



# The Fledgling

Newsletter of the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society, Inc.  
[www.southernadirondackaudubon.org](http://www.southernadirondackaudubon.org)

## President's Message

Vol. 29 No. 4 June 2012 – August 2012

The second event of our TogetherGreen grant was held on April 21<sup>st</sup> to celebrate Earth Day. Members of Southern Adirondack Audubon worked with volunteers from the Feeder Canal Alliance for their annual Canal Clean Sweep. We also constructed fishing line receptacles and placed them near popular fishing spots in Lake George, Moreau Lake State Park, and Brant Lake. Our hope is to encourage anglers to discard unusable fishing line so that fewer waterfowl become entangled and lose their ability to hunt and eat. We have more receptacles available for placement, so if you know of a good place to erect one, contact any Southern Adirondack Audubon board member and we'll take it from there.

Once again, this spring I was able to attend the Audubon New York Spring Council held at the Gideon Putnam in Saratoga Springs. One of the main speakers was David Yarnold, President and CEO of National Audubon Society. He outlined the Audubon Strategic Plan for 2012 – 2015. For the next three years, Audubon will focus on five conservation strategies critical for birds. They are putting working lands to work for birds and people, sharing our seas and shores, saving important bird areas, shaping a healthy climate and clean energy future, and creating bird-friendly communities. I hope Southern Adirondack Audubon can participate in as many aspects of this plan as possible, especially in continuing to protect the Fort Edwards Grasslands IBA and in helping to create bird-friendly communities.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Pat Walters for her contribution to Southern Adirondack Audubon Society. Pat, who recently married and moved back to Pennsylvania, was a field trip leader, board member, past president, and newsletter editor in the short time she was here. We will miss her, wish her the best of luck in the future, and hope she visits often.

*Pat Fitzgerald*

**Please join us for the following**

### **PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

Our public programs are held at the Crandall Library in 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.

Wednesday, June 27 - 7 p.m.

"Your Home - A Haven for Birds"  
with  
Mona Bearor

*This is our pot-luck supper night. If you would like to join us, come at 6 p.m. and bring a food item to share. Rather than provide plastic eating utensils, we ask you to bring your own silverware. We will provide cups, plates, napkins, and cold beverages.*

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July and August

No Public Programs.

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Wednesday, September 26 - 7 p.m.

Beekeeper Rick Green presents  
"Beekeeping Through The Seasons"

## I'm Addicted!

-Mona Bearor

Warblers, woodpeckers, sparrows, cuckoos, herons, ducks...103 species in all so far, and this is simply a dirt road in Washington county. No, it's not in the northern reaches of the county; it's only five minutes from the traffic circle in Hudson Falls. Where, you ask? It's the Towpath Rd. - four and one-half miles of birding bliss. The road begins just off Crowley Rd., which is off Lower Maple, east of Burgoyne, and ends in Smith's Basin near Lock 9.

I have birded the Towpath Rd. on occasion for several years, however, now I am hooked on this quiet, out-of-the-way dirt road. Our past president, Pat Walters, is responsible, as this was her favorite place. She shared so many stories of birding the Towpath with me that I was compelled to start spending more time there. The fact that I can get there from my home in less than 15 minutes just adds to the attraction. Also, birding from the road means no ticks!

In addition to the old canal, which supports ducks, herons, and water-loving songbirds, there are several different habitats that border the road. At the Hudson Falls end, there is an open agricultural area, mid-way there is a huge cattail marsh, and wet woods border the Fort Ann end of the road. The roadsides are edged by many species of shrubs and trees, which offer important cover for nesting birds and food for migrants. Simply driving the road can yield a good list, but to really appreciate all the road has to offer, park in a safe place and walk a bit in the different habitats.

Our local "six-pack" of woodpeckers can all be found here, both cuckoos have been seen; eight sparrows and eleven warblers have been found so far. American Bittern is seen regularly, as are Wilson's Snipe, both Alder and Willow Flycatcher, and Baltimore Orioles. Orchard Oriole has been present for the last three years; Green Herons love this area, and can often be seen perched in trees as well as stalking prey near the water. In May of this year, three Black-crowned Night-Herons were seen - a first for this area. Carolina, House, and Marsh Wrens can all be found. The list can go on and on, but you get the idea! There are so many diverse species here that birding is great in the heat of the summer when other areas have gone quiet and lost their appeal.

