



# THE BELTED KINGFISHER

DELAWARE-OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

## COMING ACTIVITIES

### MARCH

3/16: Board Meeting, 7pm, Elm Park Methodist Church.

3/19: Program: Peter Fauth presents his research on Wood Thrushes and Veeries (see article bottom of page).

3/20: Annual Montezuma Trip; leader: Dave Kiehm.

3/27: Participate in Earth Hour! See page 5 for details.

3/28: Annual Lake Otsego Waterfowl Trip, 8am at Lakefront.

### APRIL

4/10: Earth Festival, 11am-3pm, Milford Central School.

4/10: Earth Festival Field Trip to Riddell State Park; leader: Bob Donnelly. Meet in front of Milford Central School at 8am. Call 607-264-8156 for details.

4/16: Program: Warren Greene, nature photographer.

4/20: Board Meeting, 7pm, home of John Davis.

SEE PAGE 4 FOR DETAILS

## DOAS STEERS RESEARCH EFFORTS ON THE GOLDEN EAGLE IN NY STATE

Golden Eagles are found throughout the northern hemisphere. In New York State they appear in our region in greater numbers than anywhere else. These iconic birds of prey are widespread; however, little is known about the small eastern North American population which some researchers believe to be genetically distinct. In NY and among eastern hawk watchers, these birds have been closely



*Local Golden Eagle, via wildlife camera.*

identified with Franklin Mountain - so much so that they are now considered our signature bird. DOAS has been

leading efforts in New York to identify their migration routes and the northern extent of their winter range.

Once again, during the second week of March, we will count migrating Golden Eagles moving through our area. A transect of 3 sites has been created east of Otsego Lake similar to the transect we covered in Delaware County in 2009. Golden Eagles have been tracked by our

*(Continued on Page 2)*

### DOAS MARCH PROGRAM:

#### THE WOOD THRUSHES AND VEERIES OF PINE LAKE

On Friday, March 19, 2010 Peter Fauth will present his research on Wood Thrushes and Veeries from his years of study at Hartwick's Pine Lake.

Peter Fauth is a Hartwick professor trained in Conservation Biology and Evolutionary Ecology. In the Fall of 2001, he arrived at Hartwick College after teaching at St. Olaf College, Bucknell University and Drew University. Professor Fauth teaches Ecology, Ornithology, Conservation Biology, Natural History of

Costa Rica and Principles of Biology. He is currently focusing his research on the social behaviors of Tufted Titmice and the reproductive behavior of Eastern Phoebe and the Great Crested Flycatchers at Pine Lake and the nearby forest tracts.

The program will begin at 7:30PM at the Elm Park Methodist Church, 401 Chestnut Street, Oneonta. Refreshments will be served. For further information, contact Program Director Eleanor Moriarty at 607-435-2054, email: [ellie2@directv.net](mailto:ellie2@directv.net).

All DOAS Programs are free and open to the public.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tom Salo

## ***GOLDEN EAGLE RESEARCH, CONTINUED*** ***FROM PAGE 1***

collaborators in PA along many of these ridges using satellite telemetry.

At the westernmost Otsego County site, one counter can view the tops of two ridges, allowing us to cover 4 ridges from 3 hawk sites. Details on these sites can be found at [hawkcount.org](http://hawkcount.org). Look in the index for sites prefaced with DOAS. This season's sites are named "All Road", "Fish Road" and "Davis State Park". At

Wilber and Betty Davis State Park, local birders have spotted goldens moving along the ridge during both migrations. The counts will start on Sunday March 7 and run through Saturday the 13th.

Franklin Mountain counters are once again volunteering their time to cover these sites. We are looking for spotters to assist them. If you would like to help this effort, please let me know; I will try to direct you to the site where you would be the most helpful. If you wish to be added to the e-list, which automatically receives the daily data from hawkcount, send me an email and you will be added.

The '09 counts found a significant number of both Golden and Bald Eagles moving north above the hills between Hancock and the Cannonsville Reservoir. A report on that effort can be found at our website.

Since early January, we have been trying to locate winter resident Golden Eagles using baited wildlife cameras. Also known as game cameras or trail cameras, these weather-proof, motion-activated digital cameras have been stationed on ridges in Delaware and Otsego Counties. Road-killed deer are used as bait. Within a week of placing bait, at least 3 Golden Eagles showed up at 2 of the sites. An adult and a juvenile Bald Eagle have spent time at one of the sites. Other scavengers include multiple Common Ravens, with as many as 50 ravens at one site, multiple Red-tailed Hawks at every site, Rough-legged Hawks, American Crows, coyotes, a bobcat and a red fox.

