

BIRD-WATCHING IN PENNSYLVANIA

Good day everyone. . . it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

In the beginning was the Word--and shortly after that, came the bird. Man came somewhat later, and with the coming of man into a world teeming with birds, there inevitably sprang up what surely must be the world's first hobby. . . birdwatching! Against any area of the world conducive to birdwatching, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania ranks high. Pennsylvania is large enough to embrace a variety of climates, with a Canada type zone extending from the central part north and a somewhat milder, southern type zone extending south from that central part. This diversity makes its contribution to the large variety of birds to be found here. The fact that Pennsylvania is mostly a place of woods and forests--this fantastic sylvania becomes a veritable paradise for those who watch birds--the amateur or the ornithologist. One fact of truly magnificent hobbying dominates the scene in Pennsylvania--the annual hawk migration along the western face of the Kittatinny Ridge; probably the prime avian spectacle in the United States. They come in the autumn when the foliage is flaming, and the western winds are freshening. By the thousands they funnel into Eastern Pennsylvania, wheeling and floating by--fleet falcons, majestic eagles, accipters, buteos--each making use of favoring updrafts. This is certainly the most impressive sight in Pennsylvania bird-watching. Pennsylvania is in the forefront of states showing an awareness of the value of providing sanctuaries and refuges for birds. Let me list a few places: Cook State Forest Park

presents warblers and thrushes, and the ruffed grouse, Pennsylvania's State Bird is found there. Wagner's Gap near Carlisle provides hawks and eagles. Waterfowl come in the spring of the year to Columbia along the Susquehanna; there one can see impressive flights of swans numbering thousands of birds through March and April. At Presque Isle, Erie, a great migration of water-fowl, summer birds and shorebirds takes place. The non-profit Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, known throughout the world in its preservation of birds of prey offers delight from August through November. And at the western Pymatuning State Game Refuge are all varieties of transient birds year round. Pymatuning is the place, too, where the ducks walk on the backs of fish--fighting each other for bread thrown from a bridge. There are many other places for bird-watching in Pennsylvania; the well-known Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia; Pittsburgh's Frick Park; Reading's Lake Ontelaunee and the Poconos, which offer all-year bird-watching in northern-type bird-life. The entire northern tier of Pennsylvania provides constant bird-life. Enjoy man's oldest hobby in Pennsylvania--bird-watching; and those good things like hiking, dreaming and contemplation, which go with it.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.