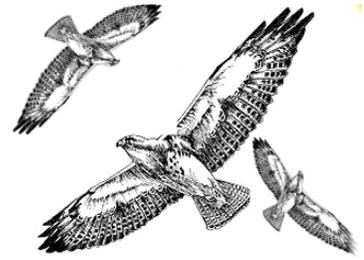


THE KETTLE



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
Mullet Lake, MI 49761

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: _____

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
Mullet Lake, MI 49761

November Program

Wednesday, November 14 [6:00 p.m.]

Swamp Rattler: Michigan's Eastern Massasauga



Aaron Veselenak will share his concern for the future of the Eastern Massasauga rattlesnake. As explained in his recently-published book *Swamp Rattler: Facts, History and Status of Michigan's Sole Venomous Serpent*, "my mission is to convince citizens of the values of preserving this endangered species, especially here in Michigan, its last stand." Everyone attending is bound to learn many things about rattlesnakes, including how to

live in their vicinity safely and with greater respect and appreciation for this slice of nature. Refreshments will be provided. You may also participate in door prize and raffle drawings.

Wednesday, December 9 [6:00 p.m.]

Potluck and Member Slide Fest

Do you have cool nature pictures or stories you'd like to share with others, yet don't want to give a full Audubon program? Your opportunity is our annual Slide Fest and holiday potluck dinner. The potluck will feature everyone's culinary talents, so bring a dish to pass and your own table service.



Photo by Jack Kirby

Our annual Christmas dinner and photo-sharing event begins at the Cheboygan Area Public Library at 6:00 pm to give plenty of time to both talk and eat. Please bring your

nature highlights of the year, either stories or photos. You may bring images on a computer disk, thumb drive, or prints. After dessert, we will enjoy images and stories from any members and guests. Bring up to 20 pictures per person in a photo album to pass around, or on a computer disk or thumb drive. The meeting will end at least by 8:45 p.m.

Upcoming Field Trips

Tuesday, November 13, [1:30 p.m. To 5:00 p.m.]
High Springs/Carp Creek Gorge Hike

Trip Leaders Jim and Kathy Bricker

High Springs, also known as Carp Creek Gorge, offers you a rare chance to see springs that bubble fresh from the ground at your feet. They form the many tongues of headwater of a stream that you will follow all the way to its mouth, and (hopefully) all the way back again. From



Photo by dwhike

Riggsville Road, you will adventure to Burt Lake through Reese's Swamp. Along the way, observe how the plant life and landscape both depend on geology and animal life. We thank the University of Michigan Biological Station for holding this property in public trust and permitting its use. Meet at the Carp Creek Gorge parking lot at 1:30 pm by driving Riggsville Rd. 3.7 miles west of I-75. Since the trip depends on good weather, call [231-627-4830](tel:231-627-4830) to register and leave your number, or email kathyhomeaccount@hotmail.com

Thursday, November, 29 [8:30 a.m.]

Northern Birds of the Eastern UP

Trip Leader Steve Baker

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 Ruyard area for raptors (Rough-legged Hawks and maybe Snowy Owls), the Dafter Dump



Glaucous Gull - Photo by Jack Kirby

(Glaucous, Iceland, Great Black-backed gulls all possible), and Dunbar (hoping for Pine Grosbeaks and Waxwings). Meet in Mackinaw City at the State Welcome Center/ Rest Area. This will be an all day trip with lunch out. Call 231-238-8723 or email steveandsuebaker@gmail.com to sign up.

Field Trip Reports

Fall Mushrooms with Marilynn Smith - Andreae Preserve

Friday, October 12, 2012

Submitted by Bev Kirby

Led by mycologist Marilynn Smith on a walk through the Agnes S. Andreae Preserve of the Little Traverse Conservancy near Indian River, we searched for mushrooms and fungi on a forest trail laden with fallen leaves. Marilynn began by giving our enthusiastic group some basic knowledge of fungi and had many samples set up on a table in the woods where we were able to see some of the species we would be looking for.



Photo by Jack Kirby

As we walked through the forest she pointed out fungi such as chaga, blewits, pine spike, shaggy mane, hoof polypore, birch polypore, and red belt pinacola to name a few. She showed us the difference between mushrooms having gills, and those that don't and how these species help to decompose fallen logs and trees in the forest. With her knife she would dig up a species, call it by the Latin and common names and tell us where it fit in the scheme of things. It was a perfect day to enjoy a hike and to learn about the fall mushrooms with such a knowledgeable leader as Marilynn.



Photo by Steve Baker

Participants were Steve and Sue Baker, Jack and Bev Kirby, Don and Donna Mittlestat, Kathy Bricker, Darrell Schwalm and Tom Cadwalader.

