

REFLECTIONS IN NATURE

Bill Bower



The white-breasted nuthatch is also known as the upside-down bird.

On the Sunday before deer season, I went to Camp Babylon, in Potter County. Before daybreak, I left the cabin and it was very cold but as the sun rose high enough to get above the mountain peak the warm rays felt good. Although I didn't see any deer, I did spend time watching the dynamic duo. In case you think I've lost it, I'm referring to the white-breasted nuthatch and the brown creeper. My calling these birds the dynamic duo comes from the nuthatch starting at the top of the tree and descending down the trunk in a spiral path, while looking for the insects and eggs buried beneath the tree's bark. The other half of the duo, the brown creeper, starts at the bottom of the tree and ascends the tree in a spiral movement while looking for the same food. What one bird misses the other bird finds.

The scientific name for the white-breasted nuthatch is *Sitta carolinensis*. *Sitta* comes from the Greek work *sitta*, which was used by Aristotle for a bird that pecks at the bark of trees. The species name means of Carolina. This nuthatch spends most of its life in large trees, as it hops over the bark and main branches. Since the nuthatch is usually moving in a downward direction it is also known as the upside-down bird or devil-down-head. The white-breasted nuthatch is the largest of North American nuthatches, being five to six inches long and a wingspan of up to eleven inches. The sexes appear the same, with blue gray above; black cap and nape, and white on its belly, sides of face and neck. This nuthatch does not migrate. The family unit breaks up in the fall. Although a mated pair remains together throughout the year, during the winter months, they separate but remain in their breeding area and are always within calling distance of each other.

During fall and winter months, the white-breasted nuthatches eat mostly nuts, and in the spring and summer months, they feed heavily on insects.

The nest, which is in a natural cavity of a tree, is lined with shredded bark, hair and feathers. The female lays on the average of eight white eggs, with brown and red markings. Both sexes incubate the eggs that hatch in 12 days. About 14 days after hatching the young will be flying.

The other part of the dynamic

duo is the brown creeper, and its scientific name is *Certhia familiaris*. The genus name is Latin and comes from the Greek work *kerthios*, which means the tree creeper. The species name comes from the Latin word *familia*, which means domestic or common.

The brown creeper, which is found from the Atlantic to the Pacific, is the only member of the creeper family found in North America. Its pattern of brown feathers, with hints of white, camouflages the bird with the bark of a tree, making it very difficult to detect. The brown creeper is about five-inches long and has a wingspan of up to 8 inches. Both sexes are outwardly alike, brown above with white speckles and streaks; a white line above the eyes; a slender and down-curved bill and a long tail, with stiff feathers at the end that are used to prop the bird up when climbing. The brown creeper has a distinct habit of going up a tree trunk and on reaching the top, flies down to the base of the next tree and repeats the process. It explores the tree trunk and the bottom of branches, in search of insects and larvae. The brown creeper's diet consists mainly of a variety of insects and larvae. During the winter months, the brown creeper will also feed on a small amount of seeds and vegetable matter. This creeper uses its slender, and down-curved bill to glean invertebrates, mainly insects and spiders, from furrows in the bark. They creep slowly with their body flattened against the bark, probing with their beak for insects.

Little information is known about the brown creepers' mating behavior; however, because no cases of polygamy have been observed, it is inferred that the brown creeper is monogamous. The female lays 5 to 6 eggs and is responsible for the incubation lasting 14-17 days. Both sexes tend to the altricial young for 13-17 days after hatching. The young are immobile, helpless and blind when born and need extra care from their parents. Nestlings presumably are fed only insects.

The brown creeper is often considered a year-round resident throughout its breeding range; however, northern and high-altitude populations migrate. It is territorial during the breeding season, but during the winter months, this bird often joins mixed-species of foraging flocks and roosts communally with other brown creepers.

I marveled at the abilities of these two bird and was sorry when they moved out of my sight. Next week, I will write about the green plants I saw in the drab woods.

Wellsboro Boys Defeat Canton

The Wellsboro boys basketball team defeated Canton 75-33 on December 11.

Scoring for Canton: Matt Berryman, 8; Ridge Moore, 8; Byron Matthews, 5; Bruce Comereski, 5; Logan Route, 3; Jeremiah McClelland, 2.

