



The Fledgling

Newsletter of the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society, Inc. (SAAS)

Vol. 40 No. 4, June — August 2023

Now in our 40th Year!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthernAdirondackAudubonSociety/>

Website: <https://www.southernadirondackaudubon.org>



Warren Green snapped this striking photo of a male Blackburnian Warbler.

June 20 program in Speculator

Warren Green will present “**Nature Images from the Adirondacks and Beyond**” on **Tuesday, June 20**, at 7:00 p.m. at the Lake Pleasant Library in Speculator, Hamilton County.

The photo-tour will offer Greene’s latest bird and wildlife images, as well as some landscape and macro images of flowers and insects. He’ll share some fun and interesting stories about his photographic adventures while traveling the Adirondacks and beyond to the New Jersey and Maine coasts from his home in Gloversville.

Greene is a native of Gloversville. He retired after 34 years at the Fulton County Probation Department and worked part time with The Family Counseling Center. For the last eight years, he has been a Fulton County Supervisor representing his ward in Gloversville. His lifelong love of nature evolved into his passion for nature photography that began in 1976.

President’s Message

Motus Operondi

By Rob Snell, SAAS President

As much as 85% of the annual mortality within a bird species occurs during migration, according to a 2020 study from Colby College in Maine.

The reasons for these deaths include fatigue, weather, collisions, habitat destruction and food scarcity.

Radio telemetry has become an integral part of understanding the risk birds take while traveling thousands of miles back and forth from their breeding and wintering grounds.

The myriad of tracking stations throughout the Americas are funded and maintained by both public and private sources, but the data gathered from them are shared through the Motus Wildlife Tracking System. The system allows researchers, educators, and conservationists to contribute to the ecology and conservation of migratory species.

You can explore Motus data

through Audubon's interactive website **Bird Migration Explorer** (<https://explorer.audubon.org/>). It provides a fascinating look at the paths that hundreds of bird species take during their migration, and insight into the dangers migrating birds face.

Because of your support, SAAS plans to erect at least one Motus receiver in our chapter area this year.

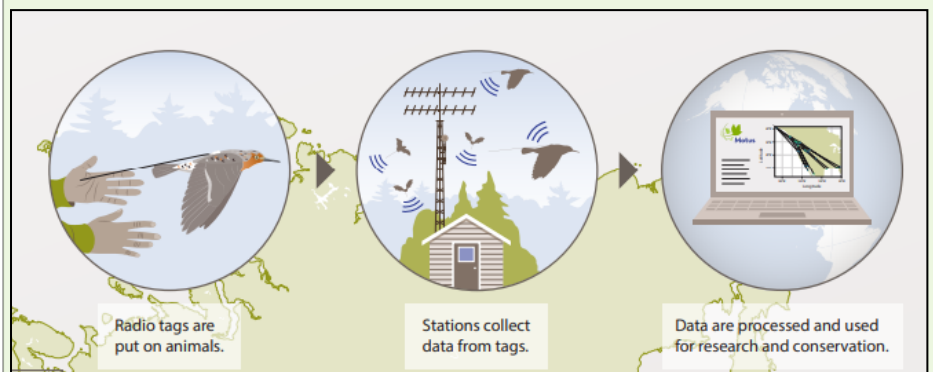
We feel that understanding the risks that birds face during their marathon journeys will allow everyone to better address their needs. If you would like to help, please consider a donation to the Motus Project at <https://www.southernadironackaudubon.org/donate>.

For a full infographic about how the Motus system works, see: <https://motus.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/MOTUS-infographic-final-rev.pdf>. Part of it is excerpted below.



SAAS President Rob Snell

Below: Images showing how the Motus system works, from the Motus website.



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Sacandaga birding trail, Page 6

Southern Adirondack Audubon Society

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Board and Committees

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(president@southernadirondackaudubon.org)
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Treasurer: Laurie Murphy
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2021-2023	Kim Atkins Peyton Atkins John Loz
2022-2024	Judy Staubo Laurie Murphy OPEN
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Board meetings are held monthly except July, August and December. Members are invited to attend.

