



THE BELTED KINGFISHER

Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society, Inc.

Founded 1968 P.O. Box 544, Oneonta, N.Y. 13820

Volume 39, No. 8, October 2007

Editor — Bob Miller

COMING ACTIVITIES

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- Oct. 6 Fall Sanctuary Open House DOAS Sancturary See page 4.
Oct. TBA Board Meeting at Tom Salo's home.
Oct. 19 DOAS General Meeting. Photographer Warren Green speaks to us with his slide
show of *Birds of the Adirondacks*
Nov. 16 Annual Charter Dinner. Sunrise Junction. Details below.
Dec. 4 Board Meeting at home of Cheryl Boise.
Dec. 15 Annual Christmas Bird Count.. Details in the next Kingfisher.
Jan. TBA Annual January Waterfowl Count.
Jan. 15 Board Meeting. Joe Richarson's home.
Jan. 18 DOAS General Meeting
Feb. 15 DOAS General Meeting
Mar. 21 DOAS General Meeting. *All About Bluebirds, and More* — John Rogers
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Annual Charter Dinner Nov. 16

The DOAS annual Charter dinner will be Fri. evening, Nov. 16 at Sunset Junction (formerly Falco's) in Colliersville on Rte. 7 east of Oneonta. A social hour begins at 5:30 PM, with dinner at 6:30 and the evening program at 7:30. Speaker will be Nina Schoch, coordinator of the Adirondack cooperative Loon Program, sponsored by the Wilderness Society. She will discuss the efforts to understand the natural history of the loon and how humans and contaminants impact loon population. Our annual raffle drawing will be held after dinner also, with a bird motif quilt and a framed original Dave Kiehm drawing as the main prizes.

Menu choices are Montreal Rubbed London Broil, Chicken Cordon Bleu, and Vegetrable Lasagna.. Reservations must be made by Nov 12. Cost is \$27.00 per person, including gratuity.

For more information/reservations, Julia Gregory, 563 2924, or PO Box 641, Unadilla, NY

Name

Menu Choice

Phone :

Amount enclosed

(checks payable to DOAS please)

President's message

This summer I was in the Rockies. It was an opportunity to visit with family and enjoy some new birds and scenery. The trip took a sobering turn when we saw the landscape scale death of pine trees in Colorado and Wyoming. The native Mountain Pine Beetle usually dies back during the cold mountain winters. A decade of warm weather has caused their numbers to rise dramatically. Usually dry conditions have further stressed the trees. In some areas on the west sides of Rocky Mountain National Park and the Bighorn Mountains, over 90% of the Lodgepole Pines are dead. This is leading to dramatic ecosystem changes and a great increase in the risk of fire. The connection between dead pines, warm winters, global warming and the carbon released so I could visit my children did not escape me. We all need to do more. Much more.

There are numerous ways you can help DOAS as a volunteer. There is always work to do on our properties including trail clearing and maintenance. We have members who need rides to programs. We need people to participate in public events, and to provide refreshments at monthly programs. You can help by watching and counting birds - at Franklin Mountain all fall, and during several organized bird counts through the year. Our next formal count is our annual Christmas Bird Count on December 15. If you have expertise in an area, contact me about writing a column for this newsletter, or maybe even presenting a program. You might even consider leading a walk or field trip.

The board congratulates Gerianne Carillo on her recent appointment to a new job. We are pleased at her positive and exciting change. Unfortunately for DOAS, the job requires a lot of her time and energy. Gerianne will continue to participate and contribute to DOAS but recently resigned from the board.

Tom Salo

POPULATION YET AGAIN

With so much attention lately on Global Warming, we have lost sight of our growing World Population, which is still creating some formidable problems for our future.

Demographic reports show that some industrial countries are experiencing population declines as fertility rates collapse. (Russia, Japan, Germany, even China). United States is the glaring exception, as we have a fertility rate of 2.1. Our growth comes from immigration, both legal and illegal, and their immigrant families. Our population will likely reach 1 billion by 2075. But worse, some countries are undergoing explosive and possibly unsustainable population growth. Five or six children per woman are still found in the Arab Gulf States, Pakistan, the Philippines, and parts of Africa. Niger, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and other countries are growing exponentially.

From 2005 to 2050 the world population is projected to grow by 2.6 billion, a number roughly equal to the total global population in 1950 (2.5 billion). If growth rates are not altered now, hundreds of millions of families will suffer from poverty, hunger, water shortages, inadequate education, and lack of employment opportunities.

This in turn will prompt mass migrations to other countries in search of a better life. And hundreds of millions of people may be compelled to relocate because of environmental pressures. Four zones will bear watching especially - low-lying coastal settlements, farm regions dependent on rivers fed by snowmelt and glacier melt, subhumid and arid regions, and humid areas in Southeast Asia which are vulnerable to changes in monsoon patterns.

