

Book step on guides, motor coach, birding, and wildlife tours now by contacting:

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Hollidaysburg, PA 16648



Alleghenies Adventures

This spot in our quarterly newsletter is used to list the great variety of guided adventures in the Allegheny Tourism Region sponsored by Waxwing Associates and our partners. This list brings you a wide range of activities your family or group may enjoy. All adventures listed are open to the general public, most of them free. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the trip leader. The list is in date order of occurrence.. See Winter 2007 Newsletter for March adventures.

April 18, 19,20—Skyline Drive

Juniata Valley Audubon is sponsoring a weekend trip through Maryland, West Virginia, and Virginia with scenic stops along the way such as Deep Creek State Park Maryland, Seneca Rocks West Virginia, and Skyline Drive Virginia along the Blue Ridge Summit. Leaving Altoona Friday night and returning Sunday night. Trip includes van transportation and 2 overnights. Reservations and costs available from Terry Wentz call 814- 693-6563.

April 22—Hemlocks vs Adelgids: Threat to Hemlocks

Penn State ecologists Carolyn Mahan will discuss her experiences with mitigation of damage to hemlocks by the woolly adelgid in the Shenandoah National Park of Virginia. Monthly meeting of Juniata Valley Audubon at Alto Rest Chapel across from Wal-Mart Altoona—7 PM.

May 10—International Migratory Bird Day

Stan Kotala will lead a hike around Canoe Creek State Park to observe more than 100 species of birds using the park as a stop off place during their annual spring migration to nesting grounds. Meet Canoe Creek Education Center 8 AM, east of Hollidaysburg.

May 20—Wild Pennsylvania

Photographer Mike Gadomski will present a multi-media tour of Pennsylvania's wild natural areas. Talk is based on the book of the same name by Gadomski and Richard Whiteford. Juniata Valley Audubon program at Alto Rest Chapel across from Wal Mart, Altoona—7PM.

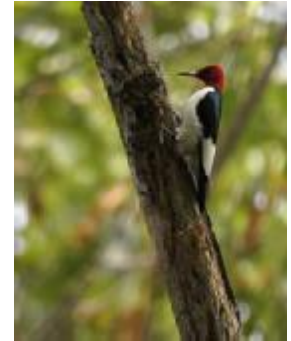
May 25—Bat Basics– 7:45 PM Canoe Creek State Park

First bat watch of the season at Canoe Creek State Park. See emergence of almost 20,000 bats after sunset and learn amazing facts about these night creatures. Meet Heidi Boyle, Park Naturalist at Pavilion 1, Canoe Creek State Park, Hollidaysburg.

May 26—Kayak Tour 6:30 PM Canoe Creek State Park

Evening paddle around Canoe Creek Lake. Call park office 814-695-6807 for details.

June 17—Eagles Here and There– Todd Katzner, Pittsburgh National Aviary will present a slide show about eagle tracking projects in Central PA. Juniata Valley Audubon annual covered dish picnic at Canoe Creek State Park Pavilion 2. Program at 5 PM in Education Center with picnic at 6:30 PM.



Red headed
woodpecker

**Get out and enjoy
Central
Pennsylvania
through out the
seasons. The
Alleghenies has
lots to offer.**



Alfarata Trail Head
Lower Rail Trail
Alexandria, PA



Blue bird breakfast
Angela Wright photo

Waxwing Newsletter

WAXWING
ASSOCIATES LLC

Volume 3, Issue 1

Return of the Bald Eagle

Pennsylvania's nesting bald eagle population has been on the rise in recent years to the status where it is now classed as threatened both in Pennsylvania and nationally instead of endangered. As recently as 1980 the state's known nesting population numbered 3 pairs; from 1997 to 1999, nests doubled from 20 to 43. This nesting recovery has continued and has surpassed the 100 mark in 2007.

Bald eagles are among the largest birds of prey and may weigh up to 14 pounds with a wing span of 7 feet. They are most readily identified by their white head and tail; however, they don't attain this characteristic until 5 years of age. Until that time, they are dark brown with varying amounts of white mottling and can be confused with golden eagles. They don't begin mating or nesting until age 4 or 5.

Bald eagles are found throughout North America, most often around water where they catch and scavenge fish, other carrion, and live small animals as prey. Don't be surprised if a bald eagle is seen along a road feasting on a road kill deer or other animal recently hit. They nest in large trees near water and normally produce 1 to 3 eaglets per year. Adults continue to use the same nest year after year building on top until it appears as large as a tree house.

