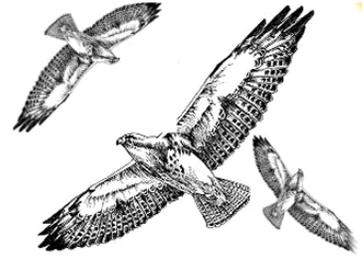


THE KETTLE



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 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

May Program

Wild Orchids of Northern Michigan

Wednesday, May 14, 2014 [6:00 p.m.]

Presented by Steve Baker

The woodlands, swamps, bogs, and beaches of the Mackinac Straits area are home to at least 45 species of native and wild orchids. Our native orchids range from the large and showy Lady's Slippers to the tiny and inconspicuous Twayblades.



Steve Baker of Indian River will show us what to look for, when to go, and where to search for these wild beauties. A field trip for those interested will be scheduled in June. After the program, refreshments will be served and door prizes and raffle prize awarded. Then we will

share recent nature sightings and learn about upcoming field trips and activities.

Arethusa bulbosa



Photo by Steve Baker

NOTE that this event is co-sponsored with EarthWeekPlus Northern Michigan.

Upcoming Programs

Hike/Spotted Knapweed Pull and Potluck

Wednesday, June 11, 2014

Hosted by: Dale and Connie Rieger

Mark your calendar for this annual event on Lake Huron. This year the traditional field trip will be expanded into eradicating an exotic species. You may come for the hike/pull or only for the potluck.

Fall 2014 Programs

Hawk in the Hand: A Falconer's Experience

Wednesday, September 10, 2014 [6:00 p.m.]

Presented by Kenn Filkins

Kenn will be back by popular demand with another live bird.

Ebird: Easy Tracking of Field Trip Birds

Wednesday, October 8, 2014 [6:00 p.m.]

Presented by Darrell Lawson, President of PRAS

Darrell will introduce us to the electronic age of birding with ebird.

Bicycling with Lewis and Clark: The Katy Trail

Wednesday, November 12, 2014 [6:00 p.m.]

Presented by Dale and Connie Rieger

Dale and Connie will be back by popular demand after their earlier talk on canoeing (and singing about) the Suwannee River

May Field Trips

Steve Baker Spontaneous Outings Any Day! Any Time! Anywhere!

Once again Steve Baker's Spontaneous Outings will happen. If you are interested in participating in birding field trips in May e-mail Steve Baker at steveandsuebaker@gmail.com to be added to a contact list. When the birds, fauna, weather and day look to be promising the trip will happen and hopefully obtain the best

results. There will be a short trip announcement lead time, so keep your gear handy.

Big Day Birdathon

Wednesday, May 21, 2014 [6:00 a.m.]

This fun big day of birding is the SAAS largest fundraiser of 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 found. There will be a pledge sheet available at the May Audubon meeting. Those wishing to participate will meet at the Mackinaw City Highway Rest Area/Welcome Center for a prompt 6 a.m. departure. Pack a lunch for eating on the go and dress for the weather. We will be exploring many habitats around Mackinaw City and St. Ignace Areas and hope to find 100 plus species of birds. Call Steve Baker 231-238-8723 for more information.

Pigeon River Country

Thursday, May 22, 2014 [6:00 p.m.]

Meet at the Pigeon River Country State Forest Headquarters for a training session for a breeding bird survey with Kyle Bartowitz, AmeriCorps Member, and Conservation Program Developer. You don't have to be a "pro" birder to join in; we will provide info to help train your eyes and ears to find the species of interest. Please join us and learn how we can each help in this project.

Seney Wildlife Refuge



Thursday, May 29, 2014 [9:00 p.m.]

Join in on the Seney Twilight Tour. Registration is a must, call Donna Mittlestat to register: 906-201-0285.

Friday, May 30, 2014 [9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.]

This is a unique opportunity to visit Seney. We will be driven in a small bus into the back country of the refuge with a Seney Guide to bird this area. Pack a lunch or snacks and dress for the weather. Call Donna Mittlestat to register: 906-201-0285. Registration is a must and limited to 14 participants.

Lee Grand 4 Mile Hike

Thursday, June 19, 2014 [10:30 a.m.]

