

# **South Mountain Airs**

**The Newsletter of the South Mountain Audubon Society**

**April - June 2012, Volume XXXVII #2 – The E-mail Edition**

## UPCOMING BIRD RELATED / OTHER EVENTS

### **International Migratory Bird Day**

What is International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD)?

IMBD celebrates and brings attention to one of the most important and spectacular events in the Americas - bird migration. IMBD is a Western Hemisphere-wide event and is celebrated in Canada, the United States, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. It will be held this year on Saturday May 12, 2012.

This date is also used for the Pennsylvania Migration Count (the PAMC), Pennsylvania's way of celebrating IMBD. People all over the state count birds and the totals are collected to form a "Snapshot" of the great spectacle of migration across our portion of the Americas. Virtually every county and province in every country carry out some type of celebratory event, festival, or other undertaking on this day. No matter where you are on this day you can find an IMBD event taking place. Just go to your internet browser and type in International Bird Day (optionally add 2012 to limit search) and you can find myriad goings-on across the country and beyond.

BUT, you can join us right here in the Gettysburg area. South Mountain Audubon Society (SMAS) counts our local birds right here adjacent to downtown Gettysburg on the Spangler Spring portion of the Gettysburg National Battlefield. See details below under field trips.

### **Earth Day**

Earth Day is April 22 this year. Founded in 1970 as a day of education about environmental issues, Earth Day is now a globally celebrated holiday that is sometimes extended into Earth Week, a full seven days of events focused on green awareness. The brainchild of Senator Gaylord Nelson and inspired by the antiwar protests of the late 1960s, Earth Day was originally aimed at creating a mass environmental movement. It began as a "national teach-in on the environment" and was held on April 22 to maximize the number of students that could be reached on university campuses. By raising public awareness of air and water pollution, Nelson hoped to bring environmental causes into the national spotlight. Earth day has continued to grow and is now recognized and participated in around the planet.

As Earth Day continues to grow and provide more concern for "Our Planet," there has been an annual theme created. For 2012, the Earth Day Theme is "Mobilize The Earth." Our planet, our home, is being neglected. Climate change and pollution continues unabated. It seems there's a new ecological disaster happening almost daily. This Earth Day, it's time to mobilize the planet from the ground up to send a message that the Earth won't wait!

Please become more attuned to this area and its related issues. Just go to your internet browser and type in Earth Day and surf some of the wealth of available information.

## UPCOMING SMAS PROGRAMS & PRESENTATIONS

Unless indicated otherwise, all SMAS Programs are held at the Adams County Agricultural Resource Center,

670 Old Harrisburg Road, Gettysburg, PA at 7:30 PM. A room number for the SMAS meeting will be posted on the front lobby entry inner door.

Please note there are no regularly scheduled monthly Chapter meetings or other events in the summer months of July and August with the exception of the Annual SMAS Picnic in August, usually the second Monday. We'll publish details on the picnic in the summer edition of the Newsletter.

SMAS does not normally hold an April program meeting. We have instead, traditionally held an annual luncheon every April; however, last year we moved the luncheon to September and combined it with our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in celebration. Since it has been well short of a year, we are not holding a luncheon this April. We are considering moving it to September on a regular basis so check the next couple of newsletters for information. We've posted information on our total activities' schedule at the end of this edition.

#### Monday May 14th - "Art Kennell's Wonderful Warbler Photography"

Art Kennell is tentatively scheduled to present his wonderful warbler slide show. Art is a well known birder and photographer in the south-central PA region and is a founding father of South Mountain Audubon. Art has taken impressive photos of nearly every eastern warbler species. Hard to do? Yes, but wait; Art has done this all in one spot, in his own back yard! He and his wife, Nonie, have created a truly "Bird-friendly Backyard." They have an extensive array of attractions set up for the birds to include a water feature and many different varieties of feeders. If you have never seen Art's slides, you need to be there. In the unfortunate event that Art is unavailable, we will substitute a "Movie Night" with a nature film or new comedy film about birdwatching. If this is the case, the "Popcorn" will be on South Mountain Audubon.

#### Monday June 11th - To Be Announced

### UPCOMING SMAS FIELD TRIPS

Contact Mike O'Brien, Field Trip Chair, as necessary for more information on all Field Trips, the annual Christmas Bird Count and the Spring Migration Count: 717.642.6676 Res / [maddogobrien@gmail.com](mailto:maddogobrien@gmail.com) E-mail. Please let the Leader know in advance if you plan to attend any field trip, especially if you plan to go direct. Trips are subject to weathering out, especially in the colder months, or otherwise being changed. In addition, if we have only one or two known attendees, we may cancel or reschedule a given field trip. We cannot alert you unless we hear from you.

#### Wednesday April 18th Lily Pons Water Gardens, Frederick County, MD

Meet at 7:30 AM at the trip leader's house at #231 Carroll's Tract Road just off PA Route #116 near the Fairfield, PA Post Office. #231 is about ½ mile past the post office on the right, the 2nd house after crossing Bullfrog and Mt. Hope Roads; the house sets back several hundred feet from the road.

