



THE BELTED KINGFISHER

DELAWARE-OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

COMING ACTIVITIES

October

October 7 – Sanctuary Open House
 October 17–DOAS Board Mtg.
 October 20 – DOAS Annual Charter Dinner and Keynote by Joan Collins, “Boreal Birds of the Adirondacks”
 October 28 – Bird Seed Order Deadline

November

November 4– Bird Seed Sale Pickup
 November 11– Glimmerglass Film Days Bird Walk
 November 17– DOAS Program, Photographer Rick Bunting, “On Heron Time”

December

December 5–DOAS Board Mtg.
 December 16–Oneonta Christmas Bird Count
 December 30– Fort Plain Christmas Bird Count
 December 31–Delaware County Christmas Bird Count (tentative)

January

January 16–DOAS Board Mtg.
 January 19– DOAS Program, “Designing Fruitful Forests”

More information on page 7
DOAS PROGRAMS
ARE FREE & OPEN TO
THE PUBLIC

Treadwell's Amazing Bald Eagles By Board Member Dorian Huneke

March 9, 2017, was the first day I could confirm that Treadwell's pair of bald eagles were sitting on the nest. They no longer perched on the edge or on nearby branches, but hunkered down in it, often hard to see. In February, Kyle Dudgeon and I hiked downstream and set up a blind in a protected spot on the opposite side of the creek from the nest tree. We were both looking forward to observing and photographing the adults and, we hoped, their eaglets.



Treadwell Eagles
 Photo by Patricia Leitenberger

Monday, March 14th arrived, bringing a severe snowstorm. Treadwell was buried under more than 30 inches of snow. I was very concerned for the wellbeing of the eagles, but it was Thursday before I finally saw them – together, sitting in a tree along the creek, just below my barn. It was cold out, below freezing, and in such weather, I was sure the eagles would not both leave the nest at **“Eagles” Continued to page 5**

Reminder—DOAS Sanctuary Open House



Join us on Saturday, October 7th from 10 AM to 2 PM, at the DOAS Sanctuary on Grange Hall Spur Road, Oneonta, to explore the Sanctuary, hone your hawk identification skills, and enjoy seeing and learning about Missy Runyan's live raptors! Full schedule at <http://doas.us/event/open-house-hawkwatch/>. The event is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be available throughout the day.



President's Message— Fall, a Time to Celebrate, Support and Advocate with DOAS!

by Co-president Susan O'Handley

The fall season is always a busy one for our chapter, but this year it is extra busy as we put the finishing touches on our 50th Year Celebrations which culminate at our Charter Dinner on Friday evening, October 20 at the Holiday Inn in Oneonta. Our keynote speaker at the dinner this year is Joan Collins, President of the New York State Ornithological Association. All are invited to this special event and we hope you will join us. Registration details can be found on page 4 of this newsletter and our raffle items can be previewed at the website. You can register for the dinner online or by phone.

Our Bird Seed Sale Fundraiser is up and running with pre-orders accepted through October 28 and product pick up on November 4th. Consider placing an order, signing up for membership (or renewals), and try out our Bird-friendly coffee! All proceeds are used to support DOAS programs in the 2018 year.

In addition to our regularly scheduled programs this Fall is our Annual Hawkwatch Open House on Saturday, October 7 from 10 AM to 2 PM. Learn how to identify local hawks in flight, take a walk on our trails, speak with our counters at the Hawkwatch and see live birds of prey with wildlife rehabilitator Missy Runyan. Join us at the

DOAS Sanctuary for this special day and bring friends and family! Refreshments will be provided.

Our chapter continues our involvement to advocate for strong environmental protections through our letter campaigns to government officials and we recently co-hosted a Climate Ambassador Training along with our partners at Audubon NY. If you are looking for tools that can support conversations with others about climate change and the impacts that are being seen with our bird populations, you can access the Advocacy Guide at our website in the Conservation/ Links and Resources section. This 47-page guide is a great tool for anyone interested in being part of the solution. For additional information, please contact me at info@doas.us or by phone at 607-643-5680.