We are hoping to repeat this effort next winter at different locations. We will be presenting a program next winter explaining the results and showing the best of our photographs from these camera traps. When Andy Mason returns, we will make photos available on the Franklin Mountain website. For now, members of the local bird discussion group osbirds (<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/osbirds>) can view a sampling of photos in the folder "scavengers".

Tom Salo, 607-965-8232  
[tomsalo@localnet.com](mailto:tomsalo@localnet.com)

*Immature and Adult Bald Eagles, with Common Ravens, at a baited camera site set up by DOAS.*



## **THE DELAWARE - OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY** **FOUNDED 1968**

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 OR EMAIL [EDITOR@DOAS.US](mailto:EDITOR@DOAS.US)

COVER ARTWORK BY DAVE KIEHM

## CONSERVATION AND LEGISLATION

BY ANDY MASON

### ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT CHANGES IN THE WORKS

The Obama administration has indicated its intentions to propose changes to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) this year. For over 35 years, the ESA has been a safety net for our nation's wildlife, fish, and plants on the brink of extinction. It is critical to keep this law strong so that it can continue to protect wildlife and wild places.

Improvements to the ESA are certainly in order. The long backlog of species awaiting action has existed for decades now, and some species have actually disappeared while caught in the regulatory quagmire.

The US Fish & Wildlife Service is seeking public comment on what changes are needed to the act. This provides an opportunity for conservationists to express their views on the importance of the law, and how to strengthen it, but it also gives industries that would like to see the ESA disappear the same opportunity.

At least one group whose board members represent the National Mining Association and the American Forest & Paper Association, among others, is already pressuring the Obama administration. Other extractive industries and development interests can be expected to push for reducing the role of science, and increasing the weight given to economics in Endangered Species Act decisions. This would represent a return to the misguided policies of the George W. Bush years.

It is important that we let the administration and Congress know of the broad support Americans have for the ESA, and the success stories it has brought about in preventing extinction of species such as the Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon.

At the same time, the lack of funding for recovery plans, and continuing political involvement in listing decisions must be emphasized.

**What you can do:** Contact US Fish and Wildlife Service Director Sam Hamilton and urge that endangered species protections be strengthened by:

- Overturning Bush-era policies and regulations that greatly undermine endangered species protection and recovery;
- Protecting species throughout their entire ranges;
- Extending the Act's safety net to all species in need;
- Strengthening habitat protections;
- Addressing global warming impacts on endangered species and their habitat;
- Increasing funding for endangered species programs.

Insist that the administration oppose any regulations that weaken endangered species protections. In particular, ask that federal agencies thoroughly consult with the U.S. Fish

and Wildlife Service when their actions may increase the climate change impacts on endangered species.

For the maximum impact, send copies of your letter to President Barack Obama, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, and your Congressional representatives and US Senators.

#### Addresses

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Director Sam D. Hamilton  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

fax: (202) 225-5077  
www.tonko.house.gov

Secretary Ken Salazar  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington DC 20240

22nd Congressional District  
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US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-6335  
fax: (202) 226-0774  
www.house.gov/hinchey

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500  
www.whitehouse.gov/  
contact  
(202) 456-1111

24th Congressional District  
(Otsego Co. towns of Springfield, Otsego, Hartwick, Laurens, Oneonta (including City of Oneonta) and west. All of Chenango Co.)  
Rep. Michael Arcuri  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3665  
fax: (202) 225-1891  
www.arcuri.house.gov

#### US Congress

20th Congressional District  
(Otsego Co. towns of Cherry Valley, Roseboom, Decatur, Worcester, Maryland, Westford, Milford, and Middlefield. Delaware Co., except towns of Deposit, Hancock and Tompkins.)  
Rep. Scott Murphy  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-5614  
www.scottmurphy.house.gov

#### US Senate

US Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand/Charles Schumer  
US Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  
Gillibrand—  
www.Gillibrand.senate.gov  
(202) 224-4451  
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senator@schumer.senate.gov  
(202) 224-6542

21st Congressional District  
(All of Schoharie Co.)  
Rep. Paul Tonko  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-5076

### LOCAL BIRD SEED AVAILABLE

Bobbie and Terry Jones, dairy farmers in Cedarville (just north of US 20 in southern Herkimer County) grew 85 acres of sunflowers this summer. The seed has been dried and bagged and a 50# bag of black oil sunflower is \$15. Most sunflower seed is trucked long distances. If you live in northern Otsego County, or are traveling towards the Mohawk Valley, this is an opportunity to help the local farm economy and reduce the miles your bird seed travels. The Jones' phone number is 315-822-5342.

