

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

Volume 40, No. 6 June 2008

Editor — Bob Miller

COMING ACTIVITIES

- June 21 Basswood Pond State Forest Bird Walk. Tom Salo leader. See page 7
- June 22 Hike for Bicknell's Thrush in the Catskills. Andy Mason leader. Page 6.
- July 13 Milford State Forest Nature Walk. John Davis leader. Sponsored by Otsego County Conservation Association. See page 6.
- July 28-31 John G. New Audubon Day Camp—An Adventure in Nature. See page 2.
- Aug. 19 Board Meeting. Pot luck at Tom's.
- Sept..16 Board Meeting. At Stephen's home.
- Sept. 19 DOAS General Meeting. *Wetlands and Wildlife*. Speaker Owen Brown
- Sept. 19-21 Annual Meeting of the N.Y. State Ornithological Assoc. See page 6.
- Oct. 4 Sanctuary Open House
- Oct. 17 Charter Dinner. *Giants of the North Woods* Speaker Mark Picard. **NOTE OCT.**this yr.
- Nov. 21 DOAS General Meeting.
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Thank You So Much

Very interesting and tasty goodies have been supplied by many of our members at every program all year, and I want to thank all of you again. You signed my sheet, responded to my requests, and then we all enjoyed your creativity and generosity.

Julia Gregory takes care of our "box" of supplies and also helps out at every program, and of course other board members are there with assistance at every meeting.

I will be asking again next year for your assistance, and do thank you again so much for making our programs more enjoyable.
... Jean Miller

2008-9 Officers and Directors

The following **officers** were elected at the May 20 Board meeting.

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

Directors for terms expiring in 2010 were elected at the May 16 program :

Nancy Cannon, Julia Gregory, Barbara Marsala,
Andy Mason, Jean Miller, and Tom Salo

President's Message

For better or worse, the Hartwick herons chose not to use our platforms. The good news is, whoever tried to destroy the rookery failed. The birds built nests in some trees further from the road on the property of the Hartwick Highlands Campground near and along the edge of the pond. We counted 18 active nests early in May. One of our Directors was assured the herons will be protected on the campground property. We will continue to monitor the rookery for damage.

We know herons will use these type platforms. They have been successful elsewhere. Also, one of the participants in the rookery efforts erected his own platform elsewhere and now has a heron nesting on it. The board is discussing moving some of our platforms to other locations next winter – possibly bringing one to the wetland at the sanctuary. We will also approach the owner of a local rookery that was abandoned due to collapsing trees to see if one could be placed there. We will likely leave 2 of the platforms in Hartwick to see if the herons there will use them next season.

This is your last newsletter until September. Check the web site for updates on our activities. Come fall we will resume monthly newsletters. The hawk watch starts up in late August. Programs start again in September on third Fridays. Our annual Open House will be at the sanctuary on October 4. We have moved the date of our Charter Dinner to October 17. We hope the better weather in early fall will increase attendance. We have scheduled an excellent program with spectacular photos of moose for that evening.

While you are at our web site (www.doas.org), take a look at our page of volunteer opportunities. We have also created a new checklist of the birds of Delaware and Otsego Counties. We stretched it a bit to include Weaver Lake and the nearby grasslands along US 20 since those are interesting local birding areas. Visit the site to learn about our Educational Activities and current conservation issues. You may want to take a look at the calendar or photos of past events.

Have a great summer.

...Tom Salo

Summer Reading

Since 2006 a number of bird related books have been published. *Good Birders Don't Wear White* with a foreword by Pete Dunne, and *The Art of Pishing* by Pete Dunne are both a lot of fun, as well as instructive. My pishing is vastly improved.

Letters From Eden by Julie Zickefoose is a series of essays that are illustrated with her paintings and take you through a year of her observations of nature.

All Things Reconsidered edited by Bill Thompson III is Roger Tory Peterson relating his birding adventures. For more about Peterson a new biography *Birdwatcher* by Elizabeth J. Rosenthal was recently released. It is excellent.

Flights Against the Sunset by Kenn Kaufman is also recent. It is a combination of birding stories and a memoir of his mother, and is pleasurable reading.

