



Volume 49 Number 9  
November 2017

# THE BELTED KINGFISHER

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DELAWARE-OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

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## COMING ACTIVITIES

### 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 10–DOAS Owl Field Trip

December 16–Oneonta Christmas  
Bird Count

December 30– Fort Plain Christmas  
Bird Count

December 31–Delaware County  
Christmas Bird Count (tentative)

### January

January 14– NYSOA Waterfowl Count

January 16–DOAS Board Mtg.

January 19– DOAS Program,  
“Designing Fruitful Forests”

January 20–DOAS Eagle Trip

### February

February 16– DOAS Program,  
Photographer Rod Sutton, “Reptiles  
and Amphibians”

**More information on page 7**

**DOAS PROGRAMS  
ARE FREE & OPEN TO  
THE PUBLIC**

## Golden Eagle Season is Here



Golden Eagle - Image by H. McLean

The first Golden Eagle of the 2017 season showed up on October 16 at the Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch at the DOAS Sanctuary. Pam Peters recorded the bird, which hopefully will be followed by a couple of hundred of its friends by season’s end.

The best days for goldens and for raptors generally come with colder weather and northwest winds, conditions which often follow

passage of a cold front, so watchers should keep an eye on the weather reports. These weather conditions require extra layers of clothing, so be sure to dress appropriately if you visit the lookout.

Forecasts of good flights are sent out by email a day or two in advance. To receive these alerts, visit [www.franklinmt.org](http://www.franklinmt.org) to sign up.

November also brings increasing  
**“Hawkwatch” Continued to page 5**

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## Join Us!—November 17th, “On Heron Time” with 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. (This program is re-scheduled from its original date in January 2017.)



Photo by Rick Bunting

## President's Message— To Puerto Rico with Love

*by Co-president Becky Gretton*

This article is my tribute to the island of Puerto Rico, expressing my respect for a uniquely wonderful environment and its inhabitants, with my resolve to do as much as I personally can during this frightening and frustrating time.

During the first week of October, 2016, I was fortunate to travel to beautiful Puerto Rico on a birding tour. Never having done much of this kind of travel, I was happy to



have a birding buddy on the tour. We looked across San Juan Marina to see Hurricane Matthew over Haiti and considered ourselves fortunate. Friendships were forged and the trip was wonderful.

The couple in charge of the entire event was mainland American. Our guides were all Puerto Rican Americans. They took us to their local neighborhoods and restaurants, and even to a private home to visit hummingbird feeders. Of course we went to El Yunque for Puerto Rican Parrots. Many habitats were visited, both night and day. The list of endemics was impressive, and the search brought days of excitement.

October of 2017 brought devastation to the island, as we all



know. Things have changed in so many ways, for humans and for the natural environment. It's overwhelming, with so many questions still remaining.

Hurricane Maria hasn't muted my memories of warm, intelligent, humble, humorous, hard working and giving people. The rhythm of life seemed chaotic in the city traffic until I watched their "give and take," helping each other get where they needed to go with the honk of a vehicle's horn a rarity. Road rage? Not a hint! Need anything or have a question? Never a problem no matter how long the day had become! I am suddenly imagining how quiet the cities are today.



Captive Puerto Rican Parrots were placed in hurricane shelters. What they face along with all the rest of the island inhabitants is a completely changed environment.

Here is an article from the New York Times that addresses environmental impacts on El Yunque.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/11/us/another-victim-of-hurricane-maria-puerto-ricos-treasured-rainforest.htm>

### THE DELAWARE - OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1968

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Janet Potter

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To contribute notes or articles for  
The Belted Kingfisher, email:  
[editor@doas.us](mailto:editor@doas.us)



## Conservation and Legislation

**Conservation challenges near and far**—Two local energy projects are in our sights and actions, and also a distant effort to extract fossil fuels has a connection here.

The company attempting to build the Constitution Pipeline is—as predicted—attempting an end run around the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation’s denial of a water quality permit for the project. The company is asking the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to issue approval, claiming DEC took too long to come to a decision.

This effort by Constitution follows FERC’s action in OKing such an approval for a proposed natural gas pipeline in Orange County, NY after that company’s claims of delay by DEC. However, the state has challenged that determination in court, arguing that any delays were caused by the company’s failure to provide needed information. The situation for Constitution is similar. No doubt these disputes will ultimately be settled in court.

Also, DOAS’s involvement in the planned Bluestone Wind project in eastern Broome County has increased. We are intervenors in the NY State Public Service Commission’s review of this 30-40 turbine wind farm, due to our concerns over possible impacts on migrating raptors, particularly Golden Eagles.

