

THE BELTED KINGFISHER

Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society, Inc.
Founded 1968 P.O. Box 544, Oneonta, N.Y. 13820

Volume 39, No. 6, June 2007

Editor — Bob Miller

COMING ACTIVITIES

- June 9 Basswood Pond State Forest. Birds and Trails with Tom Salo. Page 4.
June 16 Riddell State Park Bird Walk with Andy Mason. Page 3.
June 23 Grasslands Bird Walk - N. Otsego and Montgomery Counties with Bob Donnelly. Pg4
- July 31-Aug. 3 DOAS Summer Day Camp See page 5.
Aug. 21 Board Meeting at home of Andy Mason. Potluck supper at 6 PM.
- Sept. 18 Board Meeting at Stephen Rice's home.
Sept. 21 General Meeting. Renee Walker will speak on Zooarcheology. Meeting is at Elm Park Methodist Church , 401 Chestnut, Oneonta at 7:30 PM. Free and open to the public.
Oct. 6 Fall Sanctuary Open House
Oct. 16 Board Meeting at Tom Salo's home.
-

DOAS field trips are open to the public. Participants should meet at the stated time and location — please be prompt We encourage carpooling — please help with expenses if you are sharing a vehicle. Most trips include a moderate amount of easy walking; leaders will note any strenuous hiking. Please expect to provide your own food and drink unless a food stop is indicated. In case of bad weather, check with the leader about cancellation.

BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED

Elected at the May meeting to the DOAS Board of Directors were the following people.

For the 2007-2009 term: Cheryl Boise, Gerianne Carillo, John Davis,
Bob Donnelly, Stephen Rice, Joe Richardson.

President's Column

When

you receive this newsletter, the breeding and gardening seasons will be in full swing. Summer isn't our most active time. We elect Directors at our May general meeting then the board takes a 2 month break from meetings. This isn't as much of a break from business as in the past. The board E-mail list-serve keeps us in constant communication.

Even though we hold several events in summer, the end of spring seems to me to be the end of our activity year. At this time, I want to reflect on the successes of the past year.

Looking back, we've done a lot. There isn't space to mention everything but here are a few of the highlights: A one day Dragonfly Survey last summer drew an enthusiastic group; The Conservation Committee spent countless hours on issues surrounding birds, bats and wind power; 24 volunteers spent over 90 hours looking for Short-eared Owls in the Jordanville Project area; Our hawk counters, who spent more than 800 hours on the mountain, were honored at a dinner in January; Our public programs were entertaining and educational, except when the weather wouldn't cooperate; A variety of field trips were led by skilled naturalists; We devoted ourselves to researching the New York migratory paths of Golden Eagles; We hosted NYSOA's annual meeting in late September; We published 10 newsletters; Our annual Open House and Charter Dinner were both successful; We cleaned up the Milford State Forest, again; and, we promoted wildlife and habitat at numerous public events.

We also improved our electronic communication. We created an E-mail newsgroup to inform members of our activities (<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/DOASnews>). Our web site (www.doas.us) expanded. It is now being updated regularly. You can find our calendar and back issues of the Kingfisher there. The site also contains reports on our conservation and educational activities.

It takes the efforts of many volunteers to make this all happen. Thanks go out to all of you who helped DOAS have such a successful year. This includes our great Board of Directors. They work well together. Each and every one pitches in. I'm also very pleased at the number of regular members who volunteered their time doing everything from stuffing envelopes and cleaning the barn to staffing tables and leading field trips.

A special thanks goes out to Lisa Gorn as she leaves the board. Lisa has a deep, abiding respect for life and nature. She was a major influence motivating the board to involve members in activities. She intends to remain involved with DOAS on several levels. I'm glad she will still be contributing but I will miss her counsel both at board meetings and during the rides we often shared.

... Tom Salo

North Country Wind Projects

An area in Clinton and Franklin Counties with high average wind speeds has drawn the interest of the wind power industry. Our studies of the Golden Eagle migration through New York suggest this area may concentrate eagles during both spring and fall. At least 4 wind power projects are moving forward in this region north of the Adirondack Park.

DOAS Conservation Committee members examined the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for one project in the Towns of Chateaugay and Bellmont and found it lacking. Very little effort had been made to assess the raptor migration through the area. The project's avian consultant wrote that Golden Eagles were "very rare" in the area around the project. However, they did almost nothing to verify this claim. The few days of raptor migration surveys they conducted missed the time period when most Golden Eagles are moving.

