

# Coming Activities

### June

**June 1** – *Birds, Brunch and Beer* **June 20-22** – Adirondack Trip

### August

**August 4-7** – Day Camp at DOAS Sanctuary

August 19 - DOAS Board Mtg

# September

**September 16** – DOAS Board Mtg **September 19** – Program

#### **October**

October 4 – DOAS Open House
October 17 – Charter Dinner

More information on page 7



# Visiting The Past: A Look At The Very Early Years Of DOAS

Two years ago when I became the Delaware Otsego Audubon Society's historian, I was handed over a very large box containing an old scrapbook, a photo album, many paper articles, and other miscellaneous items. With the thought of looking through them later, I took the whole lot downstairs to be hidden away in one of my closets.

Something came up just recently that prompted me to look for an old photo. As I was looking for this picture, I found myself reading a few old articles and really finding them quite interesting and entertaining. According to the records, the local DOAS Chapter

was co-founded by Johanna Koenig and Elizabeth Feldhusen. In September 1968, twelve folks met at the Huntington Memorial Library in Oneonta to discuss the possibility of establishing an Audubon chapter in our area. In October 1969, the Charter was granted. The enrollment soon grew to 60 and later to nearly 300. Our membership today stands at around 200.

Settling in Oneonta in 1968, I was interested in seeing names of members listed as being on the Board, leading field trips, and giving programs. Maybe some of you remember Dr. John New, Dr. Jerry Shannon, Jackie Hoopes and Mary Dobinsky. Dr. Bruce Dayton and Dr. Currie Marr were also involved in the organization. According to the records, the Millers, Jean and Bob, became active in DOAS in the mid-70s.

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Many events such as nature walks, both spring and

Christmas bird counts, field trips, scholarships for summer camps, evening programs, and dinners seemed to be the most common activities. One article mentioned the annual dinner being held at the Elm Park Methodist Church with the price per person being \$3.25 for the meal, which included the gratuity.

According to one article, "The Watchbird" was the name of the first monthly publication. I could not find when the DOAS newsletter became "The Kingfisher" and now "The Belted Kingfisher." I wonder what our original founders and members would think of our outstanding Delaware and Otsego Audubon Society webpage! (continued on page 3)

# Birds and Beans: A DOAS Retail Partnership

Beginning this summer, DOAS will be partnering with Birds and Beans, a coffee producer that is certified as 'Bird Friendly' by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center to promote the sale and support of a product that promotes habitat preservation and conservation practices to protect our migratory songbird species. This certification



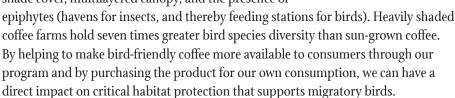
assures that Bird Friendly coffee comes from farms that provide our migratory songbirds with winter habitat. These coffee farms provide a 'last refuge' against habitat loss as tropical forest destruction and sun/chemical monoculture coffee production takes over in Latin America.

When this opportunity was brought to our board this winter, there was some discussion about whether or not it was appropriate to use DOAS and our platform in conservation, education and research as a marketing mechanism for a forprofit entity, and the determination to participate was not taken lightly. There are times when partnerships between the

private and public sectors make a good deal of sense. In this case, the program was

seen to be mutually beneficial and clearly in support of efforts that are wholly within the mission of DOAS.

Habitat loss and degradation continue to threaten our migratory bird species. The Bird-Friendly certification from the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center is the gold standard, a super certification that combines organic and fair-trade standards with eco-requirements for forest shade cover, multilayered canopy, and the presence of



Birds and Beans coffee is available for purchase online at birdsandbeans.com. We will also have product available for tasting and purchase at our member meetings beginning in the fall.

Susan O'Handley



"Today four males showed up. Every year at this time we expect the buntings. They're very punctual - May 9-12. But they don't stay here for more than a day or so. I've seen females as well, in the past." Stan Salthe on his annual visit from Indigo Buntings

# THE DELAWARE - OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY FOUNDED 1968

## Newsletter Editor:

Helen McLean

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Susan O'Handley

Joe Richardson

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> Bob Donnelly Julia Gregory Rebecca Gretton Eleanor Moriarty Stephen Rice Tom Salo Julie Smith

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Education\*: Susan O'Handley
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#### **ADDRESS CORRESPONDENCE TO:**

Delaware Otsego Audubon Society P.O. Box 544

Oneonta, NY 13820

Email: info@doas.us

#### ON THE WEB:

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

# **Conservation and Legislation**

#### Fracking—banned in NY, but we're still getting the waste—

Thanks to the great grassroots efforts by many activists across the state, including DOAS members, the dangerous practice of horizontal drilling and hydrofracking for natural gas is still not permitted in New York. We hope fracking will ultimately be banned, but the vigilance and effort need to go on.

