

# THE BELTED KINGFISHER

## Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society, Inc.

## September 15 Program **Emptying the Bucket: The Alaska Frontier**

#### By Becky Gretton

Long-time Audubon leader Andy Mason will present a program on his Circle, he experienced remoteness. 10 week camping adventure across northern Canada and Alaska in the summer of 2022. Says Andy, "I can't ible scenery, and the midnight sun. remember when I didn't dream of going to Alaska... and time was running out!" So he set off with his dog in a 17-foot camper to fulfill the vision. Traveling through five Canadian provinces and two territories, and crossing the

Continental Divide and the Arctic wildlife, native communities, thawing glaciers, wildfires, incred-

Join us in-person on September 15 at Elm Park Methodist Church or preregister to join us on Zoom.

Register for Zoom at: https://tinyurl.com/43bwt8k9



Midnight sun on the Dalton Hwy. Photo by Andy Mason



A view at the Sanctuary Photo by Matthew Bechtold, **Bechtold Photography** 

## **Open House on October 7**

#### By Susan O'Handley

On Saturday October 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society will host an open house at the DOAS Sanctuary and Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch in Oneonta. The event is free and open to the public. The address of the Sanctuary is Grange Hall Spur Road, Oneonta; directions on page 4). may be found at

https://doas.us/conservation-andenvironment/franklinmountainsanctuary

At 10 a.m., a Franklin Mountain hawk counter will conduct a workshop on how to identify flying hawks. At 11:30 a.m., there will be

guided trailwalks (one for children, one for adults), around the Sanctuary ending at the Hawkwatch. In the afternoon, starting at 12:30pm, we will host Deborah Saltis of Falcon Heart Rescue in Herkimer. NY for a live birds of prey program (see the story

A variety of complimentary snacks and drinks will be offered during the day. Raffle items for the upcoming October 20 Charter Dinner will be on display, and raffle tickets will be available to purchase. Bird-friendly coffee will also be available for sale.

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## Atlasing through the Summer of 2023

#### By Co-president Becky Gretton

Hopefully, you are well aware of the New York State Breeding Atlas Ill: https://ebird.org/atlasny/home. Efforts have increased in many under-covered Priority Blocks in response to the looming 2024 breeding season deadline, after which it halts until 2040.

I made a concerted effort to cover more Priority Blocks this season, travelling to areas that were somewhat familiar, and to many that were brand new. My initial visits revealed various habitats, elevations, and densities of human population. I seemed to be in a hurry to get things going, wanting to become comfortable with every road in each block. Seasonal roads are of particular interest to me, often allowing intimate connections with nature. Over time I slowed down, visiting habitats that I knew hosted species that were now demonstrating more observable nesting activities and spending quiet time there. With repeated visits came human interactions, some "checking me out" and others excited about sharing their own bird stories. It's always heartening to have folks slow down and ask if I'm all right. I've learned to give a thumbs-up to those kind people so they don't need to stop.



Wilson's Snipe Photo by Dorian Anderson/Audubon Photography Awards

Certain precious moments come to mind as I write: Winnowing and calling Wilson's Snipe; Yellow Warbler feeding a beautifully colored newly fledged youngster; American Redstarts plucking food from wild grapevines and feeding young; catching motion among leaves and identifying a Yellow-billed Cuckoo without any sounds whatsoever; Canada Warblers singing; and many, many more.

I have learned more about specific aspects of Atlasing from Julie Hart's Town Hall Zoom sessions that have been recorded for all to view and review on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/channe l/UCs2QvwHQ9h2lzv97vizN5Eg/vi deos

Please remember to use the New York Breeding Bird Atlas Portal as you create your eBird checklists. Happy Atlasing!



Like us on Facebook! www.facebook.com/Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society

#### DELAWARE-OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Founded 1968

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Jane Bachman

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Sales: Jane Bachman

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1...

## ON THE WEB: https://doas.us

ON FACEBOOK:

<u>https://www.facebook.com/Delaware-OtsegoAudubonSociety</u>

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

## Conservation and Legislation

#### By Andy Mason

#### Success in Albany

One of the most important pieces of environmental legislation that has been pending in the state legislature is the Birds and Bees Protection Act (A7640/S1856A). We have urged Auduboners and other conservationists here and elsewhere to contact their state Assemblymembers and Senators to vote and pass this bill. The measure would limit use of nictotinoids, or neonics, which are widely used chemicals that harm birds and pollinators alike and are documented as present in ground and surface waters.