DOAS submitted comments on the project detailing why we believe Golden Eagles concentrate there in migration. We called for more thorough studies which should include the time period when Golden Eagles migrate. Our comments can be read at our web site - www.doas.us.
...Tom Salo

April 17 Board Meeting

Beginning with this issue a regular feature will highlight each meeting of your Board of Directors. See the Chapter information section at www.doas.us if you'd like to obtain a copy of the actual complete meeting minutes.

From the April 17th meeting:

- Work continues on our planned Golden Eagle tracking study in conjunction with the National Aviary. Donations needed.
- Educational grants were approved for four schools.
- DOAS Summer Day Camp will be reactivated this summer with Peter Pollock and Meg Subik as experienced codirectors. Dates will be 7/30 - 8/3.
- Tree work and a barn cleaning day at the Sanctuary were scheduled, along with a Milford State Forest cleanup.
- A plan was launched to enlist more member volunteers for various activities, including serving refreshments at meetings.
- The DOAS Charter Dinner will be held Nov. 16 at the Sunset Junction Restaurant (formerly Falco's).
- The DOAS web site continues to offer more features. Visit www.doas.us for periodically updated details of field trips and coming meetings.

Conservation and Legislation

by Andy Mason

Make polluters pay for natural resource damage--

It has long been a common sense principle in environmental law that anyone polluting a public natural resource such as a waterway, should bear the costs of cleaning it up. The federal Superfund law and other statutes are based on this 'polluter pays' concept.

However, in New York, there are limitations on the ability of the state to recover costs of such cleanups. Currently the state can recover damages only in the case of petroleum spills as defined in the Navigation Law, or by bringing an action for damages under federal law, which is time consuming and provides a short statute of limitations. Recently introduced legislation would improve this situation by creating a liability for natural resource damages and providing for recovery of damages. It also provides for enforcement and penalties for violations and establishes a position of Natural Resources Trustee to act on behalf of the people of the state when public resources are damaged. The bill would also establish a New York Natural Resource Revolving Trust Fund to be used for restoration of damaged natural resources, and empower the Attorney General to obtain liens against real property held by non-compliant responsible parties.

What you can do-- Contact your state Assemblymember and ask them to cosponsor and support A.8090. Tell your state Senator that those responsible for damaging public resources should pay for the damages, not allowed to walk away. Also note that for this law to succeed, the Department of Environmental Conservation needs adequate staff to carry it out.

Energy in Washington not all alternatives are equal--

The US Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has passed legislation to increase use of biofuels in the United States. This legislation is expected to be turned into a larger energy package that may be voted on by the Senate in early June.

Biofuels such as corn-based ethanol may have a role in reducing dependence on fossil fuels, but they have their own set of problems such as pesticide and fertilizer use, pollution, and conversion of large amounts of land to monocultures. In addition, they typically use large amounts of energy to produce, significantly reducing their benefits.

Much preferable as energy policy are improvements in energy efficiency of lighting and appliances, and increased fuel efficiency standards for motor vehicles. Efficiency standards in the European Union and Japan are nearly twice those of the US. Another controversial issue, The Senate needs to include these efficiency standards in any energy legislation.

What you can do-- Ask Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer to work for conservation as the Senate debates an energy package in the coming weeks. Efforts to produce biofuels and alternative petroleum based fuels provide less bang for the buck and only a fraction of the global warming benefits of efficiency improvements.

Addresses

State Senate

State Sens. James Seward/
John Bonacic
NY State Senate
Albany, NY 12247
Seward—(518) 455-3131
seward@senate.state.ny.us
Bonacic—(518) 455-3181
bonacic@senate.state.ny.us

State Assembly

State Assemblymembers
Clifford Crouch -- 107th
Assembly District (Includes all of
Delaware Co. except Davenport,
Franklin, Harpersfield and Sidney,
and Chenango Co. Towns of
Coventry, Greene, Guilford, New
Berlin, Norwich, Oxford and
Smithville.)
William Magee -- 111th
Assembly District (Includes
Otsego Co. Towns of Burlington,
Edmeston, Exeter, Hartwick,
Lawrens, Middlefield, Milford, New
Lisbon, Oneonta, Otsego, Pittsfield,
Plainfield and Richfield and the City
of Oneonta)
Marc Butler -- 117th Assembly
District (Otsego Co. Towns of
Cherry Valley, Decatur, Maryland,
Roseboom, Springfield, Westford and
Worcester, and all of Fulton and
Herkimer Co.s)

