

South Mountain Airs

The Newsletter of the South Mountain Audubon Society

October - December 2012, Volume XXXVII #4 – The E-mail Edition

UPCOMING SMAS EVENTS

Saturday December 15th **SMAS Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC)** - Gettysburg Areas

All are invited and welcome to join the South Mountain Audubon Society (SMAS) for the 2012 CBC.

The SMAS 2012 CBC will be held Saturday December 15. SMAS seeks volunteers to participate in counting both species and individual numbers in the field, alone or on a team, as well as those wishing to count birds at their feeders and home property area.

Check out your calendar and mark us in. Contact Mike O'Brien, SMAS CBC Coordinator, to join us or for information for new participants or confirmation of areas/times for previous & returning individuals and team participants. Call, 717.642.6676, or Click, maddogobrien@gmail.com

For those returning or newly interested in counting at their feeders or immediate property areas, contact Charlotte O'Brien at 717.642.6676.

This will be the 113th consecutive Christmas Bird Count and is an example of Citizen Science at its best. Click on the link below to learn more about the CBC at the Audubon CBC web-site. If you are receiving our hard copy newsletter in the mail or if clicking the link does not work, just cut and paste or type the link into your web browser and press enter. The CBC is in lieu of a December field trip.

<http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count>

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.

We've posted the information on our total activities' schedule at the end of this edition.

UPCOMING MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Please note that due to availability issues at the Adams County Agricultural Resource Center, both the September and October programs were scheduled to be held on the third Monday vice the second Monday of the month. This still applies for the upcoming October meeting. And we will now return to our regular practice of the second Monday with the November meeting. And, as always is the case, we do not have a regular monthly chapter meeting in December.

Monday October 15th - "**Dairy of a Duck Hunter**" presented by Gene Wingert.

Hardie Disney was a duck hunter from West Fairview, a small town at the mouth of the Conodoginet Creek in Cumberland County. Between 1898 and 1938 he shot 17,000 ducks on the Susquehanna River at Harrisburg. He kept a record of every duck he shot. This diary is in the State Archives. The program covers a bit of river history and then compares Disney's figures with today's abundance and modern observation records. The results are surprising. Gene teaches environmental science at Dickinson University.

Monday November 12th - **To Be Announced**

SMAS will send out a supplemental Newsletter informational email when we have complete information on our program for the November meeting. Please note this date is back to the 2nd Monday of the month.

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 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 October 10th **Antietam National Battlefield**

We will visit the Antietam National Battlefield at Sharpsburg, MD. We hope to see resident birds and mid-fall passage migrants. Bring binoculars, appropriate clothing per the weather and snacks/drink as per personal needs. Call the leader at 717.642.6676 as needed / for additional info. Meet at the leader's house, Mike O'Brien, #231 Carroll's Tract Rd, Fairfield, PA at 8 AM. We plan to return by 2 to 3 PM.

Directions: To reach the leader's house: Coming from Gettysburg on PA Rte 116 (Fairfield Rd) turn right on Carroll's Tract Rd at the "Tee" intersection at the Fairfield Post Office immediately before entering the town. Proceed about 1/2 mile to #231 passing an intersection with Mt. Hope Road (on left) and Bullfrog Road (on right). #231 is the second driveway after this intersection. #231 is displayed on a fire sign (Standard green version) on the first tree on the left side of the driveway entrance.

Saturday November 10th - **Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR)**

This will be a joint field trip with the Conococheague Audubon Society (Chambersburg Chapter).

We will be traveling to Blackwater NWR on Maryland's Eastern Shore near the town of Cambridge. We may bird in some other locations en route such as the waterfront at Cambridge on the Choptank River. Time permitting we will bird along the road below the refuge to Hoopersville between the Chesapeake Bay and the Honga River looking for gulls, loon, grebes and other water related species.

Blackwater NWR was established in 1933 as a refuge for migratory birds, primarily ducks and geese. It is a chief wintering area for Canada Geese using the Atlantic Flyway. However, there is great birding for many species. Bald Eagles are usually present at this time. The Brown-headed Nuthatch is usually easy to find. And some passage migrants are usually still present including shorebirds and raptors.

This will basically be an “Auto-Tour” as we will drive the “Wildlife Drive” loop, probably more than one time or at least partially. Facilities available at the refuge. We will have a pit stop en route to Blackwater and returning. Optional dinner on return in Easton, MD at the local's favorite “Diner.”

Please note that there is a nominal entry fee for the Refuge. However, they may not ask you for it at the Headquarters (which we will visit for pit stops and to eat our lunches). Depending on how many people there are we may be able to all go without a fee based on attendees who have annual or lifetime passes.

Meet at the Leader's house, at 6:00 AM. See directions to the Leader's house above with the October field trip information. In you are interested in attending, please call the leader with your contact info so we can get back to you as necessary as the departure time may be adjusted. Bring binoculars, appropriate clothing per the weather and snacks/drinks/lunch as per personal needs. Call the leader at 717.642.6676 as needed to sign up or for more information on the trip.

