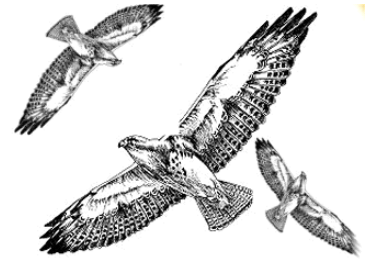


The Kettle



Straits Area Audubon Society Newsletter Est. 1983

May 2011 Vol.12 No 5 - 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	
<p>May 11 Wed 6:30 PM</p>	<p>Caribou Summer – Secrets of the Tundra <i>by Kathy and Jim Bricker</i></p> <p>NOTE: THIS MEETING WILL BE IN THE CHEBOYGAN HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM.</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>
<p>Jun 8 Wed 3:00 PM</p>	<p>Grass Bay Nature Hike and Potluck</p> <p>Stroll to Lake Huron through the Michigan Nature Conservancy's Grass Bay Preserve with accomplished naturalists. Meet at Thirsty's Bar and Grill on U.S. 23 S at 3 p.m. Following the hike will be a potluck meal starting about 5:30 p.m., at the home of Roger and Anne Benter, 4803 Grass Bay Trail, at the end of the road past the entrance to Cheboygan State Park. All are welcome to the potluck, even if you cannot join the hike. Call Benters at 627-3992 for directions</p>
Upcoming Field Trips	
<p>May 21 Sat. 6:00AM</p>	<p>Big Birding Day</p> <p>Join this annual all out effort to see as many species of birds as we can in one day. This main fund raiser for the Straits Area Audubon Society lets people pledge an amount per species seen, whether or not they can join the birdwatching. Typically around 100 species are found, so a ten-cent pledge equals a donation of about \$10. Contact Kathy Bricker to pledge, at 627-4830. Birdwatchers will meet at 6 am in Mackinaw City at the highway rest area. Guests and beginners are welcome. Pack snacks and a lunch. We have loaner Audubon binoculars, bird books, and species lists for use by participants.</p>
<p>May 25 Wed 9:00AM</p>	<p>Orchid Trip with Steve Baker</p> <p>Join northern Michigan's orchid expert Steve Baker to see some of our rare species. We will start at Emmet County's [cont]</p>

Upcoming Field Trips [cont.]	
<p>May 25 Wed 9:00AM</p>	<p>Headlands Park just west of Mackinaw City and continue to Wilderness State Park. We hope to see blossoms of pink and yellow ladyslippers, calypso and ram's-head orchids. We also will search for striped and early coralroots, the saprophytic orchids that lack chlorophyll and obtain food from organic matter. This four hour leisurely trip will end with a optional lunch in Mackinaw City. Limit 15 people; registration required; call Steve Baker at 238-8723.</p>
SAAS CHAPTER NOTES	
<p>Request for Field Trip Leaders <i>by Jim Bricker</i></p> <p>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.</p>	
<p>Nominating Committee <i>by Alice MacFarland</i></p> <p>The nominating committee wants YOUR ideas for volunteer roles. As a member of SAAS, you can nominate someone, including yourself. Steve Baker, Kathy Bricker, and I are searching for candidates to fill the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer positions, and identify people for other volunteer posts as well. Please contact me at 231-597-8173 or macfarlands@charter.net with ideas by April 20.</p>	
<p>Audubon Grant-voting time <i>by Kathy Bricker</i></p> <p>SAAS holds its annual fundraiser on the Big Birding Day on May 19. In each of the last two years, more than \$500 was raised and spent on grants and projects selected by members. By phone, mail, or email, each member can pledge a donation beyond membership of XX cents per species seen. Usually, we locate slightly more than 100 species, so a pledge of ten cents per species is about \$10. Each member may cast five votes for any combination of the following projects, which were suggested by our members.</p> <p>You may either pledge or vote by attending the May meeting, contacting me (231-627-4830) or kathyhomeaccount@hotmail.com or writing Rose Rynerson at the address on this newsletter.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partner with Mackinaw City Historical Village to erect an informational sign across from Headlands about raptors and other migrants that use the area. 2. Offer a summer nature camp scholarship to Cheboygan student who has proven an interest in nature and commitment to conservation. 	

SAAS CHAPTER NOTES [cont.]

3. Encourage people to switch to night-sky-friendly lighting.
4. Support owl research during their migration through the Straits of Mackinaw region.
5. Support migration research at Whitefish Point Bird Observatory.
6. Buy one or more of the EarthWeekPlus conservation films to donate to Cheboygan and/or Indian River Libraries [WaterWorld, Dirt the Movie, Gasland, and/or Six Degrees Could Change the World].
7. Create and decorate an SAAS Christmas tree to display and possibly raffle at the Cheboygan Area Historical Society's annual event.
8. Establish a more formal spring hawk watch in Mackinaw City by paying a modest honorarium to volunteer counters to help cover mileage costs;
9. Help with natural history interpretation / signs / boardwalks etc. along Gaylord to Mackinaw or Rogers City to Cheboygan bicycle/hiking trails.

Lighting Design Awards

by Kathy Bricker

On April 21, the SAAS nominee Rehmann Group won a night-sky friendly lighting award. This financial consulting firm joined past winners Burt Lake Springs Resort Association, Inverness Dairy, and Faith Baptist Church, all of Cheboygan County. The Outdoor Lighting Forum educates designers, architects, planners, and the public about outdoor lighting and how to preserve the dark night sky.