Peter Lopez -- 127th Assembly
District (Includes Otsego Co.
Towns of Butternuts, Morris, Otsego
and Unadilla, Delaware Co. Towns
of Davenport, Franklin, Harpersfield
and Sidney, Chenango Co. Towns of
Afton and Bainbridge and all of
Schoharie County.)
NY State Assembly
Albany, NY 12248
Crouch - (518) 455-5741, fax -
(518) 455-5864
crouchc@assembly.state.ny.us
Magee - (518) 455-4807, fax -
(518) 455-5237
mageew@assembly.state.ny.us
Butler - (518) 455-5393
butterm@assembly.state.ny.us
Lopez - (518) 455-5363
lopezp@assembly.state.ny.us

US Senate

Sens. Charles Schumer/ Hillary
Clinton
US Senate
Washington, DC 20510
Schumer-(202) 224-6542
senator@schumer.senate.gov
fax-(202) 228-3027
Clinton-(202) 224-4451
senator@clinton.senate.gov
fax-(202) 228-0282

Bird Walk at Riddell State Park, June 16

In conjunction with the Otsego Co. Conservation Assoc.'s annual Walks and Paddles program, Andy Mason will lead a bird walk at Riddell State Park, Saturday, June 16, beginning at 8 a.m.

Birds expected at this location include a variety of warblers and other songbirds, as well as water birds and possibly raptors. This easy walk will last approximately 2 hours. Participants should bring binoculars and a field guide if possible. Riddell State Park is located near Colliersville, off State Rte. 28 just north of I-88 Exit 17.

For further information, call (607) 652-2162 or email AndyMason@earthling.net.

***** Please note the expiration date on your mailing label

The first two numbers indicate the *year* your membership expires, and the second two numbers indicate the *month*. For example, '0806' indicates June, 2008.

Your last issue of The Belted Kingfisher will be stamped as such. This is the only renewal notice, so please check your label—we value your membership!

May Bird Sightings

It's hard to believe on April 16th, nearly one month ago, there was a deluge of snow and blizzard-like conditions in our area. Fortunately May is bringing such glorious weather, many reports of first of the year birds, and an explosion of warblers. Can Spring be that fickle?

On the snowstorm day, 4/16, John Birkett reported 5-6 Savannah sparrows in Bainbridge. Andy Mason heard a calling barred owl and saw 4 common ravens at the DOAS Sanctuary on 4/21. On 4/23 Tom Salo saw a pair of Eastern phoebes in W. Burlington while John Davis saw one in Cooperstown. On 4/25 Lisa Gorn saw 5 brown thrashers in Morris. Tree swallows were seen by Dorian Huneke on 4/29 in Treadwell.

May had a burst of bird activity. On 5/1 Andy Mason reported a black-and-white warbler in Jefferson, Tom Salo saw one in W. Burlington and Sandra Perry had a yellow warbler in Oneonta. On 5/2 a warbling vireo was seen by Andy Mason in Oneonta, Tom Salo reported a house wren in W. Burlington and in Treadwell, Dorian Huneke saw a red-eyed vireo. On 5/3 a ruby-throated hummingbird was seen by Gerianne Carillo in Milford, Andy Mason reported yellow-rumped and black-throated green warblers and a ruby-crowned kinglet in Jefferson, and 2 palm warblers and 3 white-crowned sparrows were seen by Tom Salo in W. Burlington.

On 5/4 Trina Bassoff saw a gray catbird, a scarlet tanager and a common yellowthroat in Blenheim, chimney swifts were seen by Sandra Perry in Oneonta and a pair of indigo buntings were reported by Terri Wetzel in Morris. Trina Bassoff saw a veery in Blenheim and bobolinks were reported by Janice Downie in Oneonta on 5/6. On 5/7 a Baltimore oriole, rose-breasted grosbeaks, pine warblers and an ovenbird were reported by John Birkett in Bainbridge and Andy Mason saw an American redstart in Oneonta. Tom Salo reported a yellow-billed cuckoo and black-throated blue warblers in W. Burlington.

Charlie Dahan saw 2 great crested flycatchers in Otego, and John Birkett reported a semipalmated plover, a least sandpiper and barn and Northern rough-winged swallows in Bainbridge on 5/9. Tom Salo also saw a least flycatcher and chestnut-sided and Nashville warblers in W. Burlington on 5/10. On 5/11 two Eastern meadowlarks were seen by Dorian Huneke in Treadwell.

On 5/12 Edie Quinn was thrilled to report a ruby-throated hummingbird, an indigo bunting and her favorite bird, a male rose-breasted grosbeak in Unadilla. That same day Sandra Perry saw magnolia and blue-winged warblers in Oneonta. On 5/13 Dorian Huneke was delighted to see a Mother's Day Eastern phoebe sitting on eggs in a nest in Treadwell.

