

Mid-Atlantic Region

A virtually unstudied bird, the vultures of Gettysburg National Military Park are finally getting their scientific picture taken. The study effort involves the National Park Service, Pennsylvania State University, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, the University of Blacksburg, Va., and the Eastern National Parks and Monuments Association. The latter contributed \$7,000 to the study.

Interpretation at the Park describes the battle carnage that originally drew vultures to the scene. Current studies of the black and turkey vultures, now an institution at the site, aim at determining the winter and summer ecology of the birds—why they continue to use the park. Tony Wright, a wildlife management major at PSU, is heading the study as part of his graduate work. Hal Greenlee, natural resource management specialist at Gettysburg NMP, calls the relationship between the vultures' presence and the 1863 Battle of Gettysburg "still speculative," but notes that it would be reasonable to assume that vultures would have come to the site if the animals killed there were left unburied.

Four new publications now available from MAR's Division of Natural Sciences are: "Rare and Endangered Plant Species Within the New Jersey Portion of the Delaware Water Gap NRA," "Trees for Urban Parks: A Guide for Selection and Culture of Trees in Northeastern Cities," "Interpretation of the Landscape in Independence NHP," and "Population Characteristics, Habitat Utilization, and Feeding Habits of the Feral Ponies, Sika Deer, and White-tailed Deer Within Assateague Island National Seashore."