



THE BELTED KINGFISHER

DELAWARE-OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

DOAS Charter Dinner 2025: New Venue – New Menu

By Kathryn Davino

Please join us for the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society's 57th Annual Charter Dinner on Friday October 17, 2025. This year the event will take place at the Sixth Ward Athletic Club Banquet Room, 22 West Broadway in Oneonta, NY. We're very excited that Bella Michael's Restaurant will cater the affair, featuring Chicken Marsala, Baked Haddock, and Eggplant Rollatini on the buffet.

The evening will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour, followed by the Buffet Dinner at 6:15 p.m. A cash bar will be available.

The 7:30 p.m. program "We Count! Raptor Migration Monitoring in the Americas" will feature presenter Julie



*These terrific prizes will be raffled off at the Charter Dinner!
Photos by Kathryn Davino*

Brown, who serves as the Director of the Hawk Migration Association. This in-person program will be available free of charge via Zoom. To register for the program only via

Zoom, please visit this link:
<https://tinyurl.com/2f3cmt7c> .

Door prizes and a "flock" of eight bird-themed Charter Raffle Prizes will add to the fun. Tickets for the Charter Raffle (a bucket raffle) are currently available online at our website when you visit <https://doas.us/2025-dinner-raffle/>. Charter Raffle winners do not need to be present at the dinner.

Dinner reservations must be made by October 10! Register online at www.doas.us. Space is limited at this venue, so please register early! Should we reach capacity for the evening, we will start a waiting list in the event of any cancellations. If you are interested in registration after the deadline, please contact Kathryn Davino at 607-397-3815.

Bird Seed Sale Reminder

By Chris DeCesare

The DOAS Bird Seed Sale has started! Have you ordered yet? It is a great opportunity to buy quality bird seed and help support DOAS programs at the same time. Proceeds from the sale help support speaker fees for meetings, field trips, programs and special events throughout the year, and the Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch. There's a variety of seed options for you to choose from.

Stock up for winter now--and thanks for your support!. Order at:
<https://doas.us/2025-order-bird-seed/>

ORDER DEADLINE: Sunday, October 19, 5 p.m.

PRODUCT PICK UP: Saturday, November 1, 9-11 a.m.

PICK UP LOCATION: VP Supply Corp, 69 Country Club Road, Oneonta NY

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Broad-winged Hawk Releases by Falcon Heart Rescue

By Co-president Becky Gretton

Our good friends Deb and John Saltis of Falcon Heart Rescue in Herkimer contacted me in July seeking habitat for release of a Broad-winged Hawk that had “passed all the tests” and was ready to go. In August we went to an area on a seasonal road that I have admired for many years, rich with bird and animal life. They approved of the site. Deb expressed her high regard for the beautiful young bird whose life they saved, donned her heavy gloves, removed it from its carrier and we watched it fly to a nearby tree and beyond.

A few weeks later I was privileged to release three more rehabilitated Broad-winged Hawks who “needed to go”, as they migrate in September. Thanks to our earlier release I knew what habitats were appropriate. Having received instruction about proper release procedure, all went well. I did not wear the heavy gloves, and simply opened the carriers.

I volunteered to pick up an American Kestrel in Laurens also, and delivered it to Falcon Heart. It was



*Broad-winged Hawk awaiting release
Photo by Becky Gretton*

alert and ready to bite any fingers that got within range of my carrier! Being so close to wild birds is amazing.

Falcon Heart Rescue is dedicated to rehabilitating injured and orphaned birds of prey. Additionally, they educate the community about raptors and the importance of conservation (they'll do a presentation at our October 4 Open House). The Saltis' dedicate boundless energy and resources to rehabilitating birds, and these were just a few of many that have become independent this season, thanks to them.

Eagle Field Trip Leader Needed

By Andy Mason

We are seeking a leader to take over DOAS' most popular field trip—traveling to the Delaware County reservoirs and rivers to view wintering Bald Eagles. The trip has been held for over 35 years and draws 20-30 birders and occasionally more--perhaps you have been one of them--to see the concentration of these magnificent birds around open water areas. Counts of up to 30 eagles are regular, along with a variety of other birds. The trip is generally held in mid to late January when the number of birds is highest. We can help a new leader with organization, routes, hot spots, etc. If interested in learning more, contact Andy Mason, (607) 267-8491, AndyMason@earthling.net.