It is indeed a human crisis of both numbers and forced migrations due to human-induced climate and hydrological change. We must do NOW all we can to support family planning and ensure environmental sustainability. We must also increase education (especially for girls and women), promote gender equality, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases. These are indeed formidable challenges for us all !!

... Jean T. Miller

Scientific American, Science News, Science

Conservation and Legislation

by Andy Mason

Important farm legislation pending in Washington--

One of the most critical pieces of environmental legislation in Washington is often not even recognized as such by the public. The Farm Bill--typically reauthorized every 6 years by Congress--includes many provisions affecting farming practices, land and water conservation, and habitat for wildlife. All of these have impacts on birds and other wildlife, as well as the quality of our environment.

For example, three programs, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) will help conserve tens of millions of acres of private land. These programs, and others, offer outstanding habitat for migratory birds and waterfowl. While much of the land in these programs is in the Midwest, farmers in NY State also take advantage of them.

The Farm Bill's land conservation programs are administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The NRCS offers full professional support--including biologists, hydrologists, soil scientists, and more--to landowners, and helps them with the enrollment process: deciding which programs to apply for, writing restoration plans, and even assisting with the actual applications.

The House of Representatives passed its version of the Farm Bill this summer. Although it did not include the full funding for conservation programs sought by environmental groups, it did increase overall funding for conservation of bird and wildlife habitat on private lands. The House did reauthorize the Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP), a program essential to protect and enhance habitat for grassland birds, many of which are in rapid decline.

The Farm Bill now faces action in the US Senate and then reconciliation between the two bills. Hopefully it can be strengthened in the Senate to maximize its environmental benefits over the next few years.

What you can do Contact NY's US Senators Charles Schumer and Hillary Clinton and urge them to advocate for strong conservation programs in the 2007 Farm Bill. Both senators are well-aware of the legislation's importance to farmers, and they need to give at least equal weight to the concerns of conservationists and the land, water and wildlife protections the Farm Bill can provide.

Addresses

US Senate

Sens. Charles Schumer/Hillary Clinton

US Senate

Washington, DC 20510

Schumer-(202) 224-6542 senator@schumer.senate.gov

fax-(202) 228-3027

Clinton-(202) 224-4451 senator@clinton.senate.gov

fax-(202) 228-0282

Audubon Folio Prints Offered

Recently a friend gave me a beautiful Audubon Folio. Included is a text written by George Dock Jr. plus 30 beautiful John James Audubon prints. Each colorful print is 14 x 17 inches.

I would like to pass this Folio on to someone who would put it to good use, either use as a teaching tool or have the prints matted and framed for their own delight. It is in mint condition - museum quality. Perhaps this would make a wonderful Christmas gift for a "birder." The complete set can be obtained with a \$75 donation to Delaware-Otsego Audubon Soc. Questions? Please contact Janice Downie, 607-432-6200 or downie278@msn.com.

Hawkwatch News

The fall season is off to a good start at the Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch. Through mid-September, over 1000 Broad-winged Hawks had been tallied, giving counters a shot at breaking the record count of 1487 for this species, set in 2004.

In addition, Osprey, Sharp-shinned Hawks and falcons have been moving past the lookout.

October should bring increasing numbers of Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks along with the first Golden Eagles of the season.

Extra pairs of eyes are always welcome at the hawkwatch, and it provides a good opportunity to learn identification skills. Counters are scheduled for nearly every day through December.

For more information, contact Andy Mason, (607) 652-2162, AndyMason@earthling.net, or Tom Salo, (607) 965-8232, tomsalo@localnet.com. Forecast 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. Directions and more information on the hawkwatch are available at www.franklinmt.org.

Membership Information

Please note the expiration date on your mailing label: the first two numbers indicate the year your membership expires, and the second two numbers indicate the month. For example, '0806' indicates June, 2008.

Your last issue of *The Belted Kingfisher* will be stamped as such. This is the only renewal notice, so please check your label—we value your membership!

Audubon Open House Oct. 6

The Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society (DOAS) will hold its annual Open House on Saturday, Oct. 6, from 10AM to 2PM, at our Sanctuary on Franklin Mountain.

Hawk watching, a trail walk and a hawk identification workshop for beginners are scheduled and refreshments will be available at the barn.

The DOAS Sanctuary is home to the Franklin Mt. Hawk Watch, one of the best locations in the Northeast for fall migrations of Red-tailed Hawks and Golden Eagles. Early October is noted for species diversity when migration of early and late raptors overlap. It's also at or near the peak of the fall leaf season!