Lady Trojans Lose To Tioga

The Lady Trojans basketball team lost to Tioga on December 12 by a score of 43-32.

Scoring for Troy: Sam Gentile, 22; Madison McClelland, 4; Roxanne Kingsley, 4; Carla Proto, 2.

SUNRISE, SUNSET

Here are the times for sunrise and sunset for the coming week, localized for Canton's longitude:

- December 17, 7:28, 4:38 pm
 - December 18, 7:29, 4:39 pm
 - December 19, 7:30, 4:39 pm
 - December 20, 7:30, 4:40 pm
 - December 21, 7:31, 4:40 pm
 - December 22, 7:31, 4:41 pm
 - December 23, 7:32, 4:41 pm
 - December 24, 7:32, 4:42 pm
- There will be 1 less minute of daylight Dec. 24 than Dec. 17

Lady Warriors Defeat Troy

The Lady Warriors basketball team earned its first victory of the season, defeating their traditional rivals, the Lady Trojans, 59 to 46 on September 8 at Troy.

Scoring for Canton were Lizzy Tymeson with 18 and Gabby Tymeson with 17; Alexa Roy, 13; Shea Roupp, 5; Joelle Urban, 1.

Scoring for Troy: Sam Gentile, 30; Roxanne Kinglsey, 6; Carla Proto, 5; Marissa Bulkley, 2; Caitlyn Hoffman, 2; Madison McClelland, 1.

Northeast Tops Lady Trojans

On December 10 the Lady Trojan basketball team lost to Northeast, 51 to 35.

Scoring for Troy: Sam Gentile, 17; Carla Proto, 5; Marissa Bulkley, 4; Roxanne Kingsley, 4; Autumn Gilbert, 2; Stephanie pazzaglia, 2.

Northeast won the JV game by a 42-15 score.

Warriors Boys Lose In Overtime

The Canton Warriors boys basketball team lost in overtime to Montgomery, 50 to 47 on December 14.

The teams were tied at 37 at the end of regulation, thanks to a Warrior rally that overcame a six-point deficit in the fourth quarter.

Scoring for Canton: Ridge Moore, 13; Jacob Aumick, 9; Byron Matthews, 9; Rusty Howard, 5; Kobe Walker, 5; Bruce Comereski, 3; Jeremiah McClelland, 2; Matt Berryman, 1.

Troy Boys Defeat Canton

The Trojan basketball team dealt their rivals from Canton a 70-51 loss on December 9 in a game played at Canton.

Scoring for Troy: Anthony Deitrick, 14; Nate Martin, 13; Jah Wallace, 10; Clark Jackson, 10; Seldon Rogers, 10; Sean Mosher, 8; Alex Butcher, 3; Ben Ward, 1; Phil Dixon, 1.

Scoring for Canton: Ridge Moore, 13; Byron Matthews, 10; Matt Berryman, 6; Jeremiah McClelland, 6; Auguste Gum, 5; Jacob Aumick, 4; Rusty Howard, 2; Malachi Washington, 2; Seth Robbins, 2; Kobe Walker, 1.

Twin Tier Antique Tractor Asso. To Hold Christmas Club Party

The Twin Tier Antique Tractor and Machinery Assoc. Inc. will hold its annual Christmas Club Party on Thursday, Dec. 17th at 6 PM in the Stoll Bldg. A short club meeting will be held before the party starts.

Please bring a dish to pass. Water, soda, coffee, paper products and plastic silverware will be provided.

An auction of donated items will be held with the proceeds benefiting the club. If possible, please donate 1 or more items to the auction.

They hope to see many of our club members there.

Wrestling Results From Penn College

Facing some of the best competition on the East Coast at the Nittany Lion Open last Sunday, eight of nine Penn College wrestlers went 0-2 in their matches, however, Tanner Leid, Terre Hill, went 1-2 in the 165-pound weight class after losing a decision, winning by medical forfeit and then losing on a technical fall. Also for Penn College, Ben Doll, of Glen Rock, lost by decision and fall at 125; Aaron Doll, of Glen Rock, lost by fall and technical at 133; Ron Smith, of Belleville, New Jersey, lost on a pair of technical falls at 149; Mason Replogle, of New Enterprise, dropped decisions at 149; Dan Frankenfield, of Dushore, lost by fall and major decision at 174;

Connor Route, of Canton, lost by fall and technical fall at 184; Pat Fitzgerald, of Port Royal, lost by technical fall and fall at 197; and Zach Kane, of Higganum, Connecticut, lost by falls at 285.