Please send sightings to Dianne Benko at (607) 829-5218, at 6815 Co. Hwy. 16, Delhi, NY 13753, or at caged@wpe.com by 8/18/07 for the September issue of The Belted Kingfisher.

Membership Information

Grassland Bird Walk

On Saturday, June 23 DOAS will lead a field trip through northern Otsego County and Montgomery County looking for grassland birds. We will especially be looking for Sedge Wrens and Henslow's Sparrows.

We meet at 7:00 AM at the Cooperative Extension building on Lake Rd. in Cooperstown. For further information please contact Bob Donnelly at rsdonn@yahoo.com or phone 286-7530.

Birds and Trails of Basswood Pond State Forest

On Saturday, June 9, Tom Salo will lead a walk through state owned property in Burlington. This is an area Tom surveyed for the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas. It has interesting and varied forests both in regards to species make up and structure. Brush, young and older conifers, hardwoods and wetlands contribute to high level of avian diversity. Meet at the Jacobs Road parking area for an 8 am start. This walk is sponsored jointly by DOAS and the Otsego County Conservation Association. For more information contact Tom Salo at 607-965-8232.

DOAS Summer Day Camp

The John G. New Audubon Day Camp, sponsored by DOAS, will be offered again this summer for students entering grades 3-6. The Camp location is the DOAS sanctuary on Franklin Mountain. Camp dates are July 31 to August 3, 2007, 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM.

Our camp will provide hands-on field experience in natural science and environmental education. Through field investigation, crafts and games, the campers will explore a variety of habitats and will learn about the creatures that live there. More information and a camp application may be found on our web site www.doas.us. If there are any questions, please call Barbara Marsala at 607-988-7805 or email to barbaramars@stny.rr.com.

Phone Numbers of DOAS Officers & Directors

Tom Salo. 965-8232 tomsalo@localnet.com
 John Davis. 547-9688 davi7js4@hughes.net
 Bob Donnelly ___ rsdonn@yahoo.com
 GerianneCarillo 286-3855
 Nancy Cannon 746-6037
 Lisa Gorn 263-5703 lgorn@localnet.com
 AndyMason 652-2162 andymason@earthling.net
 Barbara Marsala ___ barbaramars@stny.rr.com
 Stephen Rice 829-3111

DOAS Video Library

DOAS has purchased two DVDs of Al Gore's movie, An Inconvenient Truth. "Former Vice President Al Gore presents an eye-opening and compelling view of the future of our planet - and our civilization - in the MUST-SEE documentary of the year. This is a wake-up call that cuts through myths and misconceptions to deliver the message that global warming is a real and present danger. An Inconvenient Truth brings home Gore's persuasive argument that we must act now to save the earth. Each and every one of us can make changes in the way in which we live our lives and BECOME PART OF THE SOLUTION." (from the DVD cover)

DOAS members may borrow An Inconvenient Truth video by contacting Barbara Marsala at barbaramars@stny.rr.com or 607-988-7805. The video may be picked up at a DOAS meeting or may be mailed to you. You are asked to return the video, to a meeting or by mail, within two weeks of receiving it. Enjoy it yourself or invite some friends and neighbors to view An Inconvenient Truth with you and then discuss the ten things to do listed on the inside cover.

Mercury Contamination

Eastern songbirds, especially the Wood Thrush and Louisiana Waterthrush, are showing population declines due in part to mercury accumulation in their bodies. Mercury is a growing threat for land birds as well as water birds in the northeast.

Much of the mercury comes from coal fired midwestern power plants. The mercury mixes with environmental water and is believed to bind with leaf litter of mountain forests. It is then consumed by insects, which are eaten by songbirds such as the Common Yellowthroat and the thrushes. Acid rain, produced also by coal burning power plants, is also affecting the ecosystem, of course.

Scientists are using blood mercury levels "as a way of mapping contamination Hot Spots", and are hoping to demonstrate the need for stricter mercury standards in our country. ... *Jean T. Miller*

from *Nature Conservancy*, winter 2006.

"Here's what I think the truth is: We are all addicts of fossil fuels in a state of denial, about to face cold turkey. And like so many addicts about to face cold turkey, our leaders are now committing violent crimes to get what little is left of what we're hooked on." ... *Kurt Vonnegut*

Will New York State be a new Dixie in 3000?