We're pleased to report that the flurry of end-of-session bills that made it through included the BBPA! Through a broad coalition of conservationists—including birders—the bill did pass the State Senate and Assembly, as one of the few bright spots for the environment this session—with one caveat noted below.

This bill would ban the harmful and unnecessary uses which account for 80-90% of the neonics entering the state's environment every year, largely agricultural and commercial. It brings New York in line with other states and countries and may spur a nationwide halt to neonics use. If you sent an email or wrote a letter in support of the BBPA, thank you. This win shows that the public can be heard when they speak.



Monarch Butterfly Photo by Susan Ryder

Another positive bill to make it through the legislature this session is a measure banning wildlifekilling derbies. These contests are held in communities across the state with the goal of killing the greatest number and largest of a variety of wildlife, including coyotes, foxes, raccoons, and crows, among others. The derbies are billed as 'family-friendly' affairs with dinners and celebrations accompanying the awarding of prizes. There is no scientific justification for these events and even many hunters oppose them as contrary to fair chase or ethical use of natural resources.

S.4099/A.2917 would make it illegal to organize, sponsor, conduct, promote, or participate in any such contest. Exempted from the law are big buck contests and fishing derbies.

On the down side, legislation that would prohibit use of lead ammunition on state land and on lands within the New York City watershed passed the Assembly, but did not reach the floor in the Senate. The evidence connecting deaths of scavenging birds, including Bald and Golden Eagles and vultures, to ingestion of spent lead ammo is irrefutable. Lead fragments also adulterate venison. including that donated to food pantries and eaten by children. A study this year added New York to the list of states where lead. contamination of this food has been documented.

#### What you can do

Although passage of the above two bills is a great achievement, it is not complete. Both need the signature of Gov. Kathy Hochul to become law. We need to close the deal, so please consider contacting the Governor and urging her to sign these worthy bills. Be sure to include the bill numbers in your letter or email.

Gov. Kathy Hochul Executive Chambers Albany, NY 12224

Correspondence.office@exec.ny.gov

The mission of Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society is to protect our natural environment and connect people with nature to benefit birds and other wildlife through conservation, education, research and advocacy.

## **Deborah Saltis: "Never Stop Learning"**

#### By Susan O'Handley

Deborah Saltis is the Founder of Falcon Heart Rescue, Inc., a non-profit wildlife rescue and educational facility in Herkimer NY. She and Matt Perry are co-founders of the Utica Peregrine Falcon Project, which is the spark that started the rehab/educator fire in her life.

Deb went from being a non-believer of falcons nesting in downtown Utica, to a wildlife rehabilitator and educator. The knowledge she has gained from thousands of hours observing and interacting with the falcons has made her a near-expert in falcon behavior.

Soon after starting the project, it became apparent that a more local rehabber was needed to deal with injured young falcons – the nearest one was over an hour away.

Many hours of training, testing, building, learning, and licensing went into what is now a facility that rehabs



Deborah Saltis and Red-tailed Hawk Photo provided by Deborah Saltis

many birds each year and is home to 9 educational birds as well. Even though releasing a bird back to the wild is a thrilling event, education has been the focus and the most rewarding part of her journey thus far.

## Update on Accessibility at the Sanctuary

#### By Jane Bachman

As part of our commitment to work towards an accessible natural area at the Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch and Sanctuary, we are in the process of creating a permanent location for an accessible port-a-jon. In the works are plans for additional benches, and - a little further down the road- a dedicated accessible parking spot, accessible paths and viewing area. Stay tuned - and let us know if you are interested in helping.

## **Bird-Friendly Coffee**

#### By Jane Bachman

Delaware-Otsego Audubon
Society promotes the use of birdfriendly coffee to protect critical
habitat for neotropical migrant bird
species. Birds & Beans® Bird
Friendly® Shade Grown, Fair Trade
coffee is certified by The
Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center
as coming from 100% organic farms
which meet strict biodiversity
criteria. Their shade-grown coffee
requires little or no chemical
fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides.
The shade trees filter carbon
dioxide and aid in soil moisture

retention, which minimizes erosion.

You can order your bird-friendly coffee by contacting Jane Bachman (jbachwim60@gmail.com or 607-431-9509). Pick up and payment can be arranged from her front porch in Oneonta - or order it along with your bird seed (see pages 8-10) for pickup on November 4. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted. More information can be found at <a href="https://www.doas.us/bird-friendly-coffee">www.doas.us/bird-friendly-coffee</a>.



Wood Thrush Photo by Megumi Aita Audubon Photography Awards

Check the website for more details on the delicious options – from dark roast to light roast to decaf – that are available. Coffee sale proceeds support DOAS programs.

