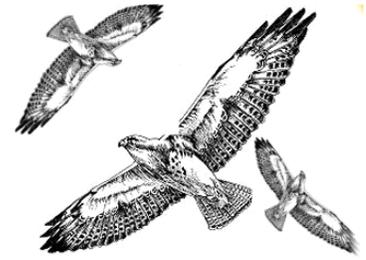


THE KETTLE



Straits Area Audubon Society Newsletter - Est. 1983

SAAS meetings are held at **6:00 pm.** on the 2nd Wednesday of each month September through May at the Cheboygan Area Public Library, 100 S. Bailey St. Refreshments will be provided and you may participate in door prize and raffle drawings.

The scheduling of a meeting or program in the library does not in any way constitute an endorsement by the library of the group, its activities, or of the ideas and opinions expressed during the course of meetings or programs.

SAAS thanks **Williams Office Equipment** for donating printing costs for **The Kettle**.

Straits Area Audubon Society
c/o Gerry VanderHart
7004 N. Straits Hwy., Box88
Mullett Lake, MI 49761

Mission Statement - The mission of the Straits Area Audubon Society is to educate the community, including it's children, about conservation and enjoyment of the natural world with emphasis on the local natural communities of wildlife. This will be accomplished through regular seasonal meetings and by sponsoring field trips, classroom studies and field studies.

Join Straits Area Audubon Society

NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____
ADDRESS: _____ E-MAIL: _____
CITY & STATE: _____ NEWS LETTER: [E-Mail] – or – [US-Mail]

Make checks payable to: Straits Area Audubon Society:
Single Membership: \$12
Family Membership: \$15

Please mail checks to:
Gerry VanderHart – Treasurer
7004 N. Straits Hwy., Box88
Mullett Lake, MI 49761

April Program

Will the Water Come Back? Climate Effects on the Great Lakes

Wednesday, April 10 [6:00 p.m.]

Anyone who has been watching the waters recede at Gordon Turner Park on Lake Michigan or elsewhere has good cause to be worried. Is the decline due to a natural long-term cycle? Will and when will the water rise again? Our guest speaker, **Roger Gauthier**, worked as Senior Hydrologist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Detroit and recently authored the Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Guidebook. Having retired to Cheboygan, he was a candidate for Cheboygan County Drain Commission in 2012. He will explain the hydrologic cycle, showing how precipitation, runoff, evaporation, and human diversions and draw downs of water affect lake levels. Roger will demonstrate how climate change, producing temperature extremes, increases the uncertainty of predicting future lake levels. Meanwhile, coastal planners must make decisions. How should community and natural resource managers react who seek to protect populations of piping plovers and shorebirds, wetlands, and the offshore aquatic vegetation needed by fish and other wildlife?

Where has the water gone? 14 Mile Shoal Light Cheboygan



Photo by Jack Kirby

What is the most responsible way for individuals and governments to adjust to the situation? The evening promises some fascinating and informed discussion. Refreshments along with a raffle drawing will follow the meeting.

The water in Lake Superior could cover all of North and South America to a depth of nearly 1 foot (about 30 cm).

May Program

Hawks in the Hand

Wednesday, May 8 [6:00 p.m.]

Our May program will be delivered by **Kenn Filkins**, a falconer from Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. He will share his extensive knowledge about raptors, aided by at least one hawk or owl. He hunts with and breeds Harris's hawks, a western species. Last December, having been granted the first such trapping permit ever offered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Kenn captured a passage, female snowy owl to use for falconry. Kenn's extensive falconry background includes serving as president of both the Indiana Falconers Association and the Iowa Falconers Association, before moving back to his home state of Michigan in 1990.

Harris's Hawk - Izzy



Photo by Kenn Filkins

Kenn has written ten books and thousands of magazine and news articles, on falconry, fly fishing, and faith. He edited and wrote for the award-winning North American Falconers Association book, ***Bond with the Wild: A Celebration of American Falconry***. Two of his other books are ***A Sophisticated Form of Hawk Watching*** and ***Fly Fishing for Salmon and Steelhead of the Great Lakes***. Kenn has served as a Christian pastor for 30-plus years, currently at New Beginning Church in the Sault. For 13 years, Kenn also has served as editor of the Sault Ste. Marie Evening News daily paper. Kenn has won both writing and photography awards. Refreshments along with a raffle drawing will follow the meeting.