At 10:30 by the barn, one of the long time Franklin Mountain hawkwatchers will conduct a 45 minute beginner's workshop on identifying flying hawks, stressing the species typically seen in the area. The ID workshop can be complemented by immediate use of the newly acquired skills at the Hawk Watch. Experienced hawk watchers will be on duty through the day, pleased to welcome and assist all visitors!

The trail walk will start at 11:30, and participants are encouraged to arrive 10-15 minutes early so as not to be left behind. For more information contact Andy Mason 607-652-2162, andymason@earthling.net or Tom Salo at 607-965-8232, tomsalo@localnet.com.

To reach the DOAS Sanctuary, travel south on Oneonta's Main Street to Route 28 and go straight at the light. After crossing Route 28 turn immediately left at the T onto Southside Drive. Turn right on Swart Hollow Road (.8 mile). Go 1.5 mile and take a sharp right on Grange Hall Road. After .2 mile take a sharp left into the driveway or park nearby on Grange Hall Road.

All are welcome!

DOAS Summer Day Camp was in full swing this summer

The focus each day was a different aspect of ecology and food webs. Andy Mason took us all for a trail walk first thing, where campers helped build more wooden walkways for the muddy parts of the trails. He also took us to some caves on the property and enlightened us about the Hawk Watch program.

Activities on the first day spotlighted abiotic factors in a forest community. During a walk on the trails we looked at the soil, rocks, moisture, pH and climate of the area. Experiments in the afternoon dealt with the properties of water, its molecules, and surface tension. We even used electricity to break water apart into hydrogen gas and oxygen gas. Each camper started a terrarium, placing only abiotic items in their shoebox.

On day two we discussed the role of decomposers in the forest. Children collected fungi, small invertebrates such as millipedes, sowbugs and insects to place in their terrariums. We discussed the role of the bacteria on decay in the environment by placing various living and nonliving items onto an agar plate to see what would grow. Cement tiles were created using leaves and ferns to make impressions in the cement.

The focus was green plants on day three. During the daily trail walk children collected ferns, mosses and other small plants for their individual terrariums. The Plant Game was played in the afternoon to teach the children about photosynthesis. Objects collected on the trail were used to create images using sun print paper. A paper marbling activity made beautiful frames for each sunprint.

Day four was animal day. We looked for red efts, and frogs were caught by the dozens at the pond. The children were fascinated while dissecting owl pellets, trying to identify the bones of three or more unfortunate rodents. Each child also created a UV light-detecting necklace from beads containing pigments sensitive to sunlight. Everyone painted their names on a large piece of slate to celebrate our 2007 camp.
...Peter Pollock, Camp Instructor

See page 5 for a photo of the children in a tree.

Board Meeting Highlights

Here are some highlights from the DOAS Board meeting of September 18. We welcome your comments!

- The Treasurer's Report indicated that are still lacking about \$2000.00 in donations for our \$6,000 goal to support our Golden-Eagle tracking project.
- The Audubon Adventures program for local schools is apparently running up against stricter curricular requirements in the schools.
- The Hawk Watch raptor season is running full tilt; at least one experienced hawk watcher is on duty almost every day; all are welcome to visit! The October 6th Open House is fully planned.
- Plans for the November 16 Charter Dinner are essentially complete; the auction will include a beautiful birding quilt made by Jean Miller and an original bird drawing by Dave Kiehm.
- The Hospitality Committee is pleased to be getting volunteers from the DOAS membership to help at general meetings.
- The Board will oppose a DEC proposal which includes lengthening the bear-hunting season in Otsego County. We are looking into possible raptor-related impacts of proposals for wind farms in Schoharie and Fulton Counties and will comment appropriately. We are also concerned about possible impacts on the species-rich wetlands at the foot of Canadarago Lake related to emerging plans to control lake flooding.
- We encourage more public participation in pending field activities, including the December 15 area Christmas bird count and planned winter trips for Bald Eagles and Short-eared Owls.
- We are attempting to propagate seedlings from cuttings from the small stand of rare Black Maples on our Burlington wetland.
- We are investigating two offers to donate lands in Otsego County to DOAS.
- The New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA, of which Andy Mason has been President for the past two years!) is preparing a comprehensive position statement on birds and wind power which mirrors that of DOAS.

John Davis, Secretary

To Contact DOAS Officers & Directors

Tom Salo 965 8232 tomsako@locaknet.com

John Davis 547 9688 davi7js4@hughes.net

Bob Donnelly rsdonn@yahoo.com

Nancy Cannon 746 6037

Andy Mason 652 2162 AndyMason@earthling

Barbara Marsala barbaramars@stny.rr.com

Stephen Rice 829 3111

See page 4 for the story.



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Andrew Mason Barbara Marsala Jean Miller
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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*	Gerianne Carillo
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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.

All meetings are free and open to the public.