



# THE BELTED KINGFISHER

DELAWARE-OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

## COMING ACTIVITIES

### SEPTEMBER

9/15: Board Meeting, 7pm, home of Stephen Rice.

9/18: General Meeting: Todd Katzner to present on Asian Vultures (see right).

### OCTOBER

10/03: DOAS Sanctuary and Franklin Mountain Hawk Watch Fall 2009 Open House.

10/16: Charter Dinner, featuring a presentation on the Golden Eagle by Trish Miller.

10/20: Board Meeting, 7pm, home of Dave Kiehm.

### NOVEMBER

11/20: General Meeting: Jean Miller to present "Does the Pika Have a Future? Climate Change May Decide" (details in the November edition).

SEE PAGE 5 FOR DETAILS

## Asian Vultures to highlight September Program

Dr. Todd Katzner, Director of Conservation and Field Research at the National Aviary, will present for DOAS on Friday, September 18, 2009, on the topic of Asian Vultures. Dr. Katzner focuses his research interests on the interactions among animals, people and the environment we share. His study of Vultures began in 2001 in Kazakhstan due to a rapid decline in their population in south Asia.

Dr. Katzner has published a number of articles that extend beyond ornithology, studying and researching the interplay between social human behavior and conservation of natural resources.

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

◆————◆  
All DOAS Programs are free and open to the public.

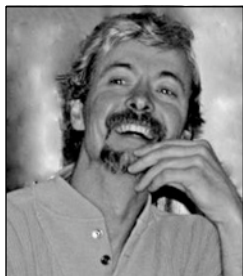
## GOLDEN EAGLES THE TOPIC AT CHARTER DINNER 2009

The annual DOAS Charter Dinner and General Meeting will take place on Friday, October 16, 2009 this year, featuring a presentation on the Golden Eagle by Trish Miller. See page 5 for dinner details, including an exciting new venue for the event, available menu items, and a registration form.



Photo by Keith Hodan

Trish Miller, with a Golden Eagle

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**Newsletter Changes***Tom Salo*

We are hoping you find changes to the appearance and content of this newsletter pleasing and informative. These improvements are the result of much work by many people over the past year. Last September, we decided to hold a contest among the commercial art students at the BOCES Otsego Area Occupational Center in Milford to design a new masthead for this publication. As an incentive, we bought teacher Ann Kiehm's class a pizza

lunch and offered a small cash prize for the winning entry. We received a number of excellent proposals from which we chose the work you see at the top of page 1.

The winning student was Matt Brown from the Cherry Valley/Springfield School. He has finished his first year of the Visual Arts Program and returns this fall with a concentration in illustration. He refined an early draft of the masthead selected by the board. A beautiful drawing of a Belted Kingfisher by Dave Kiehm was added to the final work.

Once the masthead was finalized, the board considered drafts of what the whole newsletter should look like. A committee was created to decide the details. The committee, ably chaired by Eleanor Moriarty, guided all of the changes you see today. Another recent change is our new Editor, Gerianne Carillo. She has taken over from long-time Editor Bob Miller (see page 7). She is a former DOAS Director with a strong technical background.

Besides the appearance, look closely for other changes. We are actively seeking more local content. A series on Favorite Places begins with this issue and will appear regularly. If you have a place you love, and would be willing to write a short piece about why, we would welcome your contribution. Many of these places are favorites of birders but we are not limiting the items to birds. If you know a place with great plants or spectacular views, it would fit perfectly into the series. Since we have some articles prepared in advance, please contact me before writing to make sure someone else hasn't written about your place. We plan to eventually make the series on places available on the web site with links to a map.

We are also hoping to include short items about interesting wildlife experiences. If you have had an interesting wildlife encounter, please feel free to submit something. If your submission is more than 300 words, you may want to check on space availability before submitting. Submissions can be mailed to the post office box or sent to [editor@doas.us](mailto:editor@doas.us).

We were so pleased with the Belted Kingfisher artwork created by Dave Kiehm for the masthead that we are using it in other ways. We have used it on our new letterhead and envelopes. Look for it on our web site and facebook page.