Wishing everyone a Happy Fall Birding Season! I hope to see you soon.



THE DELAWARE - OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1968

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Janet Potter

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ON THE WEB:

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To contribute notes or articles for
The Belted Kingfisher, email:
editor@doas.us

Conservation and Legislation

Help needed with review of wind project

—Last month we wrote about a large wind project adjoining western Delaware County in the Broome County towns of Sanford and Windsor. The Bluestone Wind farm would be in the route of migrating raptors, including Golden Eagles, and near a major concentration area for Bald Eagles.

DOAS is formally involved in review of the project as a registered party with the NY State Public Service Commission, which will make determinations and provide approvals. We have applied for available intervenor funding to obtain GPS migration data for Golden Eagles, and possibly establish raptor survey sites this fall and next spring.

However, there are indications that DOAS may not be eligible for these funds, as we do not have a large number of members in the project area. This would mean there would be no independent study of raptors, and decision-makers would depend on the wind company's surveys, which we know are inadequate to provide a full picture of the presence of eagles.



Wind turbines--
Tomasz Sienicki, Wikimedia Commons

As a result, we are reaching out to members and concerned individuals for help with the needed funds—amounting to several thousand dollars. Our supporters have stepped up for Golden Eagles before, raising money for transmitters for eagles that have provided valuable information on their movements in our region and beyond.

We ask again for your support for this local project that could avoid a serious threat for these birds. If we are successful in obtaining intervenor funding, donations will be used for other programs benefiting eagles, including our efforts to reduce the impacts of toxic lead ammunition on these birds.

What you can do—Send your donations to DOAS, PO Box 544, Oneonta, NY 13820, marked for Golden Eagles. We have a special interest and concern for these iconic birds that pass the Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch in good numbers in fall.

More information on the project, including DOAS comments on the raptor surveys, is available at www.doas.us.
by Andy Mason

Good Start for Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch



Northern Harrier at FMHW
photo by Curt Morgan

Broad-winged Hawks made an especially early showing at the Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch this year. Always the first species to move in significant numbers, broad-wings migrate to

South America and so they get in the air starting in late August and peaking in the middle of September.

The first triple-digit broad-wing day came on September 9 when Steve Hall counted 291—likely the high day for the year. This was followed by triple-digits on the 11th, 16th and 19th. Tom Salo looked at back records and found that September 9 was the earliest date with at least 100 Broad-winged Hawks over the past

decade.

Next up on the hawk train are increasing numbers of Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, plus rising counts of Red-tailed Hawks in mid-October. The first Golden Eagle of the season could show any time after that also.

Visitors and spotters are always welcome at the hawkwatch. For more information and directions, see www.franklinmt.org or contact Andy Mason, (607) 652-2162, AndyMason@earthling.net, or Tom Salo, (607) 965-8232, salothomas@gmail.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 www.franklinmt.org to sign up. Daily tallies from Franklin Mt. are also available by email—contact Andy Mason as above.
by Andy Mason

Annual Charter Dinner, DOAS 50th Anniversary Celebration

2017 marks the end of our 50th year! Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society concludes this special time at the Annual DOAS Charter Dinner, to be held on Friday, October 20, 2017 at the Holiday Inn, 5206 NY-23, Oneonta. Our celebration will include displays of past activities, honoring long-time members, and our keynote speaker and expert birder, Joan Collins. There will be door prizes and some fine raffle items; raffle items can be viewed on our website at <http://doas.us/raffle-items-50th-charter-dinner/>.



Prothonotary warbler cc0

Joan Collins' program is titled "Boreal Birds of the Adirondacks," a multimedia presentation using photographs, video, audio, and slides of the wonderful birds that nest in the North Country. Joan is President of the New York State Ornithological Association and Editor of New York Birders. She is also Vice-President of Northern New York Audubon, past President of High Peaks Audubon Society, and past member of the Board of Directors for the Audubon Council of New York State. As president of Adirondack Avian Expeditions and Workshops, LLC, she leads birding field trips year round, and is a New York State licensed guide and Adirondack 46er.

