

The Bluebird

Newsletter of the Prince George's Audubon Society

PGAS is a local chapter of the National Audubon Society

June-August 2013



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President's Perch

Carolyn Sturtevant

Transitions. Weather changes, leaves appear, warmer temps bring insects to support migrating birds, and flowers attract butterflies. Transitions happen to us, also: proms, graduations, weddings, summer vacations, retirement, and relocation. The last two, retirement and relocation, are my personal transitions this spring, and I'm claiming graduation also, since it's the culmination of a rich learning experience that began in September 1991 with an internship at the Library of Congress in DC.

Where am I going? Back to my childhood home just south of Erie, Pennsylvania. I've seen that kind of loyalty to place among the wrens, chickadees, cardinals, robins, and catbirds banded in my yard in recent years by the Neighborhood Nestwatch program. They are faithful to the same yards and/or boxes for as many years as they live. Clever birds—they don't collect stuff the way I do! No need to box up this year's twigs for next spring's nest.

Maureen and I recently looked through some boxes of Prince George's Audubon Society archives. We recycled some, but kept a few boxes of materials that preserve some of the history of our club. I've been a PGAS member not quite 22 years, but while looking at the notebooks, photo albums, and newsletters in our archives, I recognized many accomplishments of our Audubon chapter:

- Hosting program meetings for the public on birds and all sorts of topics
- Welcoming birders at any level of experience to field trips year-round
- Pooling the talents and strengths of PGAS and the MOS Patuxent Bird Club
- Reporting observations from May, Fall, Christmas, and Mid-winter Counts
- Participating in Maryland's second Breeding Bird Atlas
- Advocating for birds and the health of the environment

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Audubon's Mission Statement: To conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

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President's Perch.....continued from page 1

- Publishing *The Bluebird* to inform members of programs and events
- Initiating web pages and Internet messages to reach the online world
- Attracting our near neighbors with publicity in local newspapers
- Educating the public through table displays at community events

We can be proud of such a list, but like me, you're probably drawn to Audubon membership also for friendships: chatting over refreshments at meetings, honing your field skills, swapping stories on the trail, discovering new places, hearing and seeing life birds, witnessing the wonder of bird migration season after season and year after year with others who share the excitement.

I'm grateful that when my transition takes me north this season, I'll renew friendships in the Presque Isle Audubon chapter. Please continue the Audubon tradition here. Watch for me to appear from time to time—we migrants are loyal to the places we've called home!

Upcoming Monthly Meetings

Member-Share Night:

Photos, Stories, and More

presented by members and attendees

7:30 pm - Tuesday, June 11, 2013

College Park Airport Annex

1909 Cpl. Frank Scott Drive, College Park, MD 20740

Join members of the Prince George's Audubon Society and the Patuxent Bird Club of the Maryland Ornithological Society as they share their favorite nature/bird/wildlife photos (10, give or take) and stories or favorite gear, tip, app, etc. at this yearly informal evening. Member or not, bring *your* favorite photo(s) or sit back and enjoy those of others. Digital projector and laptop are available. Open free to all who are interested. Refreshments. Our clubs have some great photographers, so don't miss their favorites. Bring a friend. For more information, call Maureen at 301-262-5148 or see www.pgaudubon.org.

Stay Tuned....

for our 2013-2014 line-up of a variety of topics and speakers! What and who would you like to see and hear? Don't hesitate to let us know. Just call Maureen at 301-262-5148 or email her or any board member listed on the cover to suggest your ideas. Then, mark your calendars for the 2nd Tuesdays, September 2013-June 2014, kicking off on September 10.

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Upcoming Bird/Nature Walks

PGAS-sponsors Saturday morning bird walks to two natural areas of the Patuxent River Park co-managed by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and PGAS and one at Lake Artemesia Natural Area:

Fran Uhler Natural Area

Lemons Bridge Road, Bowie, MD

This park features miles of trails through mature woodlands and open water wetland that can host migrant warblers, Barred Owls, and the occasional Yellow-crowned Night Heron.

Dates: First Saturdays monthly (June 1, July 6, August 3, September 7)

Time: Meet in the parking area at the end of Lemons Bridge Road (off of 197) at 7:30 am. No reservations are needed.

Contact: Bill Sefton (kiwisuits@msn.com)

Governor Bridge Natural Area

Governor Bridge Road, Bowie, MD

This park offers a wide variety of habitats along the Patuxent River – mature riparian woodlands, second growth scrub, open grassy fields, and small ponds and creeks.