Any of these books are worth owning and it would be a good use of some of your tax rebate check to get them through a local, independent bookstore. I have 3 other recommended reads for the summer: *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and *In Defense of Food* both by Michael Pollan, and *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver. Our modern food supply is a large contributor to global warming. Buying and eating our locally grown food and other products is one way to shrink our carbon footprints on the world

...Julia Gregory

The John G. New Audubon Day Camp - An Adventure in Nature July 28-31, 2008

Each summer, DOAS offers a one-week summer day camp to children who will be entering grades 3-6 in the fall. The camp, located at the DOAS Sanctuary on Franklin Mountain, will run July 28-31, 2008.

DOAS camp provides hands-on field experiences in natural science and environmental education. Through field investigation, crafts and games, the campers explore a variety of habitats, and learn about creatures that live there.

Registration forms and payment must be received by June 20, 2008. Due to limited space availability, registrations will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. DOAS Camp brochure and registration information are posted on the DOAS web site at www.doas.us.

May Big Day Count

16 DOAS people in 9 parties and 9 Delhi Bird Club members in 7 parties saw a grand total of 128 species, a very respectable number considering rains interfered in late afternoon and evening. Andy Mason got the magic goal of 100 species. Millers and Stephan saw 91 and Tom Salo and Dave Kichm had a list of 90 species. All together we saw 21 species of warblers but missed seeing 4 species that we often see — Cape May, Bay Breasted, Blackpoll and Canada. The latter 2 breed within the 2 counties.

Some of the "nice" species we saw that are not regularly seen on Big Day here are: 2 Common Loon, 1 Double-crested Cormorant, 1 Red-breasted Merganser, 2 Osprey, 2 Merlin (see pg.7 for interesting Merlin info), 2 Virginia Rail, 1 Sora, 1 Black-billed Cuckoo, 2 Carolina Wren (by Delhi only, as was the 1 Wilson's Warbler), 1 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 2 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 1 Northern Mockingbird, and 1 Fox Sparrow.

For a detailed list of all the birds reported please see pages 4 and 5.

... Bob Miller

Conservation and Legislation

by Andy Mason

Good news on burn barrels--We have often written here of the health dangers of burn barrels--those smoldering back yard mini-incinerators that are so widespread and common in our rural communities.

The smoke and fumes from burn barrels affect all who breathe them--not just the individuals and families who do the burning. A recent study by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, in conjunction with DEC and the State Department of Health, found that emissions of dioxins and furans from backyard burning alone were greater than all other sources combined for the years 2002-04. The study also found that burning trash emits arsenic, carbon monoxide, benzene, styrene, formaldehyde, lead, hydrogen cyanide and other harmful chemicals. Trash containing plastics, polystyrene, pressure-treated and painted wood and bleached or colored papers can produce harmful chemicals when burned.

The seriousness of these toxins is recognized in NY State, and burn barrels are banned in municipalities with populations over 20,000. However, residents of our smaller towns are treated as second class citizens and burning remains legal.

Efforts in the state legislature to ban open burning of trash have always been blocked in the State Senate. However, the Paterson administration has now stepped forward to address the issue. The NYS DEC has proposed rules to prohibit trash burning. If approved, these regulations will bring about cleaner air, less asthma and lung disease, and reduce wildfires.

Exempted from the ban are camp fires, prescribed burns, celebratory bonfires (where allowed), fire training exercises, specialized burning to protect crops from frostbite and burning of agricultural wastes (though not agricultural plastics).

The proposed rules are supported by environmental groups, the American Lung Assoc., and firefighting organizations. However, opposition can be expected from the Farm Bureau and some local governments.

What can you do--Please consider supporting this long overdue and important change to rid our villages and rural areas of the scourge of burn barrels.

A series of public hearings on this proposal is scheduled for June. Closest to our area are:

Monday, June 23, 2008, 5-8 p.m.--Cortlandville Fire Department, 999 Route 13, Cortland, NY 13045.

Wednesday, June 25, 2008, 9:30 a.m.-noon; 5-8 p.m.--DEC Central Office, 625 Broadway, Public Assembly Room 129, Albany, NY 12233.

Written comments can also be submitted to NYSDEC, Division of Air Resources, Attention: Robert Stanton, 625 Broadway, Albany NY 12233-3254, or by email to 215fires@gw.dec.state.ny.us. Deadline for comments is July 10.

The proposed regulations can be found at www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/43439.html. For more information on the threats of burn barrels, visit www.dec.ny.gov/public/32064.html.