The evening begins at 5:30 with a social hour, Buffet at 6:30, and the program at 7:30. A cash bar will be available. Reservations must be made by October 14th, using the form below or register online at www.doas.us.

The cost for the full special evening is \$35 per person (with no charge for those wishing to attend only the program portion of the event).

We especially encourage those who have served as members of the Board or officers of DOAS over our fifty years to join us to celebrate our anniversary.

Celebrating 50 Years of Conservation, Research, Education & Advocacy 1968—2017

Annual Charter Dinner – October 20, 2017

The Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society will have their annual Charter Dinner on Friday October 20, 2017 at the Holiday Inn on State Highway 23 in Oneonta. A social hour begins at 5:30 PM, buffet at 6:30 PM and the program at 7:30 PM. The program is open to the public.

This year's speaker is Joan Collins, president of NYS Ornithological Association, who will talk about Boreal Birds of the Adirondacks

*The buffet cost is \$35 per person
Reservations must be made by October 14th by calling 607-563-2924
or mailing a check to: Julia Gregory, PO Box 641, Unadilla, New York 13849
or register online at www.doas.us*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

“Eagles” Continued from page 1 the same time.

The next day a friend and I hiked out through the deep snow to look at the nest from its back side. Both eagles were there, bringing great relief to my concerns. That sense of relief was short lived when the next day I saw them both flying upstream carrying nesting material. Another friend who lives in the village told me he'd been watching them carry nesting material to a tree way out in the valley, upstream from the original nest. As it turned out, this pair of eagles hustled! In one week, they built a new nest, laid one or more eggs, and began the process of incubation all over again.

By March 31st I had confirmed that about one third of the original nest had collapsed in the storm. I also found that the severe wind we had the week before the storm destroyed the blind Kyle and I set up. Fortunately, I had tied the blind to a tree as well as staking it to the ground, or I might never have found it.

On May 22nd, my nephew and I watched a single chick pop up and down in the nest. The ability to do that told me the chick was at least 5 or 6 days old. Spring and summer progressed and the single chick was named Stuart by my friends with a great view of the nest from their back porch.

During the first couple of days of August, Stuart was out on various branches flapping vigorously. On the morning of August 5th, he took his first flight, heading towards town, but by evening was back in the nest tree. As the weeks have passed, Stuart has ventured farther and farther from the nest tree, always vocalizing. Saturday, September 2nd, I watched him fly downstream around 11 AM and return later that afternoon. Clearly his flying skills were improving.

About 8:30 the morning of September 6th Stuart

flew over my barnyard area, vocalizing and dangling something smallish in his talons. I thought he would land in the pasture by the road, but no, Stuart landed IN THE ROAD, just below

a sharp curve. Cars go way too fast on this road, and anyone coming down the hill wouldn't be able to see him until they were on him. I went out to the road and walked slowly uphill toward him as he ate his catch. No cars came down the hill, but I stopped one going up and asked the driver to proceed very slowly. He did - Stuart didn't move until the car was alongside him and then he flew over the fence into the pasture, onto the bank of a little creek. I walked up to where he had eaten his meal, glad to see it was all gone. I was only about 15 feet away from him when he finally saw me and decided to leave.

Mind you, it was raining this entire time (probably little more than 5 minutes, but it felt like forever). As Stuart took flight, he went back over the road and then swung around, coming right toward me. I did wonder what would happen next, but he finally got some altitude and headed back out over the pastures, generally downstream and out of sight.

I do hope he doesn't repeat using the road as a dinner plate, but at least it's clear Stuart has a start at being able to feed himself!



Stuart, July 23rd
Photo by Patricia Leitenberger

Mark Your Calendar—November 17th “On Heron Time” with Rick Bunting



Photo by Rick Bunting

Popular and gifted photographer Rick Bunting will present this program featuring photographs and observations gathered from several years of monitoring a small Great Blue Heron rookery in Chenango County. He will follow the cycle of activity there from the arrival of the first bird to the last bird to fledge.