Dates: Third Saturdays monthly (June 15, July 20, August 17, September 5 and 19)

Time: Meet in the parking lot at 7:30 am. This is about 1 mile east of Route 301. No reservations are needed.

Contact: Bill Sefton (kiwisuits@msn.com)

Luther Goldman Birding Trail

Lake Artemesia Natural Area

Berwyn Heights, MD

This 2.2-mile paved birding trail with interpretive signs about Luther, the trail and lake's creation, and the mammals, fish and birds that might be seen there, loops around the 38-acre lake and alongside Indian Creek. Open water, wetlands, wood edge, riparian forest, and meadow offer opportunities to see a wide variety of resident and migrating songbirds, waterfowl, and raptor flyovers in different seasons. Binoculars recommended.

Dates/Times: Join us at **6 pm 1st and 3rd Thursdays** June 6 & 20, July 4 & 18, August 1 & 15; & at **3 pm** September 5 & 19 through winter. Meet at the parking lot at Berwyn Road and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations are needed.

Contact: David Mozurkewich of the Patuxent Bird Club (301-459-3375 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net)

Monthly Bird Walks

Sponsored by Old Bowie Wild Bird & Nature Store

Dates/Time: 2nd Sundays monthly. Meet at store (8700 Chestnut Ave, Bowie, 20720) by 7 am to carpool. You will return to the store by 12 noon. You may also meet at the sites.

July 14 ~

August 11 ~

September 8 ~

October 13 ~

Contact: Meghan First (301-464-2663)

Slate for Election of PGAS

Officers and Board of Directors

The following slate is announced for the election of officers and directors of the Prince George's Audubon Society for 2013-14. The slate will be presented for consideration at the June 11 annual meeting. All current members of the National Audubon Society are eligible to vote or run for office. Nominations are welcome from the floor that evening, or can be called in to 301-262-5148 before the meeting.

OFFICERS:

President: Maureen Blades
Vice-President: Meghan First (Incumbent)
Treasurer: Bill Sefton (Incumbent)
Secretary: Lynette Fullerton

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Mike Sampson (Incumbent)
Teresa Watson (Incumbent)
Bob Elvander (Incumbent)
Beth Kantrowitz (Incumbent)
Sharon Williams
Larry Williams

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HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Our chapter is happy to announce several milestone anniversaries:

The Luther Goldman Birding Trail

- The Luther Goldman Birding Trail, a cooperative venture of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC), The Luther Committee (friends and admirers of Luther Goldman), and the Prince George's Audubon Society, celebrated its **5th birthday on May 19**. The trail was **dedicated that lovely spring evening 2008**, on a grassy knoll overlooking Lake Artemesia with special guests, friends, and the family of Luther in attendance. Luther, a pioneer national wildlife refuge manager; renown wildlife photographer; long-time College Park resident; nature tour leader; beloved member of our chapter, the Patuxent Bird Club, and other local bird clubs; PGAS field trip leader for many years; nature tour leader; and gentleman extraordinaire died at age 95. A birding trail at Lake Artemesia Natural Area – an urban park where Luther birded almost daily – was chosen by The Luther Committee as a fitting homage. M-NCPPC approved funding, including signs along its route about Luther – the man, his life and his work – birding tips, the creation of Lake Artemesia, as well as the mammals, fish, and birdlife to be found there. The bird checklist was created primarily from Luther's records of his sightings there.

- **The Inaugural Bird Walk on May 24, 2008**, was proposed by local Berwyn Heights resident **Jack Saba**. That very Saturday, Jack, also a regular birder at Lake Artemesia, led the first group to bird on Prince George's County's first – and only - newly dedicated birding trail.
- **Regular Mid-Week Bird Trail Walks** at were proposed by **Dave Mozurkewich** of the Patuxent Bird Club (PBC), the PG County Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society, and he offered to lead them. Another regular birder at Lake Artemesia, Dave originally thought twice/monthly early morning bird walks would be popular, but since some were in place at the time, his idea morphed into the popular Mid-Week Evening Bird Walks at 6 pm on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays year-round. That was June. With the coming of fall, and the sun setting earlier and earlier, the present-day schedule evolved – 3 pm from September-April and 6 pm from May-August. At our May 11, 2013, joint program meeting with the PBC, PGAS President Carolyn Sturtevant presented a **Certificate of Appreciation to Dave in recognition of his selfless dedication and countless hours as Bird Walk Leader of the Luther Goldman Birding Trail at Lake Artemesia Natural Area Park for 5 years!**
- **The Bird Checklist** of Luther's sightings at the lake was augmented by sightings by Mike Donovan, Jack and Dave, and celebrates its **6th birthday!**