Owl Banding with Ed Pike

Friday, October 12, 2012

Submitted by Bev Kirby

Cancelling our original owl banding dates because of bad weather, Ed scheduled Friday, October 12, 2012, which turned out to be the only decent weather in 5 nights. Ed has studied the owl migration through the Mackinaw Straits for over 20 years, and banded many Northern Saw-Whet Owls which migrate through the area at this time of year. At dusk, mist nests were set up and we waited for the first net check at 8:30. The nets are checked every half hour and no birds were captured until 9 p.m. and another was caught at 9:30. Both were female hatch year birds which means they were born this year. Two more were captured later in the evening, making a total of four for the night. When an owl is removed from the net, Ed weighs it, takes measurements of the wing and tail, and determines the age by molt of feathers in the bird's wings. A numbered aluminum band is placed on its right leg and the bird is released into the woods. Everyone marveled at the size of these owls which are about 8" tall and weigh approximately 3 ounces. They are also very docile while being handled. Between net checks we warmed up by a bonfire while enjoying brownies, donuts and cider. Thanks to Ed and his

research we learned a lot more about these small nocturnal owls.



Northern Saw-whet Owl – Photo by Jack Kirby

Participants were Steve and Sue Baker, Jack and Bev Kirby, Don and Donna Mittlestat, Kathy and Jim Bricker, Jacque and Bill Thompson, Karen Busch, Glenn and Diane Matthews, Valerie and Patti Pike, Sue Deaner, Julie Crawford, and Lisa Knight.

Fall Waterfowl of the St. Ignace Area

Wednesday, October 24, 2012

Trip Leaders Steve Baker and Ed Pike

Submitted by Bev Kirby

Off we went on another birding adventure with Steve and Ed. What a foggy, misty day we encountered! However, we were still an enthusiastic group as we covered 34 stops along the shoreline and protected bays of the Mackinaw Straits, inland lakes, sewage ponds, a wastewater treatment site and a State Park.



Photo by Bev Kirby

Thousands of Redhead ducks were staging on the Northeast side of the bridge. Common Goldeneye, Pied-

Billed and Horned Grebes, Bufflehead, White-Winged Scoters, Common Loon, all 3 Merganser species....Common, Hooded and Red-breasted, Gadwall, Wood Ducks, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Lesser Scaup, Northern Pintail, Ring-Necked Duck and American Black Duck were seen, with a flyby of Long-tailed Ducks. Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, 3 Eastern Bluebirds, Pine Siskins, Cedar Waxwings, American Tree Sparrow and Dark-eyed Juncos were spotted. Raptors included 4 Bald Eagles, 4 Rough-Legged Hawks one of which was a dark morph, a Sharp-Shinned Hawk, 2 Merlins, an American



Merlin - Photo by Jack Kirby

Kestrel and 4 Red-Tailed Hawks. Stopping for an hour for Mexican food with hopes that the weather would improve (at this point, it actually got worse ☹), we began again and found Hairy & Downy Woodpeckers, Red-Breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-Crowned Kinglet, and a few Greater Yellowlegs. At Pte.LaBarbe one of the 3 Eastern Bluebirds chased off a flock of Rusty Blackbirds. A Merlin perching on a rock along the shoreline was a great photo opportunity and time to call it a day with 56 species seen. It was a fun day of birding despite the weather. Participants..Steve Baker, Ed Pike, Jack and Bev Kirby, Don Mittlestat, Dale Giddings, Faye Johnson, Vicki Lyon, Nancy Cadieux, Gina Healy.

Nature News

Wild Turkey

by Donna Mittlestat

As we approach the Holiday season often the focus of our meals is the turkey. The turkey on our tables was domesticated from the native North American wild turkey. The wild turkey has become a fairly common sight throughout Michigan. Before the settlers arrived here the turkeys ranged only in southern Michigan. Due to the cold weather and deep snows they were absent from the northern Lower Peninsula and Upper Peninsula. As more settlers arrived the birds lost their southern habitat and with unregulated hunting by the turn of the twentieth century few

turkeys were seen in Michigan. Then in the 1950's reintroduction of the birds began in southwest Michigan and in later years they were reintroduced further north. Today these birds's survival further north is assisted by



Wild Turkeys - Photo by Jack Kirby

supplemental feeding. These birds can be seen running at speeds from 15-18 mph and have excellent hearing and vision. They are able to fly short distances and roost at night in trees. Early in a turkey's life, both the male and female will gobble. With time the female eventually leaves the gobbling to the males. If Benjamin Franklin had his way in 1782 the wild turkey would have been the symbol of our new nation. However, Congress saw fit instead to honor the bald eagle.

Michigan's Kirtland's warbler reached record-high numbers in 2012

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recently released Michigan's annual survey information indicating the population of Kirtland's warbler, a federally endangered bird, has reached an all-time high.

"We are witnessing a conservation success story," said DNR endangered species coordinator Dan Kennedy.

