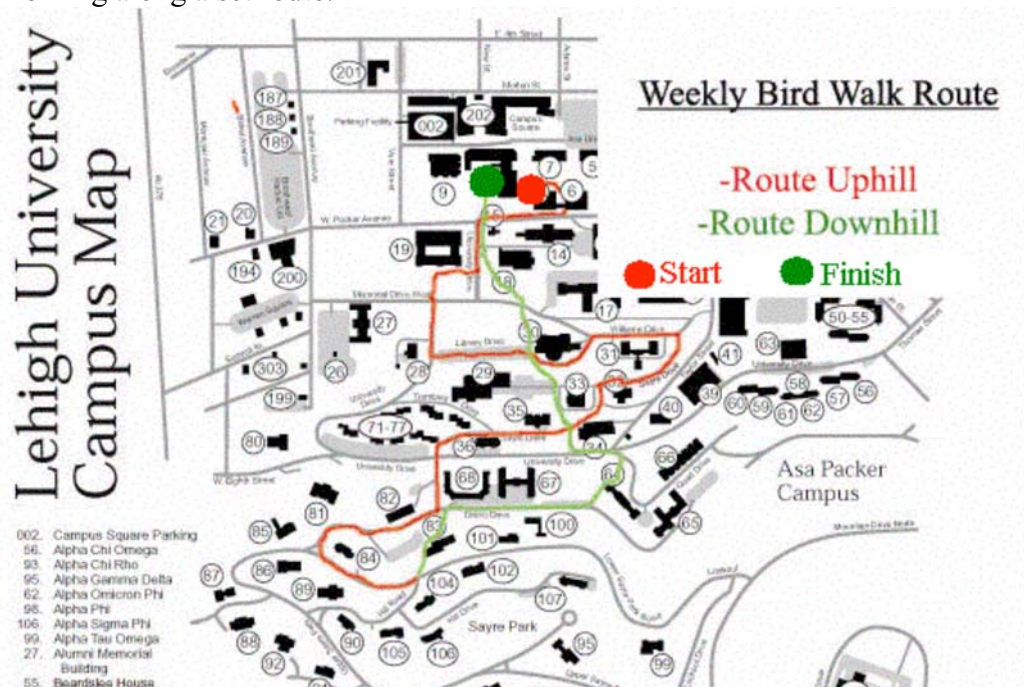


LEO internship: Mountain Hawks and Migration

The goal of this project was to raise awareness among Lehigh University's human population of the diverse bird population on campus and the amazing migrations they undertake. An increased appreciation for wildlife is needed, especially in today's world of more and more complex technology, which tends to distract us from the natural world. In an attempt to increase this appreciation in our college home, we utilized a variety of methods. Although a good amount of work was done on the project this semester, a great deal remains to be done in future semesters. As new generations of students come to call Lehigh their home every year, this project will never truly be finished. Ideally the work will become more interpersonal as the website advances, and this semester has shown how far it could go. Our efforts did bring birds into the consciousness of students who had previous been unobservant of the birds around them, and it also provided current birders with more information about campus species.

The biggest project of the semester was the bird walk taken every Wednesday morning along a set route.



Since the goal of the project was to increase awareness on campus of the birds around campus, Lehigh's Asa Packer campus was the location of all the field work. We chose areas that are commonly trafficked by students to give an idea of what can be seen by a Lehigh student in day to day life. The walk began at Fairchild-Martindale Library and worked its way up the hill until reaching Lower Sayre Park Road. It then led down behind Taylor College, down the steps by Drinker House, and continued until it concluded upon return to Fairchild-Martindale Library. During these walks, we kept a tally of the birds that were seen and heard. A large number of the birds were seen from a

distance or not seen at all and their calls or songs proved a wonderful identification guide. The list of recorded birds found its way onto the website as a page entitled “a semester of Lehigh birds”. This page included an explanation of the walk and route, a list by day of the birds seen, and comments about both the daily weather and implications of the specific species sited. The weekly results portray a nice picture of bird fluctuation on campus, with advancing spring bringing on a more diverse and numerous bird populations. These walks also let us to realize that some birds commonly seen on campus were missing from the campus bird guide constructed in the previous semester, such as a Cooper’s Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Common Grackle, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. The necessary additions to the website were made.

A page directly relating information about bird migration was also added to the website, seeing as Lehigh has such a large population of migratory or semi-migratory species. The information on this page is just a few examples of the fascinating feats of migration accomplished by North American birds. The information and pictures on this page were taken from a USGS source and were accordingly cited.

Also, in order to bring the awareness of the website into new realms, posters were made that gave information about specific and randomly chosen birds. These flyers had information about the website at the bottom, and they were placed in the dorms by the gryphons. We also added a discussion board to the website, that will aid Lehigh bird observers in sharing their questions and observations.

There are hundreds of birds on campus, and on a daily basis they pass before hundreds of students without being noticed. There is no quick way to make students, faculty, and staff take note of the species around them. The best that one can do is hope to attract a few people’s interest and have the awareness grow from humble beginnings. By utilizing a variety of methods this semester, we hoped to attract as much attention as possible to the project and its goals. The website is an invaluable resource, and the posters placed in the dorms were intended to expose more people to the existence of the website. The weekly bird walks also generated some curiosity from students and a good record for anyone interested in seasonal bird population changes. In the future, these same methods could be continued. There is a wealth of information that it is possible to add to the website, and ideally in the future weekly bird walks would be open to students, faculty, and staff on campus for hands-on communal birding.