



THE BELTED KINGFISHER

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

Volume 38, No. 9, Nov. 2006

Editor — Bob Miller

COMING ACTIVITIES

- Nov. 11 Otsego Lake Watershed Field Trip with Bob Donnelly. See page 5.
 - Nov. 17 DOAS Charter Dinner. Oneonta Country Club. See page 2.
 - Dec. 5 Board Meeting. 7:00 PM. Home of Lisa Gorn
 - Dec. 16 Annual Christmas Bird Count. Page 5.
 - Jan. 13 Bald Eagle Field Trip with Andy Mason. See page 5.
 - Jan. 14 Annual January Waterfowl Census. Page 5.
 - Jan. 19 General Meeting. Program to be announced.
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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.



ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SANCTUARY OPEN HOUSE

October 14 was cool and clear, almost a perfect day, except for southwest winds which kept some raptor migrants from showing up at the Hawk Watch. Nonetheless a Peregrine Falcon did a close flyby for many to admire. Tom Salo gave the raptor identification course, and Andy Mason led a group of enthusiastic walkers around the trails. Perhaps 50 people showed up, including from Schenectady and Binghamton. Hearty refreshments were supplied by board members. Again, thanks to Oneonta's St. James Episcopal Church for endorsing our continuing activities on the Church's magnificent Franklin property.

President's Message - Heading Out with DOAS

If you aren't a regular participant on DOAS Field trips and bird counts, consider coming along. Our field trips usually target a special place or group of species. Going on these outings is a good way to see new birds. Leaders typically have a familiarity with the location of the trip. They often scout the location in the days leading up to the outing. Sometimes a trip's destination is determined by what appears on rare bird alerts.

The level of activity required varies but most trips require only a moderate amount of easy walking. Some trips require little more than riding in your car – or maybe someone else's. We encourage carpooling to save fuel. Carpooling also makes these outings more social and educational. Trip leaders should be contacted if there are any concerns about the level of activity.

Birds are an important part of our activities but all of our trips are not focused on birds. Wildflowers and plants are sometimes the focus. I led a trip to the Rome Sand Plains last year. Birds were sought but I really wanted people to see this unique area. A place were DEC is restoring lupins so they can re-establish a population of Karner Blue Butterflies.

We also organize 3 bird counts each year. On December 16, you can participate in the Oneonta Christmas Bird Count (CBC). On a CBC, teams count every bird they can find in a 15 mile diameter circle. The same circle is counted every year. The counts are fun and social, however, the greatest benefit is the scientific value of years of accumulated data. There is another CBC centered around the village of Fort Plain to our north. It is a short drive and a fun count. It records more open country birds than our local count. It is usually held the Saturday after Christmas.

In mid-January we count waterfowl in Otsego and Delaware Counties as part of a statewide effort. Teams search all open water looking for ducks, geese, loons and grebes. Other interesting stuff is recorded also. In May we have a Big Day count to see how many species we can find locally.

I always find bird counts fun. I'm outside a lot but usually I'm not actively seeking birds. I notice the most visible and the noisiest birds. On a bird count, I work at it and find much more. We want our members and the community to participate in these activities. If you are new at this, you can be teamed with someone familiar with the count and the local birds. We also need people to lead trips. The number of leaders is the

most significant limiting factor in how many trips we have.

Another way to spend time outside enjoying birds is to visit the hawkwatch. It is staffed most dry days from late August through December. The counters are all friendly and knowledgeable. You can learn a lot at a hawk ID workshop but the real learning happens while watching live birds. About the time you read this, the Golden Eagle flight will be at its peak.

Please contact me if you would like to participate in any of these activities.

Tom Salo, DOAS President
tomsalo@localnet.com
 607-965-8232

38th ANNUAL CHARTER DINNER

The DOAS Annual Charter Dinner will be Friday, November 17, 2006 at the Oneonta Country Club, as always open to the public. A social hour begins at 5:30 with dinner at 6:30 and the program, to which the public is invited, is at 7:30. Menu choices are Montreal London Broil, Chicken Cordon Bleu and Vegetable Lasagna.

Our speaker will be Dr. P. Jay Fleisher, Distinguished Professor in the Department of Earth Sciences at the College at Oneonta, whose topic will be "*Glacial Field Research in Remote Sites; the Challenge is Half the Fun*". His images will illustrate a talk that focuses on the three main factors related to planning and conducting field research at remote sites. Identifying realistic research goals, selecting competent and compatible colleagues, and careful logistics all lead to the fun part of being there.