One word of caution: Although the road is wide enough for two cars, be sure to park where another vehicle can safely see around you. There are many curves in the road and there is no posted speed limit! The only downside to the birding experience here is the large amount of trash that has been thrown in the canal. The Town of Kingsbury cleaned up the roadsides recently, and hopefully, with a greater "people presence" there will be less littering.

Now, head out there and enjoy summer on the Towpath!



This Black-crowned Night-Heron was seen on Towpath Rd. on May 2, 2012. Photo © Tami Williams

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### SAAS Board of Directors Meeting Schedule

Friday, June 22 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
at Moreau Lake State Park Warming Hut

The board does not meet in July and August.

Friday, September 21 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
at Crandall Library

Meetings are open to the public.  
Interested members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

## *Summer Field Trips*

**Saturday June 9 8:30 –11:00 am**

**Birding Towpath Road, Hudson Falls**

**Leader: Jim Ries**

We will drive along the old canal with several stops along the way to search for spring migrants as well as nesting birds. The route provides diverse habitats including field edges, wetlands, tangled undergrowth and stands of hardwood trees. The trip is open to all, birders and non-birders alike.

Call the leader at 518-792-4477 for directions to our meeting place and for any questions.

**Saturday June 16 8:30 – 11:00 am**

**Birding the Bike Trail at the Five Combines Feeder Canal Park**

**Leader: Jim Ries**

We will walk the bike trail for about 2 miles along the Five Combines and the Feeder Canal searching for spring migrants as well as nesting birds. The habitat ranges from field edges to wetland areas to stands of tall hardwood trees and should provide for some great birding. Meet at the Five Combines Feeder Canal Parking lot off Burgoyne Ave. at 8:30 am. Call the leader at 792-4477 for directions or questions. Open to all.

**Friday, July 6 9 – 10:30 am**

**Birding Walk at the Betar Byway**

Birding walks, led by members of Southern Adirondack Audubon, are held on the first Friday of every month, weather permitting. Each walk will last about one and a half hours. We will meet at 9 a.m. at the gazebo near the parking lot at the end of First Street in South Glens Falls. This is a leisurely, easy walk. Call Pat at 792-6846 for more information. No registration is required.

**Saturday, July 28 7:00 am – 12:00 pm**

**This is a joint outing with the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club**

**Betar Byway – South Glens Falls**

**Leaders: Jim Ries and Carol Blackwell**

We will walk the Betar Byway, a paved walkway, along the Hudson River searching for waterfowl, warblers and other summer residents. This easy walk will take approximately 2-3 hours, covering about 2 miles. Contact one of the leaders for directions to our meeting place or for any questions: jimries@roadrunner.com or 792-4477 or cblackwell@nycap.rr.com or 238-3086.

**Friday, August 3 9 am – 10:30 am**

**Birding Walk at the Betar Byway**

Birding walks, led by members of Southern Adirondack Audubon, are held on the first Friday of every month, weather permitting. Each walk will last about one and a half hours. We will meet at 9 a.m. at the gazebo near the parking lot at the end of First Street in South Glens Falls. This is a leisurely, easy walk. Call Pat at 792-6846 for more information. No registration is required.

This poem, by Bob Henke, is dedicated to all the bluebird monitors and enthusiasts who have been enjoying an exciting season of nesting and fledglings, whatever may be in our nest boxes!

I built a birdhouse for a bluebird  
It was not beyond my ken.  
I nailed it to a phone pole  
and quickly housed .....a wren.

So I just built another and with  
ruler, square and glue  
made dimensions razor perfect.  
But a wren moved in there too.

I am naught if not persistent,  
so I built number three.  
They moved in by next morning.  
Not a bluebird....chickadee.

Do they think I am defeated by  
a stupid ball of fluff?  
They were starting to annoy me  
I had had about enough.

So I gathered up my scrap wood  
and a frenzy did ensue. I built birdhouse  
after birdhouse in total.....22.