Since his retirement from SUNY Potsdam and the Crane School of Music, this accomplished and well-known musician pursues his passion for photography full time. Please join us on November 17th at 7:30 PM at the Elm Park Methodist Church, 401 Chestnut St. in Oneonta, N.Y. Refreshments will be served.

“Bird Sightings” Continued from page 8 Eastern Bluebird, Red-breasted Nuthatch (Randy Lynch), Ravens, Cedar Waxwings, Nashville Warbler, American Redstart, Red-eyed Vireo, Common Yellowthroat, Purple Finch, Barn Swallow, Ovenbird (Becky Gretton), Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and a Sora calling in the early morning hours (Kyle Dudgeon). In early September came Brown Thrasher (Steve Hall), Black-throated Green Warbler (Pam Peters), Blackburnian and Palm Warbler, and two Black Vultures flying over the valley, which did not appear to be migrating just yet (Kyle Dudgeon).

Becky Gretton found a juvenile Carolina Wren at Brookwood Point near Cooperstown. Marilyn Bailey discovered a Great Egret near Portlandville, and Double-crested Cormorant on Goodyear Lake. Peter Clark came upon a female Woodcock in Cooperstown, which stared at him for some time, then “waddled off with that distinctive bobble-headed movement... with three little fledglings trailing behind.”

Mid-September: In Jefferson, Randy Lynch found Brown Thrasher and a Northern Mockingbird, and reported that the white Red-tailed Hawk is still being seen. Three species of warblers visited Barb Palmer’s yard, also in

Jefferson: Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green, and Magnolia. She still had a couple of hummingbirds in residence on the 16th. At the Hawkwatch were found Scarlet Tanager and Tennessee Warbler (Andy Mason), Yellow-rumped, Cape May, and Pine Warblers (Becky Gretton), Hooded Warbler and Blue-headed Vireo (Pam Peters).

Re-visiting a previous sighting, it became apparent that the Sandhill Cranes spotted near Norwich in June have been confirmed as breeding. Kudos to Debra Sanderson and Nathana Kain for spotting the birds, taking time to document them, then re-examining their photos and videos. A video taken by Nathana revealed two large eggs below one of the birds. At the time, their distraction display did the trick, and no one noticed those eggs on the ground. Technology can be a great help in birdwatching!



Sandhill Crane, photo by Mick Thompson

Sandy Bright



photo by Megah Langan

John New Summer Camp 2017

This summer’s John G. New Audubon Day Camp program was declared a great success. Camp Director, Megan Langan, says, “We were lucky to have some returning faces and new ones this year. Our days were filled with hikes, explorations, inquisitive minds, and helpful information. Campers hiked the sanctuary with Mr. Andy, admired nature’s gift of new life, sought the bravest in the caves, and absorbed a wealth of knowledge that Mr. Andy shares. Ms. Eileen made pond life exciting as campers explored some of the sanctuaries tiniest inhabitants. We had an amazing couple of weeks and look forward to what 2018 will bring!”

DOAS thanks Camp Director Megan Langan and Assistant Liz Brown for their ongoing enthusiasm and commitment to a great experience for all involved. We also thank campers and their parents and our guest presenters Andy Mason and Eileen Kline!

Is your Membership Current?

Your mailing label will inform you of your membership expiration date (year and month, e.g. ‘1710 indicates October 2017). DOAS memberships are \$15 per year or \$25 for two years; family memberships are \$20 per year or \$30 for two years. **View membership benefits and download application from our website: doas.us/join-us/ OR join online at doas.us/store.**

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

October

October 7– Open House: 10 AM-2 PM at DOAS Sanctuary. See article on page 1.

October 17 – DOAS Board Meeting: 6:30 PM

October 20– DOAS Annual Fall Charter Dinner: Holiday Inn, Oneonta. NYS Ornithological Society president Joan Collins will present “Boreal Birds of the Adirondacks.” A social hour begins at 5:30 PM, buffet at 6:30 PM and the program at 7:30 PM. Program is open to the public. See article and use form on page 4.

October 28 – Bird Seed Order Deadline by 5 PM

November

November 4 – Bird Seed Sale Pickup: 9 AM to 11 AM, Walmart Parking Lot, Oneonta.