Ups and downs for wolves--The endangered gray wolf has been through some perilous changes in recent months.

First, the Bush administration proposed stripping the protections of the Endangered Species Act for northern Rocky Mountains' wolves and to turn their management over to the states. Despite overwhelming public opposition, the US Fish & Wildlife Service did just that, effective in March. Wyoming, Montana and Idaho immediately seized the opportunity to implement plans to kill wolves.

Wyoming, for example, put in place its "kill on sight" predator law in nearly 90 percent of the state, and over a dozen wolves were shot in the next few days. Locals have organized wolf eradication weekends where wolves are rounded up and killed. One group tracked a wolf for 35 miles on a snowmobile before killing it. Idaho intends to use planes to track and shoot wolves.

The states' "management" plans would allow killing of 80% of the wolves in the region. Clearly these animals need continued federal protection.

In late April, twelve environmental groups filed suit against the government's action. Wolves should not have been delisted, the groups argue, because they remain threatened by biased, inadequate state management plans, as well as by the lack of connections between largely isolated state wolf populations. Meanwhile, the wolf killings continue.

What you can do--Help the groups involved in this legal challenge with a contribution. Among the lead organizations in the fight to protect wolves is Defenders of Wildlife. More information on this effort, including a list of groups that have gone to court, can be found at www.defenders.org. In addition, a petition to the Secretary of the Interior requesting adoption of a national wolf recovery plan can be found here.

Science Education Needs Change

For the past 100 years science and technology have been driven largely by military and economic forces, but today another problem must be addressed scientifically - environmental catastrophes. The fate of nations is welded together into what can be called "the global village". Are we of this village going to use science to advance humankind or to simply succumb to this latest epic tragedy, global warming?

We need to change our science education so that all high school and college students are able to THINK in a scientific way, and be able to construct new intuitions in order to know how the world works. Ordinary people must be able to cope with the scientific and technological culture that is shaping their lives.

Scientists and teachers must tackle this challenge. Global warming is upon us.

...Jean t. Miller Science News Commentary by Leon Lederman, Nobel prize winner.

- MAY 17-08 TOTAL BIRD COUNT -
BIRDS OF THE ONEONTA, NEW YORK AREA

— J. Robert Miller, 2006

(Based on the taxonomy of the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds, 7th edition, 1998 and its 42nd supplement (2000).)

NAME _____ DATE _____ TIME _____
AREA _____ WEATHER _____

GAVIIDAE	✓ Common Merganser	Common Tern
2 Red-throated Loon	1 Red-breasted Merganser	Black Tern
Common Loon	Ruddy Duck	COLUMBIDAE
PODICIPEDIDAE	PANDIONIDAE	✓ Rock Pigeon
Pied-billed Grebe	2 Osprey	✓ Mourning Dove
Horned Grebe	ACCIPITRIDAE	CUCULIDAE
Red-necked Grebe	2 Northern Harrier	1 Black-billed Cuckoo
PHALACROCORACIDAE	Sharp-shinned Hawk	2 Yellow-billed Cuckoo
1 Double-crested Cormorant	1 Cooper's Hawk	TYTONIDAE
ARDEIDAE	1 Northern Goshawk	Barn Owl
1 American Bittern	2 Bald Eagle	STRIGIDAE
Least Bittern	1 Red-shouldered Hawk	Eastern Screech-Owl
5 Great Blue Heron	1 Broad-winged Hawk	Great Horned Owl
Great Egret	9 Red-tailed Hawk	Snowy Owl
Cattle Egret	Rough-legged Hawk	2 Barred Owl
Green Heron	Golden Eagle	Northern Saw-whet Owl
Black-crowned Night-Heron	FALCONIDAE	Long-eared Owl
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	9 American Kestrel	Short-eared Owl
CATHARTIDAE	PHASIANIDAE	CAPRIMULGIDAE
45 Turkey Vulture	2 <u>MERLIN</u> Ring-necked Pheasant	Common Nighthawk
ANATIDAE	✓ Ruffed Grouse	Whip-poor-will
Mute Swan	✓ Wild Turkey	APODIDAE
Tundra Swan	ODONTOPHORIDAE	✓ Chimney Swift
Snow Goose	Northern Bobwhite	TROCHILIDAE
Brant	RALLIDAE	✓ Ruby-throated Hummingbird
✓ Canada Goose	2 Virginia Rail	ALCEDINIDAE
6 Wood Duck	1 Sora	✓ Belted Kingfisher
American Wigeon	American Coot	PICIDAE
Gadwall	CHARADRIIDAE	Red-headed Woodpecker
Green-winged Teal	✓ Killdeer	8 Red-bellied Woodpecker
✓ Mallard	SCOLOPACIDAE	✓ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
American Black Duck	1 American Woodcock	✓ Downy Woodpecker
Northern Pintail	Common Snipe	✓ Hairy Woodpecker
Blue-winged Teal	Greater Yellowlegs	Black-backed Woodpecker
Northern Shoveler	Lesser Yellowlegs	✓ Northern Flicker
Canvasback	7 Solitary Sandpiper	✓ Pileated Woodpecker
Redhead	7 Spotted Sandpiper	TYRANNIDAE
Ring-necked Duck	Upland Sandpiper	Olive-sided Flycatcher
Greater Scaup	4 Semipalmated Sandpiper	5 Eastern Wood-Pewee
Lesser Scaup	Western Sandpiper	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
Long-tailed Duck	Least Sandpiper	Alder Flycatcher
Black Scoter	Pectoral Sandpiper	2 Willow Flycatcher
Surf Scoter	LARIDAE	✓ Least Flycatcher
White-winged Scoter	Ring-billed Gull	✓ Eastern Phoebe
Common Goldeneye	Herring Gull	✓ Great Crested Flycatcher
✓ Hooded Merganser	Bonaparte's Gull	✓ Eastern Kingbird