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Conservation: OPEN
Education: OPEN
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(membership@southernadirondackaudubon.org)
Newsletter: Joyce Miller (editor@southernadirondackaudubon.org)
Programs: John Loz (Interim chair)
(programs@southernadirondackaudubon.org)
Publicity: OPEN

Chapter memberships are \$15. Renew at <https://southernadirondackaudubon.org/membership/>, or send a check using the form on the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society (SAAS) website. Contributions support SAAS's education and conservation activities in our region.

SAAS is a certified local chapter of the National Audubon Society. SAAS has approximately 600 members in Warren, Washington, northern Saratoga and southern Hamilton counties in New York State. SAAS's primary goal is to protect the environment by preserving natural habitats and promoting environmental education. Contact a board member to learn about SAAS volunteer opportunities.



Here is a sampling of Warren Green's photos.

Left: A male Black-backed Woodpecker pauses at its nest as a hungry chick peeks out.

Above: A Cape May Warbler flies from a branch.

Bottom: A Black Bear looks at the camera.

June program

Continued from Page 1

As a boy, Warren Green was most interested in butterflies and moths, and later in reptiles and amphibians. His attraction to birds only developed after he bought his first camera and tried to reproduce the types of bird images that he saw in books and magazines.

Greene has been published many times through the years in books, magazines, and calendars. He was recognized for his work by the Cape May Bird Observatory in New Jersey.

No SAAS monthly programs are scheduled for July and August.



First Saturday bird walks continue to July

Join Ray Perry and other SAAS members for morning bird walks along the beautiful Spring Run Trail in Saratoga Springs on the first Saturdays of June and July, on **June 3** and **July 1**.

So far, 129 bird species have been seen along the trail. Here's the eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L1548124>.

The one-mile trail is paved and flat. It is used for walking, running and biking, as well as birding. It offers a variety of habitats.

Bring binoculars if you have them.

Field trip guidelines

- Check the SAAS website and Facebook pages for updates on these trips.
- Please familiarize yourself with the SAAS **Field Trip Guidelines** (<https://southernadironackaudubon.org/field-trip-guidelines/>).
- SAAS strongly encourages members to follow the American Birding Association **Code of Birding Ethics** (<https://www.aba.org/aba-code-of-birding-ethics/>).

All skill levels are welcomed.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. sharp at the Spring Run Trail parking area near the corner of East Ave. and Excelsior Ave. If the parking area is full, park just slightly down the road on Excelsior Ave. in the EBI Beverage Center parking lot, adjacent to the Spring Run Trail.

No walk will be held in August.

June 11 Hebron walk

SAAS program chair John Loz will lead a guided trail walk at the Pember Nature Preserve in Hebron, Washington County, on **Sunday, June 11**, from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. Bring binoculars if you have them.

The group will learn how to identify local birds by their songs and appearance. The group will meet at the Porter Schoolhouse: 6937 State Route 22, Hebron.

The Pember Nature Preserve in Hebron encompasses 125 acres of forest, wetland, and fields on both sides of Black Creek, a tributary of the Battenkill. The mission of the Pember Nature Preserve is to provide a refuge for the region's native wildlife and plant species. Contact the Pember Museum (<https://thepember.org>) for details.

Birding festivals, events

Cornell Lab of Ornithology offers a searchable national listing of birding festivals and events (<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/birding-festivals>). They include:

- **June 2 to 4:** Great Adirondack Birding Celebration at Paul Smith's College Visitor Interpretive Center. (<https://www.paulsmithsvic.org/gabc/>).
- **June 8 to 11:** The Adirondack Boreal Birding Festival in Lake Pleasant, Hamilton County (<https://www.adirondackexperience.com/events/adirondack-boreal-birding-festival/>).
- **July 15:** New York Annual Loon Census, held from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. statewide, held by the Center for Loon Conservation in Saranac Lake (<https://www.adkloon>).



Photo show at Kelly Center in Niskayuna

SAAS and the Audubon Society of the Capital Region are co-hosting the 2022 National Audubon Photo Exhibit at the Kelly Adirondack Center of Union College in Niskayuna. The show starts Friday, June 17 and runs through Wednesday, Aug. 9. The Kelly is open Monday through Thursday (10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.), and closed during the week of July 4th.