### Annual Charter Dinner on October 20, 2023

#### By Kathryn Davino

Mark Your Calendars for the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society's 55th Annual Charter **Dinner** on Friday October 20, 2023 at the Ouality Inn (formerly the Holiday Inn) on State Highway 23 in Oneonta. The evening begins at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour, followed by The Hills Buffet at 6:15 p.m. (see menu below), and the program at 7:30 p.m. A cash bar will be available. Masks and Covid-19 vaccinations are not required, but are strongly recommended. In order to provide patrons with more space, each table will be limited to 6 seats.

As in the past, there will be door prizes and several fine raffle items. Tickets for the Charter Raffle will be available online at our website as well as at the Open House at the DOAS Sanctuary on Franklin Mountain on October 7. Raffle winners do not need to be present at the dinner.

Our guest keynote speaker for the evening will be Warren Greene, of Gloversville, New York, who will present *Adirondack Nature*Photography with Warren Greene.

Those wishing to attend only the program portion of the event will be

able to join us at no charge, either at the Quality Inn or on Zoom, starting at 7:15 p.m. for a 7:30 p.m. presentation start time. Details about the program can be found at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/vk6xe58f">https://tinyurl.com/vk6xe58f</a>. The cost for the full evening is \$38 per person.

Reservations must be made by **October 15**, using the form below or by registering online at **www.doas.us.** If you are interested in registration after the deadline, please contact Kathryn Davino at 607-397-3815, as there may be a few additional spots for late registrants.

#### Annual Charter Dinner - October 20, 2023

The Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society will hold its Annual Charter Dinner on Friday, October 20, 2023 at the Quality Inn on State Highway 23 in Oneonta. A social hour begins at 5:30pm, buffet at 6:15pm and the program at 7:30pm.

This year's program is **Adirondack Nature Photography with Warren Greene**. The program is open to the public at the Quality Inn (7:15 arrival) or via Zoom at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/8cbywjbe">https://tinyurl.com/8cbywjbe</a>.

The cost for the dinner is \$38 per person. Reservations MUST be made by October 15, 2023 by mailing payment by check (made out to DOAS) with the form below to Charlie Scheim, PO Box 544, Oneonta, NY 13820, or register online at www.doas.us. There is an additional \$2 charge per person for online processing. Phone Kathryn Davino (607-397-3815) with any questions.

#### Menu

\*Cocktail Hour snacks (popcorn, chips, and pretzels)

\*Mixed Green Salad with with choice of two dressings

\*Roasted Salmon and Tomato with a chive cream sauce

\*NY Sirloin, sliced and served with wild mushrooms and caramelized shallots

\*Eggplant Parmesan

\*Seasonal Market Vegetables

\*Herb-roasted Potatoes

\*Assorted Breads & Rolls

\*Chef's Dessert Table with coffee & assorted hot teas

#### 2023 Charter Dinner Ticket Purchase (mail-in form or order online at www.doas.us)

Name(s): Address:			
Food Allergies:			
Phone:		-	
Total # of Tickets	@ \$38 each =	Amount enclosed:	

### **Charter Dinner Presentation:**

### Adirondack Nature Photography with Warren Green

#### By Becky Gretton

Warren Greene is a native of Gloversville, NY where he still resides with his wife. His lifelong love of nature evolved into his passion for nature photography that began in 1976, shortly after graduating from college. As a boy, he was most interested in butterflies and moths and later discovered an interest in reptiles and amphibians. His attraction to birds developed subsequent to purchasing his first camera, a Nikon FM.



Black-backed Woodpecker Photo by Warren Greene



Common Loons
Photo by Warren Greene

Attempting to reproduce images of birds as well as publish them in nature magazines soon became a lifelong endeavor. He continues to shoot images of flora and fauna, mostly from the Adirondack region. A few years into his shooting with slide film he switched his camera brand to Leica, which he used until 2014. At that time, he switched to digital, which was a difficult decision since being in front of a computer screen is not something he enjoys but considers essential. When making the switch to digital Warren also switched back to Nikon, which

remains his current equipment.

Warren Greene's passion for nature will be shared through his photographs of birds and Adirondack scenery. We will experience a wide variety of birds including many that those of us who bird outside of the Adirondacks will find especially exciting, including Black-backed Woodpecker, Pine Grosbeak and Common Loon with chicks. Amazing scenic wonders will be shared with us thanks to Warren's love of nature's beauty. Enjoy a virtual get-away on October 20!