Despite this de facto moratorium, NY is not immune to the large-scale hydrofracking taking place just over the border in Pennsylvania. A report by Albany-based Environmental Advocates documents how weak NY's regulations regarding disposal of drilling wastes are. For starters, much of fracking's waste would likely be classified as hazardous waste if it were not exempt under flawed state and federal regulations. Although the makeup of all the fluids pumped down wells is not known—another loophole for the gas industry—what is known is chilling. The flowback fluids and produced fluids from fracked wells often contain known carcinogens such as benzene and formaldehyde, salts including bromides, and even radioactivity.

These materials would require handling and disposal under strict hazardous waste rules, if it were not for the infamous "Halliburton Rule" granted to the oil and gas industry by Congress. As it is, the waste goes to municipal wastewater plants which are not adequate for dealing with this type of waste; into deep injection wells which have been connected to earthquakes in Ohio, and which is merely an "out of sight, out of mind" option; and even road spreading in some communities.

#### Visiting the Past (continued from page 1)

In 1970, Emmons Pond/Bog was purchased by the Nature Conservancy for \$22,500, which ensured the preservation of that beautiful area only a short drive from the Audubon Sanctuary. DOAS was asked to raise money to reimburse the Conservancy. With private and public funding, this was achieved. Dr. Bruce Dayton was in charge of this project.

The DOAS Summer Adventure Camp for children started in the early 80s and was very successful from the start. Except for a few years, camp has been offered each summer. Many young children in grades 2-6 have enjoyed activities up around the Audubon Sanctuary on Franklin Mountain. What a wonderful opportunity for youngsters to experience nature at its best.

There's much more to visiting the history of our local Audubon Society, but that will have to wait for another time. Come to one of our monthly meetings and thumb through that old scrapbook and photo album that now has been updated and is no longer hidden away downstairs in the basement of my house.

Presently, wastes from existing vertical fracked wells in New York are treated in this fashion. There are no prohibitions on waste from outside the state also being disposed of in New York. Clearly, protections are needed for both potential out-of-state materials, as well as current and future in-state wastes.

In May, the NY State Senate Environmental Conservation Committee voted down a measure that would address the shortcomings in fracking waste disposal—a slap in the face to public and environmental health in New York. This despite the fact that the bill has 34 co-sponsors, and would likely pass if it reaches the Senate floor. There is lots of lip service in Albany regarding this issue, but the status quo continues. Citizens need to pressure their representatives to take real action.

What you can do—Contact your State Senator (James Seward-all of Otsego and Schoharie Counties, Delaware County towns of Andes, Bovina, Davenport, Franklin, Harpersfield, Kortright, Meredith, Middletown, Roxbury, Sidney and Stamford, and Chenango County towns of Columbus, Lincklaen, New Berlin, North Norwich, Otselic, Pharsalia, Pitcher, Plymouth, Sherburne and Smyrna) or (John Bonacic-Delaware County towns of Colchester, Delhi, Hamden, Masonville, Tompkins and Walton). Insist that legislation regulating fracking wastes be voted on this legislative session. This issue is too important to be buried by the Senate leadership—which includes our two senators. Contact info:

Seward: (518) 455-3131, seward@nysenate.gov Bonacic: (518) 455-3181, bonacic@nysenate.gov *Andy Mason* 

#### May Bird Sightings (Continued from page 8)

NY State Senate, Albany, NY 12247

throated Blue Warbler and a Least Flycatcher in Roseboom, Kevin Berner watched Baltimore Orioles eating oranges in the Town of Seward and Pam Peters enjoyed hearing a Blackburnian Warbler sing atop a spruce in Treadwell. On the 8th Pam also liked hearing the early morning song of a Wood Thrush and Melissa Godek watched as a pair of Eastern Bluebirds and a pair of Tree Swallows took up residence in Unadilla. Over the next few days Bob Donnelly saw Blue-winged, Hooded and Magnolia Warblers in Roseboom, Andy Mason noticed a Nashville Warbler in Clapper Hollow State Forest and a Red-eyed Vireo and a Northern Parula in Jefferson, Eleanor Moriarity had a pair of Indigo Buntings at her Davenport feeder and at Riddell State Park Rod Spangle observed a Scarlet Tanager and Chestnut-sided and Wilson's Warblers.

If you have bird sightings to report, contact me at dbenko@frontiernet.net, at 6815 Co. Hwy. 16, Delhi. NY 13753, or at 607 829-5218 for the September issue of *The Belted Kingfisher*.