DELAWARE-OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

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

Conservation and Legislation

By Andy Mason

Trump Administration's Assault on Climate Continues—President

Trump seems to have singled out efforts to reduce greenhouse gases as a particular target for his policies. He has rolled back over 125 related rules and regulations since taking office. A brief list of these actions includes:

- Eliminating requirements for energy-efficient appliances, water heaters and other devices.
- Opening up outer continental shelf areas to oil and gas drilling
- Withdrawing the US from the Paris Agreement on climate change.
- Issuing an executive order encouraging the rapid development of fossil fuel resources.
- Declaring a national energy emergency which gives the President increased authority.
- Ending off-shore wind energy leases and halting permitting for all wind projects.
- Suspending automobile fuel efficiency standards.
- Ordering expansion of timber harvesting on federal lands.
- Moving to exempt coal-fired power plants from hazardous air emission standards.
- Drastically cutting funding for environmental and climate programs.

- Ordering federal agencies to minimize use of scientific research in their policies.
- Directing federal agencies to remove regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, requiring environmental impact reviews.
- Ending renewable energy tax credits.
- Exempting chemical plants from air emission standards.
- Expanding oil and gas drilling in Alaska.
- Proposing to rescind the Endangerment Finding on greenhouse gases.

For a full listing of the Trump administration's anti-climate actions, visit 'Climate Backtracker' : <https://climate.law.columbia.edu/content/climate-backtracker>

The Latest Attack—Trump is now proposing to end the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program, in place since 2009, which will affect over 8,000 facilities, including power plants, electronic, chemical and mineral processing facilities and oil refineries. These facilities are now required to report their emissions annually, and the reported data are available to the public. These reports have guided federal policy, and the data also help companies demonstrate they are hitting

emissions-cutting benchmarks for the public, shareholders and investors. If the reports are no longer necessary, these facilities will have carte blanche to ignore even the weakened standards now in place, and there will be no information available to the public and scientists on what greenhouse gases are entering the air. This can only increase these emissions from a large sector of the nation's industrial activity.

What you can do—Most of the administration's climate actions above have been enacted through executive order, particularly under the claimed 'energy emergency'. These moves do not require public review and comment, or legislative approval. However, some rules do allow public comment, including this proposal. Citizens can express their opposition to the ending of this important regulation at www.regulations.gov, using Docket Id. No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2025-0186. Comments can also be mailed to: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, EPA Docket Center, Office of Air and Radiation Docket, Mail Code 28221T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20460. The deadline for comments is November 3.

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.

Health Benefits of Birding

By Director Prudence Danforth

Traditional wisdom tells us that, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.” Can you achieve the same results another way without the proverbial apple? Research shows that birdwatching is a proven way to improve mental health by reducing stress, anxiety, and depression, and by enhancing mood and overall well-being. The benefits come from a combination of being in nature, experiencing awe and wonder from birds' beauty and behavior, and engaging in mindful observation, which promotes focus and a sense of calm presence. Even short exposures to birds, whether through sight or sound, provide lasting improvements, and a higher diversity of bird species can further increase life satisfaction and reduce feelings of loneliness.

The physical benefits of reducing stress are numerous. Stress is a major contributing factor to several of the leading causes of death. Chronic stress is considered a major risk factor for heart disease. The constant stress response increases heart rate and blood pressure, inflames arteries, and can affect blood clotting. Over time, these effects can lead to a heart



*Pileated Woodpecker
Photo by Landa Palmer*

attack or stroke.

Stress hormones like cortisol may weaken the immune system and promote inflammation, which has been linked to cancer development and progression. Studies have also shown that chronic stress can accelerate tumor growth and metastasis. High levels of stress can contribute to depression, anxiety, and suicide. Prolonged, unmanaged stress is associated with an increased mortality risk among people with these mental health conditions.

Many people cope with chronic stress by engaging in unhealthy behaviors such as overeating, smoking, or abusing alcohol and drugs. These habits are significant risk factors for fatal diseases like heart disease, cirrhosis of the liver,

and certain cancers.

Stress and chronic anxiety both contribute to high blood pressure and a weakened immune system in the same way. Chronic anxiety may also cause changes in appetite (loss of appetite or overeating), headaches and migraines, fatigue and exhaustion, and insomnia.

Nature can restore our attention and counter the mental fatigue that today's sensory-filled environments can cause. Nature can reduce stress; blood pressure, heart rate, and stress hormones all drop with time in nature, studies show. Both factors — cognitive function and stress response — have been linked to conditions such as depression.

University of Washington environmental psychologist Gregory Bratman, who led a recent review of findings across social and health sciences says, “Evidence is there to support the conclusion that contact with nature benefits our mood, our psychological well-being, our mental health, and our cognitive functioning.”

Take a few minutes each day, regardless of the weather, to look for our avian friends and enjoy the outdoors. Your body and mind will thank you.

Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch Update September 2025

By Pam Peters, Hawkwatch Committee Chair

Volunteer counters started up at the Franklin Mountain fall Hawkwatch on August 26. Just 3 weeks into our season and we've had some good counts, with 2010 total migrants as of September 18. So far, as expected, Broad-winged Hawks lead the numbers with 1777 birds counted. With dry, sunny weather providing plenty of thermals

Continued on page 5

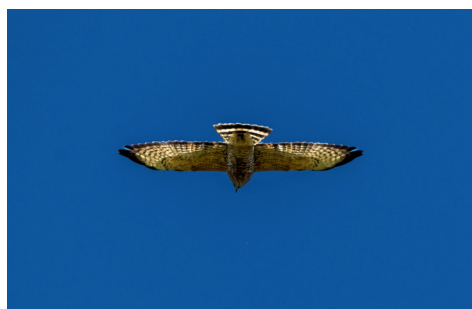
for all of September, these long-distance migrants have been on the move in the northeast, from Clarry Hill, Maine, to Putney, Vermont and along the Kittatinny Ridge in Pennsylvania. One of the hawk-watches in PA has already recorded over 12,000 Broad-winged Hawks at their site. As the hawks move south towards their South American destination, a funneling effect concentrates the birds in Mexico and Central America. Veracruz, Mexico has recorded over 31,000 Broad-winged Hawks so far, and will typically reach several hundred thousand by the end of October.

Other species on the move at Franklin Mountain include Osprey (18), Bald Eagle (49), Northern Harrier (7), Sharp-shinned Hawk (64), Cooper's Hawk (5), Red-tailed Hawk (14) and American Kestrel (53).

Broad-winged Hawks will phase out by the end of September, and we will see more diversity and greater numbers of other species for the rest



*Kettle of Broad-winged Hawks and (below) an individual BWHA at Franklin Mountain
Photos by Landa Palmer*



of the season starting early October. In addition to raptors migrating, we often see Monarch Butterflies moving through, many of them enjoying the goldenrod covering the hills at the Sanctuary.

We have recorded almost 200 visitors in these first few weeks, including college students from Hartwick, SUNY Oneonta-

Cooperstown Graduate Program, and SUNY Cobleskill. These young people are very enthusiastic and a great help in spotting birds. The Cooperstown Graduate Program students are investigating Citizen Science projects, which hawk migration fits into perfectly.

Visitors are always welcomed. Volunteer counters are at the site most dry days from about 8am-3pm EST, through the end of December. For directions to the Hawkwatch, historical data and more information, see <https://doas.us/research/franklin-mountain-hawkwatch/>

November Program: Paved Paradise: Addressing the Ecological Impacts of America's Road System

By **Becky Gretton**

While roads are so ubiquitous they're practically invisible to us, wild animals experience them as alien forces of death and disruption. Please join us on November 21 at 7:30 p.m. for a presentation via Zoom by environmental journalist Ben Goldfarb. Goldfarb, whose work has appeared in National Geographic, the Atlantic, Smithsonian Magazine, and many other publications, will discuss the ecological harms wrought by transportation and the movement to redress them — and how we can create a better, safer world for all living beings.



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August-September Bird Sightings

By **Sandy Bright**

Mid-August brought a nice surprise when fourteen Common Nighthawks hawked the skies above our house, heading toward their wintering grounds in South America. More nighthawks were spotted several times in the following weeks near Covered Bridge Road in Unadilla by Rod Spangle, marking the seasonal passage of these long-winged migrants.

Around the same time, Lance Verderame made a notable discovery at the Cannonsville Reservoir—four Ring-necked Ducks. While that area is a good winter location for the species, their presence in August is unusual.

Late August activity included an immature Great Blue Heron stalking prey at Hodges Pond in Oneonta, while a lone Canada Goose grazed peacefully nearby. At the O'Brien home, Betsy was surprised to hear baby House Wrens chirping in one of her many bird-houses. She remarked that she had never had them so late in the year, although several pairs had already



Green Heron with snack
Photo by Rick Bunting

nested earlier in the summer.

Meanwhile, Rick Bunting's camera captured images of two young male Wood Ducks preening. When they began grooming each other, it became clear they were lending a helping bill to reach difficult spots. Rick also documented a Green Heron's successful hunt—first devouring a large frog, then later snagging a smaller snack.

Hummingbird activity lingered well into late summer. While males generally migrate by mid-August, some stragglers remained. A female visited our feeder, then perched on the clothesline, looking notably plump. Whether this was from the crisp 49-degree morning or from fat reserves for migration was unclear.

September brought a Least Sandpiper to Glimmerglass State Park, spotted by Suzanne Summers, while near Andes, Ruth Pedersen found a Cape May Warbler, a species that passes through in modest numbers each fall. On the Silas Lane Greenway trail, a routine bit of trailwork startled a Green Heron into flight, its harsh call announcing its

displeasure as it crossed the river.

The Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch is up and running for the year, with September being peak Broad-winged Hawk migration time. It's a good location to watch a variety of migrating birds, and what fun to observe birds as large as Turkey Vultures soaring overhead, then see the tiniest species, a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, zipping by on its epic journey to Central America. Also migrating through are Palm Warblers, seen by Ruth Pedersen near Andes, and a Lincoln's Sparrow found in Downsville by Lance Verderame.

September also brings wandering seabirds; Rick Bunting photographed five Double-crested Cormorants lined up on a log near Unadilla on a foggy morning. He later snapped a shot of an immature Common Merganser.

My husband and I watched a House Sparrow carrying a long blade of grass, and immediately thought of nest-building and breeding, which didn't make sense on September 14th. Even though House Sparrows might have four broods in a season, they shouldn't be starting a new one in mid-September! A more likely explanation for what we saw is that they, like us, are fixing up their roosting areas in preparation for the shorter, cooler days ahead.

***If you have bird sightings to report,
contact Sandy Bright,
brights@hartwick.edu or
607-287-4465.***



Common Nighthawk
Photo by Phil Chaon
Audubon Photography Awards

Upcoming Activities

October

October 4 - **Open House**, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at DOAS Sanctuary on Franklin Mountain (see article, page 8)

October 17 - **DOAS Annual Charter Dinner**, 5:30 p.m. at the Sixth Ward Athletic Club Banquet Room, 22 West Broadway in Oneonta. The program, **"We Count! Raptor Migration Monitoring in the Americas"** with Julie Brown begins at 7:30 p.m. Reservation deadline is October 10. (See article, page 1)

October 19, 5 p.m. - **Deadline for Bird Seed Order**. (See article, page 1)

October 21- **DOAS Board Meeting**: 6:30 p.m.

November

November 1 - **Bird Seed Pickup**, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at VP Supply Corp, 41 Country Club Road, Oneonta

November 18 - **DOAS Board Meeting**: 6:30 p.m.

November 21- **DOAS Public Program: "Paved Paradise: Addressing the Ecological Impacts of America's Road System"** with environmental journalist Ben Goldfarb. Via Zoom at 7:30 p.m.; registration required at www.doas.us

December

December 2 - **DOAS Board Meeting**: 6:30 p.m.

December 14- **Oneonta Christmas Bird Count (CBC)**. Contact Sandy Bright at brights@hartwick.edu or phone 607-287-4465.

December 27 - **Fort Plain CBC**. Contact Charlie Scheim at scheimc@hartwick.edu or phone 607-434-4880

January

January 4 - **Delaware County CBC**. Contact Pam Peters at ovenbirdp@gmail.com or phone 607-829-6545

January 16- **DOAS Public Program: "Stories from Greater Yellowstone: A Deep Dive into the Heart of the Rockies and How to Defend this Threatened Wilderness"** with Kyle Dudgeon. Via Zoom at 7:30 p.m.; registration required at www.doas.us

January 20 - **DOAS Board Meeting**: 6:30 p.m.

DOAS PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

DOAS Membership

Cost is \$25 annually or \$35 for two years; family memberships \$30 annually or \$40 for two years.

Memberships can also be purchased online at <https://doas.us/membership/> or make your check payable to "DOAS" and mail payment to: DOAS Membership Chair, PO Box 544, Oneonta, NY 13820-0544

Support DOAS education and conservation programs with an additional donation!



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<https://doas.us/>

Return Service Requested

October 4 Open House

By Susan O'Handley

DOAS will host its annual Open House at the DOAS Sanctuary and Hawkwatch at 52 Grange Hall Road Spur, Oneonta, NY from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 4, 2025. The event is free and open to the public. Directions may be found here:
<https://tinyurl.com/y5un5yvs>

Complimentary refreshments will be available throughout the day. On display will be raffle items for the annual Charter Dinner (which will be held on Friday, October 17). Bird-friendly coffee, DOAS mugs, and FMHW hats will be available for purchase. In addition, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. visitors can bring window glass measurements and take home an Acopian Bird Saver to prevent bird-window collisions.



The schedule of activities will be as follows:

10:00 a.m. – Raptor Identification Workshop

11:00 a.m. – Sanctuary Trail Walk

12:30 p.m. – An introduction to Ravens (informal with live bird)

1:00 p.m. – Live Birds of Prey with Deb and John Saltis from Falcon Heart Rescue

We hope to see you there!

Is Your Membership Current?

Your mailing label above will inform you of your membership expiration date. This is the only notice you receive to let you know you need to renew your membership. Thanks for rejoining when your membership expires.