### **DOAS Officers Elected**

The DOAS Board met in August and elected officers for the 2023 - 2024 term. Incumbent co-presidents Becky Gretton and Andy Mason were re-elected. Secretary Dorian Huneke and treasurer Charlie Scheim were also re-elected. We thank our officers for their willingness to serve!

## **Summer Bird Sightings**

By Sandy Bright

This reporting period began in mid-May with some frigid nights. Tom Salo had to thaw his feeders after observing a male Ruby-throated Hummingbird trying to get sugar out of a block of ice. The visits of a Baltimore Oriole and a Rosebreasted Grosbeak helped to make up for Angelika Rashkow's many frostbitten plants.

Eastern Wood-Pewees are among the last arrivals in spring and were first reported by Pam Peters on the 19th. Jennifer Hyypio spotted a pair of Bobolinks in her field, a Scarlet Tanager in a maple tree, and a Brown Thrasher in a bush singing "like a South American Parrot with a vast repertoire of sounds".

In early June a crow snatched one nestling from a Robin's nest in Jessie Ravage's neighborhood and injured another. This is all part of the natural buggers" if she doesn't replace them world, the reason prey species have multiple births, but distressing nonetheless.

A few days later, several people expressed concern about the effects of the Canadian wildfire smoke on birds. When the level of liquid in his hummingbird feeders remained unchanged for days, Tom Salo theorized that the hummers didn't survive. Air quality varied around the area, though, and some noticed no difference in bird activity. Kathryn Davino had a close encounter with a male hummer that kept zipping around her as she mulched her blueberry bushes, coming close to her face, flashing his shiny red gorget. She also reported that a fledgling in a relatively new Bald



Black-and-White Warbler Photo by Matthew Pimm Audubon Photography Awards

Eagle nest near East Meredith was getting large and doing well.

Barb Palmer takes bird feeders down each evening, avoiding potential issues caused by unwanted nocturnal visitors. One morning she discovered that Gold- and Purple Finches can be "impatient little soon enough. They came right to the house, staring in the windows and hanging from the sills!

Evening Grosbeaks are an occasional winter species around here and their early May visits this year were surprising. Thus it was especially remarkable when Nancy New discovered a male Evening Grosbeak at her feeder on July 3rd!

In mid-July Tom Salo spotted a hen turkey several hundred yards away. He could hear her making those noises hens make to their young but couldn't see any in the tall grass until one jumped on her back to get carried for a bit. Seeing that behavior was a first for Tom, as it would be for most of us! Stan Salthe was home standing at a window when suddenly there was

a stunning Black-and-White Warbler on an evergreen branch, apparently unaware of the human just inches away. He was able to enjoy this up-close-and-personal experience for about 10 minutes before it left.

Once Merlin nestlings fledge in mid-July, it's impossible to ignore their noisy presence. They disrupted a meeting I had in Wilber Park, Oneonta and made it difficult for Suzanne Gaynor to focus on her volunteer work at a dog club event behind the Christian school in Otego. Charlie Scheim and I found two more in Schenevus. Later in the summer a Merlin caused a nerve-wracking but exciting moment when it dropped out of a tree and veered so close to Dorian and Eric Huneke's car they thought it would hit the windshield. In mid-August Susan Brunswick found a Green Heron by the Mill Race trail in Oneonta.

Our partial-leucistic female cardinal, experiencing her yearly molt, lost all head feathers, leaving her looking more like a tiny cousin to the California Condor than a cardinal. That hasn't stopped her from bringing her young to our feeders, to our great delight!



Partial-leucistic female cardinal Photo by Sandy Bright

## 35th Season Underway at Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch

#### By Andy Mason

The 35th consecutive season of counting migrating raptors at the Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch got underway in late August. The Hawkwatch, located on the DOAS Sanctuary off Grange Hall Road, will continue into early January, covering portions of 6 months, with temperatures ranging from eighty degrees to below zero at times.

Along with the change in weather comes a change in birds, with Broad-winged Hawks and Osprey leading the charge, and Golden Eagles and Rough-legged Hawks bringing up the rear. In between will be a mix of 16 different species of raptors that pass by the lookout. Last season's total was 4366 hawks and eagles. A good count of 2044 broadwings helped make up for belowaverage tallies of most other species, including a particularly low count of Red-tailed Hawks. Broad-winged Hawk migration is largely compressed into the middle two weeks of September. Good days can turn up flights of several hundred birds during this period, so visitors



Red-tailed Hawk Photo by Landa Palmer

should watch for promising conditions (see forecast alerts below).

The count of Golden Eagles, Franklin Mountain's most notable species, was also low last season with a total of 125 spotted, mostly in October and November.