Twelve photographs will be displayed in the restored 1935 home of conservationist Paul Schaefer and attached modern research library. Almost 2,500 photographers and videographers submitted nearly 10,000 entries to the contest. The Grand Prize winner for 2022 National Audubon Photo Exhibit Amateur Photography is Jack Zhi. He captured this scene of two White-tailed Kites in Costa Mesa, California with a Sony a9ii camera.

He said: "I studied White-tailed Kite behavior for three years before I got this close-up. It was a challenge to get the action, distance, lighting, and angles of the individuals all right at the same time. The father, who teaches his fledglings to hunt, held a vole in his talons. The fledgling flew in and, in a blink, grabbed the rodent as the father let go." White-tailed Kites are found in California and Oregon, as well as Central and South America.

Birding backpack program grows!

By Laurie Murphy,
SAAS Treasurer and Backpack
Program Coordinator

We are thrilled to report that our birding backpack program, which was hatched last fall, has now fledged!

We have 10 backpacks available for loan to library patrons in nine area libraries. Backpacks are currently available in Salem, Galway, Saratoga Springs, Bolton Landing, Speculator, Chestertown, Warrensburg, Ballston Spa, and Lake George.

We developed this program with a goal of encouraging people (old, young, and families) to spend time outdoors, explore new places, pay attention to birds and the little things in nature, and in a perfect world, ultimately become more interested in protecting our environment.



Top, left: Library director Laura Burrows displays two birding backpacks available at the Caldwell Public Library in Lake George.

Top, center: Library director Megan Baker models the backpack in the Bolton Free Library.

Top, right: Library director Alma Alvarez holds a newly-received backpack at the Town of Chester Public Library in Chester-town, Warren County.

Left: Deputy Director Karen Hickland holds the backpack delivered to the Bancroft Library in Salem, Washington County.

Right: SAAS past president John Loz poses with Shelby Burkhardt, library director at the Richards Library in Warrensburg.



Our goal is to supply each library with a second pack and also offer backpacks to other libraries that ask for them as they learn about the program. As a board, we have committed to expanding this program and are looking for donations.

- Seasonal Bingo Cards with washable markers
- Rite in the Rain Journal in which we hope people will write interesting observations or a place they enjoyed so others can see
- A laminated fold-up *Birds of New York Guide*
- A page including bird-watching locations specific to each library.

The contents of the birding backpack include:

- Two sets of good quality, durable binoculars
- The book *Birding Adventures for Kids*

Laura Burrows and her staff at Caldwell Public Library in Lake George offered input about the initial backpack content design and continued assistance.

Each backpack costs about \$200. Because we are volunteer run and have no overhead costs, 100% of

funds donated go directly to purchasing backpack supplies.

To donate to this program, you may pay by credit card on our website under the "Support SAAS" (<https://www.forms.southernadironackaudubon.org/donate/>). Please note in the comment field that you are making a birding backpack donation.

You can make checks payable to Southern Adirondack Audubon Society and mail to P.O. Box 5044, Saratoga Springs NY 12866, with a note in the memo section.

Thank you.



Left: The birding backpack contents for Bancroft Public Library in Salem, Washington County. SAAS customizes the list of birding spots for each town.

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Production of this issue of *The Fledgling* newsletter is provided by Edward Jones, 34 Congress Street, Suite 102, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

Bird ID apps

Bird identification apps are useful tools to identify birds in the field. Most offer a “sound ID” feature to help birders learn songs, or suggest the ID of a song being heard. Here are some you may want to download:

- The *Audubon Bird Guide* is a free field guide to more than 800 species of North American birds. It can also keep track of the birds you’ve seen. Visit <https://www.audubon.org/app>, which offers a video and links to download it.
- Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s popular *Merlin* app offers a free bird guide with photos, sounds, maps, and more. Download it on Google Play or the Apple App Store or visit <https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/>. The recordings come from Cornell’s Macauley Library.
- Cornell also offers *BirdNET* (<https://birdnet.cornell.edu/>).
- *Song Sleuth* (<http://www.song-sleuth.com/#/>) offers David Sibley Bird Reference information.

NYSOA meets in Sept.

The New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA) holds its New York Birders Conference in Tarrytown from Sept. 22 to 24. It is hosted by Saw Mill River Audubon in Westchester County.