Join us for a wonderful evening! The cost is \$26.00 per person; the program alone is free. Reservations for the dinner must be made by November 13. Call 607-563-2924 or mail to: Julia Gegoory, PO Box 641, Unadilla NY 13849.

| NAME | MENU CHOICE | COST |
|----------------|-------------|-------|
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| Total enclosed | | _____ |

Conservation and Legislation

by Andy Mason

Good news on keeping roadless areas roadless--Environmentalists scored a major victory in wilderness protection in September when Judge Elizabeth LaPorte of the U.S. District Court Northern District of California ruled that the Bush administration had illegally repealed the Roadless Rule for National Forests.

The Roadless Rule dates back to the last days of the Clinton administration when after nearly three years of analysis and the greatest public outreach in the history of federal rulemaking, the U.S. Forest Service adopted the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, to conserve a large portion of unprotected wildland on National Forests.

One of the most significant public lands measures of the last century, the Roadless Rule protected 58.5 million acres of roadless areas on National Forests and Grasslands from most logging and road construction. The rule was supported by 95% of the 1.6 million individuals expressing their views during the public comment period.

However, the promise of the Roadless Rule was short-lived. As soon as President Bush was inaugurated, his administration began efforts to delay, weaken and overturn it. On the day of his inauguration, Bush ordered the postponement of all federal rules not yet in effect. Later that year, the administration opted to not defend the Roadless Rule against legal challenges, an unprecedented action ignoring the law. In addition, the US Forest Service issued directives significantly weakening the rule.

Legal battles ensued, with the states, environmental groups, logging companies, Indian tribes and others weighing in. In the meantime, the Forest Service exempted the huge Tongass and Chugach National Forests from the rule, and in May 2005, the administration repealed the Roadless Rule and replaced it with a state petition process. Again challenged by the states, the Bush administration pushed ahead with its plans, and in August of this year, the first logging in roadless areas began.

However, in September, Judge LaPorte set aside the state petition plan and ruled the administration acted illegally in repealing the Roadless Rule. The Tongass National Forest exemption continues under this ruling, unfortunately. Since then, the timber industry has appealed Judge LaPorte's decision, and the Bush administration has grudgingly suspended planned sales in roadless areas.

What you can do Clearly President Bush will fight as long as possible to open the National Forest roadless areas to logging. Several federal legislators, including Rep. Sherwood Boehlert, have introduced bills that would make the Roadless Rule the law of the

land. This would eliminate meddling and delay in implementing the rule.

Write your federal representatives and let them know the small remaining areas of roadless forests must be protected, and ask them to support a law doing just that.

Addresses

Federal:

| | |
|---|--|
| President George W. Bush The White House Washington, DC 20500 (202) 456-1111 President@whitehouse.gov | US Rep. Sherwood Boehlert/ Maurice Hinchey/ John Sweeney/Michael McNulty US House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 Boehlert: (202) 225-3665 rep.boehlert@mail.house.gov Hinchey: (202) 225-6335 hinchey@hr.house.gov Sweeney: (202) 225-5614 http://www.house.gov/sweeney/ McNulty: (202) 225-5076 mike.mculty@mail.house.gov |
| U.S. Sens. Charles Schumer/ Hillary Clinton US Senate Washington, DC 20510 (202) 224-6542 senator@schumer.senate.gov Clinton-(202) 224-4451 senator@clinton.senate.gov | |

Hawkwatch News

The first Golden Eagle of the season arrived at the Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch on Oct. 9. If previous season counts are an indicator, there should be 150-250 more goldens following it through the end of December.

The biggest Golden Eagle flights come on cold days with north or northwest winds. Although November is probably the best month, both October and December have had exceptional days. Highlights have included:

- 11/9/01--28 Golden Eagles
- 12/9/01--28 Golden Eagles
- 10/23/03--19 Golden Eagles
- 11/20/03--51 Golden Eagles
- 11/1/04--45 Golden Eagles
- 11/11/05--71 Golden Eagles

Last season, an eastern continental record 252 Golden Eagles passed the lookout. Red-tailed Hawks also increase through October and Nov. and late season species such as N. Goshawks, Rough-legged Hawks, and Red-shouldered Hawks will also build in numbers.

Visitors, spotters and counters are always welcome at the hawkwatch. Several dates are still open, but most promising days will be covered. Be sure to dress warmly if you do visit, especially on northerly wind days.

To receive email forecasts of anticipated good flights, sign up at www.groups.yahoo.com/group/hawkcast. To watch for good winds yourself, a good site is www.intellicast.com --type in Oneonta to get the local forecast

For more information, contact Andy Mason, (607) 652-2162, AndyMason@earthling.net, or Tom Salo, (607) 965-8232, tomsalo@localnet.com. Directions to the hawkwatch the DOAS Sanctuary can be found at www.franklinmt.org.