## FIELD TRIP TO THE MONTEZUMA NWR

Saturday, March 20, 2010 is the date for the annual DOAS field trip to view the incredible migration of numerous species of ducks, geese, and hawks at this wildlife refuge, located at the north end of Cayuga Lake in the heart of the Finger Lakes Region. The trip visits the areas located in the refuge, lakes, and marshes, and breaks for lunch at the green state-of-the-art New York Audubon Center.

Recent trips have observed snow geese migration into the thousands. Raptors are often seen soaring over the waters. Located towards the northern part of the refuge, a pair of Sandhill Cranes has been breeding for two or more seasons.

The trip will leave the Dietz St. parking lot, across from the YMCA in Oneonta, at 7:30am. Carpooling is strongly encouraged, and participants can be picked up en route to Cooperstown. Return to Oneonta will be late afternoon. The trip takes a few hours each way, and participants need to pack a lunch.

For further information please contact Dave Kiehm at [dkiehm@dmcom.net](mailto:dkiehm@dmcom.net), or Eleanor Moriarty at [ellie2@directv.net](mailto:ellie2@directv.net), cell number 607-435-2054.

## EARTH FESTIVAL

April 10, 2010



The Annual Earth Festival is to be held in Milford Central School again this year and promises to be filled with interesting exhibits, hands-on activities and information, as well as topical seminars during the day. Students will be leading children's activities, and there will be a special "recycled fashion show". Nature related and earth friendly foods will again be available. The festival will run from 11 am to 3 pm, and two free movies will be shown in the evening.

DOAS will again have a table and will include a letter writing event where you can select a letter on a variety of environmental topics, have it printed out, and sign and mail it right there. One topic will be natural gas drilling in our area.

Earth festival is hosted by OCCA and the Wildlife Learning Company. Contact OCCA at 547-4488, or the WLC at 293-6043, email [admin@occainfo.org](mailto:admin@occainfo.org), for further information.

Come join in the fun and learning!

Jean T. Miller

## LAKE OTSEGO WATERFOWL TRIP



*Mallards with a Black Duck,  
by Dave Kiehm.*

On Sunday March 28, 2010 the annual spring waterfowl trip around Lake Otsego and environs will leave from Cooperstown's Lake Front Docks, at the foot of Fair Street, at 8 AM sharp. Co-leaders will be Matt Albright, Bob Donnelly and John Davis. Sponsored by the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society for several years, the trip has always attracted many area birders. Cars will be pooled, and the trip will last until around noon. For more information, contact John Davis at [davi7js4@hughes.net](mailto:davi7js4@hughes.net) or 607-547-9688.

## ANNUAL OWL FIELD TRIP

On Saturday, February 27, 2010 DOAS will lead a field trip looking for Short-eared Owls. Besides the Owls, we will search for Snow Buntings, Horned Larks, and other winter birds. There are numerous owls around this winter. Participants will meet and leave from the Cooperative Extension Building in Cooperstown at 3:00PM. The building is on Lake St (NY 80) at the north edge of the village. For those who are interested, we will also search after dark for other owls in the area. Dress appropriately for the weather: although there will be minimal walking, it can be windy. Any questions call Bob Donnelly at 607-264-8156.

**Please Note:** 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 in someone else's 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.



## WATERFOWL COUNT RESULTS

The NY State Ornithological Association's annual waterfowl count was held in mid-January with a target date of Jan. 17. DOAS covered the following areas: Otsego Lake and tributaries and surrounding ponds; Goodyear Lake; Susquehanna River, Cooperstown to Unadilla, and Bainbridge to Middle Village; East Sidney Lake and Ouleout Creek to Unadilla; Unadilla River and tributaries, South Edmeston to Sidney; Buckhorn Lake and lower Martin Brook; W. Branch Delaware River, Hobart to Deposit, including Cannonsville Reservoir; E. Branch Delaware River, Downsville to East Branch. Surrounding fields are also included.

Species of interest included Red-tailed Hawks, Bald Eagles, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Wild Turkeys, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Cardinal, and Snow Buntings.

