



The Fledgling

Newsletter of the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society, Inc.
www.southernadirondackaudubon.org

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Dec 2010 – Feb 2011

President's Message

Although I have been interested in birds and birding all my life, it wasn't until I moved to Texas, in 1995, that my eyes were fully opened to the wonderful world of birding. I attended a workshop called, Birding with a Purpose, and I was hooked. I learned about citizen science, and how to do surveys and bird counts. I began to participate in Project Feederwatch, the Backyard Bird Count, and the Christmas Bird Count. I monitored bluebird nest boxes and regularly observed a heron rookery to note its changes from year to year. Each month, I led a local birding group that surveyed the birds at a local nature center. Occasionally, I assisted in bird-banding, gathering vital statistics in an area that became an Audubon Center. Eventually, I was lucky enough to get a job searching federal lands for Golden-cheeked Warblers and Black-capped Vireos, both on the endangered species list.

In 2007 and 2008, through The Nature Conservancy, the National Park Service, and Cornell University, I volunteered to search for the Ivory-billed woodpecker in Congaree National Park, South Carolina. Wandering through cypress trees and swamps, I learned all that I could about the bird's habits hoping to find one of the last of that species. (I didn't!) Last year I volunteered to help with a survey of native Hawaiian birds on the island of Maui in the Haleakala National Park. Loss of habitat and predation by introduced species such as feral cats and the mongoose has brought the Maui Parrotbill to near extinction and is now listed as a critically endangered species by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. It was an experience I will not soon forget. Everywhere I go, every time I go out birding, I learn more about the lives of the birds that I have come to love.

After returning to the Northeast, having lived in Texas for many years, I was happy to find an active local Audubon chapter. Over the past few years, I have seen what the local chapter has been able to accomplish. Membership is up; local interest in birding, conservation, and environmental issues is high. But as with many volunteer groups, SAAS has only a few, very dedicated people, some of whom have kept this chapter going for many, many years.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Our public programs are held at the Crandall Library in City Park, Glens Falls. Enter at the Glen St. entrance, and take the elevator to the lower level; the media room is on the left. In case of inclement weather, please call the Crandall library at 792-6508

**No public program in December
"Happy Holidays"**

**Wednesday, Jan 26 7PM
"Thru-hiking the Appalachian Trail"
with Steve Mackey**

**Wednesday, Feb 23 7PM
"Madagascar"
with Joyce Miller**

**Please visit our website for further information
www.southernadirondackaudubon.org**

Once again, Southern Adirondack Audubon is in need of new officers. This month I agreed to accept the position of chapter president because I think this local Audubon chapter has a lot to offer the community. We are, however, still in need of board members, a vice president, and a newsletter editor. Hopefully these positions will be filled by the New Year. Anyone interested in becoming more involved can contact me or any of the board members at any time.

With the continued help of the board members, other volunteers, and those who support us by attending programs, and becoming chapter members, I promise to do all that I can to keep the chapter vibrant, relevant, and growing.

-Pat Fitzgerald, President

Membership Corner

By Pat Fitzgerald



Welcome to new chapter supporters!

As of December 1, we have 105 chapter supporters. Our most recent chapter supporters are:

Pam Newcombe	Whitehall
Lindsey Duval	Fort Ann
Linda Theis	Gansevoort
Roberta Clute	Hudson Falls
Majken Sellar	Argyle
Dawn Greco	Fort Edward

A special thanks all of you who have continued to support the local chapter with your annual dues throughout the years. All donations and dues support the monthly public programs, local conservation issues, educational programs, field trips, and the newsletter. Renewal notices will be going out soon. Membership runs from January through December. If you became a new member after July 2010, you will not be receiving a renewal notice until next year.

Annual dues of \$10 may be sent to Pat Fitzgerald, 79 Laurel Lane, Queensbury, NY 12804. Attend a public program, or go on a chapter-sponsored field trip, and take advantage of a special offer of 1 year for \$5. Checks or money orders should be made out to SAAS.

Return a Gift to Wildlife –

Every Dollar Helps!



When you file your New York State tax return, please consider adding a dollar amount for the “Return a Gift to Wildlife” program. Since 1982, over 250 projects have been funded by this program—including the recently completed “Second Atlas of Breeding Bird Atlas of New York State”. The current condition of New York State finances has caused the budgets for conservation programs to be decimated. This simple act can help insure that valuable projects benefitting wildlife and the environment can move forward.

UPDATE: Killian’s View Subdivision

By Jason Goldsmith, Conservation Chair

This fall, the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Killian’s View Subdivision was accepted by the Town of Ft. Edward Planning Board. This 352-lot subdivision, located in the center of the Ft. Edward Grasslands Important Bird Area (IBA), will destroy or fragment hundreds of acres of habitat used by the endangered Short-eared Owl, threatened Northern Harrier, and many other at-risk grassland species.

SAAS and Audubon New York have been following this issue closely because of the huge impact it will have on grassland birds. While minimal acreage has been provided for open space, mainly land that wouldn’t have been developed anyway, this development will ultimately harm grassland birds whose populations have already been declining. To find out how you can help protect this important bird area, please contact Jason Goldsmith at adk_wild_jay@yahoo.com

Your birding can help the IBA! Please see page 3.