Bird artist and author David Allen Sibley is the keynote speaker. A Friday night bird quiz will be led by the N.Y.S. Young Birders Club. Visit <https://www.nybirders.org> for details on workshops, research sessions, hotel reservations, meals, and field trips. Workshops will focus on birding skills, bird photography, seabird watching, and a special session by Tom Stephenson on bird sounds. Field trips fill up quickly. The registration cost increases after July 1.

Cuba trip: one spot open

SAAS and Holbrook Tours are offering a nine-day trip to Cuba in October 15-23: “[Cuba: A Mosaic of Culture, Community and Ecological Riches.](#)” One spot remains open.

Among Cuba’s 360+ recorded bird species are several endemics including the Cuban Trogon (Cuba’s na-

Walks held along the Betar Byway in May

Thirty birders attended SAAS Wildflower and Bird Walk on May 7 on the Betar Byway in South Glens Falls. It was led by wildflower author Diane Collins and newsletter editor Joyce Miller.

The group spotted or heard about 32 bird species. The checklist is posted on eBird:

<https://ebird.org/atlasny/checklist/S136508515>.

At least 13 wildflowers/plants were found: bloodroot, bluets (Quaker Ladies), dandelions, violets, garlic mustard, mayapple, ground ivy (Creeping Charlie), fringed polygala (gaywings), wildflower (wood anemone), wild oats (without flower), buttercup, skunk cabbage and common strawberry.



A second walk was held on May 21, with 33 bird species, including nesting Baltimore Orioles, and at least 15 wildflower species, including cypress spurge, celandine and foamflowers.

A female Pileated Woodpecker inspects a tree stump for carpenter ants along the Betar Byway in mid-May. Females lack the male's red forehead and red moustache. Wildflowers called bluets, or Quaker Ladies, dot the grass in the background.

tional bird), Cuban Tody, and the Bee Hummingbird, the smallest bird in the world.

A photo essay about the trip is planned in the December newsletter.

Native plant sale

Sustainable Saratoga offers its 2023 Pollinator Palooza Native Plant Sale on Sunday, June 4, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at 390 Wilton-Gansevoort Rd., Gansevoort, at the former Oligny’s Garden Center. The event offers native plants for sale, soil pH testing, children’s activities, food trucks and more. See <https://sustainablesaratoga.org/pollinator-palooza-native-plant-sale/>.

Invasive Species Awareness Week, June 5-11

New York Invasive Species Awareness Week is June 5-11, according to the Capital Region Partnership for

Regional Invasive Species Management (CR-PRISM). The CR-PRISM website (<https://www.capitalregionprism.org/>) offers more information on terrestrial and aquatic plant and animal invasive species.

The current species highlights are are:

- Spongy Moths (formerly called Gypsy Moths), a defoliating insect native to France, introduced in the U.S. in 1869. They can defoliate oak, apple, maple, hickory, birch, pine, and other trees.
- Beech Leaf Disease (BLD), first reported in Ohio in 2012, is now found in at least half of New York counties. BLD causes dark stripes between the veins of beech leaves, seen by looking up at the canopy. Beech trees are one of the most common trees in New York. Bears and other animals rely on beech nuts as a food source.
- Invasive species can be reported to <https://www.nyimaps.invasives.org/>.



Birders scan the Hudson River along the Betar Byway on May 7. The weather was sunny and warm.

Featured birding trails:

Sacandaga River Pathway

Program chair John Loz has written a detailed description with photos of the Sacandaga River Pathway in Speculator for the Birdability Map (<https://gis.audubon.org/birdability/>). The trail is located in Speculator on Route 30 near Lake Pleasant.

The Birdability Map was created by the National Audubon Society in partnership with Birdability. This non-profit organization aims to ensure that birding is available to all, regardless of mobility, visual or other accessibility issues. Volunteers from around the world contribute descriptions and photos of accessible trails to the map.

Some of Loz' photos of various sections of the trail are shown on this page. The trail is a "lollipop" (out-and-back with a loop attached). His descriptions and photos are available at Birdability's map: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/819bf15a20164b4ba5196c04f58836b4>.

The Birdability Map is one of the programs Birdability offers. Birdability focuses on people with mobility challenges, blindness or low vision, chronic illness, intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental illness, and those who are neurodivergent, deaf or hard of hearing or who have other health concerns.

