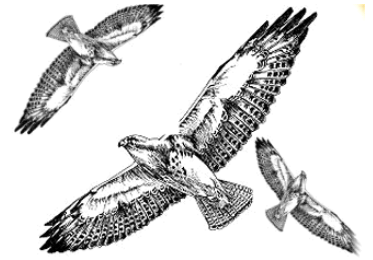


The Kettle



Straits Area Audubon Society Newsletter Est. 1983

March 2011 Vol.12 No 3 - Page 1

SAAS meetings are held at 6:30 pm. on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, September through May at the Cheboygan Area Public Library, 100 S. Bailey St. Refreshments will be provided and you may participate in door prize and raffle drawings.

The scheduling of a meeting or program in the library does not in any way constitute an endorsement by the library of the group, its activities, or of the ideas and opinions expressed during the course of meetings or programs.

SAAS thanks Roger and Ann Benter and **Williams Office Equipment** for donating printing costs for **The Kettle** and **Benter Chiropractic** for hosting www.straitsareaaudubon.org.

Straits Area Audubon Society
c/o Rosanne Rynerson
10490 E. U.S. 23
Cheboygan, MI 49721

Mission Statement: The mission of the Straits Area Audubon Society is to educate the community, including its children, about conservation and enjoyment of the natural world with emphasis on the local natural communities of wildlife. This will be accomplished through regular seasonal meetings and by sponsoring fieldtrips, classroom studies and field studies.

Join Straits Area Audubon Society

NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Make checks payable to: Straits Area Audubon Society:
Single Membership: \$12
Family Membership: \$15

Please mail checks to:
Rosanne Rynerson - Treasurer
10490 E. U.S. 23
Cheboygan, MI 49721

SAAS Events Calendar

Upcoming Programs

Mar.9 2011	<p>The Big Wild <i>by Scott Whitcomb</i></p> <p>As Forest Manager of Pigeon River Country State Forest, Scott will share the wonders of this jewel of the lower peninsula. With 105,000 acres, Pigeon River Country provides a home for the largest herd of wild elk east of the Mississippi. It offers some of the best hiking and cross-country skiing trails in Michigan, as well as bird and wildlife-watching opportunities. Ernest Hemingway called this land the "pine barrens of Michigan" and it was fondly dubbed the "Big Wild" by Michigan conservationist P.J. Lovejoy.</p>
-----------------------	---

April.13 2011	<p>Snakes Alive ! <i>by Jim McGrath</i></p> <p>This special Earth Day program will feature the founder of Nature Discovery, a Lansing-based nature education company. Jim's presentation will inspire both awe and respect for these maligned creatures that have succeeded in their way of making a living since before the time of the dinosaurs. He will discuss their role in the environment and specialized adaptations. Jim will bring many species of snakes that live in Michigan and make these gentle creatures available for program attendees to closely inspect and handle.</p>
--------------------------	--

May.11 2011	<p>Caribou Summer – Secrets of the Tundra <i>by Kathy and Jim Bricker</i></p> <p>Join biologists and adventurers Kathy and Jim to hear about their seven-week-long canoe trip to the tundra's barren grounds on Canada's Arctic Circle. Camping alone in this vast land of millions of square miles of majestic wilderness, you will discover Arctic wildflowers and birds, grizzly bears, and other wildlife. The Brickers were fortunate to spend many days among the barren ground caribou as they migrated through the area.</p>
------------------------	---

Upcoming Field Trips

Mar. 26 2011	<p>Making Maple Syrup with Will Mandrick</p> <p>Come on March 26 at 11 am to see how maple syrup is made the traditional way. Will Mandrick runs a small sugar shack on his property by Munro Lake. He has invited SAAS to tour his sugar bush. If the weather cooperates this</p>
-------------------------	---

Upcoming Field Trips [CONT.]

	<p>spring, Will should be very busy collecting sap and working the boiler by this date. To find Will's place, go west on Levering Road to 2 miles west of I-75. Turn south (left) on Heilman Road to where the pavement ends. Turn right on Munro Lake Access Rd. and go 2 miles to 10150 W. Munro Lake Drive. Look for "The Mandricks" sign on your right.</p>
--	---

April 8 2011	<p>Third Annual Headlands Park Potluck</p> <p>Owl banding and stargazing at 6:30 pm on April 8, SAAS members and guests will gather at the Guest House at the Headlands Park for a potluck dinner. Afterward, we will help Ed Pike set up mist nests and an owl calling station on-site. Ed targets saw-whet owls, with boreal and long-eared owls also possible. The first net check will be about 30 minutes after sunset. Any captured owls will be measured, aged, sexed, banded, photographed, and released. Ed will demonstrate techniques that biologists use to learn more about these nocturnal hunters and describe his findings during decades of banding. Inbetween checking the nets, we will learn about the stars and constellations either inside or outdoors if weather permits. Stay as late as you like. Up to ten people will stay overnight, on a first-come basis. Contact Jim Bricker, 231-627-4830, to reserve your space. The Emmet County Headlands Park is located just west of Mackinaw City. From the entrance, follow the signs to the Guest House.</p>
-------------------------	--

April 9 2011	<p>Hawk Watch in Mackinaw City</p> <p>At 10 am on April 9, Headlands over-nighters and others are invited to help survey hawks as they migrate over the tip of the mitt. We will meet at the Mackinaw City historic park opposite the entrance to the Headlands. Dress warmly, bring a lawn chair and binoculars, and enjoy the spectacle of hawks and eagles as they kettle high overhead on thermals. Migrating northern shrikes, blue jays, northern flickers, and others are possible. About noon, we will take brown-bag lunches to the Headlands Guest House. Anyone who wishes may stay overnight on Saturday for more owl banding and star gazing.</p>
-------------------------	---

SAAS CHAPTER NOTES

Request for Field Trip leaders
By Jim Bricker

I would welcome SAAS volunteers to lead field trips, either a nature walk or hike or bike ride to your favorite place. Please contact me at 231-627-4830. We can cover some expenses.

