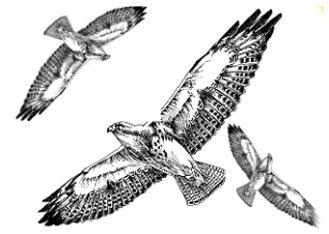


THE KETTLE



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.

To reach us by mail - **Straits Area Audubon Society**; c/o Rosanne Rynerson, 10490 E. US 23, Cheboygan, MI 49721

Mission Statement - The mission of the Straits Area Audubon Society is to educate the community, including its 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:
Rosanne Rynerson – Treasurer
10490 E. US 23
Cheboygan, MI 49721

January Program

Great Lakes Invasive Species and Coastal Conservation

Wednesday, January 14 (6:00 pm)

Guest Speaker - **Jennifer Muladore**

[Communications Manager and Ecologist at Huron Pines]

Jennifer will educate us about the array of invasive plants and animals in the upper Great Lakes, with local examples.



She will explain their harmful effects on native species and the ecosystem, recommend actions private citizens can take, and describe broader-scale control and inventory projects in Northeast Michigan. Jennifer will provide resources to help people recognize and identify a potential invasive species infestation and tell about how Huron Pines assesses infestations and provides treatment

recommendations.

Jennifer has spent the last seven years with Huron Pines manager focusing on native plant restoration and invasive species control projects. She developed the Northeast Michigan Cooperative Weed Management Area, a partnership between individuals, agencies, and organizations formed to prioritize and fight invasive plants in Northeast Michigan. She also creates and manages organizational print and online publications and social media for Huron Pines. Ms. Muladore has a BS degree in Biology and English and a MS degree in Conservation Biology and Ecosystem Management, both from the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor.

Target Invasive Plant Species for Removal



Photo - Huron Pines

For more resources:

See [Huron Pines Invasive Species page](#)

Huron Pines – www.huronpines.org

DEQ's Phragmites page:

www.michigan.gov/aquaticinvasives

Midwest Invasive Species Information Network –

www.misin.msu.edu

Michigan Invasive Species Coalition –

www.michigan.invasives.org

Upcoming Programs

February 11 - **“Secret Lives of Michigan Salamanders”**
by Jim McGrath, Nature Discovery (pending funding for Snakes Alive! in Cheboygan, Onaway, and Wolverine Schools)

March 11 **“Owls of the North Woods”**
by Mary Trout, Little Traverse Conservancy

April 8 **“North Country Trail”**
by Al and Jean Moberly

May 13 **“Six-legged Obsession: Why I Look Down”**
by Mike Grant

January Field Trips

Eastern UP -- Wintering Northern Bird Trip II

Friday, January 9 [8:00 a.m.]

Join Steve Baker in an exploration of the Eastern UP for wintering northern birds. We will visit the St. Ignace waterfront for waterfowl (Long-tailed Ducks, Scoters, and Redheads expected), the Rudyard area for raptors (Rough-legged Hawks and maybe Snowy Owls), the Dafter Dump (Glaucous, Iceland, Great Black-backed gulls all possible), and Dunbar (hoping for Pine Grosbeaks and Waxwings).

Meet at the Mackinaw City at the State Welcome Center/ Rest Area, 8:00 a.m.

This will be an all day trip with lunch out. No need to register, but if the weather looks to be nasty, email (steveandsuebaker@gmail.com) or call(231-238-8723) Steve the evening of Jan. 8 to learn if the trip is still on.

Redheads & Canvasbacks



Photo by Steve Baker

U of M Biological Station Winter Walk

Saturday, January 17

Join Jean and Al Moberly, Saturday morning, January 17, 2015, for a hike or snow shoe walk (depending on the weather) at the U of M Biological Station. Call them at 231-268-9726 for details on where and when to meet. Get out and enjoy a beautiful winter's walk with the company of others. Please pack a lunch and we will enjoy it together after our walk. Hope to see you there.