Thanks to participants Matt Albright, Cheryl Boise, Nancy Cannon, Cindy Cobbe, Kay Crane, John Davis, Bob Donnelly, Lisa Gorn, Kathy Griswold, Eric Knight, Randy Lynch, Ed McGittigan, Bob & Jean Miller, Eleanor Moriarty, Katie Ray, Tom & Joann Salo, and Cynthia Waterman.

### **Count Totals:**

Canada Goose: 499  
Mallard: 269  
Am. Black Duck: 22  
Anas, sp.: 3  
Wood Duck: 2  
Bufflehead: 2  
Hooded Merganser: 16  
Common Merganser: 69  
Am. Coot: 21

**Total: 903**

Andy Mason

## NATURAL GAS DRILLING IN OUR AREA

A major topic of interest in Otsego and Delaware Counties lately has been the drilling in Marcellus and Utica Shales for extraction of Natural Gas. When the companies come around with drilling leases asking home owners to sign, there are those who sign up for it as a means of saving an old farm from sale for development or for providing a hopeful nest egg for retirement. However, there are others who see many dangers to humans and wildlife when wells are drilled and unknown chemicals are forced down to release the gas.

The DEC has prepared a Draft Supplemental Generic Impact Statement (DGEIS) with proposed safeguards to the drilling process and to the environment. Many people think that this DGEIS does not adequately cover all the possible dangers and threats to our lands. There are hundreds of wells proposed for our county alone, and each well would require thousands of gallons of water to drill and 'frack' the well.

Our DOAS chapter has put forth a position statement calling on the state of New York to permanently ban gas drilling. Our statement outlines the dangers to humans, wildlife and water resources as primary reasons, and pinpoints potential ground and water contamination, damage to roads, farms, forests and waterways, noise and air pollution, and the impact of miles of pipelines all over the county, among other dangers.

Increasing reports are coming in about accidents and pollution and illness from wells in PA, TX, CO, and WY. We here are increasingly worried about how our lives would be impacted by gas drilling, how it would affect our property values, how it would affect home sales possibilities, how roads will be damaged and who will pay for repairs, and what our lovely upstate area will look with so many wells. Will our county look like a war zone when our children inherit it?

Please look into this threat, and educate yourself about it all. Attend meetings and talks. See the films about it. Spread the word to others.

Jean T. Miller

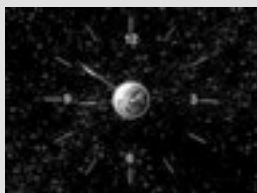
*(Editor's note: Check Andy Mason's conservation column regularly for updates on this topic.)*

## EARTH HOUR:

**8:30 pm March 27, 2010**

Every year thousands of people in homes, organizations, corporations, and governments around the world will come together to make a bold statement about their concern for climate change by doing something quite simple - turning off their lights for ONE HOUR.

EARTH HOUR turns global attention to the need to find solutions for the impact of climate change, which is already being felt



around the globe. Turn off your lights at 8:30 pm for one hour and join nearly one billion people - in 4,100 cities - in 87 countries - on 7 continents who vote for action on climate change.

This has become a global phenomenon each year!

Jean T. Miller

## WATER WATER EVERYWHERE - - -

Think how fortunate we all are to live in the rural area of Upstate New York, where we have adequate fresh water year-round. Most of the people in the rest of the world are not so fortunate. Droughts, storms and changing weather patterns are affecting water supplies for millions around the world. And world population continues to grow.

Water resources around the globe are in crisis, and poor water management is a major factor. Current demand for water from cities, agriculture, and industry is already unsustainable in many regions, and is predicted to increase in coming years. Water resources are threatened by climate change, drought, waste, and growing demand for energy, which requires enormous amounts of water. Of all fresh water used around the world, irrigation uses 70%, industry uses 22 %, and households use 8%. (Discover, Dec. 2009).