"We had a couple of guys who were wrestling well, and a position here, a position there possibly could have gotten a win. I was definitely looking for more of that but we were wrestling some of the best people in the country," coach Schuyler Frey said. "... A couple of guys actually said afterward, 'I know what I've got to do and I know I can do it (as far as improving).' We're happy with that result," the coach added.

OUTDOORS WITH JIM COLLINS



The Joys of Rabbit Hunting - Part III

My hunting career started with hunting rabbits and maybe bumped a stocked

pheasant or two. We hunt small game in a small group; five was the limit in those days and many times three hunters was the best that we could muster.

That type of hunting is probably the best way to start a young hunter into the joys of hunting. Hunting small game is never boring; one is moving although quite slowly and shots are usually frequent. When I started deer hunting, it was not long before I got cold and often bored with nothing happening. I know some other older hunters who have shared those same feelings with me.

My goal is just two rabbits for my daily limit even though the legal limit is four. Two rabbits make me a nice crock pot meal as Mrs. Collins for same strange reason is not fond of rabbit meat. Putting a positive touch on this situation, I just consider that there is more for me to eat.

The taste of wild game or fish starts with proper preparation right after the kill. I have a technique which works well for me and insures a great tasting rabbit. Immediately after the kill, I skin the rabbit; then gut it. After that

Troy High School Sports For The Week

- GIRLS BASKETBALL**
- Dec. 18 - At Wellsboro, 7:30 pm
- Dec. 19 - Towanda, home, 7:30 pm
- Dec. 21 - at N. Penn/Mansfield, 7:30 pm
- Dec. 22 & 23 - Montoursville Tournament
- Varsity Wrestling**
- Dec. 17 - at Athens, 7 pm
- Dec. 19 & 20 - Donegal Tourn.
- Dec. 22 - Sullivan, home, 7 pm
- Junior High Wrestling**
- Dec. 17 - at Athens, 6 pm
- Dec. 22 - Sullivan, home, 7 pm
- Boys Basketball**
- Dec. 16 - Sayre, home, 6 pm
- Dec. 18 - Wellsboro, home, 6 pm
- Dec. 23 - Towanda, home, 7:30 pm

chore is down, I look around for any water to clean the carcass. Then I hang the carcass in a small tree for about five minutes. One can watch the steam coming off the meat as it cools properly. If I am fairly close to my vehicle, I will put the carcass in a plastic bag and take it back to a cooler that is always packed for the hunt with a sandwich. If I am not close to my vehicle, I will simply put the skinned rabbit in my game bag. I seldom wait for more than one hour before getting the rabbit back to the cooler.

Once home, I take the rabbit and quarter it and completely clean it of any remaining hair or wounds. Then the rabbit goes into a covered pot of clean water with salt. It sits either on the back porch or refrigerator overnight.

The next step is the cooking. I like to cook the rabbit pieces in boiling water with a cut up onion for about 15 minutes after the water comes to a full boil. After cooking, let the rabbit pieces cool to the touch. The next step is to debone the pieces and cut them up into about one inch cubes. Then I take some mushroom, onion and maybe celery soup and cook the rabbit pieces on low in a crock pot for 3 to 4 hours.

The taste of a rabbit cooked this way is great. I have tempted many folks over the years into at least trying one piece. Most ask for more. Mission accomplished!

Jim Collins is an outdoor writer for this newspaper. To contact him, email jimcollinsinsurance@frontiernet.net; or write to him at *Outdoors With Jim Collins, 87 Windfall Road, Alba, PA 16910.*

Canton High School Sports For The Week

- GIRLS BASKETBALL**
- Dec. 17 - at Sayre, 6 pm
- Dec. 19 - Williamson, home, 6 pm
- Dec. 22 - Liberty, home, 6 pm
- Boys Basketball**
- Dec. 16 - at Wyalusing, 6 pm
- Dec. 18 - Sayre, home, 6 pm
- Dec. 23 - at Williamson, 6 pm
- Varsity Wrestling**
- Dec. 17 - Towanda, home, 7 pm
- Dec. 19 - Donegal Tournament

Troy Boys Whip Northeast

The Troy boys basketball team defeated Northeast 71-56 on December 11.