Cheboygan State Park Hike and Potluck Dinner

Hosted by Roger and Ann Benter

Wednesday, June 12 [6:00 p.m.]

April Field Trips

Friday, April 5 [6:30 p.m.]

FOURTH ANNUAL Headlands Park Potluck, Owl banding and Stargazing

SAAS members and guests will gather at the Guest House at the Headlands Park for a potluck dinner. Please bring a dish to pass and your own drink and table service. Afterward, we will help Ed Pike set up mist nets and an owl calling station on-site. Ed targets saw-whet owls, with boreal and long-eared owls also possible. The first net check will be about 30 minutes after sunset.

Northern Saw-whet Owl



Photo by Jack Kirby

Captured owls will be measured, aged, sexed, banded, photographed, and released. Ed will demonstrate techniques that biologists use to learn more about these nocturnal hunters and describe his findings during decades of banding. In between checking the nets, we will enjoy a campfire and learn about the stars and constellations either inside or outdoors if weather permits. Stay as late as you like. The Emmet County Headlands Park is located just west of Mackinaw City. From the entrance, follow the signs to the Guest House. This trip is co-sponsored by the Headlands Dark Sky Park.

Saturday, April 6, 7:30 pm.

Ed Pike will also set nets for owls this evening, sponsored by the Emmet County Headlands Dark Sky Park. In addition to owl-banding, Mary Stewart Adams, astrophysicist, will present on the night sky.

Saturday, April 6, [10:00 a.m.]

Mackinaw Straits Hawk Count

Come join Steve Baker and the Hawk Count crew to learn the "ins and outs" of hawk watching. Please meet at the Mackinaw City Historical Park entrance, across from Headlands Park [10:00 am]. We will then move to the best location for that day's viewing.

Hawk Watch 2012



Photo by Bev Kirby

Dress warmly; bring a lawn chair [you will be sitting and searching the skies] and binoculars. You will be viewing birds that could be up to ½ mile away and learning how to ID them.

If you wish, bring something to accompany hot dogs for a cookout lunch on-site.

Field Trip Reports

Kestrel Boxes and Bluebird Houses

Saturday, March 23, 2013

By Donna Mittlestat

On Saturday, March 23, five of us came to put up birdhouses at Dale Giddings farmstead. The snow was deep enough for us to wear snowshoes. We pulled a toboggan with our supplies for setting up 3 bluebird and 2 kestrel bird houses. We learned how Dale built the houses (his variations on the boxes from our Jan. 2013 SAAS meeting), his rationale for their placement and his hopes of attracting the birds. Our walk gave us a tour of the farmstead and the bonus of seeing a pair of Red-shouldered hawks and Pileated woodpeckers along with many animal tracks to observe. In a couple of hours the

work was completed and the boxes are ready for their new tenants.

A New Kestrel Home



Photo by Donna Mittlestat

Spring Waterfowl around Cheboygan

Saturday, March 30, 2013

By Bev Kirby

On a sunny, chilly, 19 degree spring morning, eleven Straits Area Audubon members, led by Steve Baker, visited four different areas along Lake Huron and the Cheboygan River to look for waterfowl.

Waterfowl Field Trip Group



Photo by Steve Baker

Common, Red-breasted and Hooded Mergansers were seen along with Greater Scaup, Redhead, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Mallards and Ring-necked ducks. A surprise fly-by of two Long-tailed ducks got our adrenaline going. A total of 25 species of birds were seen or heard. Bald Eagle, Mute Swan, Canada Goose, American Robin, Blue Jay, Downy Woodpecker, Killdeer, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Common Grackle, Starling, House Sparrow, American Crow, Mourning Dove, and Rock Pigeon rounded out the count. Thanks Steve for getting us out of bed early on a Saturday morning. Participants were Jack and Bev Kirby, Kathy and Jim Bricker, Janet Trudeau, Jean and Al Moberly, Diane Morand, Lynn Evans, Carol and Dave Bricker.