# Diclofenac the Vulture killing drug is now available on EU market

Diclofenac is a powerful anti-inflammatory drug that has wiped out vulture populations in India, Pakistan and Nepal. Now, a repeat of this ecological disaster is threatening Europe. Despite the fact that safe alternative drugs are readily available, Diclofenac has been authorised for use on domestic animals in Italy, and in Spain where 80% of European vultures live, and is now becoming widely available on the EU market. According to experts in SEO/BirdLife (BirdLife in Spain), RSPB (BirdLife UK) and the Vulture Conservation Foundation, this may cause a European mass die off of endangered and ecologically valuable wildlife.

Vultures have long suffered from unfavourable public opinion in Europe, but as species that are built to do the dirty work of ecological recycling, they are essential to the health and well-being of ecosystems. In Europe, four rare vulture species exist and are continuing to face threats to their survival. Egyptian Vulture is listed as Endangered by BirdLife on behalf of the IUCN Red List of Species while Cinerous Vulture is listed as Near Threatened. Fortunately, thanks to decades of conservation efforts and millions of euros invested, vulture populations are recovering. The introduction of Diclofenac now puts these efforts and investments in jeopardy.

In India, Pakistan and Nepal, Diclofenac was regularly used in the 1990's to treat cattle. When the animals died, Diclofenac remained in the body and was eaten by vultures, causing their almost immediate death. In about 10 years, the vulture populations in these countries has declined by 99%, bringing some of the most common and iconic large birds of the Indian subcontinent to the verge of extinction. This also led to serious human health consequences as the availability of unconsumed carrions led to an increase in stray dogs and spread of diseases such as rabies. Thanks to joint campaign efforts from the RSPB and its partner SAVE, Diclofenac has been banned in India and we are beginning to see signs of recovery for the Indian vulture population.

The EU and its Member States have a legal obligation to conserve vultures under the EU Birds Directive and EU Veterinary Drugs legislation that require avoiding ecological damage. An immediate ban on veterinary Diclofenac is needed to protect our vultures from the fate of their Asian cousins, and would also send a crucial signal encouraging African countries to stop the spread of Diclofenac, which is already affecting the highly endangered populations of African vultures.

New research shows the drug has similar affects on the aquila genus of eagles. There are four species of aquila eagles in Spain, including Golden Eagle. See http://www.clickgreen.org.uk/news/national-news/124684-golden-eagles-at-risk-from-diclofenic-as-calls-grow-for-europe-wide-ban.html



### See this article and petition online:

http://goo.gl/R7jiQ8

Petition by John Gilbody, Northwich, Cheshire, United Kingdom on change.org

# Petitioning Janez Potocnik, European Union

То

Janez Potocnik, European Union, European Commissioner for the Environment

Tonio Borg,, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection

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If you can help me and the thousands who have signed the petition (and its growing daily) to ban Veterinary Diclofenac in Europe it would make a world of difference.

Sincerely, [Your name]

# 2014 Big Day Bird Count Results

The 2014 Big Day bird count was held on May 17th. Despite the cold weather, one hundred eleven species were recorded. Randy Lynch and his group had ninety four species alone. There were no cuckoos or

waxwings reported, but there was a good cross section of warblers, including Bay-breasted and Pine Warblers. John Davis' group had some Swainson's Thrushes.

Following is a list of species. Bob Donnelly

Great Blue Heron Green Heron Turkey Vulture Canada Goose Wood Duck Mallard

Hooded Merganser Common Merganser

Osprey

Sharp-shinned Hawk Cooper's Hawk Bald Eagle

Broad-winged Hawk Red-tailed Hawk American Kestrel Ruffed Grouse Wild Turkey Killdeer

American Woodcock Common Snipe Least Sandpiper Rock Pigeon Mourning Dove Great Horned Owl

Barred Owl Chimney Swift

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Belted Kingfisher

Red-bellied Woodpecker Yellow-bellied Sapsucker Downy Woodpecker Hairy Woodpecker Northern Flicker Pileated Woodpecker Eastern Wood Pewee Alder Flycatcher

Willow Flycatcher

Least Flycatcher Eastern Phoebe

**Great Crested Flycatcher** 

Eastern Kingbird Blue-headed Vireo Yellow-throated Vireo

Warbling Vireo Red-eyed Vireo

Blue Jay

American Crow Common Raven Tree Swallow

Northern Rough-winged Swallow

Cliff Swallow Barn Swallow

Black-capped Chickadee

Tufted Titmouse

Red-breasted Nuthatch White-breasted Nuthatch

Brown Creeper Carolina Wren Winter Wren House Wren Eastern Bluebird

Veery

Swainson's Thrush
Hermit Thrush
Wood Thrush
American Robin
Gray Catbird
Brown Thrasher
European Starling
Blue-winged Warbler
Nashville Warbler
Yellow Warbler