I hung them on the fence posts.  
I covered all my trees.  
Got a titmouse and a nuthatch  
and tree swallows to my knees

Now my scrap pile was depleted  
but with boards weathered split and grey  
I made one final birdhouse  
Nailed up and walked away.

And now in that sorry looking birdhouse  
Knocked together with my dregs  
There is a perfect grass nest with four  
pale blue little eggs.

I guess I can't account for taste or what  
a bird-mind thinks is wrong  
But at least I can watch bluebirds now all the summer long.

*Bob Henke*



## EARTH DAY ACTIVITY

Southern Adirondack Audubon joined the Feeder Canal Alliance for their annual Canal Clean Sweep on April 21 for an Earth Day clean up. More than 35 volunteers combed the Feeder Canal trail's entire 7 miles, from the Feeder Dam in Queensbury's Overlook Park in the west to the Five Combines in Hudson Falls in the east. The cleanup was part of a statewide Earth Day cleanup along the entire canal system, expected to draw about 1,000 volunteers overall. Hikers, bikers, and dog walkers thanked the volunteers as they removed trash and brush along the trail. Many thanks to all who showed up to help make the event successful.



**Volunteer removing trash from along the Feeder Canal in Hudson Falls**

Photo by Sue Pierce

## LOON UPDATE

Last spring Southern Adirondack Audubon “adopted” a loon by supporting Dr. Nina Schoch who coordinates the Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation. Last May, two loons were spotted in Mirror Lake in Lake Placid, a place that loons usually avoid because of the high amount of human traffic. One of the loons had fishing line wrapped around its beak. Dr. Schoch was notified and was able to rescue the loon and release it to the wild. Later in the summer, Don Polunci saw a loon on Lake Abanakee with fishing line wrapped around its beak. He also notified Dr. Schoch and the loon was rescued and released. These loon rescues were two of about 30 that Dr. Schoch said she was involved with last year. Of those rescues, 13 of the birds died. Many of the deaths were from natural elements, but five were related to fishing tackle. The number of calls received last year was much higher than normal. Usually Dr. Schoch gets about five or six call about loons in distress.

Loons are not the only birds that get caught in fishing line. Dr. Schoch has received calls for herons, gulls, ducks, and geese. She has also had calls about woodpeckers, crows and ravens. Because of the high number of fishing line and tackle-related problems, we are asking that if you see fishing line along the shore of any body of water, pick it up, cut it into pieces 6 inches or smaller, and then dispose of it.

If you see a loon in trouble, notify Dr. Nina Schoch ([nina.schoch@briloon.org](mailto:nina.schoch@briloon.org)), or North Country Wild Care (518 964-6740) for more information.

**Do not attempt to capture the bird.**



## Peregrines!

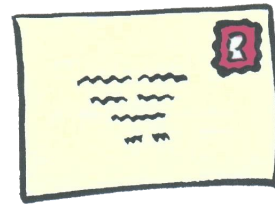
-Mona Bearor

Long-time members of SAAS may know that a Peregrine Falcon pair has nested in a Glens Falls quarry for several years. I was fortunate to be invited to replace Paul Saffold as a volunteer nest watcher for the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) when Paul moved to West Virginia in 2007. It has been an exciting five years and an amazing learning experience, as this is the only pair documented to nest in a working quarry.

Along with the euphoria of seeing nestlings fledge, nature watching sometimes brings sadness as well. In the summer of 2011, the male of the pair was injured in the South Glens Falls Lehigh quarry while hunting and had to be euthanized. The female remains in the area, and my job this season is to determine if she has found a new mate, locate a nest, and determine if young are successfully fledged.

You can help by checking known perches of the falcons as you drive around the Glens Falls area. The falcons have been seen in recent years perching and hunting from The Pines high-rise on Warren St., the many high towers on Finch Pruyn property, the Lehigh Cement storage towers on Warren St., and the Travelers building on Glen St. Any high perch with a good view is a possible hunting perch for these birds. Since we are into the breeding and nesting season for this species, the chance of seeing two birds together is slim; however, any sighting is valuable in determining whether the female has indeed found a mate and is nesting.

If you see one of our falcons, please report your sighting by calling Mona at 518-745-8637 or send an email to [conservebirds@gmail.com](mailto:conservebirds@gmail.com).