Non-breeding adults may be found across the state any time of the year and may hang out at one location for months at a time. In the winter dozens of bald eagles congregate at open water locations on rivers or lakes that do not freeze because fish are readily available for food. One such location is Huntingdon County's Raystown Lake where annual winter surveys are conducted with a record number 14 sighted around this 8300 acre lake in 2007. For the past couple of years 3 nesting pairs have successfully fledged eaglets. Needless to say this has become a major tourist attraction for this Army Corps recreational park.



Waxwing Nature Tours Are Here for Spring

Waxwing Associates is offering complete Nature Tour packages in the Alleghenies Region of Central Pennsylvania beginning in April. Packages are all inclusive with hotel accommodations, lunches, transportation, and are led by an expert guide. These weekend tours are offered once a month with a wide variety of topics and opportunities to observe and learn about wildlife.

Wildlife topics will take advantage of what's happening at that particular time of the year. Some examples include spring bird migrations, nesting birds, bat observations, elk bugling, and fall foliage.

All tours are by reservations and must be fully paid in advance. Prices start at \$150 per person, double occupancy.

HERE'S WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA:

**April 18, 19, 20—Skyline Drive
Virginia, Maryland, & W. VA.**

**May 16, 17, 18—Spring Wildlife
Tour—Birding & Wildlife,
Lincoln Caverns, Shaver's
Creek E E Center, & Elk
Watching.**

**June 18 & 19—Bats & More
Canoe Creek bats, birds, and
frogs.**

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**PLEASE NOTE: GUIDES
DO NOT PROVIDE**

BINOCULARS

**PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN
BINOCULARS AND
BIRD IDENTIFICATION
FIELD BOOKS**

Coming in next issue

June 2008:

Bats and more

Home of the Elk

Composting

Aliens are here

Living with Skunks Courtesy National Wildlife Federation

As Travis Quirk tells it, not everything is black and white when it comes to skunks. One example, you have to work hard to get a skunk to cut loose with its pungent spray. Quirk should know, he's studied the striped skunk over the past four years near Manitoba's fabled Delta Marsh. And while he has handled hundreds of wild and captive skunks, Quirk has been doused only a few times.

"They're quite timid creatures and they would rather run and hide," says the University of Saskatchewan graduate student. "Most of the time if you stand still, they warn you off before they spray. Moreover, they go through some predictable routines before they spray." First, he relates, a skunk does a "handstand" with its tail erect. Next, it stomps its feet—loudly. If this doesn't work, the animal scratches the ground and shuffles backward.

"If you're still perceived as a threat," Quirk continues, "a skunk may charge. But it's only a bluff." The animal usually will stop 5 or 6 feet away and do the stomping and scratching bit again to encourage you to retreat. As a last measure, it will twist its body into a U-shape so the anus is pointed at the intruder. "That's where the spray comes from and this is your last chance to back off. Fast!"

It's an old folktale that bathing a pet dog in tomato juice will neutralize the stink of skunk spray. Chemist William Wood explains that the powerful tomato odor binds your nasal receptors and for a while you smell the tomato juice, not the skunk juice, but the illusion is only temporary. The remedy used by skunk researchers is a mixture of 1 quart of 3 per cent hydrogen peroxide, 1/2 cup of baking soda, and 1 tablespoon of liquid dish soap. The potion turns the skunk spray odorless when applied to a surface. For a house, just open the windows and air out.

Birding Guides Available

Waxwing Associates has a staff of expert birders available to seek out any of the bird species in the Alleghenies. We are able to cater a 2 hour outing to an all day event including transportation from a local motel. We have the capability to plan an entire tour for van size to motor coach size groups including transportation to the Alleghenies, motel reservations, meals, and of course expert guides.

RATES BY GROUP SIZE:

Van size groups

Minimum: 10 people / 2hours

\$150 plus transportation, amenities.

Motor coach groups

Maximum:

50 people/ 2 hours

\$350 plus transportation & amenities

For detailed information contact :

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Raystown Eagles

Spotlight on Central Pennsylvania

Raystown Lake

Recreation Area

With its 118 miles of shoreline; 8300 acres of clean, clear water; and 30 miles of lake there is plenty of room to enjoy all types of water activity. Eight launch ramps are available for boaters, picnic pavilions for rent, lots of picnic areas, a swimming beach, and weekend events at the Seven Points Amphitheater. Also numerous campgrounds in the park, 2 resorts, and vacation housing rentals throughout the area provide a wide choice of places to stay.

Visit the Raystown Lake Visitor Center in the Seven Points Recreation Area to help plan your trip. See web: www.raystown.org



Terry Wentz, Owner
Waxwing Associates