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HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

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Governor Bridge Natural Area

The May-August 2003 Bluebird announced: “New Series of Nature Walks off to a Good Start.” In cooperation with M-NCPPC, a 2nd series of monthly walks started on Governor Bridge Road in Bowie, at what was then known as the Izaak Walton Area, meeting the 3rd Saturday of each month with exceptions then that are no longer. All PGAS bird/nature walks are now year-round, courtesy of our PGAS inveterate bird leaders. “On April 19,” the trip report goes, “a hardy group of 10 braved the threat of rain for this first walk. The rain ceased and the group, led by Mike Quinlan and Jane Fallon, was rewarded with views of a rare American Bittern, Common Loons aloft, Bald Eagle, Blue-headed Vireo, Hermit Thrush; early Ovenbird, Redstart, and Prothonotary Warbler; Black & White, and Palm and Parula Warblers in addition to commoner species. Native wildflowers were also on display, including spectacular bluebells along the Patuxent flood-plain. **Happy 10th birthday, GBNA Bird Walks!**

Fran Uhler Natural Area

In introducing the new walks above, the same article announced that PGAS was offering those walks as a 2nd series “supplementing the 14-year series of bird/nature walks at the Fran Uhler Natural Area.” Those bird/nature walks have another year to wait for their big anniversary, but FUNA missed a big one last year. **On May 2, 1987**, Governor Parris Glendening, PWRC wildlife biologist Francis Morley Uhler, MNCPPC staff, and many hardworking PGAS members and other volunteers were on hand to celebrate the massive clean-up and nature trails that resulted in the **dedication of the Fran Uhler Natural Area**. Our chapter “adopted” the Fran Uhler Natural Area under the National Audubon Society’s Adopt-A-Refuge program. **Happy 26th birthday, FUNA!**

As Carolyn said in her *President’s Perch*, we can be proud of our Audubon traditions that have enriched so many lives.

Bird Trip Report

Speaking of the FUNA, here are excerpts from an email from Carolyn on her May morning there:

Fran Uhler Natural Area and Horsepen
Saturday, May 4, 2013

Fourteen of us had a pleasant day at FUNA and Horsepen on the field trip. A breeze and cool weather kept mosquitoes at bay.

Saw or heard about 60 species, with a modest amount of migrants. Parula was the most ubiquitous warbler, and Marcia identified a Worm-eating Warbler by song. Some saw a Summer Tanager. Most unusual: Tom Turkey down near the swamp, displaying his tail feathers for an extended period of time while we watched from a distance, where he was unaware of us. Also had Pileated Woodpecker(s) in and out of nest hole in snag near the FUNA parking lot.

Kurt and Terry came for their annual May trip, and Kurt reports that his mom, Lea, is hale and hearty. They brought their friend Steve from Laurel. He provided his email address for the PGAS activities/program distribution list. I emailed him the PGAS link and info about the Neighborhood Nestwatch project.

Editor’s Note: Lea is Lea Knapp, an officer and active board member who worked hard on the PGAS clean-up, transformation and dedication of FUNA. No longer living in our area, her son Kurt joins us every May and reports back to her of his outing and sightings.



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IMPORTANT

We thank the Park and Planning staff of the Natural and Historical Resources Division+ and staff of the College Park Airport for their hospitality and assistance this past year, and for accommodating the joint programs of PGAS and the Patuxent Bird Club, MOS, at the College Park Airport Annex.

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), our gracious host these many years, is planning a remodel and expansion of the historic College Park Airport Office, starting time not yet determined; thus, our meeting place at the Annex may change. Check www.pgaudubon.org for updates - and to keep abreast of scheduled programs, field trips, bird walks, and other activities.

Upcoming 2nd Tuesday Meetings

- September 10
- October 8
- November 12
- December 10 ~ Annual Holiday Social

Membership Application

Join the **National Audubon Society** for an introductory rate of \$20.00 and receive these benefits:

- Four issues of *Audubon* magazine
- Membership in the local chapter (PGAS)
- This PGAS newsletter, *The Bluebird*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Please make checks payable to National Audubon Society and mail to:
 PGAS, P.O. Box 1658, Greenbelt, MD 20768-1658

Prince George's Audubon Society Chapter C2ZL010Z