September Bird Sightings

I never look forward to the end of summer. It usually means the end of my birding escapades and since I'm a teacher, it means the dreaded beginning of the new school year. This September, school still began on time, but I was treated to the surprise sighting of a great blue heron and a belted kingfisher which sweetened my end of this summer.

On 9/19 Sue Whitney reported a merlin in Delhi. Gerianne Carillo was still seeing female ruby-throated hummingbirds in Milford and Tom Salo sighted a common raven, a common yellowthroat, a purple finch and 3 ruffed grouses in W. Burlington on 9/22. Andy Mason watched as 2 American kestrels devoured a snake in Jefferson on 9/27. On 9/29 Tom Salo added an ovenbird to his sightings in W. Burlington. An unusual Rufous Hummingbird was reported in Andes the last week of September.

On 10/9 Gerianne Carillo reported a Carolina wren at her feeder in Milford and Andy Mason flushed out 6 American woodcocks in Gilboa. On 10/12 Charlie Dahan was also surprised to see a Carolina wren in Otego while Tom Salo had 3 hermit thrushes in W. Burlington. On 10/15 a lingering yellow-rumped warbler was seen by Gerianne Carillo in Milford.

Please send sightings to Dianne Benko at (607) 829-5218, at 6815 Co. Hwy. 16, Delhi, NY 13753, or at caged@wpe.com by 11/19/06 for the December issue of The Belted Kingfisher.

DOAS Hosts Successful NYSOA Meeting

Over the weekend of Sept. 29-Oct. 1, our Chapter served as host for the 59th annual meeting of the NY State Ornithological Assoc., formerly the Federation of NY State Bird Clubs. Held at SUCO's Morris Conference Center, the event drew over 150 participants for a series of workshops, field trips, research papers, social events, and business meetings.

A Saturday night banquet with speaker Donald Kroodsmma, author of *The Singing Life of Birds*, was the climax of the weekend. Dr. Kroodsmma's enthusiastic presentation was well-received by all present. He signed numerous books for the crowd.

Field trips to local birding locales including Emmons Pond Bog, Weaver Lake, Milford State Forest, and others showed the visiting birders some of our hot spots. Although the weather was not ideal, the trip leaders all turned up good birds.

Another highlight was a picnic lunch at the Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch on the DOAS Sanctuary. This was a good introduction to the hawkwatch for many of the participants. A Bald Eagle was spotted during their stay, and a close Sharp-shinned Hawk skimmed the treetops.

Professor's Peter Fauth of Hartwick College and Nigel Mann of SUCO chaired an excellent papers session with current research on Golden-winged Warbler habitat restoration, the status of Whip-poor-wills in NY State, and the energetics and stopover ecology of neotropical migrants in an urban park, among the topics discussed.

The meeting participants left Oneonta with a good impression of DOAS and the community. Many thanks to those who helped with this event, including Cheryl Boise, Nancy Cannon, Gerianne Carillo, Charlie Dahan, John Davis, Bob Donnelly, Jean Dorman, Peter Fauth, Lisa Gorn, Nigel Mann, Gray Mason, Marge Mathis, Jean Miller, Eleanor Moriarty, Mary Lou Parker, Sandy Perry, Tom & Jo Ann Salo, Charlie Scheim, Julie Smith, Kathy Swantak, Rich Timmerman, Cynthia Waterman, and Julie and Joel Wexler.
--Andy Mason

DOAS E-Mail News List Do you have trouble remembering the dates of our programs and trips? Would you like to know when the latest edition of the Belted Kingfisher has been posted on our web site? You can receive timely e-mails notifying you of these activities. Our new E-mail group DOASnews provides information on our upcoming activities. Subscribers to the list will receive a limited number of messages concerned only with the activities and mission of DOAS. It is easy to join. Go to <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/DOASnews/> and click on "join this group."

Earth Nears Record High Temperature

According to a new study published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Earth's temperature has risen to a level not seen for 12,000 years.

James Hansen, head of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies led the research which finds that the mean surface temperature of earth has been warming at a rate of 0.2° c. per decade for the past 30 years. The study says that the globe's mean temperature is now within 1° of the maximum for the past million years.

Hansen says "This evidence implies that we are getting close to dangerous levels of human made pollution". If additional warming is kept below 1° C., "the effects of global warming may be relatively manageable, but if further warming reaches 2-3° C., we will likely see changes that make Earth a very different place than the Earth we know". About 3 million years ago was the last time Earth was this warm and then sea level was about 25 meters higher than today. He warns if CO2 emissions are not curbed, global temperatures are likely to rise 2-3° C. by 2100.