Come join Al and Jean Moberly on a 4 mile hike in Lee Grande to view a beaver pond, birds and vegetation along the way. Pack a lunch or snacks and dress for the weather. Call Al and Jean to register and for the location to meet at: 231-268-9726

Field Trip Reports

Owl Banding at the Headlands

Friday, April 4, 2014

Submitted By Diane Morand

The falling snow made the Headlands Dark Sky Park a beautiful sight but turned the program of outdoor owl-banding and star gazing into a very enjoyable indoor program. Forty hearty souls braved the snow for a delicious pot-luck, even without any desserts, followed by presentations by Ed Pike and Mary Stewart Adams. Ed showed us the nets he uses to capture the owls and the bands used to register the owls, followed by a slide presentation with photos of owls that can be spotted locally and charts showing the numbers of owls caught here and also maps of where some of them have been recaptured, including two in Maine. Migrating, nocturnal Northern Saw-whet owls are his main focus at this time of year.

Mary passed out April star charts and talked about currently visible, if it wasn't snowing, stars and constellations and told enchanting stories about them. Then we all sang her song of the "Chief Ecliptic Stars".

Mackinaw Straits Hawk Watch

Saturday, April 5, 2014

Submitted By Diane Morand

On a sunny, cold and windy day thirteen people joined Steve Baker at the Mackinaw Straits Hawk Watch location. While we were there red tailed hawks, turkey vultures, a Bald eagle, a golden eagle and a northern harrier were spotted. A small kettle of seven red tails were seen. Check out http://hawkcount.org/month_summary.php?site=613 for daily counts.

Owl Banding at the Headlands

Saturday, April 5, 2014

Submitted By Diane Morand

On a clear, cold evening fifty people showed up for another attempt at owl-banding and star-gazing. Following an introductory indoor presentation we followed Ed Pike through the snow to set up his mist nets and Saw-whet owl call in hopes of capturing some owls.

Then while we were waiting for the owls to come, Mary Stewart Adams pointed out overhead stars and led us around the sky. Then we returned to the warmth of the guest house where Mary Stewart Adams talked and told stories about the "Chief Ecliptic Stars," and taught more people her song. Much to everyone's disappointment no owls showed up and around 10: 30 p.m. most people went home. Later, Jim and Kathy Bricker were the only ones still there when Ed retrieved and banded a Northern Saw-whet owl.

The moral of the story is to stay until Ed goes home.

Spring Waterfowl of the Mackinac Straits

Thursday, April 17, 2014

Submitted by Donna Mittlestat

Red-tailed Hawks



Photo by Steve Baker

A blustery east wind blowing off the ice of Lake Huron greeted this birding day. Waterfowl were spotted in the many gaps in the ice. Turkey Vultures and Red-tails were making their passage north. A pair of Perigrine Falcons was seen hanging in the air over the south anchor pier of the bridge. The day ended at the Hawk Watch in Mackinaw City. Highlights of the day were a very white Red-tailed Hawk and a dark morph Red-tail.

SAAS Chapter Notes

Youth Outreach Program Report

Submitted by Al & Jean Moberly

During the 2013-14 school year SAAS facilitated a Little Traverse Conservancy snowshoe learning experiences for classrooms, and an LTC program on owls (classroom information and owl pellet dissection). The LTC is providing valuable learning experiences in our schools and is a great partner in nature education. For example the snowshoe experience asks the questions, "what chewed the bark on that tree?", "what kind of woodpecker is making that noise?" the questions that lead one to study our surroundings more carefully and appreciate our natural world.

In addition the Audubon Adventures print materials have been provided by SAAS to elementary classrooms with lesson plans. At the secondary the Green Dinosaurs group has continued with recycling efforts and plans a tree planting with elementary student participation funded by SAAS. Recycling continues at the middle school funded by prior monies provided through SAAS. This spring our local Audubon group will be supporting kite building by elementary art students tied to wind use by birds in their natural environment.

It is important that all nature education efforts in the schools be recognized and, when appropriate, be financially supported by SAAS. An application based funding method for school projects was started for the 2013-14 school year with a description of the project for funding along with learning goals in keeping with the mission of SAAS.

It should be noted that the Snakes in the Schools program is independent of the liaison activities, but is a valuable resource for the schools provided by SAAS and facilitated by Kathy & Jim Bricker.