~ Tom Salo

## THE DELAWARE - OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1968

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GERIANNE CARILLO

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WEB ADDRESS: [WWW.DOAS.US](http://WWW.DOAS.US)

TO CONTRIBUTE NOTES OR ARTICLES FOR  
THE BELTED KINGFISHER PLEASE SEND TO  
"KINGFISHER EDITOR" AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS,  
OR EMAIL [EDITOR@DOAS.US](mailto:EDITOR@DOAS.US)

COVER ARTWORK BY DAVE KIEHM

**CONSERVATION AND LEGISLATION**

BY ANDY MASON

**Governor Paterson uses Executive Order to Target Environmental and Health Regulations**

In early August NY Governor David A. Paterson issued an Executive Order that would allow a handpicked group of top aides to repeal state regulations they deem outdated or overly burdensome to businesses.

This action puts in place a policy that met with strong opposition when a draft was found by the media last year. Environmental and public health advocates in particular feared the governor was targeting clean air and global warming rules at the behest of industry groups.

The draft has now become reality, and predictably has been praised by those such as the Business Council of NY State as needed to “remove obstacles to . . . growth” in the state.

The order creates a select committee of five senior members of the Governor’s

cabinet who will review existing regulations, with environmental, health and safety agencies among the first to undergo this process.

Environmental leaders were particularly incensed as Paterson released the Executive Order one day after he proposed ambitious targets for reducing New York’s carbon emissions. The governor sought positive comments from these same leaders for the carbon announcement, but never mentioned his order planned for the following day that could undo the carbon goals.

**What you can do:** Contact Governor Paterson and ask him to repeal Executive Order #25, and to not target important protections for the state’s citizens and its lands, air and water. An online message can be sent via [http://actionnetwork.org/campaign/xo\\_25](http://actionnetwork.org/campaign/xo_25).

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**Population - We Can’t Grow On Like This!**

Although the focus in Washington has been on health care reform and the Supreme Court nomination, other important issues continue to need attention from the White House and lawmakers.

One of these is population growth—here in the US and overseas. More people and the resources they demand has had major negative impacts on our environment. Dwindling water supplies, energy production, large-scale agriculture, and urban sprawl are just a few of the effects of rapidly expanding populations.

Scientists have documented declines in wildlife populations, including many bird species, due to competition for habitat with humans. This is particularly true in third-world countries where populations are increasing exponentially.

There are relatively easy ways to lessen population growth and, in turn, help the environment. Birth control education programs are needed in many poor countries,

as are contraceptives. These countries request and appreciate such assistance, but programs have been cut in recent years due to pressure from conservative groups and a hands-off approach by the Bush administration.

Low cost and low tech development programs also reduce the pressure on poor families to have more children for economic reasons. Helping communities develop water supplies, improve subsistence agriculture and increase public health all provide a better quality of life that allows family planning to become a more realistic consideration in these areas.

**What you can do:** Ask President Obama and your federal representatives to make population a priority and to fully fund programs to provide family planning information and techniques to countries that desire them. Not only will the globe’s health improve, but so will our nation’s security and standing in the world community.

**Addresses**

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

**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](http://www.scottmurphy.house.gov)

*21st Congressional District (All of Schoharie Co.):*

Rep. Paul Tonko  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-5076  
fax: (202) 225-5077  
[www.tonko.house.gov](http://www.tonko.house.gov)

*22nd Congressional District (Delaware Co. Towns of Deposit, Hancock and Tompkins):*

Rep. Maurice Hinchey  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-6335  
fax: (202) 226-0774  
[www.house.gov/hinchey](http://www.house.gov/hinchey)

*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](http://www.arcuri.house)

**US Senate**

US Senators Kirsten Gillibrand/  
Charles Schumer  
US Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  
Senator Gillibrand—  
[www.Gillibrand.senate.gov](http://www.Gillibrand.senate.gov)  
(202) 224-4451  
Senator Schumer—  
[senator@schumer.senate.gov](mailto:senator@schumer.senate.gov)  
(202) 224-6542

## NATURE'S PLEASURES START AT HOME

Many of life's most generous journeys take place at home. I started birding with a friend about twenty-five years ago. Both teachers, we would unwind at the end of particularly stressful days by birding the shoreline of the Hudson River below Nyack, NY. Pete has since retired and moved to a mountaintop in Colorado. He often leads birding expeditions into the southwest and Mexico. Over the years I have traveled more than a few miles to catch a fleeting glimpse of a rare or uncommon species, but that enthusiasm has waned. There is much to be said for staying put, for learning as much as one can about one's home environment. My most pleasurable birding moments occur right here at home, usually when I am sitting in my favorite chair on our deck sipping coffee as the sun starts to creep over the horizon to light up another day filled often with unanticipated pleasures.