Scoring for Troy: Clark Jackson, 17; Nate Martin, 14; Jah Wallace, 14; Alex Butcher, 8; Sean Moser, 8; Anthony Dietrick, 7; Seldon Rogers, 3.

Troy also took the JV game 59-38. Seldon Rogers led Troy with 23 points.

Canton Borough

Canton VFW Post #714 donated funds for the Police Department to acquire four more body cameras and another taser.

Mr. Bastion gave the Street Department report. He said the new leaf vacuum "works great. It saved us a lot of time and is much easier to use."

The Borough sold the 2011 Dodge Ram through Muncibids for a final price of \$48,900. This exceeded expectations. Last month Council had awarded the bid to finance the new 2016 Ford F550 (which costs \$69,593.25) through Chemung Canal Trust Company; however, the sale of the Dodge brought in enough money that only some \$20,000 was left to finance. Mrs. Seeley said "We originally expected to finance about \$40,500. It doesn't make sense to borrow [now]." She recommended that Council retract its acceptance of the Chemung Canal bid, which Council did unanimously.

The Borough is looking for a leak at the pool, which has drained almost all of the water that was left in at the close of the season.

Mr. Jannone gave the fire department report. The 2016 contract will be unchanged. The current year is expected to run a small surplus. He commended the fire department for projecting its 2015 budget so well.

VFW Post 714 also donated money to purchase some equipment for the Borough Emergency Management office.

Paperwork has been submitted by the Shade Tree Commission for "Tree City USA."

Council set these wages for 2016 (all 2.5% increases unless noted): Police: Chief Seeley, \$52,629.61; Plus clothing allowance; No night shift differential pay, overtime, call out or holiday pay; Sergeant Kurtz, \$15.76 per hour, Plus clothing allowance, overtime, call out pay, holiday pay and night shift differential pay Full time Officer, \$14.45 per

hour; Plus clothing allowance, overtime, call out pay, holiday pay and night shift differential pay

Street (wages plus uniforms, overtime, call out pay and holiday pay) Kurt Bastion, \$17.12 per hour; David Groover, \$12.69 per hour;

Borough Secretary-Treasurer-Administrator, Amy C. Seeley, \$39,875.27; No overtime, call out or holiday pay

Part Time Employees -- Police: All part time officers, \$14.09 per hour, No benefits; Plus uniforms and equipment (to be returned if they leave employment)

Street: All part time positions, \$12.08 per hour, Plus uniform jackets

Code: All part time positions, \$12.08 per hour.

Seasonal Recreation Employees Pool Manager, \$9.15 per hour; Head Lifeguard, \$8.20 per hour, same as 2015

Lifeguards (Returning), \$7.43 per hour; (New and sub) \$7.25 per hour, Same as 2015 (current minimum wage for municipal employees)

Council approved a 2016 budget with Total Revenues of \$821,358 for all funds and Total Expenditures of \$832,309 for all funds.

Ordinance 585 was approved fixing the tax rates for 2016 at the same level as 2015. "This should make everybody happy," Mr. Robertson said.

Mrs. Seeley was authorized to contact the following appointees to see if they wish to be retained in those positions: Vacancy Board Chairman, Will Holmes; Borough Authority Board, John Mosser; Planning Commission, Carl Sutton; Zoning Board, Jerry Schmidt; Shade Tree Commission, John Mosser.

Refreshments were served at the conclusion of the meeting.

As this was Mrs. Thompson's final meeting, Mr. Robertson expressed his appreciation on her years of service on Council.



On Friday December 4 the Canton Elementary School enjoyed America's most popular character education assembly! Each year All for KIDZ(r) encourages over 2.5 million students across the United States, Canada, the UK, New Zealand and Australia. This show has also performed 11 times at the White House.

The NED Show Mission: To motivate and encourage students to become Champions at school and in life. The Ned Show uses positive behavior interventions to partner with the school in an effort to maximize instructional time and help students achieve more academically.

In this 45 minute assembly, they communicate the NED message and stress an anti-bullying theme with humor, audience participation, magic, and world class yo-yo tricks, in order to share the story of the character NED®, whose name is also an acronym: Never Give Up, Encourage Others, Do Your Best®.



Never Give Up, Encourage Others, Do Your Best®.

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