## Welcome to new chapter supporters!

We now have 90 chapter supporters. Won't you invite a friend or family member to join and help us reach a goal of 100 by the end of June?

Our most recent new chapter supporters are:

Lisa Balschunat - Queensbury  
Maureen Coutant - Queensbury

Membership runs from January through December.  
Annual dues of \$10.00 may be sent to:

Majken Sellar,  
9 Allen Rd. Ext.  
Argyle, NY 12809

New chapter supporters who attend a public program, or go on a chapter-sponsored field trip can take advantage of a special offer of one-year membership for \$5.00. Checks or money orders should be made out to SAAS.

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## Volunteers Needed

If you are interested in volunteering with SAAS, you could help by

- Making a basket for our monthly raffle
- Assisting in grant writing to raise monies for various conservation and educational projects
- Helping to give out informational materials at an event

For more information about any of these volunteer activities, call Pat Fitzgerald at 792-6846.

# ***Calling All Birders!***

## ***Birds Mean Business in New York!***

### ***...and you can help show it***

Did you know that bird watching is the fastest growing outdoor recreation in New York and across the county, and one that contributes billions of dollars each year to state and local economies? Audubon New York is launching their *Birds Mean Business* campaign to highlight the economic impact of bird watching throughout the state and to build more support for protecting open space and parklands. To make this campaign successful, they need the help of Audubon members to get the word out. This new initiative is designed to inform businesses and municipalities that birders like you are bringing in tourism monies locally.

How many trips a year do you take to watch birds? From taking a walk in your local park, to traveling across the state and region to visit your favorite birding hotspots, you are already contributing to the economic engine of bird watching! Even though this fiscal impact is happening, many local businesses and tourism agencies are not aware that people travel to their communities and spend money to watch birds, nor are they actively working to promote and enhance those opportunities. To make municipalities and businesses aware of these facts, we are asking Audubon members and birdwatchers across the state to show the economic impact bird and wildlife watching has on our communities by using our “*Birds Mean Business*” cards.

#### **How to use the cards:**

First, fill out the back of the card. Write either your hometown, chapter name and website, your name and contact information, or anything else to describe where you are from. Secondly, whenever bird watching, make sure you stop in local shops and eateries to support the local business of the communities you visit. Leave this card when you pay to let them know what brought you to their store. Finally, in addition to local businesses, be sure to leave these cards with tourism promotion agencies, Chambers of Commerce and offices of local elected officials so they know why you are visiting their town. Our goal is to help them realize that it is important to do more to protect the places that attract you to visit the area.

These cards will be available at our June program and at our field trips. If you are planning a birding trip, or know someone who is, and would like to take some cards to have on hand, contact Pat Fitzgerald at 792-6846 and we will make sure you have them for your outing.

For more information on the ***Birds Mean Business*** initiative you can visit [NY.Audubon.org/ecotourism](http://NY.Audubon.org/ecotourism)



Front of card



Back of Card

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79 Laurel Lane  
Queensbury, NY 12804



Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Glens Falls, NY  
Permit No.81

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## SOUTHERN ADIRONDACK AUDUBON SOCIETY

President	Pat Fitzgerald	518-792-6846
Vice-President	OPEN	
Secretary	Linda Hoyt	518-494-2380
Treasurer	Mona Bearor	518-745-8637
Newsletter Editor	OPEN	
Education	OPEN	
Publicity	Carol Moyer	518-793-1960
Conservation	Jason Goldsmith	518-480-4243
Membership	Majken Sellar	518-638-8867
Website	<a href="http://www.southernadirondackaudubon.org">www.southernadirondackaudubon.org</a>	
Email SAAS:	audubon@netheaven.com	

## DIRECTORS

### 2009-2012

Carol Moyer	793-1960
Jason Goldsmith	480-4243

### 2010-2013

Pat Fitzgerald	792-6846
Ginny Vogel	584-3936
Jim Ries	792-4477

### 2011-2014

Linda Hoyt	494-2380
Sue Pierce	798-2051

## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the National 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:  
Majken Sellar, 9 Allen Rd Ext., Argyle, NY 12809

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