

The Kettle



Straits Area Audubon Society newsletter dating from 1983

May 2009

Vol. 10 No. 5

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Meetings: PLEASE NOTE that SAAS meetings are held at the Cheboygan Area Public Library. We thank the Library for providing this space at 100 S. Bailey St.

April Meeting Announcement—Hawks Alive

by Jim Bricker

Biologist Glen McCune of East Jordan will bring a live Red-Tailed hawk to the Cheboygan Area Public Library for our next program on Wednesday, May 13. Entitled "Hawks Alive," Mr. McCune will include hawk and eagle characteristics, behavior, hunting techniques, and prey preference. Once regularly killed by humans, these predators play a vital role in nature's web of life. Be sure to bring your whole family to this extraordinary presentation by this famed naturalist, falconer, wildlife rehabilitator, and artist.

After the meeting, share in refreshments prepared by Marie Bartlett, Alice MacFarland, and Nancy Nowitzke. You may also participate in door prize and raffle drawings.



Chirping "Thanks to Volunteers"

by Kathy Bricker

People make SAAS, from your shared bird sightings to insightful questions after each program. At this end of the season, I thank you for being members, visiting as guests, joining program and field trips, bringing treats, contributing items for the *Kettle* or door prizes, and helping in myriad ways. We especially appreciate Archie Reeves and Brian Mastenbrook for presenting their programs for free. I have donated a Whitefish Point Bird Observatory raffle ticket for each volunteer and speaker this season, and hope you win!

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 fieldtrips, classroom studies and field studies.

Meet John James Audubon

By Chris Gordy, Executive Director of Ella Sharp Museum of Art and History

We invite members of SAAS to our museum in Jackson, Michigan for the nationally-touring exhibition *John James Audubon: American Artist and Naturalist*. We

are the only Michigan location for this exhibit, which runs from June 6 through August 29. See www.ellasharp.org for more information.

Field Trips

by Steve Baker

Saturday, May 2, 9 to 10 am

Joy of Birds introductory nature walk at Gordon Turner Park, Cheboygan. New loaner binoculars and bird books available. No need to register. Call Kathy Bricker at 627-4830 with questions.

Saturday, May 9 Emmet County Spring Migration Count

The second Saturday in May is when birders all over North America participate in an all day birding marathon to tally bird numbers by county. Collected data is important in documenting changes in bird populations and is a great example of the value of citizen science. Ed Pike is the compiler for Emmet County and can be contacted at 231-758-3319.

Saturday, May 16 Loon trip with Jeff Lange

Following his highly acclaimed film, *The Uncommon Loon*, viewed at our March meeting, Jeff Lange will lead SAAS members to see loons first-hand at Robert's Lake, near Indian River. We will gather at Burger King parking lot in Indian River at 6:30 pm, then form a car caravan promptly at 6:45 pm to reach the lake well before dusk. We will target loons as well as other birds. Water boots would be helpful but not necessary. The field trip will last for one hour and those that want to stay longer can. Call Jim Bricker, 627-4830 to register.

Sunday, May 17 SAAS Big Birding Day

This is our annual big day of birding for fun and fund-raising. Meet at the Mackinaw City Highway Rest Area on Old 31 at 6 am. Bring a lunch if you plan to stay out all day. Dress for the weather, be prepared for insects, and hope for lots of birds. Questions? Steve Baker 231-238-8723

Wednesday, June 10 Field trip, 3 pm Grass Bay Nature Sanctuary .

Come walk to Lake Huron through the Grass Bay Nature Sanctuary (Michigan Nature Conservancy), meeting at Cordwood Shores. Field trip will be followed by pot-luck meal at 6 pm at Cordwood Shores, and a viewing of *Uncommon Loon* film. Call Alice and Roy MacFarland at 597-8173 for directions and more information.

Spreading Autumn Tweets

Thanks to Seedums Garden Club, where 50 attendees actively participated in Kathy Bricker's April 16th presentation about the joy of birds and the work of SAAS.

Headlands photo by Fred Gray



Mullet Lake Trail Cleanup

by Kathy Bricker

Vickie Lyon is our new SAAS representative running the North Central Trail cleanup, since Maureen Conklin has had to take a leave of absence. Please alert Vickie, 989-

733-6303, if you can give an hour of time this summer either outdoors along Mullett Lake or by making phone calls.