This summer's show has been particularly memorable. I have watched several pairs of tree swallows, bluebirds, robins, chickadees and, now, house wrens and phoebes, establish their territories, build nests in our next boxes, raise their families, and then move on. On several occasions I have had to duck as I have had the temerity to be walking a bit too close to a tree swallow abode housing very noisy and quite chatty babies. A few mornings ago, after making sure that ma and pa were off getting the morning's chow, I opened each of two nest boxes and peered in at those lovely creatures who will soon be joining their parents in performing some of nature's most lovely aerial ballets. When the whole troupe performs, who needs to drive to New York or Saratoga when the show here is free and extraordinarily beautiful and uplifting.

Earlier this summer I watched while swallows and bluebirds competed for one particular nest box. It is exactly the same as all the others. Why all the fuss? I guess in the avian world location is everything and, just like humans, birds often engage in competitive gestures rooted in a species' will to survive as robustly as possible. I have seen quite a bit of sociology and genetics and politics at work this summer. And no small amount of purposeful but carefully calibrated aggression.

There is a phoebe nest nestled atop an outdoor light just above and to the left of the barn door. Every time I open the door three little beaks quiver while mama makes a racket atop the fence post about ten feet from the nest. We have reached an accommodation of

sorts. I wish I had a way of letting her know how crucial her existence is to mine, that her being brings a richness and depth to mine impossible to express.

The most bountiful of life's journeys often require little more than a cup of coffee, a chair, and patience.

~ Richard deRosa  
Hawthorn Hill Farm  
July 22, 2009

*(Richard DeRosa, Ph.D. is a retired educator who writes a weekly column "Hawthorne Hill Journal" for the Cooperstown Crier. A longtime Cooperstown-area naturalist and organic gardener, he is a member of the Board of Directors of the Otsego County Conservation Association.)*

### NEW YORK'S WATCHABLE WILDLIFE PROGRAM

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is in the process of updating and enhancing New York's Wildlife Viewing Guide. The public is invited to provide input about areas where the public can reliably find and view wildlife and natural areas. DEC has a web page featuring information on wildlife and nature viewing. They will also produce a printed guidebook. Bird and wildlife watching is one of the fastest growing outdoor recreational activities in the U.S.



*Photo by Nancy Cannon*

DEC is collecting as much information as possible about sites in New York State where the public can reliably find and view wildlife and natural areas. The public is encouraged to nominate parks, wildlife management areas, forests, outdoor education centers, preserves and private lands that allow public access. The primary goal is to encourage the public to get outside and enjoy New York's wonderful wildlife and natural resources.

The web site was launched in July with a limited number of early applications. Site nominations are due by October 31. After compiling a list of sites, a steering/site-selection committee will select the sites that will appear in the guide and on the Web site. The sites selected for the Web will begun appearing on the DEC website - <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/55423.html>. DOAS has submitted the sanctuary on Franklin Mountain and Weaver Lake. Request an application from Maria Katchmar at (518) 402-8044 or by email at [makatchm@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:makatchm@gw.dec.state.ny.us).



## DELAWARE-OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY'S SANCTUARY OPEN HOUSE FRANKLIN MOUNTAIN HAWK WATCH AND FALL 2009 OPEN HOUSE

Thousands of raptors of 15 species are counted moving south each fall as they concentrate along the ridges overlooking Oneonta. The Franklin Mountain Hawk Watch began in 1989 as a survey of hawks and eagles migrating past the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society's wildlife sanctuary in the Town of Davenport. Volunteers count hawks, eagles and vultures passing the site on most days from late August through December. The site is noted for its flights of Golden Eagles and Red-tailed Hawks. In recent years an average of almost 200 Golden Eagles and over 2000 Red-tailed Hawks have been recorded each fall. The best flights generally occur on days with north or northwest winds, usually following cold fronts.

