



# The Fledgling

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

Vol. 30 No. 2 December 2012 – February 2013

## President's Message

Many of our spring and summer birds have left for warmer places at this time of year, but there are still many birding activities to enjoy. Although Project Feederwatch is already underway, it is not too late to sign-up and help out. Project Feederwatch is an easy and exciting way to see what's happening in your own backyard. The data you collect help scientists track movements of winter bird populations, and determine long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance. Find more information on the following website: <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/Overview/whatispaw.htm>

On Saturday, December 15, you can join the Christmas Bird Count, another nation-wide data collection activity to track birds during the winter months. Southern Adirondack Audubon will participate in this year's count, and we always appreciate more counters. See page 4 for more information about this year's Christmas Bird Count.

I am happy to announce that Joyce Miller and Jim Campinell have agreed to be on the Southern Adirondack Audubon Board of Directors. Both Jim and Joyce have been active chapter supporters for many years. I look forward to working with them and to the new ideas and energy they will bring to the board.

During this season of holiday rush, I hope you can take time to return to some of your favorite natural places. We live in an area rich in habitat for a variety of bird species. Enjoy the peace of the outdoors as you spend time with our feathered winter residents.

*Pat Fitzgerald, President*

**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.

December 2012  
No Public Program  
Happy Holidays!

Wednesday January 23 7 p.m.  
"Galapagos-Enchanted Isles"  
with John Schneider

Since their discovery in 1535, the Galapagos Islands have intrigued travelers and researchers. Come see what makes this a special destination.

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Wednesday February 27 7 p.m.  
"Nature at Your Doorstep"  
with Denise Stoner

If you think you have to travel to the far corners of the earth to explore the beauty of the natural world, think again! Join us for this photo tour of birding sites in the Capital region and beyond.

## Win a Week at Summer Camp

Southern Adirondack Audubon will sponsor a scholarship for a student aged 11-17 years to attend one of the DEC environmental education summer camps for a week in 2013. Anyone interested is asked to submit an essay which will determine the winner.

Entrants should write an essay of 250 words or less describing why they would like to attend DEC nature camp. The essay should include experiences they have enjoyed outdoors, and why they feel time in nature is important.

We will select one entrant to attend either Camp Colby in Saranac Lake or Pack Forest in Warrensburg. Information about the camps can be found on the DEC webpage: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/education/29.html>



The camper's family will be responsible for transportation to and from the camp, and the camper will be required either to write an article about their camping experience to be published in our newsletter, or give a short presentation to our members at the September 2013 public program. Please direct any questions to Mona at 518-745-8637. Entries must include the entrant's name, parents' names, and contact information (name, address, telephone number, and email address) along with the essay, to Mona Bearor at 4 Windy Lane, So. Glens Falls, NY 12803. Essays must be received by January 15, 2013 to be considered.

## Welcome to new chapter supporters!

As of December 1, we have 98 chapter supporters. Our most recent new chapter supporters are:

Rebecca Yates	Chestertown
Larry Deys	Delmar
Bert Weber	Lake George

Membership runs from January through December. We will be sending out renewal notices in January. In order to save on postage we send only one notice. Once again, we will be asking all renewing chapter supporters their preference for the newsletter: mailed by the post office, e-mailed to their e-mail address or reading it on our website [www.southernadirondackaudubon.org](http://www.southernadirondackaudubon.org).

Annual dues of \$10.00 may be sent to:  
Majken Sellar, 9 Allen Rd. Ext., Argyle, NY 12809



### Clean Feeders Help Keep Birds Healthy

Moldy or decomposing bird food that accumulates in tube feeders or on feeder trays can make birds sick. Bird droppings and other contaminants may also spread infectious bird diseases. Clean your feeders about once every two weeks, and more often during times of heavy use or wet weather. Wash each feeder thoroughly in hot, soapy water. If there have been reports of salmonella in your area, or if you've seen sick birds in your yard, wash your feeders and then soak or rinse them in a solution of one part vinegar to three parts water. Dry the feeders thoroughly before refilling. Make sure your feeders have no sharp edges to scratch birds; even the tiniest injury can lead to sickness if the bird comes in contact with contaminated surfaces or other infected birds.