## AND NARRY A DROP TO DRINK - - -

### Here is the 'Bad News' first:

- More than a billion people worldwide lack clean drinking water.
- Developing countries are doubling their use of fresh water annually, and this puts more stress on global water supplies. They need adequate water, too!
- 20% of all croplands are irrigated, and they yield 40% of our world's food supply. As population grows, can we keep up with adequate foods for all people?
- Agriculture and cities are drawing water from underground aquifers faster than it can be replenished by natural rains. What happens when aquifers are empty?
- Agricultural runoff is heavily laden with chemicals, herbicides, and fertilizers, which pollute rivers, lakes, bogs, streams and oceans. Can we prevent some of this?
- Millions of tons of agricultural soil erode away every year: good top soil lost forever. It takes centuries to build top soil.
- Glaciers supplying water to areas below are melting faster every year, and many are predicted to be gone before 2100. People will be left without adequate water.
- In USA we flush down the toilet 2.1 trillion gallons of FRESH water annually. We need to work on this problem. Industry take note!
- Some corporations are already privatizing water sources to control its use. NOT a good thing.
- It is quite likely that WARS will be waged in the future over dwindling fresh water supplies, as humans need water for growing foods and for quality life.
- Considering drilling for natural gas in upstate NY, can we justify using millions of gallons of fresh water per well for thousands of wells? This would be fresh water

drawn from rivers, lakes, and underground, water needed for wildlife and humans and beauty around us.

### Now some encouraging news:

- Water CONSERVATION is growing slowly as people learn how to save more forests and grasslands. This keeps sediments out of the water . Some farmers and ranchers are planting buffers along streams and rivers, and this prevents floods from inundating their lands. Other people are avoiding draining our wetlands, which soak up storm waters and recycle nutrients.
- In our US west, century-old laws which govern water rights are being rewritten to more justly apportion the water, thus giving agriculture and cities and industry fairer water proportions.
- Landscape irrigation is being corrected by "Hydropoint", an innovative company which specializes in correcting wasteful sprinkler systems. This saved 11 billion gallons of water in 2008 alone in CA.
- Planting more native plants in landscaping saves tremendous amounts of irrigation water. Growing crops that use less water in areas that HAVE less water requires fewer fertilizers.
- New processing plants are finding ways to more efficiently recycle waste water to make it suitable for drinking.
- Some cities are growing roof top gardens - called vertical farming - which uses rain and sun where possible and also cools the buildings. Hydroponic and aeroponic techniques can use 90% less water than traditional gardens.
- Desalinating sea water, a process which has high energy requirements, may be a more viable option in the future.
- Cities which require strict water "payment for use" rules find that water waste is greatly reduced. Daily habits are changed.
- Some successes: the Hudson River is cleaner today than any time in the last 100 years. Acid rain levels in the northeast USA have dropped 60% since the early 1990s. Some industries, (eg Coca-Cola) are working to improve water efficiency while promoting agricultural "best practices" and helping to conserve the world's most important freshwater basins.

These are all encouraging signs, but let us not forget that we must be continually vigilant, and must NOT waste our precious water. We must assure that future generations will have a sustainable supply of fresh water for quality of life.

Jean T. Miller

**FAVORITE PLACES SERIES:  
CANADARAGO LAKE OUTLET**

I consider the outlet of Canadarago Lake one of the top birding spots in Otsego County. It takes a canoe or kayak to fully investigate the area. Oaks Creek, where it exits the lake, flows through an extensive wetland that was an unintended benefit from the dam constructed below County Hwy 22. It is a relatively short paddle, about a mile in slight current, from the road to the lake. Move slowly; watch for birds perched in dead trees. Pay particular attention as you round each bend and new areas come into view.

In April, a great diversity of migrating waterfowl can be found through the wetland, and where it opens up into the south end of the lake. On the heavily developed lake, the south end is an oasis of natural habitat. Bald Eagles, Osprey and wading birds find this area attractive along with the wetlands. American Bittern, Virginia Rail, Common Moorhen and Wilson's Snipe were all found in this spot during the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas. If you time your trip well, Olive-sided Flycatchers are often present at the end of May, or even very early June, and again at the end of August. The wetlands are home to many species of turtles and frogs. Beaver activity is obvious and mink are sometimes seen.

Both the lake and the outlet see a lot of recreational use so it is important to visit these areas early in the day before boat and canoe traffic becomes heavy. This is more of a problem in the summer and on weekends. Launching is better on the south side of the road. If you unload near the hydrant, move your vehicle and park on the shoulder of the road. The hydrant is used by the local fire company. Canadarago Lake has zebra mussels; take necessary precautions when moving your boat.

Tom Salo

*(Editor's Note: use the link below for a map of the Lake:*  
<http://maps.google.com/maps?t=p&ie=UTF8&ll=42.8153,-75.003147&spn=0.107034,0.215607&z=13>)

**PLAYING CHICKEN WITH A CHICKADEE**

The weight of a chickadee barely registers when it lands on your hand to take a seed. I had found that it is quite easy to entice these inquisitive little birds with black-oil sunflower seeds and the right technique. I



*Photo by Dave Kiehm*

would place my seed-filled hand on a twig near a recently-emptied bird feeder and, within minutes, chickadees would be sidling down the branch, then hopping on to grab a seed. I wondered if this would work away from a bird feeder.