A perfect weekend at The Headlands

by Steve Baker

The wonderful Headlands Park owned by Emmet County near Mackinaw City was the site for our Audubon gathering on the weekend of April 10. It was great to enjoy the beautiful wooded surroundings with friends, food, hawks, owls, and stars. Over



Photo by Fred Gray
Steve Baker removing Saw-whet owl from netting

50 folks participated in the Friday night potluck, followed by a bonfire chat about owls (Ed Pike), hawk migration (Steve Baker), and stars (Mary Stewart Adams and Kathy Bricker). At dusk everyone observed the owl banding nets being set up, then returned to the campfire where telescopes were used to study the brilliant night sky. After dark Ed led the group back to the nets where 3 Saw-whet owls were caught on the first net check and a total of 9 were captured by 11 pm. Ed then demonstrated to the group how to safely remove the captured

owls from the nets, and then measured, aged, and sexed the owls before release. The words "amazing" and "how cute!" were often repeated as many in the group were seeing a Saw-whet Owl for the first time. An incredible 3 of the 9 owls were already banded which is what bird banding is all about - information is only gained when recaptures occur. These bands told a bit of each bird's history. One had been banded by Ed at Cheboygan in 2004 as a 1 year old, so now it was known to be 6 years old. Two other banded owls were captured later in the weekend for a total of 5 returns out of 29 owls captured! Three were Whitefish Point bands and one had been banded in Indiana in the fall of 2007. Between net checks, the group returned to the bonfire where we were privileged to have Mary Stewart Adams continue to share her vast knowledge of the night sky and star lore. The night was topped off by the spectacular moonrise of the full moon. Several SAAS members were



Photo by Fred Gray
Mary Stewart Adams

able to spend the night in the guest house as Ed and his banding crew (Jim Veller and Erika Schwartzfisher) worked the nets. On Saturday night they had a midnight meal of blueberry-pecan pancakes with fresh maple syrup!

The migrating hawk totals for Friday afternoon were also impressive as observed from just east of the Headlands. In three hours the following totals were tallied.

Red-tailed Hawk-379,
Rough-legged hawk-8,
Red-shouldered hawk- 2,
Turkey Vulture-34,
Sharp-shinned hawk-3,
Bald Eagle-12,
Golden Eagle-12

It is hoped that we can make this an annual event but this weekend will be hard to top. Thanks to all who made it happen and a big thank you to Emmet County for allowing us to use the Headlands facilities.

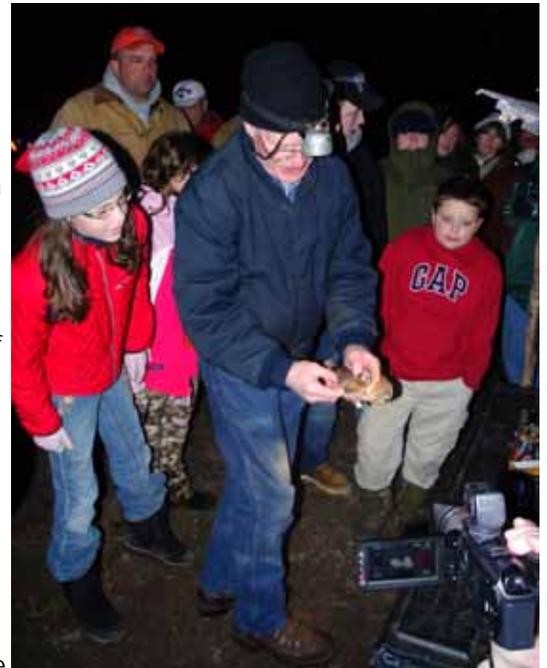


Photo by Fred Gray

Got Books?

Now that SAAS has new binoculars to loan out on our field trips, we also need bird guides. If you can donate any used

field guides for wannabe birders to borrow during field trips, please bring them to the May 13 meeting or contact Steve Baker.

Night Sky Award Thanks to SAAS

by Kathy Bricker

On April 21 at the 6th Annual Lighting Awards Luncheon, Inverness Dairy of Cheboygan won the Gary R. Williams award given for responsible dark sky lighting. Straits Area Audubon Society nominated them for this honor bestowed by the Outdoor Lighting Forum in front of 40 guests. Said owner Charles Woiderski, "I installed night-friendly lights, choosing fully

-shaded fluorescent lights because mercury-vapor lights produce so much glare. Besides, they look obnoxious. To light the entry, we use a compact fluorescent bulb that shines directly on the ground. When doing this, I didn't think about protecting the night sky but am glad that it worked out that way."

Congratulations, Inverness Dairy!

Cosmos Talk on July 14

Mary Stewart Adams will present another star lore program at the Cheboygan Area Public Library on July 14, 6:30 pm. This will contain different material from her Audubon talk in January, and she invites all SAAS members to attend.



Photo by Kathy Bricker

Earth Day 2009 in Cheboygan

by Kathy Bricker

On April 18, I represented SAAS at the Earth Day Conference before 20 attendees, sharing our programs and field trips, and speaking about Cheboygan County Recycling. Remember that you may obtain home recycling bins, informational brochures, *Let's Go Beyond Recycling* newsletters, and application forms for non-households at the County Building Treasurer's office and the Cheboygan Fairground office.

Laren Corie, a solar house design expert, advised starting with no or low cost energy saving strategies. "Then let those savings pay for further refinements." We learned about the weatherization program that covers up to \$6,500 in insulation, weather-stripping,

and other costs through the Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency. Households that meet an income test (family of 1, \$21,660; of 2, \$29,140, and so on) may apply by calling toll free to 866-270-0686.