Field Trip Reports

Wintering Birds of the Eastern Upper Peninsula

Friday, December 5, 2014

Submitted by Bev Kirby

Meeting at 8:30 a.m. at the Mackinaw City Welcome Center, 10 members of the Straits Area Audubon began seeing birds right there in the parking lot with 4 American Robins and a Northern Cardinal to start us out. Crossing the Mackinac Bridge approximately 2000 Redhead ducks were seen on the northeast side. Along the St. Ignace waterfront, 30 Long-tailed Ducks, 5 Common Goldeneye, 1 Red-necked Grebe, 1 Northern Shrike, 4 American Black Ducks, and 4 Common Redpoll were noted and checked off the list. Driving directly to Rudyard, we found 5 Snowy Owls, 4 Horned Larks and 2 Snow Buntings along the county roads. Riding along the snow covered roads we found 2 Rough-legged hawks, and another Northern Shrike ...we would end up seeing three Northern Shrikes that

day....(3 Shrikes and you're out). At a feeder in the area, 20 Black-capped Chickadees, 3 American Tree Sparrows, and 1 Dark-eyed Junco were seen. On to the Dafter landfill where we saw 25 Bald Eagles, 1200 Herring Gulls, 9 Glaucous gulls, 1 Great Black-backed gull, 30 American Crows, 30 Common Ravens and 200 European Starlings. Moving along to Pickford we found 8 Wild Turkeys just before we stopped for lunch at the Main Street Café. Now is when it REALLY got exciting. In the Pickford area we found 28 Snowy Owls. We saw 24 along one road alone giving us a total of 33 for the day. They were on fence posts, utility poles, barn roofs, wooden fences, bushes, and tops of trees. They were coming fast and furious...."There's one!!!.....There's one!!! Wow! You can never see too many Snowy Owls! (A few days later, Steve Baker went back and was able to find 50!) What a day! As dusk approached we waited and watched for Short-eared Owls, but they did not show. A coyote kept our attention while it was hunting in the field. At 5 p.m. we called it a day with 29 species of birds found but Snowy Owls surely were the highlight.



Thanks to Steve Baker for leading this exciting trip. Participants: Steve Baker, Jack and Bev Kirby, Don and Donna Mittlestat, Jim and Kathy Bricker, Joey Arbaugh, Marilynn Smith, and Sharon Szczesny.

Field Report

Mackinac Straits Christmas Bird Count 2014

Submitted by Steve Baker

The 2014 Mackinac Straits Christmas Bird Count was conducted on a crisp and sunny December 18, 2014. Seventeen hardy birders took to the field and water to find and identify as many birds as possible. Observers searched from the Mackinac Bridge (thank you MBA), scanned the waters from the ferry deck (thank you Arnold Line), drove

the back roads, and walked the woods. A total of 2807 individual birds of 42 species were tallied.

Snowy Owl



Photo by Steve Baker

Most volunteers commented that there were fewer birds than normal, probably due to the harsh November weather which may have forced many birds south. Highlights include a Snowy Owl on the State Dock in Mackinaw City, a very late Gray Catbird near St. Ignace, 5 late Common Grackles, 3 Red-necked Grebes off Mackinac Island, and both Pine and Evening Grosbeaks. Thanks to all the volunteers for another great day of birding and maintaining the rich tradition of over 100 years of Christmas Bird Counts.

CBC Listing

Red-necked Grebe 3; Mute Swan; 19; American Black Duck 4; Mallard 263; Redhead 1205; White-winged Scoter 1; Scoter species 1; Long-tailed Duck 126; Bufflehead 1; Common Goldeneye 88; Hooded Merganser 1; Common Merganser 7; Bald Eagle 11; Ring-billed Gull 1; Herring Gull 24; Gull Species 6; Rock Pigeon 154; Mourning Dove 14; Snowy Owl 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker 3; Downy Woodpecker 8; Hairy Woodpecker 10; Pileated Woodpecker 4; Northern Shrike 1; Blue Jay 66; American Crow 50; Common Raven 35; Black-capped Chickadee 223; Red-breasted Nuthatch 3; White-breasted Nuthatch 6; Golden-crowned Kinglet 2; Gray Catbird 1; European Starling 268; Bohemian Waxwing 14; Cedar Waxwing 9; Snow Bunting 13; Northern Cardinal 3; Common Grackle 5; Pine Grosbeak 31; Common Redpoll 46; American Goldfinch 14; Evening Grosbeak 2; House Sparrow 20

Total Species --- 42

Total Individuals --- 2807

Compiler: Steve Baker, Indian River.

SAAS Chapter Notes

TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by **Rose Rynerson - Treasurer**

Hi! I'm Rose and I collect, deposit and distribute funds for our Straits Area Audubon Society checking account. Membership dues, fundraiser pledges and donations to SAAS can be given to me at our meetings or mailed. SAAS offers "thank you gifts" of \$50 to our regular program speakers and \$10 to field trip leaders. Our funds also cover postage expenses, printing costs, supplies, our raffle license, and website hosting charges. Since I keep track of the membership dues and listing, please remember to contact me at 231-597-9788 if you have any questions or updates to your address – I don't want anyone to miss each new Kettle newsletter.