SAAS Kathy Bricker presents the Gary Williams award to Annette Eustice of the Rehmann Group. *Jim Bricker*

Youth Scholarship for Summer Camp Offered by SAAS

by Jim Bricker

SAAS Members in May 2010 voted to support a Cheboygan County child to attend a summer nature camp. Applications are now being taken, with a deadline of May 15. To apply, students will explain in words or art (1 or 2 sheets of paper) why they want to learn more about the outdoors. Please provide contact information, birth date and session of interest. Include a parent's name and signature indicating that if funded, they will arrange for transportation. Submit the application to Jim Bricker, pivot77777@hotmail.com or 4483 E. Dotski Rd., Cheboygan. The winning student will be asked to attend a fall SAAS meeting to describe his or her experience. The scholarship money may apply to either the Indian River nature camp featuring naturalist Mike Supernault or the Lansing area Nature Discovery Camp in Williamston, where lodging can be arranged through SAAS with owner and naturalist Jim McGrath. The Indian River Natural History Field School targets students 6 to 10 years old. Available dates are June 20 to 22, July 11 to 14; July 18 to 21, all from 9:00 to 12:30. For Nature Discovery Camp, students must be 10 years or older. The Nature Discovery offerings include Field Birding June 20 to 23; Wetland Exploration July 18 to 21; Entomology August 29 to September 1.

EarthWeekPlus

Without question, EarthWeekPlus was the largest and most successful celebration of Earth Day in Cheboygan County's history. The number of events, number of attendees, and number of children all exceeded last year. Enjoy a photo review at the June 8 summer potluck.

Kathy Bricker

This delicate dragonfly regaled nature-lovers on a May SAAS field trip in 2010. *Kathy Bricker*



Field Trip Report - Hawk Watch at Mackinaw City. April 9, 2011 by Steve Baker

A spectacular day of observing the hawk migration was enjoyed by 12 lucky birders as part of the weekend at the Headlands. We began at 10 am in the fields around the Historic Village across from the entrance to the Headlands. We observed a trio of Sandhill Cranes in the field until the horse who claimed this turf chased them off. Also seen were a Phoebe and an assortment of Woodpeckers. The migrating hawks soon stole the show as the thermals developed and the kettles of raptors soared overhead. Despite everyone being short of sleep from the owl banding the night before, folks stayed till 5:00 pm as the hawks kept flowing overhead. Here are the species and numbers seen.

- Red-tailed Hawk 648
- Rough-legged Hawk 18
- Red-shouldered Hawk 8
- Bald Eagle 12
- Golden Eagle 2
- Northern Harrier 3
- Kestrel 3
- Sharp-shinned Hawk 43
- Turkey Vulture 126

Other migrants seen were 126 Sandhill Cranes and 17 Common Loons.



Golden Eagles
Steve Baker



Albino Red-tail Hawk with an immature Golden Eagle
Steve Baker

SAAS North Central State Trail Cleanup

Saturday, June 11, 10 a.m. by Vickie Lyon

The annual SAAS North Central State Trail clean-up invites volunteers. As a stewardship project, SAAS adopted the section of this popular biking and walking trail from Topinabee north for 6.6 miles to Mullett Lake Village. With the building of the trail-head facility in Cheboygan, the trail should be more popular than ever.

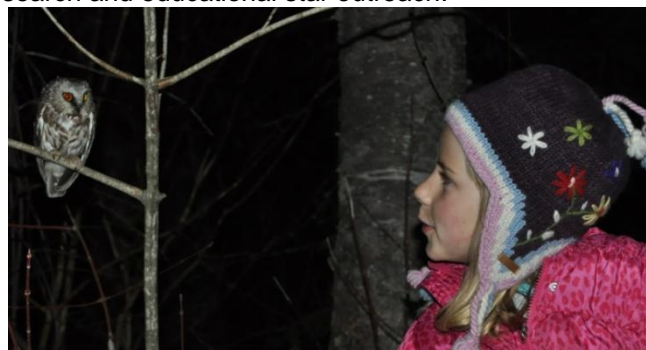
The clean-up event will include litter removal; monitoring any damaged or missing signs; monitoring trespasses, damage, vandalism, illegal activity or obstructions to the trail; hand tool clearing of litter, branches, brush, or fallen trees/limbs within the rail trail corridor; and minor tread repair to insure that the trail remains dry and smooth.

We will document and report any problems and refer any hazardous situations as appropriate. After the clean-up, volunteers are invited to a backyard cookout lunch. Meet at the Mullett Township /Topinabee town park for assignments and instructions. Wear long pants and a long-sleeve shirt to protect against poison ivy along the trail, and a rain jacket, if needed. Bring work gloves, leaf rakes, branch loppers, hand saws, and a backpack to carry the tools. SAAS will provide trash bags, water, and snacks. Please sign up by contacting **Vickie Lyon** at vlyon@m33access.com (989-733-6303) or **Darrell Schwalm** at Schwalmie2@aol.com.

Owl Banding field trip report

by Kathy Bricker

April 8, 2011 was the best ever spring owl banding event at Headlands Park. 25 people attended, bringing treats for a delicious potluck with enough left-overs to feed the six of us who stayed over at the Guest House, plus the next day's hawk watchers. Ed Pike let participants observe as he set up the nets, then he spoke about owl migration through the Straits of Mackinac. The first net check came up empty and sadly, some people had to leave. Those who stayed were rewarded by two saw-whet owls, named Paulina and Hootie by our youngest attendee, Lauren Willman, who came with her dad Don from Traverse City. Action stayed steady, with ten more owls netted before the bewitching hour of 4:30 am when we finally went to bed. Throughout the crystal clear night, between net checks, we identified and told stories about constellations, including Gemini the Twins. We turned the telescope on Saturn as it rose with the stars of Virgo the Virgin. THANKS to Emmet County for letting SAAS use the Headlands Park for owl research and educational star outreach.



Lauren Willman and Mr. Owl Jim Bricker