As part of the process, funding for intervenors including local residents and municipalities, as well as public interest groups, is made available to assist in reviewing the project. DOAS applied for a portion of this money and recently was granted funds to conduct on-ground migration surveys and obtain maps showing locations and movements of Golden Eagles in and near the project area.

We will be conducting surveys this fall and next spring and will provide our findings to project decision-makers.

See [www.doas.us](http://www.doas.us) for more information.

**Representative Faso votes to open Alaska Refuge to drilling**—In early October, local US Representative John Faso voted to approve a budget bill that would open the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to drilling for oil and gas. DOAS members and other local conservationists had visited Faso’s Delhi office this fall to provide him with information on the critical role ANWR plays in providing habitat for a wide range of bird species, including many that migrate through NY State. This area is also essential for one of North America’s last great caribou herds and it is our most important onshore denning habitat for polar bears.



Alaska Caribou, National Park Service Photo

Unfortunately, Representative Faso voted for this damaging drilling anyway. Combined with earlier votes to allow dumping mountain-top coal mining waste in streams and against efforts to reduce global warming, he has amply demonstrated his anti-environment approach.

What you can do—Contact Representative Faso and let him know you are disappointed with his lack of concern for ANWR and for the environment generally. Ask him to put clean air and water above the polluting industries that seek to plunder our resources. (1616 Longworth HOB, Washington, DC 20515, (202) 225-5614, [www.faso.house.gov/contact/](http://www.faso.house.gov/contact/))

by Andy Mason



### Mark Your Calendar: “Designing Fruitful Forests,” January 19th Program

How can a woodland become a more fruitful forest? On January 19th, Ryan Trapani (Executive Director, Catskill Forest Association) & John MacNaught (Wildlife Specialist, Catskill Forest Association) will present some basic tree identification and silvicultural practices.. Ryan & John will show examples of how they have helped members of the Catskill

Forest Association achieve a more fruitful forest for both humans & wildlife. Please join us at 7:30 PM at the Elm Park Methodist Church, 401 Chestnut Street in Oneonta, N.Y. Refreshments will be served.

## Holiday Gift Shopping!!

Too early to be thinking about Christmas gifts? Not if you visit Walmart or any other store that capitalizes on the holidays. We have our own gift suggestions: wildlife art from the fine artists here in our region who have generously donated items for DOAS fundraising.

Here is a sampling from these talented painters, photographers and carvers:

### Dave Kiehm

Dave is an internationally-recognized painter and photographer who lives near Milford. He is a long-time DOAS member and an active birder, which is reflected in his work. Dave's art can be seen at [www.deadriftstudio.com](http://www.deadriftstudio.com).



Great Blue by Dave Kiehm

### Doug Jamieson



Doug lives in Treadwell and is another birder and DOAS member. He utilizes a variety of styles and subjects, one of which is bird etchings. Doug's work is at [www.dougjamiesonartist.com](http://www.dougjamiesonartist.com).

Turkey Vulture by  
Doug Jamieson

### Rod Spangle

Rod Spangle of Unadilla is a DOAS sponsor, antique clock repair expert, and bird carver. We recently raffled two of his pieces at the Charter Dinner. Rod's carvings can be seen at The Green Giraffe Antiques & Consignment, 54 State Highway 357, Unadilla, N.Y. 13849; (607) 369-3234.



Northern Cardinal Carving  
by Rod Spangle

### Kyle Dudgeon



Photo by Kyle Dudgeon

Kyle is a SUNY Oneonta student and a fine birder who is now also a counter at the Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch. He is a talented photographer, specializing in birds, and is producing a 2018 bird calendar, including the Great Grey Owl pictured here. His photos are at [www.kyledudgeonphotography.com](http://www.kyledudgeonphotography.com).

**Please consider these gifted artists when starting your holiday shopping. Both you and the recipient will be very pleased!.**

### 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/](http://doas.us/join-us/) OR join online at [doas.us/store](http://doas.us/store).**

**“Hawkwatch” Continued from page 1** numbers of Red-tailed Hawks, with several hundred possible on similar promising conditions. Other later-season species making appearances include Red-shouldered Hawks, Northern Goshawks, and Rough-legged Hawks.

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

Daily tallies from Franklin Mountain are also available by email at [www.doas.us/mailman/listinfo/fmhwdailyreports](http://www.doas.us/mailman/listinfo/fmhwdailyreports). More information and directions to the Hawkwatch can be found at [www.franklinmt.org](http://www.franklinmt.org).