No Child Left Inside Act

Attention Audubon activists!

Be on the lookout in early 2011 for Action Alerts for national and state-level versions of the No Child Left Inside Act. This important legislation, focused on elementary and secondary grade levels, will substantially strengthen existing education acts by providing funding to train teachers in delivering high quality environmental education and utilizing the local environment as an extension of the classroom. In addition, it will offer incentives for states to develop Environmental Literacy Plans, insuring that every student is prepared to understand the environmental challenges of the future. Teachers and school administrators will be encouraged to make time and resources available for environmental education.

Environmental education, especially when done outside in a natural environment, is more important than ever. It is estimated that the average child spends more than 45 hours a week playing video games or watching TV. This has created a significant disconnection between children and the environment. The No Child Left Inside Act will be a significant step forward in building a solid foundation of environmental responsibility, thereby helping to protect the natural environment of both New York state and the nation. If you haven’t signed up for free action alerts, you can register by going to www.audubonaction.org/signup. It has never been more important for your voice to be heard! -Jason Goldsmith, Conservation Chair



Bald Eagle by Gordie Ellmers © 2010

HOLIDAY EAGLE WATCH

The Moreau Lake State Park's section of the Hudson River is home to wintering bald eagles. Each week the park naturalist visits several sites within the park to monitor the bird's population.

Join the fun this December 24 from 10 a. m. to 12 p.m. Meet at the main entrance. Participants are advised to dress warmly and bring binoculars. Pre-registration is requested. This program is weather-permitting and may be changed or cancelled if conditions are unfavorable. For registration and more information about this program, call the Park Office at 518-793-0511.

Kestrel Program Update

The results are in for the 2009 TogetherGreen grant which funded the Audubon NY Kestrel Program. In addition to the 10 Kestrel boxes that Southern Adirondack Audubon placed in our area, some of the activities that were held throughout the state included:

- Interviews on Martha Stewart, radio stations (NY City and lower Hudson), PBS TV station, and newspaper articles, which reached millions
- Over 3,000 educational materials distributed
- Action Alert highlighting grassland birds sent to 6,000 people with 400 responding.
- 12 box-building workshops were held
- 190 nest boxes were built, 150 installed with over 230 volunteers involved in building, installing, and monitoring boxes
- 12 boxes had kestrels nesting and 9 successfully fledged young; the chapters that had nesting success were Jamestown, SAAS and Northern New York.

Once again, thanks to all who helped make SAAS one of the successes of the program. We will be continuing the program for 2011. Please contact Pat Fitzgerald if you are interested in more information.

URGENT!! Fort Edward Grasslands Winter Raptor Monitoring

We are beginning to schedule the Audubon Winter Raptor surveys in the Fort Edward IBA and Washington County Grasslands. These surveys will be conducted in the late morning or afternoon and are designed to document Short-eared Owls (SEOWs), but also other important wintering species that might not be active in the evening. This will compliment the surveys being coordinated by DEC, which will largely concentrate on SEOWs and be conducted during the evenings. We hope you will be able to join us for one or more of our surveys. This area provides incredible grassland habitat to numerous at-risk birds and is very vulnerable to development. The data you have collected over the past few years has guided conservation efforts and will continue to do so.

We will begin the scheduling shortly after the Thanksgiving weekend and the surveys will run from early December to late March. Please let us know if you are interested in conducting at least one survey this season. Also, feel free to pass this on to potentially interested birders. Thanks for your assistance and happy birding! To volunteer, or for further information, please contact Audubon New York's Laura McCarthy at lmccarthy@audubon.org.

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79 Laurel Lane
Queensbury, NY 12804



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SOUTHERN ADIRONDACK AUDUBON SOCIETY

President	Pat Fitzgerald	518-792-6846
Vice-President	<i>Position Open</i>	
Secretary	Linda Hoyt	518-494-2380
Treasurer	Virginia Vogel	518-584-3936
Newsletter Editor	<i>Position Open</i>	
Education	Linda White	518-792-4446
Publicity	Carol Moyer	518-793-1960
Conservation	Jason Goldsmith	518-480-4243
Membership	Pat Fitzgerald	518-792-6846
Website	www.southernadirondackaudubon.org	
Email SAAS:	audubon@netheaven.com	

DIRECTORS

2008-2011

Linda Hoyt	494-2380
Linda White	792-4446
Pat Walters	793-1960

2009-2012

Carol Moyer	793-1960
Jason Goldsmith	480-4243

Position Open

2010-2013

Pat Fitzgerald	792-6846
Ginny Vogel	584-3936

Position Open

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

National membership in the Audubon Society includes the magazine, *Audubon*, and the SAAS newsletter, *The Fledgling*. The cost is \$20 annually for regular membership and \$15 for seniors and students. Make checks payable to "National Audubon Society," and send with name, address, and phone number to the address listed below. Membership as a "Chapter Supporter" is \$10 annually and includes *The Fledgling* and all chapter activities. Make check payable to "Southern Adirondack Audubon Society" and send with name, address, and phone number to:
Pat Fitzgerald, 79 Laurel Ln., Queensbury, NY 12804

Newsletter Submission Policy: We welcome submissions to *The Fledgling*. Please email your articles to Audubon@netheaven.com, and include your name and contact information. We reserve the right to edit as necessary.