On Saturday, October 3, 2009 from 10 AM to 2 PM, the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society will host an open house at the sanctuary. At 10:30, there will be a 45 minute beginners workshop on Identifying Flying Hawks. A trail walk will leave the barn at 11:30 AM and will cover most of the sanctuary grounds. The hawk watch will be staffed through the day and refreshments will be served at the barn.

The sanctuary can be reached by taking Oneonta's Main Street south across NY Route 28. After passing through the light, turn immediately left at the T onto Southside Drive.

Turn right after 8/10 mile onto Swart Hollow Road. Go 1 1/2 mile and take a sharp right on Grange Hall Road. After 2/10 mile, take a sharp left into the driveway, or park nearby on Grange Hall Road. The hawk watch is 100 yards up the hill from the barn.

For more information on the hawk watch visit <http://www.doas.us>, or contact Tom Salo at 607-965-8232 or [tomsalo@localnet.com](mailto:tomsalo@localnet.com).



*Photo by Gerianne Carillo*

*The Barn at the DOAS Sanctuary*

### **GOLDEN EAGLES THE TOPIC AT CHARTER DINNER 2009**

The 41st Annual Charter Dinner of the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society will be Friday, October 16, 2009 at the Foothills Performing Arts Center on Market Street in Oneonta. A social hour with appetizers and cash bar begins at 5:30 pm, dinner begins at 6:30 pm, and the program begins at 7:30 pm.

This year's featured presenter will be Trish Miller, PhD student in Ecology at The Pennsylvania State University. Trish will present her research on Golden Eagles, and the potential conflicts between diurnal raptors and wind power development.

Dinner reservations must be made by October 11th. Menu choices are: herb encrusted pork loin, chicken marsala, and vegetable lasagne. The cost is \$28.00 per person. Complete the reservation form below and mail, with your payment, to: Julia Gregory, P.O. Box 641, Unadilla, NY 13849, or call 607-563-2924.



#### **2009 Charter Dinner Registration Form**

Attendee Names: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Menu Choice: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you!*

## BOB MILLER'S DEDICATED SERVICE RECOGNIZED

With this issue, long-time editor of The Belted Kingfisher, J. Robert Miller, is stepping down from the position after over three decades of service. It is difficult to put into words the organization's appreciation for this great effort. Below is a letter to Bob from the DOAS Board of Directors.

The Board wishes new editor Gerianne Carillo similar success and longevity!



*Bob Miller*

## NYSOA MEETING AT MONTEZUMA SEPTEMBER 26

The 62nd Annual Meeting of the New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA) will be held on Saturday, September 26, 2009 at the Montezuma Audubon Center. The meeting will feature field trips to the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, and a workshop on finding and identifying shorebirds.

A registration form can be found on the NYSOA web site: <http://www.nybirds.org>. Those interested in attending should register ASAP.

Activities for the day include:

- Field trips beginning at 7:30, 8:00, and 8:30 a.m. at the Montezuma NWR Visitor's Center.
- Buffet lunch (limit of 80 people) at the Montezuma Audubon Center.
- Lunchtime speaker: Shai Mitra on "Finding and Identifying Shorebirds in New York State".

Techniques for finding and identifying shorebirds in New York State will be explained, focusing on similarities and differences between coastal and inland sites. The presentation will be illustrated with Shai's photos from Long Island, and by Dominic Sherony's photos from throughout the state, and will be integrated with the morning's field trip results from the Montezuma wetlands complex.

Annual Meeting of Council of Delegates 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. (Open to all NYSOA members.)

J. Robert Miller  
636 Co. Hwy. 35  
Maryland, NY

August 18, 2009

Dear Bob,

As both board members of the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society and as individuals we express our heartfelt thanks for your long and successful service to The Belted Kingfisher. For over thirty years your vision and dedication as editor have provided members of the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society with this excellent publication that has been so important in communicating the events, policies, activism, science and other valuable information that so vigorously define our Chapter.

As you have noted, this period has been one of dramatic technological change. In the era of hand-cranked mimeograph machines, no one could have foreseen the development of electronic publishing as it has come about. You were able to move The Kingfisher to computer early on and so improve its production and quality and consistency. The newsletter has been a steady and dependable presence that has helped establish DOAS as a credible and important part of the community over the years.