Chestnut-sided Warbler Magnolia Warbler Black-throated Blue Warbler Yellow-rumpled Warbler

Black-throated Green Warbler

Blackburnian Warbler

Pine Warbler Prairie Warbler

Bay-breasted Warbler Black-and-white Warbler American Redstart

Ovenbird

Northern Waterthrush Mourning Warbler Common Yellowthroat

Canada Warbler
Scarlet Tanager
Eastern Towhee
Chipping Sparrow
Field Sparrow
Savannah Sparrow
Song Sparrow

Swamp Sparrow

White-crowned Sparrow White-throated Sparrow

Dark-eyed Junco

Northern Cardinal

Rose-breasted Grosbeak

Indigo Bunting

Bobolink

Red-winged Blackbird Eastern Meadowlark Common Grackle

Brown-headed Cowbird

Baltimore Oriole Purple Finch House Finch

American Goldfinch House Sparrow

# **Annual South Hill Birding Trip**

This spring, DOAS has sponsored numerous bird walks, perhaps the most in recent years. The weather cooperated for the majority of the trips. I began this trip to the South Hill Forest in Davenport about five to six years ago. Over those five years our DOAS group combined with the Delhi Birding Club to view Woodland Species, with a possible lucky view of ducks, waterfowl along the marshes, and wetlands surrounding the Pine Lake area of Charlotte Creek.

This year was cool, cloudy but we had a wonderful group with three new participants and old friends from the Delhi Birding Club which no longer is in operation. The collective birding talent on this trip left me in awe. Becky Gretton and Randy Lynch were the 'birding by ear" leaders, but Gerianne Carillo, Carol Lynch, Kathy Mario, Julie Smith and Cynthia Waterman were spotters and song scramblers as well.

The three new members that joined us on this trip were terrific company and excellent birders: Sandy Yark, from Fleischmanns, NY and Ken and Donna Waite from Poconos, PA.

Carol Lynch provided the list of participants and species spending time together. Huge thanks to her for excellent tallies and records. 42 species were seen and heard. The stars of the morning were the Black-throated Blue and Green Warbler, the Mourning Warbler, the Nashville Warbler, Canada Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Blackburnian Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow Warbler and the Wood and Hermit Thrush. Along most of the path we walked, the Towhee and the White-throated Sparrow were in constant song.

South Hill Forest is a wonderful place for our woodland species to be seen and heard. Level walking ground or a car can drive through the dirt road without too much difficulty.

Eleanor Moriarty



#### **DOAS Election of Directors**

The annual election of Directors was held May 16 at the Elm Park United Methodist Church. The slate was unanimously elected. No nominations came from the floor. Julia Gregory, Dorian Huneke, Becky Gretton, Andy Mason, Tom Salo and Charlie Scheim will serve as Directors for the 2014-2016 term. Thanks to John Davis, Fred Johnson, and Joe Richardson who served with me on this committee.

Julie Smith

View membership benefits and download application from our website: doas.us/join-us/

**Membership Reminder:** Please check your address on this newsletter for your membership expiration date. This date is shown by four numbers—the first two digits indicate the year and the second two digits indicate the month, i.e., '1406' is June 2014. Renewal information is on page 7 — please renew and continue your support of DOAS and our programs.



www.facebook.com/DelawareOtsegoAudubonSociety

# **Upcoming Activities**

### June

**June 1** – Birds, Brunch and Beer

June 20-22 – Adirondack Boreal Birding Trip: This trip is filled. We are creating a waiting list in case of cancellation. If interested, contact Eleanor Moriarty, 607-435-2054 or eleanormrrt955@gmail.com.

### August

**August 4-7 – Day Camp at DOAS Sanctuary:** To register, call 607-643-5680.

**August 19 – DOAS Board Meeting: 7PM** 

# September

**September 16 – DOAS Board Meeting:** 7PM

**September 19 – Program:** This coming Fall, the DOAS monthly presentations will be exciting and informative with excellent speakers. To start off the Fall season of the monthly programs, we begin on Friday, September 19, 2014 with Matt Perry's presentation of *"The Birds of our Forests"*. Expert and beginning birders alike will gain invaluable information on our woodland species, along with an understanding of the importance of protecting our woodlands.