A warm welcome is extended to our newest members:

Dave Mayberry

Roy Tassava

They bring SAAS's total memberships to 113. Our actual number of members is much higher, however, representing 42 singles and 71 families.

Happy New Year to each of you! -- Rose

Your investment brings results

Submitted by **Kathy Bricker**

The start of a new calendar year marks a time to reflect on your investment of \$12 or \$15 or more in SAAS. For a few of our members who have not yet renewed, hopefully these results will convince you to come forward again.

One way to measure our group's effectiveness in teaching people about nature is to examine attendance numbers. "If you build it, they will come" proved true in 2014!

Our nine monthly programs drew 465 people, matching last year's average of 52 attendees. Donna Mittlestat arranged a record number of 27 field trips, more than two a month. They drew 352 people, compared to previous years' highs of 22 field trips and 311 attendees.

Clearly the word has spread about our Wildlife Room at the April EarthWeekPlus Expo, where we attracted 386 people into the room out of the 482 people at the Expo. Our volunteers taught the public about insects, animal skulls, beavers, bird feathers and nests, reptiles, and offered hands-on activities that were fun for everyone.

Through the Snakes Alive! presentations in schools in February by Jim McGrath, we fostered greater understanding of these creatures to 197 children and

adults, at Cheboygan Middle School, Cornerstone Christian Academy, Wolverine School, and Citizens National Bank, which helped to fund this nature education.

A wonderful cadre of committed volunteers makes all this happen. Besides the executive committee, the field trip leaders, the Wildlife Discovery Room helpers, the donors of raffle and door prizes, and other lead volunteers listed periodically in the Kettle, we thank those who brought refreshments for program meetings. These include Ann and Roger Benter, Kathy and Jim Bricker, Eileen Bur, Karen Busch, Judi and Pete Chimner, Maureen Conklin, Dale Giddings, Mike and Chris Grant, Jean Gross, Eloise and Darst Grund, Jack and Bev Kirby, Mary Liebner, Roy and Alice MacFarland, Glen and Diane Matthews, Al and Jean Moberly, Diane Morand, Dale and Connie Rieger, Rose Rynerson, Becky Schaefer, Esther Summers, and Jacque Thompson. Many others shared food at our three signature potluck events of the holiday dinner, owl banding at Headlands, and the June shore side gathering hosted this year by Dale and Connie Rieger. When we each do a little bit, a lot gets done! Lastly, thank you to the more than 100 members of SAAS, even those who cannot volunteer or attend meetings or field trips. Your dues produce results!

January 15, 2015". Roger Benter seconded. There were no objections. Checks to SAAS are tax-deductible.

Pot Luck Dinner



Photo by Kathy Bricker

To follow up on last month's discussion of Rezoning of Lake and Stream Waterways Roger Gauthier spoke about the changes and the need to define what should be protected. There will be a meeting at the library next Wednesday for more discussion on the Water Quality Ordinance. All are encouraged to attend. Alice MacFarland reminded that free announcements may be made on WCBY. Dale Giddings gave kudos to Kathy Bricker for her recycling efforts.

After a very delicious pot-luck dinner the program was provided by members, Don Middlestat - Nature Highlights of the Year; Kathy Bricker – EarthWeekPlus; Mike Grant - Reptiles and Amphibians; Chris Grant - My Year in Pictures; Diane Morand – Morocco; Steve Baker - Redheads and Cranes and More and Tom Cadwalader - Year's Nature Shots. Because time was running out we only got to see the short version of Tom's video and missed Jim Bickers' slides of the arctic. Hopefully we will see them at a later date.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES STRAITS AREA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Submitted by **Diane Morand - Secretary**

Date: December 10, 2014

Program: Pot-luck and Sharing of Photos

Attendance: 24 members and 1 guest for a total of 25

President Dale Giddings began the meeting with a brief business session.

The only field trips for December are the bird counts. All are urged to participate.

Steve Baker suggested that we support the East Side Bird Trail by helping provide signs for the trail which will be dedicated in May 2015. Roger Benter moved and Dale Rieger seconded that SAAS donate \$250. Kathy Bricker discussed the growing effort for bird trails throughout the state. The motion passed unanimously.