You are leaving The Kingfisher in excellent shape and position to continue its important role in our Chapter. Coming years will no doubt see ongoing changes as they have occurred over the past three decades. Your spirit and influence will remain a positive part of The Kingfisher for a long, long time. DOAS is indebted to you for your committed efforts as editor and in the many other way you assist the organization. The environment, the birds and the people of our region and beyond are better for the large part you play in DOAS.

With admiration and affection,

Nancy Cannon

John Davis

Bob Donnelly

Julia Gregory

Dave Kiehm

Barbara Marsala

## HAWKWATCH NEWS

Counting at the Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch on the DOAS Sanctuary began in mid-August and will continue through December. This season marks the 21st consecutive season at the lookout.

Dedicated volunteers record thousands of raptors each season. The 2008 season brought nearly 4,500 birds of 15 species past the site. This represented a somewhat down year from recent counts, but we are anticipating a good bounce back this season!

Visitors, spotters and counters are always welcome at the hawkwatch. For more information, contact Andy Mason, (607) 652-2162, [AndyMason@earthling.net](mailto:AndyMason@earthling.net), or Tom Salo, (607) 965-8232, [tomsalo@localnet.com](mailto:tomsalo@localnet.com).

Forecasts of anticipated good flights at the hawkwatch are sent out by email a day or two in advance. To receive these alerts, visit <http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/hawkcast/> to sign up. Daily tallies from Franklin Mt. are also available by email—contact Andy Mason as above. More information and directions to the hawkwatch at the DOAS Sanctuary can be found at [www.franklinmt.org](http://www.franklinmt.org).



*Redtail,*  
*Dave Kiehm*

## THE SECOND ATLAS OF BREEDING BIRDS IN NEW YORK STATE STILL AVAILABLE

Based on comprehensive, statewide research efforts conducted from 2000 to 2005, *The Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State* documents and illustrates the current distribution of breeding birds within the state, and the significant changes in bird distribution that have occurred since the publication of *The Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State* in 1988. Edited by Kevin J. McGowan and Kimberley Corwin, the book is loaded with information including detailed species accounts with maps, an overview of the species' breeding range, habitat preferences, history in the state, trends in distribution, and conservation implications. There are majestic landscape paintings of family groups and original artwork of each species.

This landmark volume is still available at a substantial discount over the \$59.95 book store price. The cost is \$45 plus \$5 for shipping. To order a copy, send a \$50 check by October 5 to DOAS – BBA, PO Box 544, Oneonta, NY 13820. Be sure to include your correct shipping address.

## MOVEMENT OF FIREWOOD IS THE MOST COMMON METHOD OF LONG-DISTANCE SPREAD OF THE EMERALD ASH BORER

The first occurrence of emerald ash borer (EAB, *Agrilus planipennis* Fairmaire) in New York State was confirmed by the NY Department of Agriculture and Markets and Department of Environmental Conservation on June 17, 2009 in Randolph, NY (Cattaraugus County). An invasive beetle native to eastern Asia, EAB kills all species of ash trees in North America, and has the potential to cause severe economic and ecological damage. First detected near Detroit in 2002 it has now spread to 13 states, the District of Columbia, and two Canadian provinces. Ash mortality is 100% near Detroit and is widespread in all the affected areas. With establishment of EAB in New York State we can expect tremendous economic impacts in forests where ash is a common timber species and in urban areas

where ash are frequently planted as street trees. EAB will impact a wide range of stakeholders from homeowners and small woodlot owners to municipal governments and large timber companies. Horticultural and specialty industries that rely heavily on ash, such as baseball bat and tool handle manufacturers, will be severely impacted by necessary quarantine regulations and the potential complete loss of ash. Ecological effects of EAB will be greatest in areas where ash is most abundant, such as along streams and rivers, in northern wetlands, in second growth woodlands of abandoned agricultural fields, and in the extensive upland forests of New York's southern tier. Do not move firewood! Movement of ash firewood is the most common method of long-distance spread.

Current DEC firewood regulations ([www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html)) limit the transportation of untreated firewood to less than 50 miles from its source and prohibit the import of firewood into NY unless it has been heat treated to kill EAB. Compliance with these regulations by the public is critical to slowing EAB spread in New York. To view photos and get more information, visit: [www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info) or [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html).

If you detect EAB or EAB damage, call your county Cooperative Extension, Regional NYSDEC office, or NYSDEC at (866) 640-0652 or (518) 402-9425.