Hawk Watch at Peak Birds

Submitted by Kathy Bricker

I keep saying that numbers have peaked, just when the migrating raptors break yet another daily record. The Mackinac Straits Raptor Watch, as of this writing, approaches 17,000 raptors of 16 species identified by professional counter Kevin Georg. My personal highlight is watching the smiles of people seeing this spectacle for the first time. When a golden eagle or one of those gorgeous albinistic red-tailed hawks flies right over your head, it's all over. Welcome to the raptor equivalent of your first scarlet tanager or blackburnian warbler.

The raptors are crossing



Photo by Steve Baker

Please go visit Mackinaw City and see for yourself, before the end of May. You could be the person to spot the third Swainson's hawk or the first black vulture of the year. You may get more information about the hawk count in several ways. Steve Baker welcomes people to be added to his 'chatty reports' with photos and migration forecasts, by emailing steveandsuebaker@gmail.com. Kevin posts daily counts, hours, and weather data at www.hmana.org (click on Research, Hawk Counts, Michigan, and Mackinac Straits). Darrell Lawson maintains site directions, photos and other information at www.MackinacRaptorWatch.org. You may also subscribe to PET-AUD for update information from Ed Pike, which comes without photos.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by Rose Rynerson

Please welcome new members, **Stuart and Patricia Gage**. Memberships now total 96, plus 11 complimentary ones. Our checkbook balance is currently \$626.49. I look forward to working on the Big Bird Count pledges in the upcoming weeks. Enjoy your summer!

Nature Events

Wildlife Discovery Room

Submitted by Kathy Bricker

The EarthWeekPlus Expo on April 12 broke all records in the number and quality of the presentations and exhibitors, with more than 463 people attending, about 63 more than 2013. We thank the following SAAS members for extraordinary volunteer effort in the Wildlife Discovery Room where we educated the Straits area community about bird feathers and nests, insects, beavers, animal skulls, and other nature items.

We thank the following people for helping that afternoon: Jim and Kathy Bricker, Kate Caldwell, Dale Giddings, Mike and Chris Grant, Jean Gross, Cyndi Kress, Ben and Marilee and Drew Lillie, Alice MacFarland, Al and Jean Moberly, Diane Morand and Nancy Waldron. As well, we appreciate the loan of educational biological materials from University of Michigan Biological Station.

National survey: Birdwatchers now outnumber hunters and fishers in Michigan

Submitted by Donna Mittlestat

Posted by Michigan Audubon on 03/19/2014

Birding is currently the second fastest growing hobby in the United States after gardening, according to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. In 2011, there were 47 million birdwatchers (birders) ages 16 or older in the United States, making up roughly 20 percent of the nation's population. Birders spent an estimated \$41 billion on trip related expenditures and equipment, added \$107 billion dollars to the economy, supported 666,000 jobs and generated \$6 billion in State tax revenue and \$7 billion in Federal tax revenue.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

May 15-18 Tawas Point Birding Festival

May 17, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Trillium Walk at Goodhart Farm Nature Preserve. Contact Little Traverse Conservancy.

May 20, 7:30 a.m. Bird walk at Pond Hill Farms with John and Joanne Biddick. Contact Petoskey Audubon Society.

June 6-8, Cerulean Warbler Weekend, Barry County. Contact Michigan Audubon Society.

June 14, 7:00 a.m. Allegan State Game Area (Birding Around Michigan III) With Darrell Lawson. Contact Petoskey Audubon Society.

Straits Area Audubon Society 2013 - 2014 Officers and Volunteers

Executive Committee

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[No email]
Vice President: **Jim Bricker** - 231-627-4830
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Treasurer: **Rosanne Rynerson** - 231-597-9788
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Secretary: **Diane Morand** - 231-627-4282
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Past President: **Roger Benter** - 231-627-3992
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Exe.Com. At-Large: **Ben Lillie** - 231-627-5128
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MAS Representative: **Donna Mittlestat** – 906-201-0285
ddmstat@hotmail.com

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rogerbenter@gmail.com

Meeting Space Provider:

Cheboygan Area Public Library - 231-627-2381

eno.melanie@cheboyganlibrary.org

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

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