Dale Giddings reviewed our efforts to support the resolution to cut back on the use of plastic bags which the county commission passed by a vote five to two. Kathy Bricker mentioned that the city met last night to pass a city resolution. She moved: "To further SAAS support the Cheboygan First Plastic Bag Reduction effort by facilitating buying an ad for that effort in the Cheboygan Daily Tribune in the amount of \$600, provided that an equal amount of restricted donations arrive to cover that amount, with timing of both the ad payment and the deposit of the income at the discretion of the Treasurer, so long as both occur before

From Our SAAS Conservation Desk

Submitted by Glen Matthews

The information contained with this email is worthwhile and you can consider adding a link [#1] to their site in the Kettle. There is a link [#2] to the letter sign-on, for those who wish to support it. A year or so ago the SAAS sent a letter to the governor expressing concern and requesting that he take an active role. Since then, more voices have been added and gotten stronger. I expect that the recent gas leak near Manistique will add to the volume. Glen

Link 1: [Read the full story about our presentation to the Task Force, and view the slide presentation here.](#)

Link 2: [please sign the letter today](#)

SAAS – By the Numbers

ATTENDANCE SUMMARY 2009 / 2014

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of Monthly Programs					
8	9	9	9	9	9
Attendance by members					
235	272	254	282	314	307

	Attendance by guests				
261	253	310	314	156	158
	Total Attendance				
496	525	564	596	470	465
	Average number of members				
30	30	28	31	35	34
	Average number of guests				
32	28	34	35	17	18
	Average number of people				
62	58	62	66	52	52
	Number of Field Trips				
12	18	22	21	19	27
	Attendance by members				
99	153	214	210	197	219
	Attendance by guests				
96	67	60	64	114	133
	Total Attendance				
195	220	274	274	311	352
	Average number of members				
8	8	10	10	10	8
	Average number of guests				
8	4	3	3	6	5
	Average number of people				
16	12	13	13	16	13
	Snakes Alive! In Schools people				
n/a	n/a	170	200	212	197
	Community nature people				
12	n/a	130	348	N/A	N/A
	EarthWeekPlus Event Number				
n/a	30	35	N/A	34	42
	EarthWeekPlus Attendance				
n/a	833	836	N/A	885	1,067
	Average number of people				
n/a	27	24	N/A	N/A	N/A

n/a = not conducted that year N/A = not assembled
Submitted by Kathy Bricker

Vice President: **Connie Rieger** - 231-818-9065
conniereger@yahoo.com

Treasurer: **Rosanne Rynerson** - 231-597-9788
fiddleheadfilly4@gmail.com

Secretary: **Diane Morand** - 231-627-4282
mdlmorand@aol.com

Past President: **Roger Benter** - 231-627-3992
rogerbenter@gmail.com

Exe.Com. At-Large: **Chris Grant** – 231-238-8216
chrisgrant723@yahoo.com

MAS Representative: **Donna Mittlestat** – 906-201-0285
ddmstat@hotmail.com

Nature Links

Michigan Audubon Society



www.michiganaudubon.org

MNA (Michigan Nature Association)

www.michigannature.org

The Nature Conservancy

<http://nature.org/greatlakes>

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>

HMANA Mackinaw Straits Raptor Watch

http://hawkcount.org/month_summary.php?rsite=613

Mackinaw Straits Raptor Watch

www.MackinacRaptorWatch.org

The Snowy Owls Are Back!

Submitted by Donna Mittlestat

Some winters the Snowy Owls migrate south into our neck of the woods. This seems to be a very promising year. Although the Snowy Owls have been seen around Cheboygan, Petoskey and Rudyard the largest congregation of them are in the Pickford Area. Once in Pickford cruise up and down 23 Mile Road. The roads between 23 Mile and Townline are also good locales. The fence posts, trees and power poles are some of these bird's favorite perching locations. Twenty plus owls have been seen in this area. After enjoying the birds top off your day with a lunch or snack at the restaurant in Pickford to complete a great outing.

For Your Information

Names & Numbers

Straits Area Audubon Society 2014 - 2015 Officers

President: **Dale Giddings** - 231-525-8874

[No email]

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]

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

Please consider them for all your Computer, Copier, Printer and Fax needs.

312 West Elm Street, Cheboygan, MI 49721

Phone: 231-627-7020 -- Fax: 231-627-7477

Happy New Year 2015