What will our local climate look like as global warming slowly changes our weather patterns? We already have seen temperatures rise about 1 ° F in summer and 4° F in winter since 1970.

Choice # 1 would be to continue to rely heavily on fossil fuels, and this would result in dramatic regional warming of 7° to 12° on average by century end. Snowy winters as we now know them would disappear and snow cover would recede to the Adirondack area. Summers would be much hotter and more humid. We would think we lived in South Carolina.

Choice # 2 would be a lower emission pathway, and with this choice temperatures would rise between 5° and 7.5° by 3000 AD. Winter precipitation would increase but would be more likely in the form of rain. Summers would be like those in the state of Maryland.

If global warming emissions continue unabated, New York City could have more than 60 days per year with temperatures topping 90° F later in the century. Lower emissions would cut this increase about in half.

Clearly - the choice is ours, and now is the time to make the changes. We must transform our use of energy to be far more efficient and to produce far lower emissions. We must each do our own part, and we must press our politicians to do their parts.

Jean T. Miller from Union of Concerned Scientists
"Catalyst"

May Big Day Bird Count

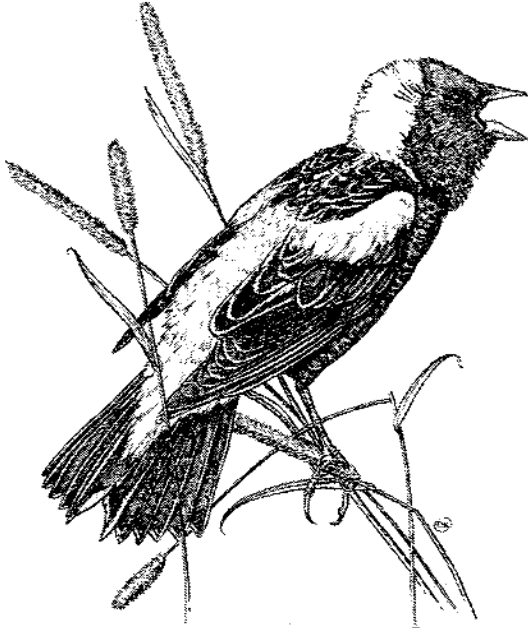
Saturday, May 19 was the Big Day. The AM was nicely clouded over but in most of our area it was mostly rain from about 1:30 PM on. Despite the less than optimum weather we saw 131 species. In the 39 years that DOAS has been doing the May count this is only the 7th time that we have been in the 130s. (They run from 130-136 species.) Delhi Bird Club had 8 observers and DOAS had 19 — the groups mostly as ones or twos but some of 5.

Species seen but seldom or not often on this count were Mute Swan, Red-breasted Merganser, Osprey, Am. Woodcock, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Black-billed Cuckoo, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Raven, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, N. Mockingbird, Orange Crowned Warbler, Fox Sparrow, Pine Grosbeak and Pine Siskins.

To see the full count check out our web site www.doas.us.

Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society
PO Box 544
Oneonta, NY 13820-0544
www.doas.us

Non-profit Organization
US Postage Paid
Bulk Mail Permit #208
Oneonta, NY 13820-0544
Address Service Requested



Board of Directors

Officers

President-Tom Salo Vice President-Cheryl Boise
Treasurer-Bob Donnelly Secretary- John Davis

Directors

Gerianne Carillo Nancy Cannon Julia Gregory
Andrew Mason Barbara Marsala Jean Miller
Stephen Rice Joe Richardson

Committee Chairs* & Other Assignments

Conservation*	Andrew Mason
Education*	Barbara Marsala
Field Trips*	Bob Donnelly
Hawkwatch*	Andrew Mason, Tom Salo
Hospitality*	Jean Miller
Charter Dinner	Julia Gregory
Bird Counts	Bob Miller
Programs*	Gerianne Carillo
Membership*	Bruce Milavec
Sanctuary*	Andrew Mason
Sales	Stephen Rice
Publicity*	John Davis
Kingfisher	Bob Miller
Historian	Jean Miller

Membership Application

Membership in the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Soc. includes 9 issues of our newsletter, *The Belted Kingfisher*. Cost is \$12 annually or \$20 for 2 years. Please make check payable to DOAS and mail to DOAS Membership Chair, PO Box 544, Oneonta, NY 13820-0544, with name, address and phone.

(NOTE: Please mail National Audubon renewals to address on renewal notice.)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

To contribute notes or articles for *The Belted Kingfisher*, please send to: Kingfisher Editor, DOAS, PO Box 544, Oneonta, NY 13820-0544.

All meetings are free and open to the public.