

July 11, 2011



PARK PICKS
by
FRIENDS OF THE ALLENTOWN PARKS



Join us today! Become a member and help make Allentown's great park system even better.



Allentown to Receive Special Designation by Pennsylvania Audubon Society

If you joined **Friends** on the May **Discovery Walk** through Trexler Park ("Birdwatching for Beginners") you saw and heard the presence of many wonderful birds. Thanks to the efforts of Allentown's parks staff in maintaining environments which attract birds, and, Allentown residents for planting native trees, plants and shrubs and respecting bird habitats, the Pennsylvania Audubon Society is honoring Allentown as the first Pennsylvania city to be designated a **Bird Town Community**.

While the program is primarily about ways to attract birds, that's not all. Tangible benefits we as Allentown residents and visitors receive are numerous:

- Improved quality of ecological systems
- Economic development and higher property values
- Cleaner water and air
- Reduced maintenance costs and time
- Vastly increased resources for native birds and native insects
- A safer, more rewarding place to live, work and play

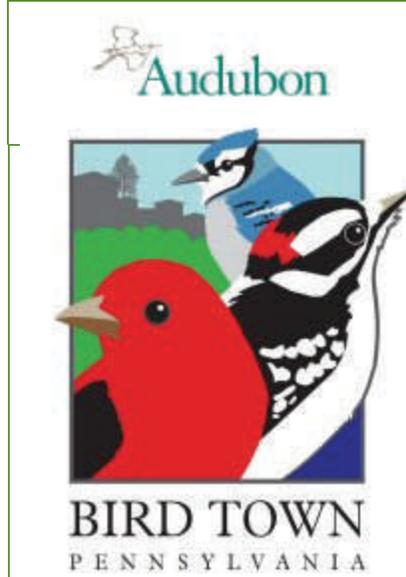
And, our actions on landscapes and efforts to make our homes greener assist to minimize environmental impact.

So, why focus on birds? Birds provide the most visible and measurable indicators of an area's environmental health. How many of us are pleased to see the first Robin, an indication that spring is just around the corner? Or that first Junco (aka "snowbird") to predict the first snowfall? How many of us participate in the Audubon Christmas Bird Count and the Great Backyard Bird Count? Or look forward to seeing PPL's Peregrine Falcons? A beautiful Goldfinch or busy Blue Jay certainly captures our attention.

Pennsylvania is in the "Atlantic flyway" for millions of migrant birds (check out the Snow Geese which flock to fields in the west end of Allentown in fall) or Baltimore Orioles in spring. Pennsylvania is a breeding ground for 16% of the world's Scarlet Tanagers, 10% of the world's Worm-eating Warblers and 9% of the world's Wood Thrushes.

Habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation are leading causes of declines in bird population which also impacts other wildlife and plant communities. Approximately 2.1 million acres of wildlife habitat nationwide are converted to residential use every year. As a result, our own backyards need to provide resting, nesting and refueling stations for our most common bird species as well as those on their long migratory travels.

Friends of the Allentown Parks is pleased to spearhead implementation of the **Bird Town** initiative. Working with local residents and businesses, **Friends** in partnership with the Pennsylvania Audubon Society, the Lehigh Valley Audubon Society and others will provide information you need to create conducive habitats. By planting



native plants and registering your property with Audubon, valuable information will be gathered about your "bird habitat" and you and your family will become key players in the world of bird conservation!

Friends of the Allentown Parks wishes to recognize and sincerely thank **PPL Corporation** for providing the opportunity for this collaboration and great honor.

For more information:

Friends of the Allentown Parks: <http://www.allentownparks.org>

Bird Habitat Recognition Program: <http://pa.audubon.org/habitat>

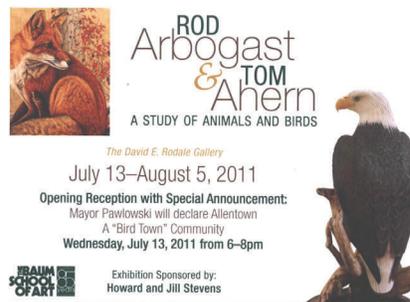
What Plant for Which Bird? www.pabirdplants.org

Birds to Help: <http://www.audubonathome.org/birdstohelp>

Calculate your ecological footprint at Designing with Natives: www.dwt.net

Discover the Lehigh Valley Audubon Society: <http://www.lehigh.edu/~bcmo/lvas/index.html>

Bird Town Announcement by Mayor Ed Pawlowski and Reception



Date: July 13, 2011

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Baum School of Art, 510 Linden St., Allentown

Free and open to the public.

Exhibit: Rob Arbogast & Tom Ahern: A Study of Animals and Birds

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Interested in these and other Friends programs? Have suggestions for future issues of Park Picks? Please contact us. Ideas are always welcome. See you in the parks!

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