Karen Martin of the Straits Area Concerned Citizens for Peace and Justice described the litter, contamination, and wildlife destruction caused by plastic shopping bags. Glen's Market donated cloth shopping bags to everyone who attended Earth Day. Interest is high in follow-up education and action on all these topics, so please let me know if you have time to help plan or implement future outreach.

Hold the Bag and the Date

Audubon members voted to participate in the next International Coastal Cleanup, where volunteers gather basic data about debris while cleaning beaches and river ways. Please mark your calendar now for the morning of September 12 and watch the first fall *Kettle* for details on where and when to meet.

What you missed at the April meeting

by Judy Frock, Substitute Secretary

The April 8th meeting of the Straits Area Audubon Society was opened at 7 P.M. by President Kathy Bricker with 74 people in attendance; 30 members and 44 guests. Following announcements of upcoming opportunities, people shared recent bird sightings.

There was one formal vote this month. A motion to nominate Inverness Dairy for an award from the Outdoor Lighting Forum for night-sky friendly lighting was made by Nancy Nowitzke and seconded by Art Frock. The motion was unanimously passed by a show of hands. Kathy Bricker will prepare and submit the nomination.

The program for the evening, "Living With Bears in Michigan" was presented by DNR biologist Brian Mastenbrook. With bears

coming out of hibernation now, this power-point program covered such topics as how to get along with bears, being safe around bears, bears and bird feeders, managing bears, and where bears are in Michigan. Brian followed his excellent and informative talk with a question and answer period.

The raffle prize of a birdhouse donated by Judy Vander Hart, was won by guest LuAnne Thomas. The door prizes of an Eagle videotape, donated by Roy and Alice MacFarland; and a \$40 gift certificate to Air Bear Travel, donated by Kathy Bricker, were won by guest Sheila Malleis.

A big thank you goes to Dorothy Woosley and Jim and Kathy Bricker for the excellent refreshments.



Fundraising and Grant-Giving Time

by Kathy Bricker

May 17 marks our Big Birding Day, when SAAS counts bird species and solicits donations based on the number we find. In 2008, we saw 110 species. So someone giving ten cents a bird would donate \$11 to Audubon. Last year, we raised \$329 with this event.

This year, members will again vote on grant recipients. Please select THREE of the following six choices.

- (A) Expenses such as travel, related to owl banding research
- (B) Expenses such as copying and postage used to educate the public on our dark-sky -friendly night lighting conservation project

- (C) Expenses such as trash bags and supplies to implement our North Country Trail and International Coastal Cleanup conservation projects
- (D) Thank-you items of some sort for cleanup volunteers saying "Straits Area Audubon Society Cleanup Volunteer" with our logo of kettling hawks
- (E) Field trip tally forms for Audubon field trips
- (F) Payments to cover some travel and other expenses for field trip leaders

To either donate or record your vote, please attend the May meeting or contact Kathy Bricker before May 12.

SAAS 2008 Statement of Income and Expenses

by Kittie Kramer

Expenses:	\$3036.00	Income:	\$2016.00
Postage and mailing expenses	234.00	Dues and miscellaneous donations	594.00
Newsletter printing	donated	Raffles	93.00
Website services and hosting	donated	Spring Bird Count fundraiser	329.00
Speakers ^(a)	300.00	Grants for Citizens for Cheboygan	
Publicity	92.00	County Recycling	1000.00
Grants (Cheboygan Middle School, and owl research via Ed Pike) ^(a)	300.00		
Raffle state fee	40.00		
Supplies (name badges, hospitality)	70.00		
Expenses for student marsh study ^(b)	1000.00		
Expenses for Citizens for Cheboygan County Recycling	1000.00		
		(a) Omits January 2009 speaker fee (\$50) and grant (\$100 to Cheboygan Area Public Library) dated 12/08 but not delivered until 1/09	
		(b) Grant income of \$1,000 to cover Dingman Marsh study was received in 2007 from Michigan Audubon Society	

Membership Application
For
Straits Area Audubon Society

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

E-MAIL:

Please make checks payable to: Straits Area Audubon Society

Please mail checks to:

Mrs. Kittie Kramer, Tre.
10260 Munro Lake Dr.
Levering, MI 49755

Single Membership:
\$12.00

Family Membership:
\$15.00

Kettle Contribution
Due Dates

In order to deliver The Kettle in a timely matter, please submit your photos and articles by the following due dates:

8/27/09

Send your submissions to
lbaney@ncmich.edu

SAAS thanks Benter Chiropractic for its in-kind donation of the printing of the monthly *Kettle* and hosting of the SAAS website.

Coming Programs

Mark your calanders now to be sure you can attend.

Jun. 10— Member Potluck

SAAS meetings are held at the Cheboygan Area Public Library.

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

Straits Area Audubon Society
c/o Mrs. Kittie Kramer, Treasurer
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