



THE KESTREL

Onondaga Audubon Society
A Chapter of National Audubon

Serving Cayuga, Cortland, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, Tompkins Counties and other areas of Central and Northern New York for 58 years.

The Audubon chapter for the Eastern Lake Ontario basin.

New Series Volume 40 - Number 3

June / July / August 2009

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are free and open to the public. Novice birders (and non-birders too!) are welcome. If you are planning to join us on a field trip, you should notify the leader whose telephone number is listed with the trip details. Please call at a reasonable hour as most birders turn in early. Carpooling from the meeting place is encouraged. If your schedule allows you to join the carpool, do remember to offer to help the driver with the cost of gas.

Occasionally changes in published field trips and/or additional trips are announced on the OAS website <http://www.onondagaaudubon.org>.

THE ROME SAND PLAINS

June 13th, Saturday 1/2 day
Brenda Best 363-2906

The Rome Sand Plains is a unique inland pine barren owned and protected by five groups, including NYSDEC, The Nature Conservancy, and the Izaak Walton League. There are several marked trails. We will walk DEC's Sand Dune trail, which is an easy trek, looking and listening for late migrants and resident breeders.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As Onondaga Audubon approaches the end of our Fiscal year 2008-09, I am pleased to be able to report it has been a year of continued progress. Highlights include:

- Board building efforts that have resulted in several excellent additions to the board and enhanced activities by current board members.
- The addition of Dr David G. Muir as Sanctuary chairperson to oversee Onondaga Audubon's crown jewels, our sanctuaries. Dave will be working to build the sanctuary committee as we seek to expand

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CONSERVATION

THE GREEN ECONOMY

by Thomas Riley, Conservation Chair

Below is the text of a letter to Governor Paterson from Onondaga Audubon and co-signed by 17 Audubon New York chapters.

May 12, 2009

Governor Paterson,

We are excited about the possibilities that a Green Economy could mean for New York State. As you have articulated so well yourself, investing in energy conservation, alternative energy and a healthy environment will create jobs and make New York a better place to do business and live a productive life. As you lead our state out of financial difficulties we wanted to offer up a suggestion.

We believe that you have a powerful tool at your disposal to make these growth initiatives happen. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has an enviable record of productivity and effectiveness in whatever task the citizens of New York have asked of it. It has successfully



Photo by Julie Covey

Ecotourism will become increasingly important in the Green Economy. Photo by the editor.

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THE KESTREL

Vol. 40 - No. 3

June / July / August 2009

Editor Julie Covey
Distribution Elizabeth Chapman

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Richardson, George Spak,
Thomas Riley.

Onondaga Audubon Society, Inc. is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Meetings will be held at various sites primarily within Onondaga County on different dates during different months from September to May, excluding January and February. Please check *The Kestrel* and/or <http://www.onondagaaudubon.org> for details on each monthly meeting's date and time. Meetings usually run approximately two hours long. Field trips are held year round to observe birds, and other interesting aspects of nature. All programs and field trips are free and open to the public.

OAS owns and operates two sanctuaries on Lake Ontario: Derby Hill Bird Observatory and Richard A. Noyes Sanctuary. Derby Hill is an important site for spring hawk migration. Noyes Sanctuary provides a variety of scenic and birding opportunities in all seasons. Both sanctuaries have maintained trails and are free and open to the public, dawn to dusk.

Chapter only members receive *The Kestrel* newsletter. Joint members with National Audubon receive *The Kestrel* plus Audubon Magazine. Onondaga Audubon encourages membership in both National Audubon and the local chapter. Members are encouraged to actively participate as volunteers in all functions of Onondaga Audubon.

Problems with subscriptions should be referred to membership chair, Elizabeth Chapman.

Letters to the Editor may be sent to:

Onondaga Audubon Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 620, Syracuse, NY 13201
Phone 315-771-6209
<http://www.onondagaaudubon.org>

The mission of the Onondaga Audubon Society is to engender in the people of the Central New York Community a greater appreciation of wildlife, land, water, and other natural resources. The members of Onondaga Audubon believe this will lead to the wiser use of these resources and encourage this result through our programs, field trips, sanctuary management and environmental education.

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Onondaga Audubon Society Chapter Membership Application

For information on National Audubon Society membership please visit the OAS website: <http://www.onondagaaudubon.org>.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN:

To enroll as a member of the Onondaga Audubon Society chapter only please send your name, address, and a check for \$15, made payable to the Onondaga Audubon Society, to:

Elizabeth Chapman
250 Oarlock Circle
East Syracuse NY 13057

You will receive The Kestrel newsletter several times per year.

Onondaga Audubon Society Chapter Code:

RO5
7XCH



ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUMMER PROGRAMS

There are no summer programs scheduled as of the time this newsletter's printing, but please check the OAS website of <http://www.onondagaaudubon.org> for a possible program in August.

ANNUAL PICNIC

On Saturday, June 13th Onondaga Audubon Society will be holding its First Annual Picnic at Clark Reservation State Park, near Jamesville. The picnic begins at around 12PM and will go all afternoon. Hot dogs, hamburgers and vegetable based burgers will be supplied. Please bring a dish to pass and share. Plastic cups, paper plates and utensils will be provided. Please RSVP with Rick Barrett by June 5th at 315-637-5677.

We look forward to seeing you there!

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transformed itself from a game focused agency in the 1960's into a sophisticated monitor of and guardian of our environment. Long a model of government efficiency and accountability it is highly regarded by the citizens of the state as well as many professionals across the country. It has consistently stepped up to address the challenges of our changing environment. We believe it is ready for another transformation.