Hansen, with collaborators from the University of Calif., Santa Barbara, compared recent temperatures with those derived from sea sediments deposited over the past million years.

The study explains that global warming is already affecting species. Research has found that 1700 plant and animal species are moving toward the North or South Pole at a rate of 6 km. per decade, but over the past 30 years, climate zones have been moving poleward at a rate of 40 km. per decade, Hansen says.
... Bob Miller from *Chemical and Engineering News*, Oct.2, 2006.

If you haven't yet seen Al Gore's movie *An Inconvenient Truth*, about global warming, **DO SO!**

November Waterfowl Field Trip

DOAS will have a waterfowl trip led by Bob Donnelly on Saturday, November 11. We will meet at 8:30 PM in Cooperstown at the foot of Fair St. where it meets Otsego Lake. The Otsego Lake watershed attracts numerous species, and often in large quantities. All are invited. There will be a moderate amount of easy walking. For further information please contact Bob Donnelly at 547-8654 or rsdonn@yahoo.com.

Christmas Bird Count

The DOAS annual Christmas Bird Count is Saturday, December 16. This will be our 38th year of participating in this national count. Everyone, novice or experienced, is welcome to join us on that day. Small groups in one or two cars count all the birds they see in their assigned area for whatever hours they choose. Each group has a leader who will have received appropriate materials beforehand. Alternatively, instead of joining a group, you can count birds at your own feeder off and on throughout the day. If you are a new counter for either the group counts or the feeder counts please phone Bob Miller at 607-432-5767. People who have participated before will be contacted.

Eagle Trip Scheduled for January

This winter's DOAS field trip to view Bald Eagles in Delaware County is scheduled for Saturday, January 13, 2007. Further details will appear in the next Belted Kingfisher, but the trip will leave Oneonta in the morning and return mid-afternoon. Participants can also meet up along the way in Hamden or Downsville.

For further information, contact trip leader Andy Mason, (607) 652-2162, AndyMason@earthling.net.

January Waterfowl Trip

The NY State Ornithological Association's annual statewide waterfowl count is scheduled for Sunday, Jan. 14, 2007. DOAS covers Otsego Lake and the Susquehanna River above Unadilla, the Unadilla River, and Cannonsville Reservoir and the W. Branch of the Delaware River.

Anyone interested in helping with this census, please contact Andy Mason, (607) 652-2162, AndyMason@earthling.net.

Don't let invasive plants take over your garden or our landscape.

An "invasive species" is defined as a species that is non-native and may be referred to as an exotic, alien, or non-indigenous species. An invasive species grows/ reproduces and spreads rapidly, establishes over large areas, and persists. Purple loosestrife is an example of an introduced plant that has become an invasive, noxious weed. In the past couple of decades it has spread through wetlands once occupied by native cattails and can now be seen in wetlands from here to New York City and up to Canada.

1. Plant non-invasive plants: select plant species that are not listed on the noxious weed list for your state.
2. Use non-invasive alternatives: ask a local nursery about non-invasive plant alternatives. Native plants often have similar characteristics as invasives without the damaging ecological side effects.
3. Watch out for invasive plant hitchhikers: check clothes (especially the soles of shoes), belongings, and vehicles for seeds and pieces of plants.
4. Have a care if you share: many invasive plants are passed around because they are attractive garden plants. Do not share cuttings, seedlings or plants that are invasive with neighbors and friends.
5. Use only seed mixes that are invasive plant free: try to purchase seed mixes from reputable manufacturers that guarantee the purity and content of their seed.
6. Use weed-free soil and mulch mix: look for a tag that says "Certified weed free."
7. Be especially careful with aquatic plants: don't just dump them!! Invasive aquatic plants were often introduced as attractive water garden and aquarium decorations.
8. Keep an eye on new sprouts and volunteers: some invasive plants make attractive additions to our gardens but can spread very quickly by producing lots of seedlings. Be aware of what is coming up in your yard, and take care to control these new invasives by regular mowing or use of barriers.
9. Dispose of invasive plants carefully: prune or remove invasive plants before they produce fruit or seeds. Pay attention, some invasive plants mature very quickly. When removing the plant either burn, bag or freeze before you dispose.
10. If you can't part with your invasive plant, remember - contain it, control it, or cage it. Please be responsible.

To learn more about native plants and prevention of invasive plants in our area, visit the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at www.wildflower.org.

Barbara Marsala

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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.