In other hawk watch news, improvements are underway at the lookout, including new siding on the shelter, an additional bench, and interpretive signs that will help visitors with hawk identification and landmark locations to assist spotting raptors.

Visitors and spotters are always

welcome at the lookout. For more information, contact Andy Mason, (607) 267-8491,

AndyMason@earthling.net, or Tom Salo, (607) 965-8232, salothomas@gmail.com.

Forecasts of anticipated good flights at the Hawkwatch are sent out by email a day or two in advance. To receive these alerts, visit www.franklinmt.org to sign up. Daily tallies from Franklin Mt. are also available by email; contact Andy Mason as above.

More information and directions to the hawk watch can be found at www.franklinmt.org.



Tom Salo working at FMHW
Photo by Andy Mason

## Support DOAS, Order Bird Seed Today!

#### By Susan O'Handley

The DOAS Bird Seed Sale Fundraiser is your opportunity to buy quality bird seed and help support DOAS programs at the same time! This year we're happy to again offer local sunflower seed, grown in Edmeston, priced at \$39 for a 40-pound bag.

Proceeds from this sale support speaker fees for meetings, field trips, programs and special events throughout the year, as well as youth summer programs and the Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch. We encourage you to stock up for the winter months ahead. Thank you for supporting DOAS! Orders are now in progress for our November 4 delivery date.

### 2023 Bird Seed Sale Fundraiser Order Form

	2023 Bird	l Seed Sale Fundi	raiser Order l	F <b>orm</b>	OLIAWARE	OTS.
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Email Address						
Phone number					The same	A. M.
Address						
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City	State	Zip Code			AUDUBON	SOCIETY
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LOCALLY GROWN Support our local farms with			NY.			
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This is a premium option for best single ingredient choice	well-cleaned sunflower se	ed. Works great in tray or p			,	
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Ultimate Blend 40 lb ba					\$68.00 ea = \$	
A corn-free mix that includes Peanuts, Sunflower Kernels, S	s Black Oil Sunflower, Wh					
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PAGE 1 SUBTOTAL CONTINUED ON BACK

PAGE 2			PAGE I SUBTOTAL	
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-	ive DOAS Update Emails?			
$DOAS\ Update\ Emails\ are$	sent monthly (and additionally	as needed) and include notification of upo	coming DOAS activities, news and eve	nts.
Yes, Please Add Me to	o DOAS News Email List	I already receive update emails	No, Tha	nk You

### **Upcoming Activities**

#### September

September 1 - Bird Seed Sale Begins

September 15 - **DOAS Public Program: "Emptying the Bucket: The Alaska Frontier"** with Andy Mason. The in-person program begins at 7:30 p.m. at Elm Park Church, 401 Chestnut Street in Oneonta. Register for streaming program at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/43bwt8k9">https://tinyurl.com/43bwt8k9</a>

September 19 - DOAS Board Meeting: 6:30 p.m.

#### October

October 7 - **Open House**, 10 a.m. - 2 p. m. at DOAS Sanctuary on Franklin Mountain. See article on page 1

October 17 - **DOAS Board Meeting**: 6:30 p.m.

October 20 - **DOAS Annual Charter Dinner**, 5:30 p.m. at the Quality Inn, State Highway 23, Oneonta. Speaker Warren Greene will present "Adirondack Nature Photography with Warren Greene". The program begins at 7:30 p.m and will be available via Zoom. Reservation deadline is October 15. See article on page 6

October 22, 5 p.m. - **Deadline for Bird Seed Order** See article on page 8 and order forms on pages 9-10. Pickup is on November 4, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

#### November

November 4 - **Bird Seed Pickup**, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at VP Supply Corp, 41 Country Club Road, Oneonta

November 17- **DOAS Public Program: "A Glorious Galapagos Adventure.**" Kathryn Davino will share her photos and stories from the Galapagos Archipelago via Zoom at 7:30 p.m. Registration required at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/yy4k7va4">https://tinyurl.com/yy4k7va4</a>.

#### **December**

December 5 - **DOAS Board Meeting**: 6:30 p.m.

December 16 - **Oneonta Christmas Bird Count**. For more information contact Sandy Bright at brights@hartwick.edu or phone 607-287-4465.

December 31 - **Delaware County Christmas Bird Count**. Contact Pam Peters at ovenb1rdp@gmail.com or phone 607-829-6545

DOAS PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

In Case You Missed It — Past Webinars Are Available Online at https://doas.us/webinars/.



Ruby-throated Hummingbird Photo by Landa Palmer



White-breasted Nuthatch
Photo by Landa Palmer

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