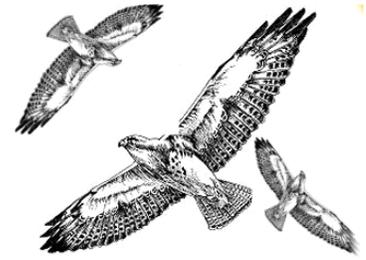


THE KETTLE



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

May Program

Hawks in the Hand

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

After election of officers, voting for Big Birding Day grant recipients, and other business, our May program will be delivered by Kenn Filkins, a falconer from Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

Kenn and MUGS



Photo provided by Kenn Filkins

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. Kenn has written ten books and thousands of magazine and news articles, on falconry, fly fishing, and faith.

Harris's Hawk - Izzy



Photo provided by Kenn Filkins

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. Meeting refreshments will be brought by Al and Jean Moberly and Janet Trudeau.

June Program

SAAS Annual Nature Hike and Potluck Dinner

Hosted by Roger and Ann Benter

Wednesday, June 12

Hike [3:00 p.m.]

Potluck Diner [5:00 p.m.]

Stroll along Lake Huron between Cheboygan State Park and the Michigan Nature Conservancy's Grass Bay Preserve, enjoying birds and plants as you go. The beach hike will start at 3:00 pm and will be led B. D. Gillig. Jim and Kathy Bricker will be among those to point out special adaptations of shore-dwelling plants.

Finding Fauna



Photo by Jack Kirby

At 5:00 pm, following the hike, we will share the annual end-of-season Audubon potluck dinner.

Potluck Time



Photo by Bev Kirby

Meet for both events at the home of Roger and Anne Benter, 4803 Grass Bay Trail. Go to the end of the road past the entrance to Cheboygan State Park. All are welcome to the potluck, even if you cannot join the hike. Call the Benter's at 231-627-3992 for directions.

May Field Trips

Saturday, May 11

North American Migration Count for Emmet County

The North American Migration Count is similar to the Christmas Bird Count in that birders count not only species observed, but also total individual birds.

The goals of the **North American Migration Count** are:

- * To obtain a "snapshot" of the progress of Spring Migration.
- * To obtain information on the abundance and distribution of each species.
- * Initiate more participation among Birders within a state and between states.
- * Create challenges and goals among Birders while collecting useful information.
- * Aid in organization and centralization of data.
- * Have fun.
- * Establish the second Saturday in May as a "National Birding Day".

If you would like to participate, please contact Ed Pike. 231-758-3319 or aes05@localnet.com

Tuesday, May 14

SAAS Big Day Birdathon [6:00 am]

This fun big day of birding is our largest fundraiser for the year. Our goal is to find as many species of birds as possible in the Straits area. All Audubon members and friends are encouraged to support this effort by pledging an amount for each species seen and will have an opportunity to sign up at the May Audubon meeting. Those wishing to participate in this big day of birding will meet at the Mackinaw City Highway Rest Area/Welcome Center for a prompt 6 am departure. Pack a lunch for eating on the go and dress for the weather We will explore many habitats around Mackinaw City and St. Ignace areas and hope to find 100 plus species of birds.

Call Steve Baker at 231-238-8723 for more information.

Thursday, May 16

SAAS First Big Sit [8:30 – 10:30 am]

We want to experiment with a nature trip where people stay put in one place and let the birds and other wildlife come to us. Jim and Kathy Bricker will lead the Big Sit on Thursday, May 16 at Dingman Marsh flooding, along the dike area. Dress for the weather conditions, bring lawn chairs, and birding equipment [binoculars, spotting scope, and field guides]. We will train guests on binocular and spotting scope use, and have loaner binoculars available for people to use. Call 231-627-4830 for directions and weather contingency plans.

Sunday, May 19

Birding hike on the Rail Trail south of Wolverine [8:00 am]

Don and Donna Mittlestat will share a favorite birding location along the North Central State Rail Trail. This is an easy hike through various habitats and ending at a huge beaver dam and pond, a very rich birding spot. We should see many migrating and resident warblers, flycatchers, vireos, thrushes, rails, and waterfowl. Bobolinks and Meadowlarks will be singing in the fields and raptors soaring overhead. **Please sign up for this great outing by calling Don or Donna Mittlestat at 906-201-0285**

Saturday, May 25

Plants and Sands of Sturgeon Bay Dunes [12:00 pm]

What characteristics make dune plants so unique, and why are many of them threatened species? Join Jim and Kathy Bricker to explore the beautiful flowers, birds, and geological formations of Sturgeon Bay Dunes, a part of Wilderness State Park.