SAAS Chapter Notes

Last Month's SAAS Program

By Kathy Bricker

Nature sightings run by Bev Kirby, upcoming field trips by Steve Baker, and announcements by Dale Giddings preceded the meeting program. Alice MacFarland, Refreshments Director, thanked the people who brought treats for the large crowd of 44 people: Al and Jean Moberly, Kate Caldwell, Lanny and Bobie Crongeyer, and Gerry VanderHart. The door prize of wild bird seed donated by Cheboygan Co-op was won by member Sue Emerson. The raffle prize of a bat house donated by the Cheboygan Co-op was won by member Kate Caldwell.

Then Bobie Crongeyer explained the Memorandum of Partnership detailing the novel relationship between SAAS and the Cheboygan Middle 'Green' School. It was moved, seconded, and passed to authorize this Memorandum, which can be viewed at the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative's website.

Bobie then introduced the Cheboygan Middle School Green Club. Giving the program were students Maggie Kimbrell, Marina Morse, Mikaela Chimner, Jordan Barrette, and Autumn Piotrowski. Teachers Patti Dobias and Margaret Paull provided additional background, while Principal Linda Chase thanked SAAS profusely for our leadership.

Cheboygan Middle School Green Club Presentation



Photo by Jim Bricker

The program covered their progress and plans for recycling and the native plant garden. Members reached a consensus that part of the SAAS grant to the Middle School in 2013 would cover a student trip to the Emmet County Transfer Station to learn about the sorting, processing, marketing, and retooling into new products of Cheboygan County recyclables, and the resultant energy and pollution savings. Members already approved (December 2012) \$544 for the Green School project, which should cover that trip plus other activities

Call for Big Birding Day Grant Ideas

By Kathy Bricker

All SAAS members get to vote on how to spend money raised at Big Birding Day. On May 16, 2012, SAAS Big Birding Day participants tallied 125 species. Thanks to pledges ranging from ten to forty cents per species, we raised \$686. Members voted to make grants for five purposes: owl banding research, Mackinaw Hawk count, Cheboygan Green School, EarthWeekPlus, and Snakes Alive! Hands-on presentations for all 5th graders in Cheboygan and Wolverine Schools. To suggest a project for this year's fundraiser, or to make your pledge, please attend the April meeting or contact me before April 19 (kathyhomeaccount@hotmail.com, 231-627-4830). The upcoming 2013 field trips with our chapter experts you can experience nature first-hand, building up a wonderful memory bank.

2013 EarthWeekPlus

Again this year, SAAS is a lead sponsor for EarthWeekPlus Cheboygan County. Please visit www.earthweekplus.org for details or pick up a brochure at your nearest library or Chamber of Commerce. Pencil in your calendar for the following events:

April 13, [12 to 5 pm], Expo at Cheboygan High School. A live bird of prey presentation by Wings of Wonder is the highlight of the day. Both adults and children will also enjoy presentations of Bees, Wolves, Invasive Species, Butterfly Gardens, Native Americans, Water Quality, Kestrel Box Building, Grandmother Moon Drummers, Animal Tracks, and Organic Gardening.

April 17, [6 pm], Caribou Summer film by Jim and Kathy Bricker at Cheboygan Area Public Library.

April 20, [10 am], Raising Backyard Chickens by Cyndi Kress at her home in Indian River.

April 20, [10 am to 5 pm], Flush But Don't Forget by Richard Lincoln at BrassWind Landing, Indian River.

April 24, [6 pm], If This is Global Warming, Why Aren't We Warm? By Richard Riker at Cheboygan Area Public Library

April 27, [11 am], Sundown Alpaca Ranch Tour near Ocqueoc.

April 28, [6:30 am], Sunrise Ceremony at home of Bill and Colleen Nash, Indian River

April 28, [10 am], Hike to Beaver Pond by Kate Caldwell at Historic Mill Creek Discovery Park, Mackinaw City.

May 1, [6 pm], It's More Than Carbon Dioxide by Richard Riker at Cheboygan Area Public Library.

May 4, [11 am], Organic Hide Tanning at Cheboygan Area Public Library

May 4, [1 pm], Greenhouse and Farm Open House at Don and Lynda Tracey farm, Cheboygan.

May 5, [12 pm], Kayaking Twin Lakes by Sheree Lincoln near Indian River

May 5, [10 am], Invasive Species Hike by Maureen Stine at Cheboygan State Park

Remaining Adventures through May 18 will be announced in the May Kettle.