LANIIDAE
 Northern Shrike
 VIREONIDAE
 ✓ Blue-headed Vireo
 9 Yellow-throated Vireo
 ✓ Warbling Vireo
 Philadelphia Vireo
 ✓ Red-eyed Vireo
 CORVIDAE
 ✓ Blue Jay
 ✓ American Crow
 7 Common Raven
 ALAUDIDAE
 Horned Lark
 HIRUNDINIDAE
 Purple Martin
 ✓ Tree Swallow
 ✓ Northn. Rough-winged Swallow
 ✓ Bank Swallow
 ✓ Cliff Swallow
 ✓ Barn Swallow
 PARIDAE
 ✓ Black-capped Chickadee
 Boreal Chickadee
 ✓ Tufted Titmouse
 SITTIDAE
 ✓ Red-breasted Nuthatch
 ✓ White-breasted Nuthatch
 CERTHIIDAE
 ✓ Brown Creeper
 TROGLODYTIDAE
 2 Carolina Wren
 4 Winter Wren
 ✓ House Wren
 Marsh Wren
 REGULIDAE
 2 Golden-crowned Kinglet
 1 Ruby-crowned Kinglet
 SYLVIIDAE
 2 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
 TURDIDAE
 ✓ Eastern Bluebird
 ✓ Veery
 Gray-cheeked Thrush
 Swainson's Thrush
 ✓ Hermit thrush
 ✓ Wood Thrush
 ✓ American Robin
 MIMIDAE
 ✓ Gray Catbird
 1 Northern Mockingbird
 ✓ Brown Thrasher
 STURNIDAE
 ✓ European Starling
 MOTACILLIDAE
 American Pipit

BOMBYCILLIDAE
 3 Cedar Waxwing
 PARULIDAE
 7 Blue-winged Warbler
 Golden-winged Warbler
 7 Tennessee Warbler
 Orange-crowned Warbler
 4 Nashville Warbler
 1 Northern Parula
 ✓ Yellow Warbler
 ✓ Chestnut-sided Warbler
 5 Magnolia Warbler
 Cape May Warbler
 ✓ Black-throated Blue Warbler
 ✓ Yellow-rumped Warbler
 ✓ Black-throated Green Warbler
 ✓ Blackburnian Warbler
 Pine Warbler
 9 Prairie Warbler
 Palm Warbler
 Bay-breasted Warbler
 Blackpoll Warbler
 ✓ Cerulean Warbler
 6 Black-and-white Warbler
 ✓ American Redstart
 Prothonotary Warbler
 Worm-eating Warbler
 ✓ Ovenbird
 ✓ Northern Waterthrush
 3 Louisiana Waterthrush
 4 Mourning Warbler
 ✓ Common Yellowthroat
 1 Wilson's Warbler
 Canada Warbler
 Yellow-breasted Chat
 THRAUPIDAE
 ✓ Scarlet Tanager
 EMBERIZIDAE
 ✓ Eastern Towhee
 American Tree Sparrow
 ✓ Chipping Sparrow
 ✓ Field Sparrow
 Vesper Sparrow
 ✓ Savannah Sparrow
 Henslow's Sparrow
 Grasshopper Sparrow
 1 Fox Sparrow
 ✓ Song Sparrow
 Lincoln's Sparrow
 ✓ Swamp Sparrow
 ✓ White-crowned Sparrow
 ✓ White-throated Sparrow
 ✓ Dark-eyed Junco
 Lapland Longspur
 Snow Bunting