Sturgeon Bay Dunes



Photo by Jack Kirby

We will meet at 12:00 pm at the gas station in Pellston at the corner of Riggsville Rd. and M-31 in order to car-pool to the dunes on Lake Michigan. Dinner afterward at Legs Inn in Cross Village is optional. If stormy weather, please call Bricker's at 627-4830 by 10 am to confirm that the trip will be held.

Field Trip Reports

2013 Mackinac Straits Hawk Watch – May Update

Submitted by Jack and Bev Kirby

The count officially began March 15 but we counted 3 hrs on the 8th of March. Hawk Watch 2013 had a very slow start, and it was not until March 18th and 12.5 hrs of observation time that we logged before recording our first 2 raptors! Since then, through April 30th the Hawk Count crew has logged 172.5 hours. The total number of raptors counted during this time period was an amazing **12142** birds.

Thank you to the Darrow's for allowing us to use their property for our count and for the wonderful support of our visitors through the good and the bad weather!

Best birds to date of the 2013 Hawk Watch are:

- Swainson's Hawk
- American White Pelican
- A leucistic Red-tailed Hawk---see photo below



Photo by Steve Baker

Many other species of birds were seen at our site throughout the many cold and windy days. Sandhill Cranes and Common Loons were seen in abundance. Savannah, American Tree, Song, Vesper, White-throated, Field, and Chipping sparrows were all present at the feeders, along with Black-capped Chickadees, Northern Cardinal, Dark-eyed Juncos, Tufted Titmouse, Common Redpoll and Red-winged blackbirds. Eastern Meadowlark, Killdeer, Double-

Crested Cormorant, American Robin, Northern Shrike, Eastern Bluebird, Northern Flicker, Common Raven, American Crow, Bohemian Waxwings, Canada Goose, Mallard, Common Merganser, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker, Great Blue Heron, Starlings, Grackles and Tree Swallows were seen at, over, or around the site. Thanks to Steve Baker, Ed Pike, and Don Mittlestat for rotating and manning the site every day.

Below are the raptor species seen as of 4/30/13

0	Black Vulture
1510	Turkey Vulture
50	Osprey
185	Bald Eagle
46	Northern Harrier
766	Sharp-shinned Hawk
13	Cooper's Hawk
7	Northern Goshawk
78	Red-shouldered Hawk
2877	Broad-winged Hawk
6430	Red-tailed Hawk
78	Rough-legged Hawk
68	Golden Eagle
17	American Kestrel
16	Merlin
0	Peregrine Falcon
1	Swainson's Hawk

You can follow all the activates and sightings of the Mackinac Straits Hawk Watch at the link below:

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

You may also look at other hawk watch sites throughout the United States. Please enjoy!

Headlands, Potluck, Owl Banding and Stargazing

Submitted by Bev Kirby

A good turnout of sixty or more members and guests of the Straits Area Audubon Society gathered at The Headlands Park for a delicious potluck dinner. While mist nets were set up for owl banding later in the evening, Kathy Bricker talked about planets and constellations. Mary Stewart Adams of the Headlands Dark Sky Park spoke about the night sky and stargazing.

Ed Pike with Northern Saw-whet Owl



Photo by Jack Kirby

Moving to the outdoors at the first net check, Ed Pike banded a Northern Saw-whet Owl and described his findings to the crowd of interested onlookers.

SAAS Chapter Notes

2013 EarthWeekPlus

THANKS to EarthWeekPlus volunteers

The EarthWeekPlus Expo on April 13 broke all records in the number and quality of the presentations and exhibitors, with more than 400 people attending. We thank the following SAAS members for extraordinary volunteer effort to reach out to the Straits area community with nature and conservation education: Jim and Kathy Bricker, Kate Caldwell, Pete and Judi Chimner, Bobie and Lanny Crongeyer, Dale Giddings, Susan Good, Cyndi Kress, Mary Liebner, Ben and Marilee Lillie, Karen Martin, Glen and Diane Matthews, Al and Jean Moberly, Diane Morand, and Rose Rynerson. Highlights of the SAAS Wildlife Room included three fold-out displays showing the many activities of SAAS, Pivot the reticulated python, an extensive skull collection, bird nests and mounts, pond water, nature posters, books, pictures, and stickers. EarthWeekPlus continues through mid-May with the

following events. Consult the EWP brochure or www.earthweekplus.org for full information.