SAAS CHAPTER NOTES [cont.]

2011 Earth Week Plus

By Kathy Bricker

The main contribution by SAAS to the 2011 Earth Day will be bringing Jim McGrath of Nature Discovery to Cheboygan to talk about snakes (see April meeting announcement). However, many of our members are helping people from other community groups to plan a broader celebration of Earth Day, building on the 2010 Earth Week. Your help is invited on either the Program, Publicity, or Fundraising Committees. Please contact Mr. Laren Corie, larencorie@axilar.net or Judi Chimner, judichimner@yahoo.com, to share your talents, have fun, and make Earth Week Plus a success.

Safe Passage Great Lakes

by Detroit Audubon Society

With one simple act, you can save money, save energy, and save birds. Turn the lights off or draw your blinds or curtains between dusk and dawn every night from March 15 through May 31 and from August 15 through October 30. Scientists estimate that nearly one billion birds are killed every year due to lighted buildings, especially multi-story office buildings. During migration, any lights can interfere with the navigation system of birds flying at tree-top level or over cities. Birds either fly in circles around the building and die of exhaustion, or collide with windows. For more information, contact Detroit Audubon Society, at 248-545-2929 or www.detroitaudubon.org

Lighting Nominations Sought

by Kathy Bricker

SAAS is again invited to submit a nomination for a lighting award for a Cheboygan County business which installed responsible outdoor lighting that ensures safety without ruining views of the night sky. Please contact me as soon as possible with your suggestions, at 231-627-4830.

Florida Bird

Common Moorhen -- Royal Palm, Everglades N. P.



Photo by Jack Kirby

Pine Siskins

By Jim Bricker



Hi All, This has to be the year of the pine siskins! I just bought my 8th 50 pound bag of Thistle seed and I will buy another tomorrow. Help! This is the way it is every day, all day at the Dotski Road feeders. The siskins have a nickname for me - they call me "Thistle"

Photos by Jim Bricker



Winter 2011 Trip January

01/21/11 Left Cheboygan with snow-covered roads, 6 degrees and snowing. It was so cold with the wind chill from driving that our windshield wiper fluid froze, full of slush. Roy added straight alcohol to reservoir and that solved the problem.

01/23/11 We crossed the Mississippi today at 11:25 guided by a great blue heron onto the bridge and greeted by a red-tailed hawk on the western side. We are making good time, stopping for the day between 4:00 and 5:00.

01/24/11 It is a no news day when the important report is sampling the McDonald's Maple Fruity Oatmeal for breakfast. Pretty good, too! Arrived KOA in Baton Rouge in rain at 56 degrees. To us, this is very good weather. Black vultures were our birds of the day.

01/26/11 In Creole country and enjoying the Black Voodoo beer by Dixie Brewing Company along with crab/shrimp/corn chowder and red beans, sausage and rice at Oak Alley Plantation. The most interesting plantation, though, was Laura, a Creole sugar cane plantation restored to the 1830's and containing the original building and several slave quarters buildings along with a guided tour explaining the area and this plantation's history. The history was documented by Laura, the last descendant of the original owners, who sold the plantation and moved to New Orleans. This is a must see on the Great River Road (Mississippi.) We also visited Oakley, a cotton plantation where John James Audubon spent time viewing, researching and drawing animals and birds for his Elephantine series of very large drawings meant to be collected and bound into books by the collectors. We didn't see much in the way of birds, however. Lady (our Husky) spooked a long horn cow who trumpeted us off the farm area. What we did see of area interest were communities completely cut off from nearby land whose only mode of transportation between themselves and the mainland was boats. This was between Baton Rouge and New Orleans on Highway 55 by Lake Maurepas. We saw a bit of Baton Rouge but are saving it for another trip.

1/28/11 Arrived Port Arthur, TX through a boring stretch of very flat land. The big deal for the next few days was the number of feral cats at the park. Lady was tormented and mesmerized by them at the same time. Obsessed wouldn't be too strong a word and for two days, she was a dog possessed by keeping track of six cats. Too windy to bird watch.

1/31/11 Traveled to Victoria. Vultures and hawks were common along the way. Spotted belted kingfishers, great blue heron, white heron and cormorants along the Navidad River, as well as a crested caracara flying along the highway looking for road kill.

Victoria is a lovely, historic Texas town with the traditional plaza in the center of town. The day reached 78 degrees and it was very pleasant to stroll around town, take coffee and bread pudding and butter pecan pie at the local coffee shop and sit in DeLeon Plaza for a shady respite.

Love being on the road and in warmer weather. End of January

Barred Owls

by Jack and Bev Kirby

These young barred owls had only been out of the nest for 4 days when we saw them sitting on a limb of a live oak tree. Viewed at Mahogany Hammock in Everglades National Park.



Photo by Jack Kirby

Note from the Editor:

Jack Kirby [jskirby@wowway.com]

All articles and photos for THE KETTLE should be submitted to the editor's e-mail box one week BEFORE the end of a publication month. This will allow the e-mail edition to be sent out by the first of the month and the printed edition to be mailed by the 4th day of the month. Thank you.