CARDINALIDAE
 ✓ Northern Cardinal
 ✓ Rose-breasted Grosbeak
 ✓ Indigo Bunting
 ICTERIDAE
 ✓ Bobolink
 ✓ Red-winged Blackbird
 ✓ Eastern Meadowlark
 Rusty Blackbird
 ✓ Common Grackle
 ✓ Brown-headed Cowbird
 ✓ Baltimore Oriole
 FRINGILLIDAE
 Pine Grosbeak
 ✓ Purple Finch
 7 House Finch
 Red Crossbill
 White-winged Crossbill
 Common Redpoll
 Pine Siskin
 ✓ American Goldfinch
 Evening Grosbeak
 PASSERIDAE
 ✓ House Sparrow

April-May Bird Sightings

Phoebes have been building a nest on their last year's nest above a light fixture on the outside of my sunroom door. My sunroom is an all glassed area and last year the phoebes made quite a mess using clumps of mud for the nest's foundation. Many of my windows and doors were splattered with globs of brown spots. This year just the final touches of green lacy plants were needed to spruce up the old nest. Today the contented female sits patiently and waits.

On 4/9 Trina Bassoff saw an Eastern phoebe in Blenheim. On 4/12 Becky Gretton reported a Louisiana waterthrush in Springfield and 4 American tree swallows were seen by Eleanor Moriarty in Davenport. Gerianne Carillo reported an evening grosbeak in Milford on 4/13. The next day Eleanor Moriarty saw 5 chipping sparrows and a Northern flicker in Davenport.

On 4/18 Andy Mason reported a blue-headed vireo in Jefferson and Mike Restuccia saw an upland sandpiper in Ames. In Cooperstown on 4/20 John Davis reported a northern flicker. On 4/21 Dorian Huneke saw a common yellowthroat in Treadwell and Gerianne Carillo saw a yellow-rumped warbler in Milford. The next day Andy Mason reported a black-throated green warbler in Jefferson and Marion Karl saw a hermit thrush in Middlefield.

On 4/15 Gerianne Carillo saw a brown thrasher in Milford, Marge Mathis reported a white-throated sparrow in Morris and Andy Mason saw a Baltimore oriole in Schoharie and a house wren in Jefferson. On 4/28 a yellow warbler was seen by Trina Bassoff in Blenheim. On 4/30 Eleanor Moriarty saw a pair of kestrels in Davenport.

On 5/2 Edie Quinn saw 3 rose-breasted grosbeaks, 2 male, 1 female in Unadilla. On 5/3 Becky Gretton saw an Eastern towhee in Springfield, John Birkett saw an Eastern kingbird in Bainbridge, Andy Mason reported an ovenbird and a Nashville warbler in Jefferson, Bob Donnelly heard a singing least flycatcher in Roseboom and a gray catbird was reported by Tom Salo in W. Burlington.

On 5/4 John Birkett saw a greater yellowlegs, 4 lesser yellowlegs, 5 solitary sandpipers, and a semipalmated plover in Bainbridge. Ruby-throated hummingbirds entered the scene on 5/6. Trina Bassoff saw 1 in Blenheim, Andy Mason saw 2 in Jefferson and Gerianne Carillo saw 1 in Milford. On 5/7 Tom Salo reported a yellow-throated vireo, a warbling vireo, an American redstart, a chestnut-sided warbler and black and white warblers in W. Burlington. The next day he also saw an indigo bunting there. On 5/9 Edie Quinn saw a bobolink in Unadilla. Shirley O'Shea saw a Northern bobwhite in Oneonta on 5/11. A mourning warbler and a red-eyed vireo were reported by Tom Salo on 5/14.