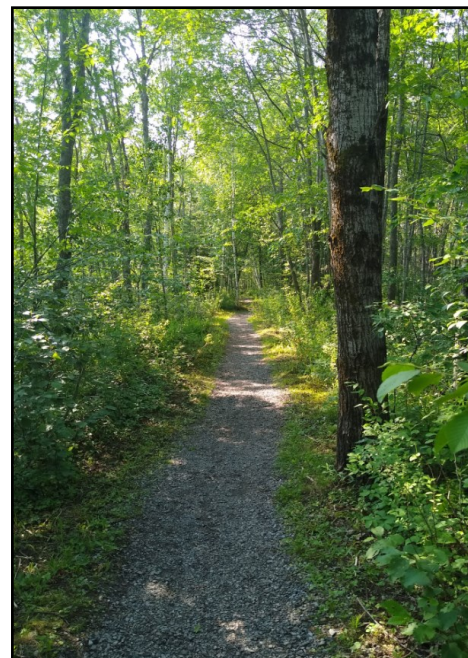
For more about Birdability, see <https://www.birdability.org/>.

For additional descriptions and photos about the trail, see:

- Visit Sacandaga: <https://www.visitsacandaga.com/sacandaga-pathway/>
- AllTrails: <https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/new-york/sacandaga-river-pathway>.



Photos of the Sacandaga River Pathway in Speculator by John Loz



About Wildflowers

Forget-me-nots

By Diane Collins

While I was staying with my daughter in Bogota, Colombia, this winter, I visited the renovated home of Simon Bolivar, known (and cherished) throughout South America as “El Libertador.”

Bolivar provided the political and military leadership that freed Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela from Spanish rule beginning in 1810. His “occasional” home in Bogota was not elaborate, really a simple country home, but now a museum with historical furnishing, like the Chapman Historical Museum in Glens Falls.

The gardens have been kept intact with lovely plants and flowers, and among them a few Forget-me-nots. These piqued my curiosity. They looked different from those I’d seen on the banks of Halfway Brook in Cole’s Woods, and along the Hudson River. And yes, actually, they were another species, with larger leaves, and flowers a bit saucer shaped.



Myosotis arvensis Forget-me-not, photographed by Diane Collins in Bogota, Colombia.

There are 11 species of Forget-me-nots, most originating in Europe and Asia. Of the two most common in North America, one is native and the other a European immigrant. Both are found along streams and in wet places, and not always easy to tell apart. The European immigrant is *Myosotis scorpiodes*. The species name comes from the raceme of blossoms that curl over like a scorpion’s tail.

The native, *Myosotis laxa*, is less tall and likes it very wet, even growing in shallow brooks. *Laxa* means “open,”

referring to looser racemes of flowers. The genus name *Myosotis* means “mouse-ear” and refers to leaf shape. Both are perennial and belong to the Borage family. And both can become “escapees” (due to abundance of miniscule pollen and seeds), showing up in our gardens even if not planted.

At the time I wrote this article in late April, there were carpets of tiny Bluets along the Betar Byway trail. Bluets, with four blue petals and bright yellow centers, are often mistaken for Forget-me-nots, which have five petals. Forget-me-nots bloom later in May along moist banks.

Their common names have charm and relevance. Bluets are called Quaker Ladies as they resemble pretty hats, and Forget-me-nots are also known as Scorpion Grass. Forget-me-nots symbolize true love and the promise of remembrance for many.

Wildflower photographer Diane Collins is the author of several local wildflower booklets, including the new Springtime Birds & Wildflowers along the Betar Byway, South Glens Falls. See <http://www.wildflowersinyourownbackyard.com>.



Gordie Ellmers’ photos of a male and female Common Yellowthroat show the typically perky poses of these small warblers.

Species Spotlight

Common Yellowthroat

By Joyce Miller, SAAS Newsletter Editor

Walk along any trail in the summer in our area, and you’re likely to encounter the pert Common Yellowthroat. You’ll probably hear this small warbler before you see it: its “witchety witchety witchety” song is

easy to identify. It also has a rattling, scolding call.

The female lacks the male’s black mask, but has the bright yellow throat that gives this species its name.

Yellowthroats spend the winter in Central America and the southern United States. In the spring, they fly north to breed across North America, usually raising two broods a year.