We want to encourage you to think about the DEC spearheading the Green Economy initiatives. A clean energy future is a critical part of that economy. As New York State focuses on creating new sources of energy it will be important that the sources are sustainable and do not compromise the natural areas of our state. Environment reviews of new energy projects are going to be necessary to validate their sustainability and to protect New York's wildlife resources. These reviews will need scientists, technicians, managers and engineers to make them happen. The good news is that the DEC is experienced and proficient with interstate and agency project management and with proper staffing levels would be ready to hit the ground running. We believe that sending the message to the current staff of the DEC that no reductions are planned and that additional staff will be hired would indicate that you are serious about a Green Economy for New York.

Part of the Green Economy will be the continued growth of New York as an ecotourism destination. Being within a day's drive of 1/3 of the country's population we have the outstanding natural beauty of the Adirondacks, Catskills, Finger Lakes, Great Lakes, Long Island Sound and the Hudson River. Open Space and Smart Growth initiatives are going to be even more important and will require additional resources to integrate green energy projects while maintaining the natural appeal of the rural areas of the state. It will be important to see that these regions are enhanced for the qualities that make them so special. The DEC has long been a leader in the protection of these resources. In collaboration with other agencies, such as the Empire State Development Corporation, the DEC is well positioned to guide the development of New York as a destination for ecotourism. Partnerships between the DEC, other agencies and NGOs will maximize the opportunities to capitalize on ecotourism revenue.

We are all challenged by the economic realities of 2009. However we want to encourage you to continue on the course of investment in the environment. We believe this will pay us back many times over. While we do not want to burden the already overworked staff of the Department of Environmental Conservation we do look to them as the most likely candidates to

take the lead in making a Green Economy a reality in New York State.

HILL AND HOLLOW PLAN

The NYSDEC is requesting public comments about the future of the three areas in the Hill and Hollow Management Area. Those three areas are Morgan Hill State Forest, Kettlebail State Forest and Labrador Hollow Unique Area. They will use these comments to help them prepare a draft Unit Management Plan. When the draft plan is published the public will be able to comment again. The DEC is accepting comments from the public until June 6. It is unlikely that you will receive this newsletter in time to comment. However if you do the contact info is:

Mark L. Zubal, Senior Forester
New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation
1285 Fisher Avenue
Cortland, New York 13045-1090
mlzubal@gw.dec.state.ny.us

You can request an information sheet on the process for developing the Unit Management Plan from the DEC or email me and I can forward a copy to you. Our chapter is commenting and will keep the membership aware of the opportunity to comment on the final draft.

ONONDAGA CREEK FOLLOW-UP

The latest draft of the Onondaga Creek Revitalization Plan is available for public review and comment. You can see the draft plan at this website: <http://www.esf.edu/onondagacreek/>

In addition anyone is welcome to use the Onondaga Environmental Institute's ftp site to download chapters of the plan. To access the ftp site:

1. Go to the ftp site: <ftp://oei2.org>
2. Download OCRP documents to your computer

Or you request the plan on a CD by contacting Meredith Perreault at mperreault@oei2.org or 472-2150 x22. They are accepting email or letter comments on the plan for at least another 4 months.

Tom Riley, Conservation chair
tsriley@hughes.net



The Sanctuary Committee for Noyes Sanctuary and Derby Hill Bird Observatory is reorganizing and expanding this summer. Volunteers are needed to fill positions. Those interested in helping, please contact David Muir at (315) 673-4875 or email at dmuirg@gmail.com.

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President's Report *continued from page 1*

volunteer participation in all OAS efforts. There are a myriad of exciting opportunities for volunteers so anyone who wishes to join the OAS 2010 team please contact me at goshawk@gisco.net or 315-771-6902.

- We welcome our new volunteer Webmaster Stephen Boss of Camillus and thank outgoing Webmaster Tom Carrolan for his past efforts.
- We are financially at least breaking even, which in these times is an accomplishment. Many thanks to all who have contributed your precious dollars this year. The ongoing support of our members and friends is critical to achieving our mission.
- We began an enhanced educational effort for a school group, general visitors and public field trips to Derby Hill this spring. Hopefully grant applications submitted will be funded and these efforts can be greatly enhanced in 2010.
- Achieved reasonable attendance at our program meetings. If members have thoughts on any aspect of these meetings please share them with me.
- Paul Richardson has succeeded Marge Rusk as field trip chairperson. Welcome Paul and many thanks to Marge, one of the OAS longest serving volunteers, for her years of service.
- Continued expansion of our conservation efforts locally and statewide under the direction of Conservation Chair

Tom Riley. Efforts included Adoption of the Onondaga Lake IBA in conjunction with the Montezuma Audubon Center and Honeywell Corporation. OAS is once again becoming a significant player on the Central and Northern New York Conservation Scene.

- Continued close cooperation with Audubon New York and the Montezuma Audubon Center. Increased cooperative efforts between all parts of the Audubon family are paying ever-increasing dividends.
- Continued the Derby Hill Daily Hawk count begun in 1979 this year under the direction of staff ornithologist Kyle Wright. It has been a fun and interesting year with many eagles, two Swainson's Hawks and nearly a dozen and a half of Sandhill Cranes.

I could drone on and on, something those who know me well claim I do, so I will restrain that tendency here. Despite these OAS successes this year, there remains much to do to manage our sanctuaries, expand educational programs, achieve good conservation results and have fun learning about nature along the way. The OAS continues to seek enthusiastic volunteers wishing to work in a positive organization-building atmosphere with fun people. I hope that some of you who read this would like to help on committees, projects and board efforts that fit your interest. If so please let me know and the OAS will put you to working on efforts that help birds and people. May the joy and beauty of nature fill your world.

Gerry Smith, Onondaga Audubon President