So I hiked up the Audubon Sanctuary trail on Franklin Mountain, past the Hawk Watch area. Chickadees were calling where the trail diverges. I set myself up, cross-legged on the trail, each seed-filled hand resting on a knee.

The chickadees buzzed around, checking me out, chatting "dee-dee-dee." One came to perch in front of me, several feet away. A stare-down ensued.

Suddenly it took off, beating a path straight toward my forehead. I willed myself to stay still, certain the bird would veer off, yet it raced closer and closer. The thrumming of wings, loud and ominous, seemed to heighten the pounding of my heart. How can such a little bird make so much noise in flight? At the last moment, instinct took over, my eyes snapped shut, and I braced for impact.

Instead, I felt a gentle breeze touch my forehead. I opened my eyes to find the bird a couple of feet to my right on a dead weed.

Soon thereafter, the whole group of chickadees began taking turns grabbing seeds from my hands. It must have been the leader of the pack who had challenged me to play "Chicken."

So who won the game? I'd say we both did!

Sandy Bright

**DOAS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Membership in the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society includes 9 issues of our newsletter, The Belted Kingfisher. Cost is \$15 annually or \$25 for two years. Please make your check payable to "DOAS" and mail payment with this form to: DOAS Membership Chair, PO Box 544, Oneonta, NY 13820-0544.

**Note: Please mail National Audubon *renewals* to address on renewal notice.**

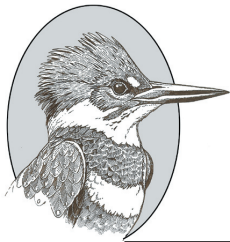
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DELAWARE-OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.  
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*Eastern Screech Owl, taken by Jack McShane  
on his Andes property, February 12, 2010.*

## JANUARY-FEBRUARY BIRD SIGHTINGS

As I was walking across the road from my house to retrieve the newspaper, I heard several Black-capped Chickadees singing their two-tone spring call. It was a midwinter morning and I knew spring was slowly creeping into the landscape even though Washington DC had just received a record 54" of snow. Other birders also reported hints of spring.

On 1/13 Warren Ryther observed a flock of Snow Buntings in Garrattsville. Two days later Tom Salo in W. Burlington sighted several Snow Buntings. On the 19th he also spotted a Northern Shrike in Burlington. Randy Lynch reported seeing his first of the year group of Pine Siskins in Kortright and Tom Salo sighted 2 soaring dark phase Rough-legged Hawks in W. Burlington on 1/23.

February 1st was a big birding day. While driving on I-88 to Schenectady on a beautifully sunny day, Ellen Sokolow saw a Golden Eagle, a Cooper's Hawk and a Red-tailed Hawk. In Harsperfield Eleanor Moriarty and Randy Lynch saw a Golden Eagle joined by a pair of Red-tailed Hawks. Apparently there was no interaction between the two species. On that same day Randy Lynch also saw a Northern Shrike in Kortright and a Bald Eagle

in Hobart. The next day Becky Gretton reported seeing a Rough-legged Hawk, a Common Raven and 3 Snow Buntings at Davis Park. After continuing her bird watching journey a few miles down the road, she saw an additional 40 Snow Buntings. On 2/6 Randy Lynch saw a Golden Eagle in Harpersfield. The landowner said he had seen several Golden Eagles preying regularly on Wild Turkeys over the past four years on that property. Vivienne Clark saw a Downy, a Hairy and a Red-bellied Woodpecker at her feeder in Cooperstown on 2/7. According to her husband it was a perfect trifecta day.

Signs of spring appeared on 2/9. Trina Bassoff saw 2 Eastern Bluebirds in Fultonham and on her daily walk Becky Gretton sighted 40 American Robins in Springfield. While skiing the next day Cindy Campbell also saw 2 Eastern Bluebirds in the Cherry Valley-Sharon Springs area.

If you have bird sightings to report, please contact me [dbenko@frontiernet.net](mailto:dbenko@frontiernet.net), 6815 Co. Hwy. 16, Delhi, NY 13753, 607 829-5218 by March 14, 2010 for the next issue of *The Belted Kingfisher*.

~ Dianne Benko