Biologists, researchers and volunteers in Michigan observed 2,063 singing males during the official 2012 survey period – 1,805 males were observed in 2011. This represents the largest single-year increase since 2007. The lowest numbers were recorded in 1974 and 1987, when only 167 singing males were found.

This year, singing males (numbers in parentheses) were found in 12 northern Lower Peninsula counties: Antrim (2), Alcona (266), Clare (40), Crawford (322), Iosco (248), Kalkaska (72), Montmorency (63), Ogemaw (540), Oscoda (388), Otsego (11), Presque Isle (24) and Roscommon (49). Surveyors identified 38 singing males in seven Upper Peninsula counties: Alger (4), Baraga (2), Chippewa (13), Delta (5), Luce (3), Marquette (4) and Schoolcraft (7). Twenty-seven additional singing males were observed outside Michigan in Wisconsin (23) and Ontario (4).

The Kirtland's warbler survey is conducted during the second and third weeks of June, when the birds are defending their nesting territories. Warblers are detected by listening for their songs, which can be heard at distances up to one-quarter mile, providing an excellent way to detect the birds with minimum disturbance. Only the males sing, so estimates of breeding population size are obtained by doubling the number of singing males recorded, based on the assumption that each male has a mate in its territory.

The 2012 survey was a joint effort between the DNR, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, the Michigan Audubon Society and citizen volunteers. "The record census results we have observed this year are testament to the extraordinary habitat management work of many individuals and DNR partners," said Kennedy.

Kirtland's warblers typically nest on the ground in stands of jack pine between 4 and 20 years old. Historically, these stands of young jack pine were created by natural wildfires that frequently swept through northern Michigan. Modern fire suppression programs altered this natural process, reducing Kirtland's warbler habitat. As a result, the population of Kirtland's warblers declined to the point that they were listed as endangered.

To mimic the effects of wildfire and ensure the future of this species, the DNR, the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manage the forests through a combination of timber harvests, burning, seeding and replanting to promote habitat for many species, including snowshoe hare, white-tailed deer, other songbird species and rare plants. Because large prescribed fires are neither safe nor economical in northern Michigan, approximately 3,000 acres of jack pine trees are harvested and replanted annually on state and federal lands. This use of public lands creates jobs, provides habitat for Kirtland's warblers and other species, and brings birders and hunters from across the state and around the world to northern Michigan.

"The Kirtland's warbler program is not just for the benefit of an endangered bird," said DNR wildlife biologist Keith Fisher. "This program provides local economic benefits such as wood-products jobs and tourism, while at the same time supplying excellent habitat for a variety of plant and wildlife species."

Do Birds Sound Different in the City?

Researchers have found that city birds make sounds that are different from those made by birds in rural areas. Studies have shown that sparrows and blackbirds, among others, change their sounds in the city so that they can be heard over the noise of city traffic and because of the acoustics created by large city buildings. Researchers also have compared the sounds made by white crowned

sparrows in 1969 and 2005 and found that the 2005 sparrow calls had a higher pitch.

SAAS Chapter Notes:

Dues Renewal Time

Thanks to our fundraising, SAAS has kept our membership at \$12 for single and \$15 for family. The SAAS dues year is from September to September. It is now overdue for the current year, so please consider renewing so you continue to receive the entertaining and informative Kettle. To check whether you already paid, please call SAAS Treasurer Gerry VanderHart at 231-627-6249.

Raffle Prizes

You have the chance every month to win a walking stick, bird feeder and seed, or other nature-related object. In 2011, raffles brought in nearly \$200, enabling SAAS to maintain low membership dues despite increased operational costs. SAAS wishes to thank the **Cheboygan Co-op** for supplying the entire current year of raffle prizes. **Blaskowski Feed & Seed, Zany Kitchen, Court Street Antiques & Gifts, Marilyn Smith, and Darrell Schwalm** also have given items. SAAS appreciates the efforts of Maureen Conklin to obtain these prizes, and everyone who donates them.

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**
231-627-3992 rogerbenter@gmail.com
Executive Com. At-Large: **Gloria Cadwalader**
231-290-0436 gcadwalader@gmail.com
MAS Representative: **Donna Mittlestat**
231-525-8169 ddmstat@hotmail.com

Other Volunteers

Greeter: **Susan Emerson**
231-625-9302 [No email]
Greeter Assistants:
Dale Rieger 231-818-9065 dalerieger@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
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
Historian: [Vacant]
Kettle Editor: **Jack Kirby**
231-625-9923 saaskettle2011@gmail.com
Kettle Producer: **Ann Benter**
231-625-3992 rogerbenter@gmail.com
Audiovisual/Web Master: **Roy MacFarland**
231-597-8173 roymac@charter.net

Kettle Printer: **Williams Office Supply**
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]