They prefer marshy, shrubby habitats. They feed by hopping around in bushes and shrubs to hunt for grasshoppers, beetles, caterpillars and other insects.

According to the Audubon Field Guide website about Common Yellowthroats (<https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/common-yellowthroat>), the “male displays to female during courtship by flicking wings and tail, following her closely, and performing a flight display: flying up to 25-100’ in the air and returning to another low perch, calling and singing.” Watch for this behavior on your summertime walks.

To learn more about this charming warbler, see this All About Birds page from Cornell Lab of Ornithology: https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Common_Yellowthroat.

Summer feeding tips

Many birders enjoy keeping feeders up for the summer — unless bears are common in your area, of course. Make sure to clean your feeders:

- Sugar water in hummingbird feeders should be changed every three to five days, and more often in hot weather to prevent mold and fermentation.
- Scrub seed feeders with a mild bleach solution every two weeks to avoid spreading salmonella and other infections.

See Cornell's All About Birds page "How To Clean Your Bird Feeder" (<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/how-to-clean-your-bird-feeder/#>).

Bird atlasers sought

With two years remaining in the five-year project, the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas III (NYSBBAIII) is seeking area birders to cover lightly-birded areas across the state.

NYSBBAIII divided the state into a grid pattern with certain priority blocks. Many priority blocks are within the SAAS membership area.

Birders visit specific priority blocks to look for evidence of bird breeding activity: seeing a pair of birds in likely nesting habitat, defending territory, carrying food back to a nest, or feeding fledglings, for instance. Observations are recorded in the eBird database, run by Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Current atlas results are posted on the Atlas Effort Map (<https://ebird.org/atlasny/effortmap>). Birders can zoom in to a specific area to see which species were seen.

Atlasing is a great way to increase one's birding skills. See the NYSBBA III website (<https://ebird.org/atlasny/home>) to see which atlas blocks need attention. The Atlas Essentials page offers a good overview of the project: <https://ebird.org/atlasny/about/atlas-essentials>.

This is the third time that New York has done an atlas project. The second atlas project, held 20 years ago, found evidence that 251 bird species were breeding in the state.

To see when specific bird species breed in our area, see the [N.Y. Breeding Guideline Bar Chart](#). Bird breeding time periods are shown in green.

Renew for 2023 and get a chance to win this poster!

SAAS memberships run the calendar year, from January to December. Chapter memberships are only \$15.

If you join as a chapter supporter or renew your support by **Friday, July 7**, you'll receive three raffle entries to win this 2018 Audubon Photo Award winning Top 100 photo, below, by amateur photographer Judy Lynn Malloch. The bird is a Pyrrhuloxia, photographed at the Santa Clara Ranch, McCook, Texas.

"At Santa Clara, a wildlife sanctuary in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, birds at a watering hole were exhibiting territorial behavior," said Malloch. "I was especially captivated by the aggressive posture of this Pyrrhuloxia, a close relative of the Northern Cardinal. It may be small, but it's feisty."

This photo was on national tour in 2019. It is approximately 36" wide by 24" tall, mounted on foam board, and can be hung as is. SAAS members in Ballston Spa, Queensbury and the Town of Day have won pre-



SAAS planned giving

By Judy Staubo
SAAS Board Member

Do you have a dream? Or maybe a good idea? Birders think about conservation and protection. You can join the efforts to help by:

- Donating to SAAS today
- Leaving a gift to SAAS in your will
- Making a contribution via your IRA.

Each of your choices could have tax advantages. Talk with your financial advisors.

To donate to SAAS, you may:

- visit our website under "Support SAAS" (<https://www.forms.southernadirdackaudubon.org/donate/>) to pay by credit card, or
- make checks payable to Southern Adirondack Audubon Society and mail to P.O. Box 5044, Saratoga Springs NY 12866.

Thank you.

vious posters.

An additional ticket will be allotted for every \$5 donated through the SAAS membership or donation page. Contributions support SAAS's educational and conservation activities in our region.

Approximately 600 members of National Audubon live in our chapter area. Many National members also become chapter supporter members to financially support SAAS's local efforts.

Renew your annual membership for 2023 at the SAAS Membership page (<https://www.southernadirdackaudubon.org/membership/>).

This colorful Pyrrhuloxia was photographed in Texas. It is a relative of our North Cardinal.