer
Programs: Martha Pokras	Membership: Ruth Stamps
Publicity: Marion Johnston	Publications: Ed Bristow

Remember - this is what makes the organization work!!

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT (in June!)

On June 18th, a group of seven hardy souls offered their bodies as a sacrifice to flies, mosquitoes, and ticks, and their eyes and ears to an attempt to do a bird count covering the area of our Marmora Christmas Bird Count. There were 110 species recorded - along with innumerable insect bites. Among the highlights were a late Purple Sandpiper, a Black-billed Cuckoo, a late Pine Siskin, and a good variety of our regular resident birds. Quite a different mix of birds compared to the early winter species during the regular counts.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Once again this year, the Least Tern colonies on Brigantine Island will be monitored and protected by a group under the direction of the Pokrasés. The area will be posted and monitors will be on hand to provide informational leaflets and try to keep people and animals out of the breeding colonies. Atlantic Audubon has provided some of the financial support for this program as well as some back-up as extra monitors. If you are over on Brigantine, stop by to see what a little money and a lot of effort can accomplish.

MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE

By now you all should have received the flyer on the Regional Conference in August. Your editor and others who have been to previous sessions know full well what a marvelous experience this can be, and we urge any of you who can to join with many fine Audubon people from around the region and share an exhilarating time.

Dates: August 25th to 27th Place: Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.
(outside of Harrisburg)

Cost: \$6 registration, \$27 for room and board - six meals and two nights.
This is a bargain any way you figure.

Following the conference itself will be six field trips to various places in the region, including one here to South Jersey. Our chapter will serve as hosts and guides. If you think you can help and have not already volunteered your services, contact Jim Akers at 266-7859. Jim is serving as coordinator.





ALASKA LANDS

First the good news - the House of Representatives has overwhelmingly passed the Alaska public interests lands bill H.R. 39. Now the bill faces considerable opposition in the Senate with the threat of filibuster by the Senators from Alaska. Your voice needs to be heard now - write to Senators Case and Williams urging them to support this bill without any weakening amendments. There will NEVER be another chance to save this areas many valuable ecosystems once they are open for exploitation. We have had great difficulty in the lower 48 states in trying to recover after areas have been open, with great cost to the taxpayer. Hopefully we can do this one the right way. Many of those pushing for lessening of the restrictions are primarily interested in the financial returns to accrue, with little consideration of the need for something of the spirit. Please help - WRITE!!!

NEWS ITEMS

Large fines were levied against the helicopter service involved in the eagle killings in Texas which were reported in our January Newsletter. The judge who heard the case had indicated that the law might be changed to allow this kind of activity. When his views were published in the local papers, he received much mail arguing persuasively against such a viewpoint according to his own report. Hopefully, this will lead to some more intelligent approaches to the problems of the natural actions of predatory birds and animals.

Project Puffin, now in its fifth year on a small island in Maine waters will hopefully have its first nestings of returning birds. The first island-hatched birds returned last year and the hope is that they will begin nesting this year.

When the Alaska Pipeline was under fire years ago, one of the charges was that it would cause an excess of oil on the West Coast leading to trans-shipment to Japan. This charge was vehemently denied by the oil companies and the other interested parties involved in the pipeline. Now we are told that a permit will be issued to export residual fuel oil to Japan because it is not needed in the West due to the heavy rains producing high levels for hydroelectric power. Homeowners and taxpayers take note!

Elvis Stahr, current president of National Audubon Society has tendered his resignation to the Board of Governors to take effect upon the selection of his successor. By making this move now, he hopes to allow the board time to carefully select the leader for the next decade and to concurrently chart Audubon's course for this same period. This was done when Dr. Stahr took over in 1968 and has led to a great many accomplishments along with tremendous growth during his term in office. His successor will have some mighty big shoes to fill. The search committee will begin working on this in the very near future.

MAILINGS

Remember to let us know if you change your address. Since this newsletter goes third class now, it will not be forwarded nor returned to us and we will have no way of knowing this until we get a complaint.



BOOK REVIEWS

The World of Roger Tory Peterson by Devlin and Naismith. Here is a very enjoyable look at the father of the Peterson Field Guides and the man who made birdwatching the popular sport it has become. While telling the story of his life, it provides a fascinating look at the many fields of natural endeavor with which he has been involved - Audubon, Lindblad cruises, bird and animal art, etc. Highly recommended as a pleasant way to while away the warm summer days.

Coming Into The Country by John McPhee. The author of the book on the Pine Barrens takes a look at that marvelous land which is Alaska. Told from the point of view of some of the field workers as well as by portraits of some of the varying inhabitants of Alaska, it provides some very different viewpoints of what Alaska is all about. While hardly a definitive work on this great state, it does provide some stimulus for thought concerning the future-development of Alaska. Recommended.

A PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

After 2 years of serving as president of Atlantic Audubon Society, I have developed some perspectives on the nature of the job. The responsibilities fall mainly into two areas: facilitating the growth and "clout" of the organization through action on issues and challenges, and making sure that everyone with chapter responsibilities is doing his or her job.

It has been my privilege to have the support of a hard-working group of chapter leaders who carry out their responsibilities with efficiency and good humor. This has left me and the board with time and energy to deal with some pressing issues and to watch with pleasure as our membership has skyrocketed. Atlantic Audubon is a growing and dynamic force for conservation and environmental education, and the credit belongs to many, many people.

Six times a year, Ed and Pat Bristow spend days creating this newsletter. It is an immense task and represents great devotion to our Audubon cause. With help from Charley, Carol and Barbie Bristow and other chapter members, they get the newsletter folded, stapled, stamped, addressed, and mailed. Dave Rhodes handles the detail of printing Atlantic Currents. The Bristows help in many other ways as well, and the work they do for the chapter is invaluable.

The friendly face you see behind the Audubon patches, bumper stickers, and wildflower guides at program meetings is my hard-working vice-president, Sherri Hamer. She is a real "behind the scenes" worker and has quietly and cheerfully handled the small details that no one notices when things go right and everyone would notice if they ever went "wrong". The tall guy she hangs around with is our field trip chairperson Fred Hamer. Fred has served in this capacity for two years and will coordinate the field trip schedule next year. This is a tremendous job and one which Fred has done splendidly. An outstanding (and inexpensive) artist in his own right, he also ran our first very successful Art Show in 1977 and is already busy on the next one to be held in November.

Joe Delesantro, Jr. has just completed a three year stint keeping the books for Atlantic Audubon. A fine treasurer, he has also helped the chapter by organizing clean-ups and educational exhibits. He will always be one to count on when there is hard work to be done.



Perhaps no one has done more to facilitate my job this year than Nora Delesantro. As secretary she always provides me with a neat, complete, and prompt set of minutes for each board and program meeting. She also writes personal thank-you notes to each of our speakers and handles other chapter correspondence as well.

June Carlton needs no introduction to those of you who have enjoyed her flashy style of conservation announcements at program meetings. There is real substance behind that flash, and June has fired up all of us this year with her willingness to work hard for legislation and policy which will result in a healthy environment.

Keeping track of chapter membership requires real organizational skills, and Ruth Stamps is a natural. Her membership committee meetings are famous in part for the magnificent goodies she provides, but also for the careful and detailed work she does keeping our membership information up to date. Ruth has served our chapter in many ways over the past few years, but a major contribution has to be the greeter-name tag policy that makes people feel welcome at meetings.

Of all Audubon activities, our program meetings are the mainstay of our identity as a chapter. George Bassett has provided us with an exciting mixture of educational, entertaining, and issue-oriented programs. He has twice offered his course "Exploring a Natural Area" to familiarize members and the public with Jeffers Landing and to provide revenue to the chapter. George's sensitivity to our interests and his dedication to Audubon promise strong leadership in the coming years.

The popular Bird Identification Course was offered again this year by Mark Pokras whose charming personality (so who's objective?!) and infectious enthusiasm make the course worthwhile and fun. As education chairperson, he has worked especially hard (with Jerry Schonleber) on protecting the endangered Least Tern, and on educating people about the birds' problems.

Have you heard a field trip or program announced on the radio or read about our meetings in your local paper? Quiet but persistent, Shirley DeMill has done a dynamite job as publicity chairperson for the last three years. Her efforts keep us and the public informed as Audubon reaches out to generate interest in environmental issues.

Atlantic Audubon board members serve on committees, staff exhibits, brainstorm, and share their ideas and enthusiasm at board meetings. June Bancroft, Sky Dawson, and Jerry Schonleber have served in this capacity this year and have built a strong foundation of commitment to the Audubon cause.

Who is the "voice behind the cookies"? Each month this year Diane Newcomb hastalked to some of you who have volunteered to bring baked goodies to program meetings. Our thanks to Diane and all of you who provided the fine confections and baked goods. Getting hot water for coffee at Stockton is not as simple as it might seem. Lester Block has anticipated the changes in academic schedule that determine when and where we get our coffee water each month. Lester will continue his involvement with Audubon by serving on the board next year.

The list is long and still incomplete. Others (you know who you are) have given of themselves regularly or occasionally, when the need was critical. We are fortunate to have so many people willing to give their time and energy to Audubon.

As you can see, the president's job is only the most visible one. The shared responsibility, satisfaction, and fun belong to each of us. As George anticipates challenges, he will be calling on all of us to help out. My experience has been one of great support and I'm confident that we will continue to function as a broad-based and responsible voice for our environment.

/s/ Martha Pokras

ATLANTIC AUDUBON SOCIETY

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