Saturday December 15th - #113 Christmas Bird Count (CBC) - Gettysburg Areas

All are invited and welcome to join SMAS for the 2012 CBC. This will be the 113th consecutive Christmas Bird Count and is an example of Citizen Science at its best.

Please note the annual CBC is traditionally in lieu of a December field trip.

Please see the opening paragraphs at the beginning of the Newsletter for complete information and details on this year's CBC.

Mark your calendars now for the 113th Audubon Christmas Bird Count.

Feathery Factoid: The Quiz: Oh No! It's another quiz. The quiz is a mixture of topics but are all mostly easy and deal with North American species, categories or something “birdy.”

1. What is a rasorial bird?
2. Which cuckoo kills rattlesnakes?
3. What is a cross country runner sometimes called?
4. Who starred in the 1930 movie (comedy) *Horse Feathers*?
5. What legendary English character was called the *Prince of Thieves*?
6. Which American bird is called the “French *mockingbird*?”
7. Which American hawk undertakes the longest migration?
8. What famous avian personality hangs out on Sesame Street?
9. How does the Common *Grackle* open acorns?
10. Which is the only North American *gull* that, as an adult, has a forked tail?

Answers appear at the end of the Newsletter. And no peeping ahead!

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

Simply copy the url and paste it into your browser search box or just type it in (Clicking usually 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	sdeitz1630@comcast.net
Vice-President	Cy Deitz	253-0297	sdeitz1630@comcast.net
Secretary	Elizabeth Weller	339-8443	amazingheartfarm@comcast.net
Treasurer	Mike Bertram	352-7936	the2nomads@hughes.net
Director At Large	Carole Simon	337-1662	carolesimon@embarqmail.com
Director At Large	Bob Brandt	677-8323	brantownb@aol.com

Committee Chairs

Conservation	Rusty Ryan	642-9293	rryan@adamscounty.us
Education	Vacant		
Field Trips	Mike O'Brien	642-6676	maddogobrien@gmail.com
Hospitality	Vacant		
Membership	Nancy Locher**	334-4768	nclocher@embarqmail.com
Programs	Deb Siefken	677-4830	siefkend@embarqmail.com
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 do not currently have a Hospitality Coordinator for the refreshments we provide at our regular program meetings. 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

SMAS Annual Schedule Information

Regular SMAS Monthly Program Meetings are held Jan / Mar / May / June / Sept / 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 in case there is any variation by quarter. 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 / Sept / 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. We usually go to a nearby hawk watch site in late September or early October.

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.

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).

UPCOMING PRESENTATION AT THE AG CENTER OF POSSIBLE INTEREST.

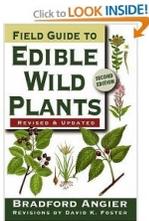
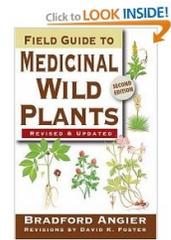
Below is information on a presentation on **Medicinal and Edible Plants of the Eastern Forests**. It is provided through Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve (SHNP) and is being given at the Adams County Agricultural Resource Center, 670 Old Harrisburg Road, Gettysburg, PA.

This is a short fuse time frame as it occurs tomorrow evening at 6:30 PM. We are adding it here because many among the SMAS membership may have an interest. There is a cost which varies some based on membership / non-membership at SHNP and whether you pay in advance or not.

Medicinal and Edible Plants of the Eastern Forests

Tuesday, October 2, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Could you survive if you were lost in the woods? Dr. David Foster, M.S., Ph.D., Professor of Biology and Environmental Science at Messiah College will identify interesting nutritional and medicinal characteristics of wild plants. As the author of two books on edible wild plants, he will lead us in a hands-on cooking demonstration guaranteed to captivate your taste buds.



****This program takes place at the
Adams County Agricultural Center
670 Old Harrisburg Road, Gettysburg.****

The cost is: \$12.00/members; \$15.00/non-members.
In advance: \$10.00/members; \$13.00/non-members.

Call Strawberry Hill's office for details.
717.642.5840

Reservations are required!

Answers to Feathery Factoid: *The Quiz*.

1. A ratorial bird characteristically scratches the ground while foraging, such as a *chicken*.
2. The Greater *Roadrunner*.
3. A *Harrier*.
4. The four Marx Brothers.
5. *Robin Hood*, a 15th Century outlaw.
6. The Loggerhead *Shrike*.
7. Swainson's *Hawk*.
8. *Big Bird*.
9. Acorns are sawed open by means of a sharp keel on the roof of the *grackle's* mouth.
10. Sabine's *Gull*. (Quite rare. One just spent at least 5 days at Tridelphia Reservoir in MD, 7 to 12 Sep.)