*(Reprinted from the August 5, 2009 Otsego County Conservation Association Eco-bulletin, Vol. 2, No. 20)*

## FAVORITE PLACES SERIES: THE UPPER UNADILLA RIVER

One of my favorite local rivers is the Unadilla. There is a section of slow water between West Winfield and Unadilla Forks that is a wonderful area to canoe or kayak. The current is almost indiscernible. You can paddle upstream or down so you do not need to shuttle your boat. Roads can't be seen from most of this stretch. The area is a mix of open wetland, edge and woods. Access is from the old bridge site on Camp Road off US 20 west of West Winfield. Wildlife is abundant. You can take as much time as you like paddling in either direction.

Another paddle I enjoy on this river is from Leonardsville downstream to South Edmeston. For most of this 10 mile stretch the river is out of sight of roads and houses. For a quiet person in a canoe or kayak, wildlife viewing opportunities are constant. The bird life is great. Great-horned Owls, Yellow-throated Vireos, N. Rough-winged Swallows, Northern Waterthrush, ducks, raptors and Belted Kingfishers are regular in late May and June. Before leaf-out, a couple of Red-tailed Hawk nests can be seen in the area north of West Edmeston. Mink are seen often, as are deer and muskrats.

Give yourself about 5 hours to cover this stretch if you plan to watch wildlife. There is a little fast water which provides some minor thrills. During low water levels, be prepared to get out several times to walk through riffles. We always advise paddlers to wear their pfd (personal flotation device).



~ Tom Salo

*(Editor's Note: This is the debut of a series featuring local hotspots for birds, wildlife and other attractions of nature. If you have a favorite place you like to visit, let us know! Send your contribution to "Kingfisher Editor" at the address on page 2, or email [editor@doas.us](mailto:editor@doas.us).)*

## DANGER IN THE NURSERY

The Canadian Boreal Forest, in northern Alberta, is the annual breeding site for tens of millions of migratory birds. This bird nursery is being overrun by major oil companies seeking to extract petroleum from the tar sands reserves. Our Canada Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, Blackpoll Warbler and many other of our "backyard birds" are being threatened by the extraction process. The forests are being lost at a rapid rate.

Tar sands mining and drilling operations in Alberta are industrializing the landscape with pipelines and refineries, creating toxic holding ponds and destroying critical habitat. Our Evening Grosbeak, once so common in winter every year, is losing its nesting grounds as clearcutting of the boreal forest makes way for drilling projects. As many as 8,000 to one hundred thousand birds of various species die each year in ponds containing toxic mining waste such as cadmium and mercury. Imagine 500 ducks such as the beautiful Bufflehead dying after landing on one of the polluted storage lakes.

If tar sands oil development continues unchecked, anywhere from 6 million to 166 million birds could be lost over the next 30-50 years. Also, this type of mining is Canada's fastest growing source of global warming pollution, putting humankind and wildlife all across the planet at risk. Much of the exported petroleum comes to the United States!

We enjoy the birds as they migrate through our gardens and yards in spring, and we can do many things to help them on their way, but where they spend their winters and summers can also affect their success and longevity.

Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Nature Conservancy, and Natural Resources Defense Council are just three of the many organizations that are working to encourage Canada to rein in the province's tar sand operations.

~ Jean T. Miller

## MISSING!

One of the historian's books is missing. It is a scrap book style, and covers many of the early years of DOAS events and history. If you have any information about it, please call Jean Miller at 432-5767 or email her at [millerj4@hartwick.edu](mailto:millerj4@hartwick.edu).

Thank you!



**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERS:**  
**PLEASE JOIN OUR LOCAL CHAPTER**

If you are a member of the National Audubon Society (NAS), you are receiving this issue of *The Belted Kingfisher* compliments of our local Chapter, the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society. Due to rising printing and postage costs and the loss of the portion of NAS dues that our Chapter receives, we are no longer able to send the newsletter to NAS-only members.

NAS-only members receive the September Kingfisher - this issue - each year. However, the other eight issues go only to those who have taken a local membership or are joint local/NAS members.

We encourage all NAS-only members to consider a local membership in order to help defray the costs of the newsletter and to support our Chapter's education and

conservation activities. Local memberships are \$15 per year or \$25 for two years - see below for our membership form.