**Sharpie at the Hawkwatch**  
Photo by Kyle Dudgeon

## October Celebrations

### Open House

The annual DOAS Open House was held at the Sanctuary on October 7, with a remarkable crowd of enthusiastic nature lovers in attendance. Andy Mason instructed us on hawk identification, Becky Gretton toured the Sanctuary Trail with our guests, our board members supplied delicious food and drinks, items were for sale inside the barn, and Wildlife Rehabilitator Missy Runion fascinated all with her beautiful birds. A grand finale was the release of a juvenile rehabbed Red-tailed Hawk. There were many watchful eyes at the top of the hill, with Steve Hall counting migrating raptors. Thanks to all for making this day a big success!



**Sharing a laugh with Missy Runion and one of her raptors**  
Photo by Kathryn Davino

### Charter Dinner

Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society celebrated the end of their 50th Year at a special Charter Dinner event on Friday, October 20 in Oneonta, NY.

A group of about 75 people attended to celebrate the milestone event with special recognitions to 24 attendees who have served on the Board of Directors over the years. Four of the Chapter's current board members received the National Audubon Great Egret Award in recognition of ongoing environmental leadership and commitment to conservation through a long history of active participation in legislative activism, educational outreach for youth and adults, contributions towards scientific research programs, and operational management of Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society infrastructure, operations and governance.



A special slide presentation was created by Treasurer, Charles Scheim and Historian, Kathryn Davino to showcase images and items of interest from chapter archives. The evening culminated with a fantastic Keynote presentation “Boreal Birds of the Adirondacks” with Joan Collins, President of the NYS Ornithological Association.

Pictured at left (from left to right - with the number of years of service on the Board of Directors): Andy Mason (32 years); Julia Gregory (29 years); Bob Donnelly (21 years); Tom Salo (29 years). Photo by Rod Sutton.



**“Bird Sightings” Continued from page 8** In Jefferson, Randy and Carol Lynch had a return visit of a Northern Mockingbird, Blue-headed Vireo, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. A few days earlier, they found a small raft of Ring-necked Ducks, and counted 6 Bald Eagles around the Stamford area. They also reported a sighting of the white Red-tailed on the 12th.

Dorian Huneke shared some news about a male Treadwell Red-tailed Hawk, who had been found, suspected of being hit by a car, and taken to a rehabilitator. After testing positive for West Nile Virus, he is being treated, is expected to recover fully, and will

eventually be released. His mate, who hasn't been seen recently, may not have been so lucky.

While it can be disheartening to lose track of a bird we've gotten to know through our birdwatching, that's nature, and things keep changing. One bird's loss is another's opportunity. Bald Eagles had taken over that Red-tail nest a few years ago, then abandoned it earlier this year after a snowstorm. The Red-tails built another nest elsewhere. Dorian is eagerly awaiting spring, to find out who will nest where next!

Sandy Bright



Wood Stork, Photo by  
Doug Amadon

### Rare Sighting in Delaware County!

Doug Amadon of East Meredith took several photos of a Wood Stork in Delaware County. He reports, “I took this at sunrise on a foggy morning near the village of East Meredith, NY on October 2, 2017. We thought this to be a rare sighting. Enjoy!” Andy Mason thinks this is a young bird which evidently got off track, perhaps because of hurricanes. Although it's not the first such report for New York State, he did think it was a first for Delaware County.

### Visiting Vroman's Nose By Board Member Bob Donnelly



Photo by Ira Goldstein

Just outside of Middleburgh, NY is an unusual geological landmark called Vroman's Nose. It is worth a trip for both birders and those interested in plants. The Nose stands out from the valley floor and is hard to miss. There is ample parking at the base of the hill. Climbing to the top and back is a two mile round trip. Only a few spots along the way are steep. At the summit is a beautiful view in all directions of the Schoharie valley. The soil disappears in many spots to reveal bare flat rocks. One can see the path the glaciers took through there 50,000 years ago from all the scratches on the rock.

For birders it is a great place to see peregrine falcons at eye level. They nest on the steep cliffs and are often flying along the edge of the cliff. In spring, many migrating birds stop there. The trees are all stunted so one doesn't have to get a sore neck to see the birds. Soil there is barely existent, limiting the tree growth. The summit is one of the few places around with native stands of red cedar in the area. Hickory and chestnut oak are also common there.

For solitude, I would recommend an early morning visit as on a nice day there can be a lot of people on the trails.

# UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

## November

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

**November 11 – Glimmerglass Film Days Bird Walk:** Join Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society on Saturday, November 11, 11:30 AM-12:15 PM for a bird walk on the grounds of the Fenimore Art Museum prior to the viewing of *Look and See: A Portrait of Wendell Berry* as part of the Glimmerglass Film Days. This bird walk is free and open to the public. Participants will meet DOAS Board Members and leaders, Becky Gretton and Charles Scheim, at the back patio of the Fenimore Art Museum in time for an 11:30 AM start. The film will be shown from 1:00-2:45 PM.

For information about the full schedule, visit <http://www.glimmerglassfilmdays.org>.

**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 10– Short-eared Owl Trip:** Meet at 3 PM at Cooperstown village docks at the end of Fair Street. For information contact Bob Donnelly: [rsdonn@yahoo.com](mailto:rsdonn@yahoo.com) or 607-264-8156.

**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](mailto: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](mailto:rsdonn@yahoo.com) or 607-264-8156.

**December 31– Delaware County Christmas Bird Count:** Pending National Audubon approval.

Contact Pam Peters if you can drive or count: [ovenb1rdp@gmail.com](mailto:ovenb1rdp@gmail.com) or 607-829-6545.

## January

**January 14– NY State Ornithological Association**

**Waterfowl Count:** DOAS covers Otsego Lake and the Susquehanna River above Unadilla, the Unadilla River, and Cannonsville Reservoir and the West Branch of the Delaware River. This effort involves surveying waterways where they can be seen, and identifying and counting ducks and geese. The totals are used by the Department of Environmental Conservation in managing these species over the upcoming year. Anyone interested in helping with the census, please contact Andy Mason, (607) 652-2162, [AndyMason@earthling.net](mailto:AndyMason@earthling.net).

**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.

**January 20– DOAS Eagle Trip:** Field trip to view wintering bald eagles in Delaware County. Depart from the Dietz St. parking lot across from the YMCA in Oneonta at 7:30 AM. Participants can be picked up en route in Delhi and Walton. For further information, contact Andy Mason, (607) 652-2162, [AndyMason@earthling.net](mailto:AndyMason@earthling.net).

## February

**February 16 – DOAS Public Program, “Reptiles and Amphibians”:** Rod Sutton will present his wonderful photographs of reptiles and amphibians. The program begins at 7:30 PM at the Elm Park United Methodist Church, 401 Chestnut Street, Oneonta.

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

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## September-October 2017 Bird Sightings

This has been a quiet month in terms of bird sightings. Several people mentioned an unusual lack of activity at their feeders, likely due to the unusually warm weather; when food is abundant, there is less need for birds to visit feeders. Colder weather and more adverse conditions will likely bring them back to our backyards. Despite this, there have been some good sightings and unusual species noted.

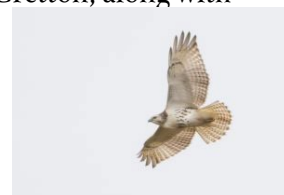
In the waning days of September, Charlie Scheim discovered 3 Pied-billed Grebes on a pond in West Oneonta, and a large number of bluebirds in the west end of Oneonta. Gerianne Carillo enjoyed watching not just their usual pair, but five Common Ravens circling overhead in Milford. Randy Lynch found a 1st-year

***If you have bird sightings to report, contact Sandy Bright, [brights@hartwick.edu](mailto: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.***

White-crowned Sparrow in Jefferson. A Golden-crowned Kinglet was spotted at the Hawkwatch (Franklin Mountain, Becky Gretton), along with Cape May Warblers (Randy Lynch, Kyle Dudgeon).

Andy Cooper got a great view of a low-flying Black Vulture over Glenwood Cemetery in Oneonta on October 4th. On the 10th, Becky Gretton noted a Black Vulture migrating over the Hawkwatch on Franklin Mountain.

In mid-October, Gerianne Carillo enjoyed the vocalizations of a couple of Great-horned Owls in Milford. Marilyn Bailey found a Common Merganser on Goodyear Lake swimming with three Mallards. Dave Kiehm discovered a Lincoln's Sparrow in a bush outside his studio near Milford State Forest, a species also found at the Hawkwatch by Becky Gretton, along with Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Palm Warbler. Also at the Hawkwatch, a juvenile Krider's Red-tailed Hawk made an appearance, found and identified by Tom Salo and Peter Fauth, and photographed extensively by Kyle Dudgeon.



**Krider's Red-tailed Hawk  
by Kyle Dudgeon**

**"Bird Sightings" Continued on page 6**