Thank you: Kathy Bricker

Call for Big Birding Day Grant Ideas

by Kathy Bricker

SAAS members get to vote on how to spend money raised at Big Birding Day, our principal fundraiser. Last year, this event raised \$686 to promote nature in the Straits area. Please nominate projects to add to this year's ballot. Members may vote by email, phone, or at the May meeting (kathyhomeaccount@hotmail.com, 231-627-4830).

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 (pivot777777@hotmail.com), Alice MacFarland (macfarlands@charter.net), or Gerry VanderHart (231-627-6249).

Tawas Birding Festival

Come and see our very own Ed Pike assisted by Steve Baker and Selena Creed banding birds at the Tawas Birding Festival, sponsored by the Michigan Audubon Society, Friday and Saturday mornings May 17, 18, 2013. They will be located between the campground and the lighthouse for their bird banding demonstration. Don't miss this opportunity to see passerines up close.

A Walk on a Beach.....

Submitted by Donna Mittlestat

As you are walking along the shorelines of the Great Lakes this spring keep an eye out for the birds skirting the waterline in front of you. There are many different shorebirds you may see with the Sanderling, Killdeer and Spotted Sandpiper being some of the more common ones. Some of these birds will nest here like the Killdeer and Spotted Sandpiper. Others like the Sanderling are passing

through and will nest and raise their young in the Arctic (Alaska, Canada, and Russia). These birds are often seen running on the beach just at the water's edge hoping to find a good tidbit to eat. They are often in small groups and many times more than one species is in the group. The spotted sandpiper has an unusual nesting behavior, polyandry. The female defends a territory and mates with more than one male in a single breeding season, leaving the male to tend to the nest and eggs.* So, keep a sharp eye out and hopefully you'll spot some of these shorebirds.

*Birds of Michigan. Ted Black, Gregory Kennedy

Straits Area Audubon Society 2012-2013 Officers and Volunteers

Executive Committee

President: **Dale Giddings** - 231-525-8874
[No email]
Vice President: **Jim Bricker** - 231-627-4830
pivot777777@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

Support Volunteers

Greeter: **Susan Emerson** - 231-625-9302
[No email]
Greeter Assistants:
Dale Rieger - 231-818-9065 - daleriger@yahoo.com
Connie Rieger - 231-818-9065
conniereger@yahoo.com
Kathy Bricker - 231-627-4830
kathyhomeaccount@hotmail.com
Jacque Thompson - 231-625-2732
bithom@aol.com
Field Trips: **Steve Baker** - 231-238-8723
steveandsuebaker@gmail.com
Bird Counts: **Ed Pike** - 231-758-3319
aes05@localnet.com
Conservation Chair: **Glen Matthews** - 231-412-0833
gmatthews24@yahoo.com
Raffle/Door Prize: **Diane Morand** - 231-627-4282
mdlmorand@aol.com
Raffle Assistants: **Maureen Conklin** - 231-625-8058
conklinmaureen@gmail.com
Refreshments: **Alice MacFarland** - 231-597-8173
macfarlands@charter.net
Nature Sightings: **Bev Kirby** - 231-625-9923

bevkirby@wowway.com

Youth Outreach: **Bobie Crongeyer** - 231-627-6497

bcrongeyer@sbcglobal.net

Kettle Editor: **Jack Kirby** - 231-625-9923

saaskettle2011@gmail.com

Kettle Producer: **Ann Benter** - 231-627-3992

rogerbenter@gmail.com

Web Master: **Roy MacFarland** - 231-597-8173

roymac@charter.net

Web Site Sponsor: **Roger Benter** - 231-290-4345

rogerbenter@gmail.com

Meeting Space Provider: **Cheboygan Area Public Library**

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]

“The Kettle” will see you in
September. Have a Great
Summer ☺

The Kettle Staff