Please send sightings to Dianne Benko; 607 829-5218; 6815 Co. Hwy 16, Delhi, NY 13753; dbenko@frontiernet.net by Aug 15 for the September issue of The Belted Kingfisher.

Hike for Bicknell's Thrush

A hike has been scheduled for Sunday, June 22 to seek out Bicknell's Thrush and other high-elevation species on Plateau Mt. in Greene Co. in the Catskills. Bicknell's Thrush is a state-listed species of special concern and its range in the Catskills is limited to spruce-fir habitats.

Other species expected include Blackpoll Warbler, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and Swainson's Thrush.

Plateau Mt. is a 3800 ft. peak accessible via a very steep climb from the Devil's Tombstone campground south of Hunter. Participants should be prepared for a rigorous hike. The climb will start at daybreak to maximize the chances of finding Bicknell's Thrush.

Anyone interested in this hike should contact Andy Mason, 607-652-2162, AndyMason@earthling.net.

60th Annual Meeting of the NY State Ornithological Assoc.

The Rochester Birding Assoc. and the Burroughs Audubon Nature Club will host this year's Annual Meeting of the NY State Ornithological Assoc., Sept. 19-21, in Rochester. The event marks the 60th anniversary for the organization and Rochester has held the event every 10th year.

The meeting will feature great field trips, as well as workshops, a research papers session, and social events. Featured speaker is Peter Harrison on "Seven Years and Seven Continents". He is the author of *Seabirds: An Identification Guide*, a definitive book on the seabirds of the world. An entertaining and incisive speaker, he delivers a serious message, with wit and passion, about the need to conserve habitats for all birds.

For registration information, contact Ferne Merrill, (585) 671-5479, fmerrill@rochester.rr.com; or Chita McKinney, (585) 482-2693, chitamckinney@gmail.com.

...Andy Mason July 13

Nature Walk Milford State Forest The Milford State Forest has been carefully managed since enduring a tornado in May 1998; the result is varied habitat for both flora and fauna, with scenes of quiet morning beauty. Led by John Davis, hikers will meet at 8 AM sharp on Sunday, July 13 at the DEC warehouse on Kelly Corners Road (about 1/2 mile south of its intersection with State Land Road) for a walk of 2-3 hours. Bring binoculars if you have them, and choose footwear appropriate for tall, possibly wet grass. The walk is sponsored by the Otsego County Conservation Association. For further information, contact John Davis at davi7js4@hughes.net or 607-547-9688.

Merlins Nesting Locally

In May, Jessie Ravage discovered 2 small raptors interacting in the Village of Cooperstown. They were later determined to be Merlins engaged in breeding activity.

Merlins are small, dark, powerful falcons. Their length approximates that of an American Kestrel though they are considerably heavier than their better known cousins. Females and young have similar markings: dark brown backs and a streaked body. Adult males are not as dark, with a lighter belly and a slate gray back. All Merlins have a checkerboard pattern under the wings and a dark tail with narrow white bands. They also lack the distinct mustache mark that is found on many falcons.

Historically, breeding season reports of Merlins have been rare in New York. The first documented nesting by *Falco columbarius* occurred on the shore of Spitfire Lake, Franklin County in 1992. Since then, they have spread across upstate New York. While Merlins are often thought of as birds of the wild north, they are now regularly nesting in towns. A map of Merlin breeding activity from 2000-2005 can be seen at the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas web site <http://www.dec.ny.gov/cfm/xtapps/bba/>.

Merlins are very vocal. Recently fledged Merlins scream for food often. They chase and harry their parents constantly. Only food will bring peace, and not for long. Residents of the that neighborhood may find themselves faced with a choice of keeping their windows closed or being awakened at first light each day during much of July.

...Tom Salo

Are You Using the DOAS Website ?

I wonder how many of our readers have really looked over and used the DOAS web site : www.doas.us, that was started by Andy Mason and has been so remarkably enhanced, maintained and kept up to date by our web master, Lisa Gorn. Here's a rundown of some of what you'll find there:

- a list of upcoming programs and activities, including field trips, general and Board meetings
- reports and (many) photos of past events
- a brochure to download for registering for our summer camp (do it by June 20!)
- a section on Conservation and the Environment, including news of our Golden Eagle study, our position on wind power development and more
- our new downloadable checklist of "Birds of Otsego, Delaware and Nearby Parts of Adjoining Counties"
- information on our various educational activities (grants we award, Audubon Adventures, summer camp)
- a new section for members to "Get Involved"
- downloadable copies of past Belted Kingfishers
- bios and pictures of your Board of Directors
- how to join the DOAS e-mail news list; how to become a member of DOAS
- a copy of our Bylaws (currently under review by the Board)
- much more, including a direct link to our web site for the Franklin Mountain Hawk Watch www.doas.us/franklinmt.htm.