We will carpool per attendee preferences and available vehicles. Bring a chair if desired, food snacks/drinks and any personal comfort items. Do not forget binoculars and apparel per weather forecast. Scopes a plus if you have one. There is an observation platform at the site. We will walk the area at times and you may walk as you wish or hang out at the platform area. Call the leader for additional information, clarification, or with any questions. We'll look for spring land and water related migrants as well as resident and local seasonal species. There's a Great Blue Heron rookery along the river here, the Monocacy. Facilities available.

#### Saturday May 12th Spangler Spring Area At Gettysburg National Military Park

Meet at 7 AM at the Spangler Spring area. Turn off Middle Street at its intersection with Liberty Street in Gettysburg and go one short block to a left at the park entry. Follow the one-way road to the Spangler Spring

parking area. This outing is a SMAS tradition coinciding with International Migratory Bird Day (See above). Easy walking on mostly paved areas. We'll be there into the afternoon, so depending on your schedule, you can always join us anytime beyond the stated start time. Bring a chair if you wish and hang out.

Do not forget personal items including food, drink and appropriate apparel. This is prime spring migration time and we should see a good selection of passerines and near-passerines as well as a mix of other species. Call the leader for additional information, clarification or with any questions. Facilities should be open.

#### Thursday June 7th      **Pennsylvania State Game Lands #249**

Meeting time is 7:30 AM at the Gameland's entrance located on Game Lands Road (aka State Game Land Road depending on your map) off PA #234 about midway between Biglerville and US #15. Meet at the rustic sign for the Gamelands just down the entry lane from #234. Depending on the current management configuration of the various areas at the time, we should be able to bird from our vehicles stopping at various vantage points. Some may chose to walk. The area is mostly flat with easy walking. The area includes woods and fields, and there is a stream along part of the road we will drive / walk along. We will look for passage migrants and local resident and nesting species. Bring your optics, weather appropriate clothing and any food or drink you may need. No facilities.

**Feathery Factoid:** How far can or do birds fly? This has been our topic the past couple of Newsletter editions.

We promised that for this edition we would examine how far birds fly distance-wise. We noted that this category is not as simple as it might seem because we have to examine birds by different types and if they make their journey non-stop, i.e., without landing, or if they layover one or more times along the way. And we thought we would start by looking at various distance migrants such as shorebirds, waterfowl and a few land birds in general. Since then, some disturbing information has come to light regarding a particular shorebird, a large wader, that flies a considerable distance, the Whimbrel.

This is a sad story of Marchi, a Whimbrel who flew more than 27,000 miles from the fall of 2009 to fall of 2011 with seven separate, nonstop flights of more than 2,000 miles after being caught and being tagged with a satellite tracking device. Below is the opening paragraph of the story.

#### Whimbrel Survives Tropical Storm, Shot in Caribbean (Reprinted from The Cornell Blog of Ornithology)

A migrating Whimbrel named Machi has been shot on the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, French West Indies. Machi had likely landed to rest up after detouring around Tropical Storm Maria. Machi became one of thousands of shorebirds that are hunted for sport each fall—but she stood out from the flock because of a satellite tracking tag applied by scientists at the [Center for Conservation Biology](#) at the College of William and Mary. The hunter contacted a local wildlife biologist to report what he'd found. Please click on the link below and read the entire heartbreaking article. Problems with link? See note at bottom of page.

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/roundrobin/2011/09/13/whimbrel-survives-tropical-storm-shot-in-caribbean/>

Just a day after the news of Machi the Whimbrel's shooting by hunters on Guadeloupe comes the report that a second satellite-tracked bird also died in the same hunting area on the island.

The second Whimbrel's name was Goshen, a female that had been tracked since August 2010 by the [Center for Conservation Biology](#) at the College of William and Mary. It was an unhappy coincidence that Goshen and Machi happened to land in the same heavily hunted wetland—Goshen had made the trip to the Caribbean more than a week before Machi, flying around Hurricane Irene and landing on Antigua, where she rested for a week before flying to Guadeloupe, according to a Center for Conservation Biology [press release](#). You can read this full article via the link below.

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/roundrobin/2011/09/15/second-tracked-whimbrel-dies-in-guadeloupe/>

**Please Note:** If clicking on the links does not work for you or with your system, then try holding down the *Control Button* and clicking anywhere *on the blue underlined link* area. Otherwise, simply highlight and copy the entire link and paste it into the search box of you web browser and hit the send or enter button.

## Accessing the SMAS Newsletter

A great feature of having the Newsletter on-line and receiving it via e-mail, is that you can always access a misplaced or discarded issue at a future date.

You can access the Newsletter in several ways.

First, if you do not routinely discard your emails or you retain selected items in your in-box or transfer them to a saved information folder or similar, you can always access them at a future date on your own system.

Second, we post the electronic edition on the internet at the following url: [perch.es](http://perch.es)

Simply copy the url and paste it into your browser search box or just type it in (Clicking will not work).