Matt Perry is the Conservation Director and Resident Naturalist for Spring Farm CARES in Clinton, NY. There he oversees habitat restoration projects at a 260 acre nature preserve. He is a Region 5 Editor of "The Kingbird" which is a quarterly journal published by the New York State Ornithological Association. Matt also writes a monthly nature-themed article for Mohawk Valley Living Magazine.

"The Birds of Our Own Forests" is a presentation that features the many kinds of birds that can be found right here in the forests of Central New York. Close-up video footage of seldom seen summer residents like the Scarlet Tanager, Wood Thrush and Hooded Warbler will be shown. Learn about the habits of these species and dozens of others and hear their unique and beautiful songs.

#### October

October 4 – DOAS Open House

October 17 – Charter Dinner: The Incredible Birds of Ecquador, presented by expert photographer and birder, Robert E. Mumford, Jr. Bob's work has been published in many books and national magazines, including National Wildlife, Birding, and a four page centerfold in "Ranger Rick". One of his images is on permanent display at the National Aquarium in Baltimore by the puffin tank. He has exhibited at Chincoteague, Bombay Hook, Blackwater, Patuxent National Wildlife Refuges as well as the Audubon Naturalist Society. His work has also appeared in Wild Bird Magazine, Rails and Trails, and the NY Times. One of his images was a winner in the prestigious National Wildlife's annual international competition and another was honored in Nature's Best Windland Rice contest.

Bob travels extensively to photograph natural scenes and wildlife. He has worked in most of the states and Canadian provinces. He also traveled to Iceland, Costa Rica, Tanzania and Kenya. Bob has worked extensively in Churchill, Manitoba, mainly concentrating on polar bears. He recently visited South Georgia Island, a destination made famous by Sir Ernest Shackleton. And in late 2013, New Zealand, where he saw and photographed three new (to him) penguin species.

The locus of his most recent work has been Ecuador, where he has made fifteen trips over six years. His book on the birds of Ecuador is expected out in early summer 2014.

# **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; family memberships \$20 annually or \$30 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.

Name:	Phone:
Address:	
Email:	



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# **May Bird Sightings**

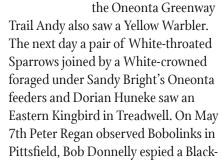
Too many birds! Too little space! Please forgive me if your sighting was missing! On 4/12 Pam Peters heard her FOS Hermit Thrush singing in the woods on a foggy morning in Treadwell, an immature Golden Eagle zipped right over Kathy Mario's Delhi house, Stacey Grocott saw a Great Egret in Toddsville and Tom Salo noted a single Tundra Swan in the Town of Otsego. The next day John Davis was musically greeted by a Warbling Vireo in Cooperstown. On the 16th Dave Kiehm saw a bright male Pine Warbler on his Oneonta suet feeder and Leslie Preston watched a Palm Warbler at Wilber Lake, a lifer for her. The next day a FOS Brown Thrasher visited Tom Salo in W. Burlington and a Rufous-sided Towhee had arrived a few days earlier. On the 18th a Ruby-crowned Kinglet flitted among the streamside willows near Andy Mason's Jefferson home. On 4/19 Pam Peters heard the lovely singing of a Field Sparrow appropriately found in a Treadwell field. The next day a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

drumming on a road sign in Oneonta woke up Andrew Cooper. On the 21st Sandy Bright enjoyed hearing a Blue-

headed Vireo's song near Strawberry Field. Angelika Rashkow was delighted to see and hear "her" Belted Kingfisher especially nice and close up in Hartwick and Charlie Scheim heard his FOS singing Gray Catbird in Oneonta both on 4/22. On 4/28 while hiking with her dog in Treadwell, Dorian Huneke spotted an Osprey and the dog flushed out a Ruffed Grouse from some honeysuckle bushes.

Now on to May! On the 1st Dorian Huneke, while walking through the woods in Treadwell, watched numerous Redbellied Woodpeckers in all their spring beauty. Andy Mason had a Black-throated Green Warbler visitor in Jefferson and Sandy Bright saw a "cigar with wings", a Chimney Swift in Oneonta. The next day Bob Donnelly watched Black and White Warblers in Roseboom and heard a singing Common Yellowthroat in Oaks Creek and Pam Peters enjoyed the singing

of her FOS Ovenbird in Treadwell. On the 3rd a Rose-breasted Grosbeak greeted Eleanor Moriarity at her Davenport feeder, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds arrived in Burlington for Stacey Grocott and Andy Mason's FOS Baltimore Oriole made a visit to Jefferson. On 5/5 while walking





Continued on page 3