



The Biweekly Newsletter for the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology

Thursday, January 22nd, 2026

With the winter chill settling into January, more of us are watching our feeders to get our daily dose of birding. (To those of you who are out despite temperatures in the negatives-- kudos to you!)

Every version of birding is valid and valued here. Now warm up with a cup of coffee or tea and read through some of this weeks updates!

If you have photos to share or any questions or comments about the newsletter, email me at:
kaitlynstouch@gmail.com.

Happy birding!

-Kaitlyn Stouch

The PSO Pileated Editor

This edition's banner photo is courtesy of Tom Norville. The photo was taken on 6/17/23 at Salt Springs State Park in Susquehanna County, PA.

PSO January Webinar TONIGHT!



**Birds and People: Pigment Parallels and
Perpendiculars**

7 PM January 22nd, 2026 via Zoom

Hosted by: Nina Jablonski and Bryce
Robinson.

Register here:

[https://psu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kO
Y34cHSR0-X4nYPCZZjtw](https://psu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kOY34cHSR0-X4nYPCZZjtw)

To view a full list of all our upcoming Webinars, visit [our events page on our website](#).

Award and Scholarship Nominations Due REMINDER



Photo by Doug Baird

Nominations for PSO's 2026 awards are due by **February 15**. We appreciate your consideration and nomination of deserving individuals and/or organizations.

The **Earl Poole Award** is presented annually to a person or persons who have made significant contributions to Pennsylvania's ornithology. This may be in the form of research, volunteer efforts, publications, field work, or any other pursuit that has increased our knowledge and understanding of the birdlife in Pennsylvania. To nominate someone for this award, please visit [this webpage](#). Past winners of the award can be found [here](#).

The **Conservation Award** is presented periodically to an individual or organization that has had a positive impact on bird conservation in Pennsylvania. To make a nomination for this award, [click here](#). Past winners of the award can be found [here](#).

[Email any questions to Carolyn Hendricks.](#)

Youth Scholarships are available to attend the 2026 PSO Festival in Blair County, June 19-21, 2026. The scholarships cover transportation, lodging, and meals for a child and parent/guardian. Please note that a parent/guardian or an adult designated by the youth's parent guardian must attend the festival with the scholarship recipient. To nominate someone for a youth scholarship, [please visit this link](#) to fill out the brief application form.

[Email any questions to Joe Gyekis.](#)

Avian Action Alerts



1. SPEAK UP TO PROTECT OUR SHOREBIRDS AND SEABIRDS TODAY

The Trump administration recently proposed a huge expansion in oil and gas drilling in protected areas along the coasts of California, Alaska, and Florida. That's in addition to offshore areas already being pumped for oil and natural gas. The Department of the Interior is now taking public feedback on the draft 5-Year Offshore Drilling Plan. This is your chance to protect coastal birds, coastal ecosystems and communities from threats like pollution and deadly oil spills.

[TAKE ACTION](#)

2. ENHANCING WILDLIFE HABITAT: Brush Pile and Snags

Songbirds use brush piles for perching and for shelter. We've seen birds flock into a brush pile when a Blue Jay sounds an alarm that a predator is nearby. Snags are a favorite of many woodpecker species since they feed on the insect larvae in the dead wood and create cavities for nesting in snags. Learn how to build brush piles and create snags by reading this short article.

[LEARN MORE](#)

3. GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT (GBBC) FEBRUARY 13 – 16, 2026

Spend time in your favorite places watching birds. Identify all the birds you see or hear, count them, and submit your counts to help scientists better understand and protect birds around the world. Watch birds for 15 minutes or more, at least once over the four days. You can even watch observations come in from all over the world since each submission becomes a glowing light on the Bird Sightings Map. If you already use eBird or Merlin, your submissions over the 4 days automatically count toward the GBBC.