Your mailing label will inform you of your membership status: an L indicates a local member, with expiration date (year and month, e.g. '0910' indicates October 2009); an N indicates an NAS-only member; both an L and an N indicates a joint local/NAS member. If you are an NAS-only member, you will need to take a local membership in order to continue receiving *The Belted Kingfisher*. If you are a local member or a joint local/NAS member, you will continue receiving the newsletter as in the past.

We appreciate the continued support of all members for our efforts to protect the natural world.

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**DAVE KIEHM TO SOLO IN COOPERSTOWN**

The Cooperstown Art Association is delighted to announce that artist David Kiehm of Oneonta will be having a solo show in our galleries September 5 - October 2, 2009. The opening reception will be held Friday, September 11th from 5-7pm.

David Kiehm states, "A lifetime of living closely with nature has inspired me to capture some of the everchanging images that flourish around us everyday. All of us see fleeting glimpses of extraordinary natural events like a hawk tucked tight in a dive or a brilliantly colored warbler flitting from branch to branch. I try to express my love of these wild things through my paintings, and if I can capture the essence of my subjects, hopefully the viewer can also experience the passion I feel and even a coax a memory of a similar experience they may have had."

~ Janet Erway, Director  
Cooperstown Art Association



*Great Egret, by Dave Kiehm*

**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.**

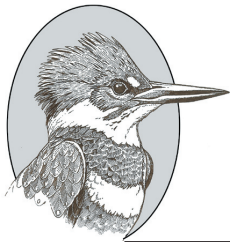
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*Oneonta Merlin, by Dave Kiehm*

## SUMMER BIRD SIGHTINGS

Summertime, and the livin' may be easy for some, but not for those busy birds trying to raise young.

Birdwatchers in the area have reported lots of activity.

Marge Mathis had young Purple Finches begging at her feeders (Morris, 6/24). Dennis Fowler watched a family of Bobolinks along Mill Creek Road (Otego 7/16). Dorian Huneke reported broods of Phoebes and Barn Swallows in Treadwell (7/27), and Andy Mason flushed a Hermit Thrush off a nest with 3 eggs (Jefferson, 7/29). Gerianne Carillo found 25 species, including N. Parula and Golden-crowned Kinglet, in the Milford State Forest (7/5).

Tom Salo reported many Mourning and Chestnut-sided Warblers, Towhees, Cuckoos (mostly Yellow-billed), and Catbirds in W. Burlington (6/25). Also in June, a Black-billed Cuckoo twice surprised Charlie Scheim in his mid-Oneonta backyard. Bob Donnelly spotted a Mockingbird in Jefferson (6/14), and Common Terns on Weaver Lake (6/13). Dennis Fowler enjoyed listening to Raven conversations in pine woods near Otego (7/27).

Dorian Huneke's tractor apparently is a hawk magnet, as she was followed by a male Kestrel on July 8th, and Red-tails on several occasions as she mowed in Treadwell. She also reported a juvenile Red-tail (7/27). Kestrels were also observed by Tom Salo in W. Burlington (7/3, recently-

fledged young), Dennis Fowler (Otego, 7/20), and Ellie Moriarty (Davenport, 6/21).

Dave Kiehm reported the premature death of a Mourning Dove caused by a N. Goshawk. Alerted by the sound of dove crashing into window, he was able to observe predator plucking prey from just 4 feet away (near Milford, 7/6).

Merlins are present for the second year in a row in two Otsego County locations. John Davis reported fledglings in Cooperstown in late July, while the Oneonta pair again fledged three chicks in Wilber Park.

Ted Buhl reported, in response to an owl, a group of 30 Orioles, a pair of Grosbeaks, a Tanager, and many Chickadees and Juncos (Richfield Springs, 7/26), while Kay Crane had a dozen Orioles in Walton (8/11).

A species that has caused quite a stir in the state is the Mississippi Kite. Three individuals have been observed many times throughout the summer near the town of Root in Montgomery County.

~ Contributed by Sandy Bright

*(Editor's Note: If you have bird sightings to report, please contact Dianne Benko [dbenko@frontiernet.net](mailto:dbenko@frontiernet.net), 6815 Co. Hwy. 16, Delhi, NY 13753, 607 829-5218 by September 12, 2009 for the October issue of The Belted Kingfisher.)*