Mackinaw Hawk Count Committee

On March 13, the SAAS Executive Committee met and voted for SAAS to take a leadership role in expanding the Mackinaw Straits Hawk Count starting in spring 2014. An ad hoc committee has formed to explore possibilities and develop a plan. So far, the committee consists of Steve Baker, Kathy Bricker, Kate Caldwell, Ed Pike, and Gerry VanderHart and will begin meeting and gathering information in May. Other people are welcome to join the committee by contacting Kathy at 231-627-4830. We are especially seeking someone with a background in legal and/or insurance issues.

Nominating Committee

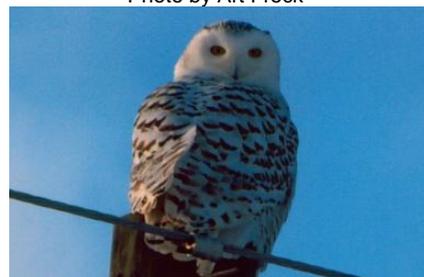
SAAS President Dale Giddings has announced a Nominating Committee to recruit volunteers for the 2013-2014 seasons. The strength of SAAS comes from the many people who give so willingly to the organization, from members to the executive committee. This year, you are again needed. You may ask about becoming an active volunteer, retaining your position, or being promoted to a different position. For any of these, please contact committee members Jim Bricker (pivot77777@hotmail.com), Alice MacFarland (macfarlands@charter.net), or Gerry VanderHart (231-627-6249).

Nature Sightings

SNOWY OWL SIGHTING:

Owl was sighted on Wing Road, February 5th, 2013 by Art and Judy Frock.

Photo by Art Frock



Answers to March White Bird Quiz

By Bev Kirby

Bird #1 - Cattle Egret: A small stocky 20 inch Heron with throat feathers extending onto the bill. Breeding adult has orange-buff plumes on crown, back and fore neck. Came to South America from Africa and spread to Florida in the early 1950's. Cattle Egrets stalk about in open fields, hunting grasshoppers and other large insects. They often forage near farm animals that may flush insects from the grass.



Bird # 1

Bird #2 - Little Blue Heron: This is a tricky one. The Little Blue Heron is slate blue as an adult but white when it is a juvenile. Easily confused with an immature Snowy Egret, but the juvenile Little Blue has dull yellow legs and feet. Often stands motionless with neck fully out-stretched, head held high but pointed down, looking straight down at the water.



Bird # 2

Bird #3 - Snowy Egret: Graceful plumes (aigrettes) on head, neck and back and bright golden yellow feet ...the bird with the golden slippers. The Snowy has a thin black bill and black legs. This is a dainty egret that dances in the shallows, shuffling its feet or dashing about actively pursuing minnows and tadpoles.



Bird # 3

Straits Area Audubon Society 2012-2013 Officers

Executive Committee

President: **Dale Giddings** - 231-525-8874
[No email]

Vice President: **Jim Bricker** - 231-627-4830
pivot77777@hotmail.com

Treasurer: **Gerry VanderHart** - 231-627-6249
[No email]

Secretary: **Kate Caldwell** - 231-627-2780
katecaldwell10@yahoo.com

Past President: **Roger Benter** - 231-290-4345
rogerbenter@gmail.com

Exe.Com. At-Large: **Gloria Cadwalader** 231-290-0436
gcadwalader@gmail.com

MAS Representative: **Donna Mittlestat** - 231-525-8169
ddmstat@hotmail.com

Nature Links

Michigan Audubon Society



www.michiganaudubon.org

MNA (Michigan Nature Association)

www.michigannature.org

Little Traverse Conservancy

www.landtrust.org

Whitefish Point Bird Observatory

www.wpbo.org

Upper Peninsula Bird Listing

www.upbird.org

Northern Michigan Conservation Network

<http://nmconservationnetwork.org>

Note from the Editor: All articles and photos for *THE KETTLE* should be submitted to the editor's e-mail box one week BEFORE the end of a publication month. This will allow the e-mail edition to be sent out by the first of the month and the printed edition to be mailed by the 4th day of the month.

Thank you. **Jack Kirby** [saaskettle2011@gmail.com]