[PARTICIPATE](#)

4. SEND A CANDY GRAM FOR VALENTINE'S DAY THAT SUPPORTS BIRD CONSERVATION

Send your favorite love bird a Valentine's Day Candy Gram that brings together hummingbirds, chocolate, and support for bird conservation. Place order by February 5 to include a personalized,

handwritten Valentine's card. Cost is about \$20.00. Each purchase helps the Environment for the Americas' (EFTA) work in conservation. EFTA provides a lot of educational resources for World Migratory Bird Day on their website: <https://migratorybirdday.org>

[ORDER HERE](#)

-Laura Jackson, PSO Conservation Chair
<https://pabird.org/contact-laura-jackson>

2026 PSO Breeding Bird Blitz for Conservation: Applications Open for Conservation Partners- Due March 1st



Osprey Butler Co Moraine by Jeanette Green

The Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology (PSO) is excited to announce that applications are now open for organizations interested in becoming 2026 Conservation Partners through this year's Breeding Bird Blitz for Conservation. We are thrilled to continue this annual tradition of raising funds for bird conservation and are eager to collaborate with nonprofit organizations dedicated to conserving Pennsylvania's Bird Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

Since 2021, the PSO Breeding Bird Blitz, together with our conservation partners, has raised \$92,318 to help fund 15 conservation initiatives across the Commonwealth. In 2025 alone, we awarded a total of \$25,000 to our three Conservation Partners. For 2026, we will consider applications for projects requesting up to \$10,000 in funding. We are excited to offer this much support to impactful, on-the-ground conservation projects for Pennsylvania's birds through the Breeding Bird Blitz.

To learn more about the Breeding Bird Blitz for Conservation, visit our website at <https://www.breedingbirdblitz.org>. If your organization is interested in applying to become a Conservation Partner, please complete the application available at <https://www.breedingbirdblitz.org/b4c-application>.

Even if you personally do not plan to apply, you may know an organization that would be a perfect fit. We encourage you to share this opportunity with local bird clubs, conservation groups, and nonprofit partners in your local community. Your help ensures this funding reaches projects that will make a real difference for bird species in need.

And don't forget—team registration for the Breeding Bird Blitz opens in April! In addition to our Conservation Partners, we rely on volunteer teams to participate, raise funds, and enjoy a great week of birding. If you are not a part of a project to apply to be a partner, you can always support bird conservation by forming a team! More information about the Blitz and the team competitions can be found on our website.

-Karter Witmer

Festival Sponsorship Opportunity Reminder

The 2026 PSO Birding Festival will take place June 19-21, 2026 at the Blair County Conventions Center. This year marks the 35th PSO Festival and its first visit to Blair County, an area rich in summer birding opportunities and ornithological history. The event will feature field trips led by local experts, speakers, and vendors with everything a birder needs: optics, books, art, and more. Sponsorship opportunities are available as detailed [on our website](#). Sponsorships may be paid through the PSO website at <https://pabirds.org/festival-sponsors/>. Or send a check to PSO, 2469 Hammertown Rd, Narvon, PA 17555-9730

Sponsorship payments must be received by March 31, 2026 to ensure inclusion on Festival materials.

For more details about sponsorship levels and more, [click here](#) or contact PSO President Brian Byrnes at brianjbyrnes79@gmail.com.

2026 County Spotlights-Save the Date

 Huntingdon County Birding Spotlight  March 13-16, 2026 	 Fayette County Birding Spotlight  April 24-27, 2026 	 Potter County Birding Spotlight  October 16-19, 2026 
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Our [County Spotlights](#) are PSO-organized weekend field trips to lesser-birded counties in Pennsylvania. Be sure to save the dates for our 2026 County Spotlights! Graphics by Tony Desantis.

Organization Information

To email a PSO officer or Board Member, click on the name below.

Officers

President – [Brian Byrnes](#) (Delaware)

Vice-President – [Carolyn Hendricks](#) (Bedford)

Secretary – [Sheree Daugherty](#) (Allegheny)

Treasurer – [Franklin Haas](#) (Lancaster)

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Newsletter Editor

[Kaitlyn Stouch](#) (Centre)

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[Mark Bonta](#) (Blair)

Mailing Address

PSO
2469 Hammertown Rd
Narvon PA 17555-9730

[View more info on our organization members here](#)



Did you Know...

We are on social media! We have a Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and even a Discord server for our members and friends. Make sure you join us on whatever your preferred platform is to get daily updates and chat with other birders around the state.



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