Clean the ground below your feeders, too, to prevent a build-up of hulls, uneaten seeds, and other waste. Moldy or spoiled food is unhealthy both for birds and for your outside pets. And bird food scattered on the ground can attract unwanted rodents.

## *Winter Field Trip*

**Saturday, February 9 10:00 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Snowshoe Siamese Pond Wilderness Area**

Take a walk on the trails around 13<sup>th</sup> Lake, look for tracks in the snow, and enjoy the beauty of winter. Dress warmly, bring your snowshoes and a lunch. Warm drinks (coffee, tea, hot chocolate) will be supplied at a rustic cabin after the walk where we can eat our lunches and sit by the woodstove to warm up. Walk is dependent on sufficient snow cover and limited to 8 participants. Call Pat at 792-6846 for more information.

### **Monthly Walks at the Betar Byway**

Birding walks led by members of Southern Adirondack Audubon will not be held during the winter months. They will begin again on the first Friday of every month starting in April, weather permitting.

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## *Winter Raptor Surveys*

The first winter raptor survey in the Fort Edward Grasslands IBA will be conducted during the second week of December. Short-eared Owls have already been confirmed in the area so it should be an exciting survey! The participation of volunteers is needed to make this effort a success. If you are interested in taking part in the surveys this year, please contact Theresa Swenson at [tgswenso@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:tgswenso@gw.dec.state.ny.us).

## *Bald Eagle Monitoring*

The section of the Hudson River that runs through Moreau Lake State Park is home to wintering Bald Eagles. Eagle-watch monitoring will be conducted by the park naturalist on Fridays in December from 9:30 to 12. (The survey on the December 21<sup>st</sup> will be from 8:30 to 11.) If you are interested in participating, or would like more information about the project, call the park office at 793-0511. Registration is required.

## *Build a Rustic Birdhouse*

Former Southern Adirondack Audubon president, Don Polunci, will hold the following workshop at the Adirondack Folk School in Lake Luzerne.

Anyone can learn to make a rustic birdhouse in just a few hours. A birdhouse is a simple structure with seven basic parts—two sides, a front and back, a bottom, and two pieces for the top. Power tools are not necessary to cut the wood; it can be done with a handsaw. Using rough-cut lumber, we will construct a rustic birdhouse that can be functional and/or decorative. Each workshop participant will be able to choose from several birdhouse designs. There will be a short discussion about nesting birds, feeding birds and suitable houses for area birds. Participants are encouraged to bring objects (such as old drawer pulls, doorknobs, hardware, etc.) from home. Children 10 years of age and older must be accompanied by an adult.



January 26, 2013 Saturday  
March 30, 2013 Sunday  
Length of class: ½ Day  
Hours: 9 AM-Noon  
Number of Students: 10-12  
Materials Fee \$25.00

Adirondack Folk School  
51 Main Street  
Lake Luzerne, NY 12846  
518-696-2400  
[adirondackfolkschool.org](http://adirondackfolkschool.org)

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# CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

## December 15, 2012



The Southern Adirondack Audubon Society invites birders and nature enthusiasts to take part in the 113th annual Christmas Bird Count, to be held Saturday, December 15, 2012. Tens of thousands of volunteers will participate in over 2,000 individual counts scheduled to take place throughout the Americas from December 14, 2012 to January 5, 2013. Data which is generated will become a valuable addition to the U.S. Government's natural history monitoring database.

The public is welcome to join one of our teams as birds are counted within a 15-mile-diameter circle centered in Hudson Falls. The circle includes the city of Glens Falls, the villages of South Glens Falls, Fort Edward, and Hudson Falls, as well as much of the towns of Queensbury, Fort Edward, and Moreau. There are many diverse habitats within our count circle that makes for interesting observations. You do not need to be a bird identification expert to participate; we need birders of all skill levels, and non-birders are especially welcome to help spot birds or keep team records.

If you are interested in joining one of our count teams for either a whole or a partial day, please call Linda White at 518-792-4446 or 518-222-5675.

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## *The 2012 Finch Superflight*

If you think there is no interesting birding in fall and winter - think again! We are in the midst of one of the most exciting winter finch irruptions in over a decade. The word "irruption" in reference to birds describes a movement outside their normal range in response to lack of food. An irruption can occur at any time of year, but it is most commonly observed in the fall and winter months and associated with a southerly movement of birds.

Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Matt Young has coined the term "Superflight" to describe the incredible number of finches irrupting this fall and their extreme southerly movement. Young predicted a good irruptive year; he studies the cone and seed crop, and with his extensive knowledge of finch feeding habits, forecasts which species will move in what direction - or remain in their normal wintering range. He seems to have hit the mark this time!

So far this season, Redpolls have been reported as far south as North Carolina, Red-breasted Nuthatches and Pine Siskins are in every state in the lower 48, Red Crossbills are in Georgia, Bohemian Waxwings in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island, Evening Grosbeaks

have been seen in North Carolina and Tennessee, and Pine Grosbeaks in the Berkshires - as well as most recently in Queensbury at the Middle School, by SAAS board member Jim Ries.

Owls also exhibit irruptive behavior in response to scarcity of food. It remains to be seen whether this winter will bring large numbers of Snowy, Great Gray, or Short-eared Owls to our state. There have been no reports yet of Great Grays, only scattered reports of Snowys in the state, and a few Short-eareds have been sighted recently in Fort Edward on Fitzpatrick Road.

Birders can help researchers who study finch irruptions by reporting their sightings to Cornell Lab's eBird database. Lists of birds observed including these species are important, but lists of birds without any unusual species can also play a vital role in determining movement of species. Exploring the eBird website can keep you up to date on where birds are being reported, the latest news in birding, and rarities sighted. The eBird website can be found at [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

*-Mona Bearor*

## *A Federal Wildlife Conservation Stamp Proposal*

Many birders are aware of the Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps, commonly known as “Duck Stamps.” They are the pictorial stamps produced by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. They are not valid for postage. They were originally created in 1934 as federal licenses required for hunting migratory waterfowl. Today, Federal Duck Stamps are a vital tool for wetland conservation. Ninety-eight cents out of every dollar generated by the sale of Federal Duck Stamps goes directly to purchase or lease wetland habitat for protection in the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Federal Duck Stamp has been called one of the most successful conservation programs ever initiated and is a highly effective way to conserve America’s natural resources.

Now there is a proposal for the creation of a Federal Wildlife Conservation Stamp. A dedicated *Wildlife Conservation Stamp* could help overcome revenue shortfalls in the National Wildlife Refuge System. Wildlife watchers and birders share a passionate commitment to wildlife, but they often diverge from hunters on which habitat and Refuge priorities should be funded and emphasized. One of the advantages of having a separate Wildlife Conservation Stamp is that it could fund species and habitat projects that are sometimes short-changed in favor of game animal priorities.

Birders, photographers and wildlife watchers, through this financial avenue, could have a voice in Refuge



diversity as well as in innovative research, education and habitat programs.

You can sign the petition for the creation of the Federal Wildlife Conservation Stamp by signing on to [https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/create-wildlife-conservation-stamp-habitat-acquisition-and-conservation-wildlife/hRsmR72M?utm\\_source=wh.gov&utm\\_medium=shorturl&utm\\_campaign=shorturl](https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/create-wildlife-conservation-stamp-habitat-acquisition-and-conservation-wildlife/hRsmR72M?utm_source=wh.gov&utm_medium=shorturl&utm_campaign=shorturl)

For more information on the stamp: <http://10000birds.com/the-wildlife-conservation-stamp-an-additional-income-stream-for-our-national-wildlife-refuges.htm>

### **SAAS Board of Directors Meeting Schedule**

The SAAS Board does not meet in December.

Friday, January 18 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Meetings are held at Crandall Library and are open to the public.

Interested members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

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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	OPEN	
Secretary	Linda Hoyt	518-494-2380
Treasurer	Mona Bearor	518-745-8637
Newsletter Editor	OPEN	
Education	Mona Bearor	518-745-8637
Publicity	Carol Moyer	518-793-1960
Conservation	Jason Goldsmith	518-480-4243
Membership	Majken Sellar	518-638-8867
Website	www.southernadirondackaudubon.org	
Email SAAS:	audubon@netheaven.com	

### DIRECTORS

#### 2010-2013

Pat Fitzgerald	792-6846
Jim Ries	792-4477

#### 2011-2014

Linda Hoyt	494-2380
Sue Pierce	798-2051

#### 2012-2015

Carol Moyer	793-1960
Jason Goldsmith	480-4243

### 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:  
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.