The first header that appears is for the current (most recent) issue. In addition, there is a heading, by year, for past quarter issues which we archive on the site. We have put the past issues here since we started the electronic edition.

Third, you can access it on the internet at the Yahoo.com Chat Group site, Adams County Nature Chat (AdCoNaChat). Presence of the information on this site may lag the Newsletter somewhat.

We post our SMAS field trips, meeting dates and topics, special events like an annual picnic, annual luncheon, and other club news on the calendar. There are directions uploaded to the files section for some areas we have trips to, and also, we often upload the species list from completed field trips and Christmas Bird Counts on the Files area. You can access the AdCoNaChat web-site at the link provided below. This is the link to the home page and from there you can access posts and messages by members, the Calendar and Files section, and much more. Copy and paste the following url into your browser search box:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AdCoNaChat/>

## OTHER SMAS RELATED INFORMATION

<u>Board Members</u>	Point of Contact	Telephone	Email address
President	Melissa Deitz	334-5585	<a href="mailto:sdeitz1630@comcast.net">sdeitz1630@comcast.net</a>
Vice-President	Cy Deitz	253-0297	<a href="mailto:sdeitz1630@comcast.net">sdeitz1630@comcast.net</a>
Secretary	Vacant		<a href="mailto:the2nomads@hughes.net">the2nomads@hughes.net</a>
Treasurer	Mike Bertram	352-7936	<a href="mailto:brantownb@aol.com">brantownb@aol.com</a>
Director At Large	Carole Simon	337-1662	<a href="mailto:carolesimon@embarqmail.com">carolesimon@embarqmail.com</a>
Director At Large	Bob Brandt	677-8323	

### Committee Chairs

Conservation	Rusty Ryan	642-9293	<a href="mailto:rryan@adamscounty.us">rryan@adamscounty.us</a>
Education	Vacant		
Field Trips	Mike O'Brien	642-6676	<a href="mailto:maddogobrien@gmail.com">maddogobrien@gmail.com</a>
Hospitality	Vacant		
Membership	Nancy Locher**	334-4768	<a href="mailto:nclocher@embarqmail.com">nclocher@embarqmail.com</a>
Programs	Deb Siefken	677-4830	<a href="mailto:siefkend@embarqmail.com">siefkend@embarqmail.com</a>
Publications	Vacant*		

\* Mike O'Brien, pro tempore

\*\* Ms. Locher for questions on joining as a member, etc. / Mr. O'Brien re statistics and detail information  
See the respective contact information above for these asterisked areas.

### **Volunteers needed:**

We are currently in need of and searching for an SMAS club Secretary. No experience necessary. Attend Board meetings and take notes and at your convenience produce a copy of the "Minutes" of the meetings. We only have several Board meetings scheduled per year. These last about an hour and a half.

In addition we do not currently have a Hospitality Coordinator for the refreshments we provide at our regular program meetings. Like the Secretary position, you need no specific experience. The duties involve canvassing for volunteers willing to bring refreshments to the regular month program meetings, 6 or 7 times a year; maintaining the list of people scheduled by month, and giving them a reminder call before the meeting they are volunteering to provide for. We will provide a list of people who have helped out in the past for you to contact if anyone is willing to do this.

Please consider volunteering. Contact Mike O'Brien for info or any questions: call 717.642.6676 or click [maddogobrien@gmail.com](mailto:maddogobrien@gmail.com)

### **SMAS Annual Schedule:**

Regular SMAS Monthly Program Meetings are held Jan / Mar / May / June / Sep / Oct / Nov.

Unless indicated otherwise, all meetings are held on Mondays at 7:30 PM at the Adams County Agricultural Center. Please see complete information at the beginning of this and every Newsletter. Please check individual programs in each issue in the event of a change in times and / or venue.

Field Trips are normally held monthly in Jan / Feb / Mar / April / May / Jun / Sep / Oct / Nov. In December we substitute the annual Christmas Bird Count for the monthly field trip.

Some of these monthly field trips traditionally repeat each year, such as the Christmas Bird Count and the Migration Count in May.

The Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is held by design between 14 Dec and 5 Jan. For SMAS, this is in lieu of a regular field trip. We schedule our SMAS CBC on the first available Saturday after 13 Dec. In the event of really bad weather, we may cancel and reschedule.

The Annual Luncheon has been traditionally held in April, in lieu of, the regular monthly meeting. See the information above under Upcoming SMAS Programs and Presentations on this date as we are considering moving this to the month of September.

Our SMAS Annual Picnic and get together is held in August on the second Monday. This is "Bring A Dish" to share and the kickoff is 5 PM with dinner at 6 PM. In addition to bringing a dish to share, attendees should bring their own place setting materials. Drinks and some type of main dish(es) will be provided. See the summer Newsletter edition for details on times and directions.

All meetings, field trips and other activities are subject to weathering out or other cancellation reasons. If you are on our email list (receiving our Newsletters and other information) you will get an email notification as soon as the decision is made. Otherwise, if there is some question based on the weather or some other issue, please contact the field trip leader or someone from the list of Board Members / Committee Chairpersons applicable to your question(s).