- links to other regional and state-wide environmental organizations, clubs and news groups

There's a gold mine of information here about an organization dedicated to helping our natural world in so many ways. So by all means, check it out! Use it to your advantage and to tell non members about us. ...John Davis

Basswood Pond State Forest Bird Walk

Tom Salo will lead a bird walk around the trails of Basswood Pond State Forest in Burlington on June 21. Meet at 8 am at the Jacobs Road parking area. Jacobs Road intersects County Highway 16 about 3 miles north of State Highway 80. The walk is jointly sponsored by OCCA and DOAS. For more information contact Tom at 607-965-8232 or tomsalo@localnet.com.

Gas Drilling in Our Area

Energy companies are moving into our area to tap the Marcellus Shale Formation for natural gas. Large amounts of money are being offered for lease payments in some areas, including parts of our membership area. The board will be monitoring the local situation while it learns more about the impacts of gas extraction. For now we encourage caution and offer this article reprinted with permission from the Susquehanna Group of the Sierra Club. Tom Salo

Gas Drilling

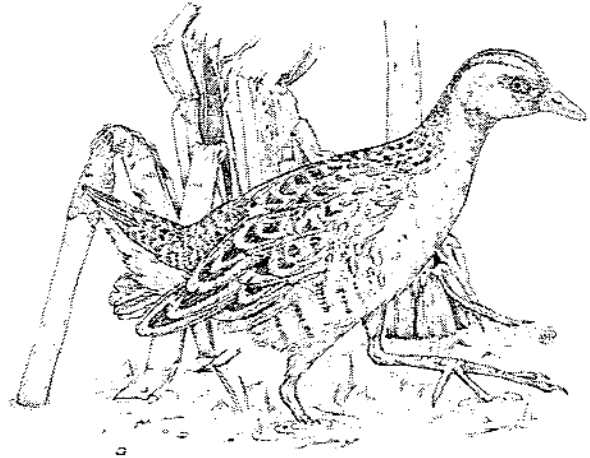
The *Susquehanna group of the Sierra Club's main statement about gas drilling* is that it is never good for the environment. Furthermore natural gas cannot be considered a form of clean energy and it releases green house gases, which contribute to climate change. There are DEC regulations that intend to safeguard the environment and people, but they can only do so much and all interested parties should be watchful of any short cuts that can be a threat to the environment, health and safety.

Landowners and communities need to get expert assistance to protect their interests while negotiating with the gas companies as to their paying reasonably as to their needs and desires. Some topics to consider:

- I. The lease should require that wells be tested before drilling starts, and after each fracking at the lessee's expense.
- II. For each well that's drilled, 800,000 gal. of water are required. That water can be reused, but the storage for it means the drill site is 3-4 acres. It is likely that the fracking process will be repeated during well operation.
- III. When drilling occurs, the material that is brought to the surface must be disposed of. Common practice is to bury on site, with a plastic liner. Is this appropriate on the site of the drilling?
- IV. If local power is not available, a generator will be necessary for the duration of operation, so the noise pollution will not be temporary.
- V. Leases should require blankets to reduce the noise levels during drilling and operation.
- VI. When the site is prepared, top soil should be segregated, to allow it to be used during restoration. This must also be done for any pipeline installation. Pipelines should be installed at a depth that will not restrict farming operations. ...*Susquehanna Group of Sierra Club*

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Nancy Cannon Julia Gregory
Andrew Mason Barbara Marsala Jean Miller
Eleanor Moriarty Stephen Rice Joe Richardson

Committee Chairs* & Other Assignments

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

Membership Application

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

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

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

To contribute notes or articles for *The Belted Kingfisher*, please send to: Kingfisher Editor, DOAS, PO Box 544, Oneonta, NY 13820-0544.
Do you know a good location for a field trip ?

All meetings are free and open to the public