November 11 – Glimmerglass Film Days and Bird Walk: More information in the November issue.

November 17 – DOAS Public Program, “On Heron Time”: Photographer Rick Bunting will present a program about Great Blue Herons. The program begins at 7:30 PM at the Elm Park United Methodist Church,

401 Chestnut Street, Oneonta.

December

December 5– DOAS Board Meeting: 6:30 PM

December 16– Oneonta Christmas Bird Count: Everyone is welcome to count as part of a group or at your own feeder, contact Sandy Bright at sbright@hartwick.edu or phone 607-287-4465.

December 30– Fort Plain Christmas Bird Count: All are welcome to participate regardless of birding experience. For information contact Bob Donnelly: rsdonn@yahoo.com or 607-264-8156.

December 31– Delaware County Christmas Bird Count: Tentative, pending National Audubon approval.

January

January 16 – DOAS Board Meeting: 6:30 PM

January 19 – DOAS Public Program, “Designing Fruitful Forests”: The program begins at 7:30 PM at the Elm Park United Methodist Church, 401 Chestnut Street, Oneonta.



DELAWARE-OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY

2017 BIRD SEED SALE FUNDRAISER

ORDER BY 10/28 · PICK UP ON 11/4, 9AM-11AM IN ONEONTA

Order online at www.doas.us/store/
or call 607-643-5680

Bird Seed Sale

The DOAS Bird Seed Sale Fundraiser is your opportunity to buy quality bird seed and help support DOAS programs at the same time! Proceeds from this sale support speaker fees for member meetings, field trips, programs and special events throughout the year, summer camp programs and the Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch. We encourage you to stock up for the winter months ahead and thank you in advance for your support! Order online at www.doas.us/store or call 607-643-5680.

Order by October 28; Pick up in Oneonta on November 4, 9 AM to 11 AM, Walmart Parking Lot, Oneonta.

Support our Sponsors! Thank you to Rod Spangle Antiques in Unadilla for being a sponsor!

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August September 2017 Bird Sightings

In Autumn, it's not the first sighting of some species that counts, but the last, as so many of our feathered friends depart for warmer wintering grounds. It's a bittersweet time of the year, though, because we also get to see species that are only observed during migration.

At the end of August, Andy Cooper spotted at least 8 Common Nighthawks while paddling around Steward Lake in Schenevus. Several more were seen in Oneonta and West Oneonta around that time. Broad-winged Hawks were found near Morris (Charlie Scheim) and Oneonta. Suzanne Gaynor observed three over Hartwick College, two of them interacting, though not aggressively. She theorized they might be a family. Leslie Preston spotted several at the Audubon Sanctuary, along with

If you have bird sightings to report, contact Sandy Bright, brights@hartwick.edu, at 40 Fair St., Oneonta, NY 13820, or at 607 287-4465 for the next issue of The Belted Kingfisher. We regret that not every report can be included due to limited space. Additional information may be requested for sightings of rare or unusual birds.

Flicker, Tree Swallows, Goldfinches, Eastern Towhee, Catbird, Great Blue Heron, and Belted Kingfisher. Steve Hall discovered a Snow Goose at Canadarago Lake, an unusual sighting outside of the winter months!

A Red-tailed Hawk residing near Dorian Huneke in Treadwell took advantage of prey stirred up by her husband's tractor, finding several easy meals as he worked the field, and not shy about hunting in such close proximity to the human driving the tractor! John Davis enjoyed the song of Northern Parulas in his Black Locust grove. Charlie Scheim reported a lot of aggressive aerial interaction between two Kingfishers in West Oneonta; this act was repeated a week later by 2 different Kingfishers in Oneonta, which rattled at and chased each other for quite some time.



**Red-tailed Hawk
by David Kiehm**

At the Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch, hawks are not the only birds spotted by the spotters. Among the many species reported at month's end were Olive-sided Flycatcher, Eastern Towhee, Magnolia Warbler, Chimney Swifts, **"Bird Sightings" Continued on page 6**