

South Mountain Airs

The Newsletter of the South Mountain Audubon Society

January – March 2013, Volume XXXVIII #1 – The E-mail Edition

SMAS Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) – Gettysburg Areas

Results of the SMAS CBC #113 held Saturday December 15th.

Our Annual Christmas Bird Count for Gettysburg and Surrounding Areas took place on Saturday, 15 December, 2012.

SMAS had 15 members and volunteers comprising 10 parties counting the number of bird species and the total individual number of birds in the field throughout most of the day in the Gettysburg count area, a 15 mile diameter circle centered on Knoxlyn, PA. Several people also participated by observing at their bird feeders and in their yard and on property areas.

A total of 71 species were seen with 4073 individual birds tallied for the overall count. Two additional species not found on count day were reported during the count week.

The species and individual totals this year compare with 76/7911 in 2010 and 72/8037 in 2011 respectively. Overall, the total count of individual birds was down this year by approximately 50%. Individual numbers of birds, per species, in some cases were even lower. We believe this was generally due to the mild weather during the count period as was the case last year. It was the second year in a row with open water in all count areas, thus we missed some usual waterfowl and water related species.

We tallied 18 Party Hours / 15.5 miles on foot and 27 hours / 213.4 miles by car.

The complete count is summarized by species and numbers in an Attachment at the end of the Newsletter for USPS hard copy mail recipients, and as a second file attachment for recipients of the e-mail edition.

UPCOMING BIRD RELATED EVENTS

The 16th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)

After 15 years of success in North America, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) will open up to the entire world for the first time in 2013. Anyone, from anywhere on earth, can participate by visiting www.birdcount.org and reporting the kinds and numbers of birds they see during the 16th annual count, February 15 - 18, 2013.

Discover and help the birds in your community. It's fun, family-friendly, and educational. It is free and open to all ages and skill levels.

Each year, tens of thousands of people throughout the U.S. And Canada take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count. Participants take part in their own backyards, out their office windows, at local parks and nature centers, and absolutely anywhere else. You can spend as little as 15 minutes or even make a whole weekend of it.

People of all ages and levels of bird-watching experience are welcome to participate. The GBBC is a great way to learn more about the birds in your community and connect with nature and is perfect for fledgling birders. You can count by yourself, with your family, community group, school, or friends. It is an ideal way for experienced birders to introduce children, grandchildren and others to the wonderful world of birds.

Learn how easy it is to participate. Enter your data. Explore results on-line. You can also enter a photo contest if you take pictures of the birds and have a chance to win birding prizes. For complete information visit the GBBC website on-line at:

www.birdcount.org

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

Monday January 14th - "Native Plants, Wildlife, and the Legacy of the PA Quaker Botanists"

Kim Blocher will be speaking to the Adams County Audubon Society on January 14 at 7:30 pm. Her presentation will focus on the native plants of our South Mountain region and their importance to birds and other wildlife. Kim will also share some of the rich legacy we've inherited from our PA Quaker Botanists and the way in which that legacy can enhance our appreciation for native plants. Her presentation will also highlight the ways in which non-native plants have had a negative impact on our South Mountain region and what we can do about it.

The Rev. Dr. Kim Blocher is an Adams County native who grew up in Gettysburg. She and her husband Larry Knutson currently live near Pine Grove Furnace on the edge of the Michaux State Forest. She serves as pastor of Zion UCC in Arendtsville. On a recent sabbatical, she began a study of the Pennsylvania Quaker botanists John and William Bartram and their contribution to our knowledge of native plants. She is working on a guide to some of the trails in the Michaux Forest, incorporating writings of John and William Bartram. The guide highlights the native plants important to our local ecosystem and shares some of the history of how these plants were discovered and introduced by our Quaker botanists.

Monday March 11th - "Saving Pelican 895" an HBO Documentary Movie

Saving Pelican 895 is a HBO documentary about the after effect of the BP Oil Spill on wildlife.

The Louisiana state bird – the brown pelican – spent 45 years on the endangered species list. After years of being relocated back to its natural habitat, the April 2010 BP explosion and ensuing oil spill ravaged the brown pelican's nesting homes on the Gulf of Mexico. But after three months, cleanup workers at the Fort Jackson Oiled Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Louisiana had rescued 894 surviving oiled pelicans. "Saving Pelican 895" tells the gripping story of the rescue of one of the oiled bird victims, pelican "LA 895" (named after its state and rescue number).

Saving Pelican 895 is a story of redemption and human compassion. People worked interminably in the months following the spill to rescue the helpless wildlife. Thanks to their efforts, 1,246 birds were rescued and released back into the wild. The film documents the rescue of the 895th oiled pelican, to show the efforts made to save one life, showing how conservationists, government agencies and wildlife activists joined forces to preserve this one life. An inspiring bird's-eye view of the rigorous process of rescuing thousands of oiled birds.

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 February 6th **Pine Grove Furnace State Park**

We'll meet in the parking lot at the Camp Store and Visitors Center on route 233 (Pine Grove Road) at 8:30 A.M. We hope to see both resident and wintering land birds. We have had good luck in the past with winter species such as Hermit Thrush, Winter Wren and Red-breasted nuthatch. Hopefully, we will come across some of this year's irruptive species such as Crossbills, Evening Grosbeaks, Redpolls and Red-breasted Nuthatches.

If you arrive later than 8:30, the group will be in the area somewhere nearby. It can be quite cold there, so dress according to the weather forecast. Bring binoculars and a snack and drink as desired. If interested in carpooling to the site, contact the field trip leader in this regard.

Thursday March 7th - **Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area**

The Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area, located on the Lebanon-Lancaster County line about one mile south of Kleinfeltersville, is a tract owned by the Pennsylvania Game Commission for the protection, propagation management, preservation and controlled harvest of wildlife. Per the PA Game Commission, this area of more than 5,000 acres provides habitat for waterfowl, forest and farmland wildlife species, and includes a 40 acre shallow lake and 70 acres of impoundments.

Bring binoculars, appropriate clothing per the weather including windy conditions, and snacks/drink as per personal needs. Scopes are desirable if available. Mixed birding from vehicles on wildlife drive loop roads and some walking to include, if desired, about a quarter mile to viewing point on the lake area (and return). Facilities available. We will have a lunch break in the HQ Building Visitors Center. Contact the leader as needed / for additional information.

Meet at the parking lot area between CVS and Burger King (across road opposite Walmart) on US #30 near its intersection with US #15 at 8 AM (this is on the West side of the US #30 and #15 interchange).

Feathery Factoid: Did you know that the Dusky Seaside Sparrow was sacrificed to facilitate man's race to the moon? When the NASA Space Center was established at Cape Canaveral (later Cape Kennedy), Merritt Island was diked to control mosquitoes. The dikes prevented the tidal flooding of the marshes, sealing the doom of the specialized sparrow, the last of which passed into extinction in 1987.

HEY!! Checkout our new South Mountain Audubon Society Website!!!

SMAS now has a new Website up and running. The home page has some general information and synopses of Chapter activities as well as a number of links to other informational aspects. These include the Calendar, Board members and officers, Chapter meeting minutes, current and archival newsletter editions and links to a number of other Adams County organizations as well as other county, state and national groups and organizations.

We are also working to put up some location specific area checklists. So look for them in the future. All are encouraged to offer suggestions on what you would like to see on the website. Contact info on the site.

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/>

And, of course, per information above re the new SMAS Website, you can reference current & past issues there.

OTHER SMAS RELATED INFORMATION

<u>Board Members</u>	Point of Contact	Telephone	Email address
President	Deb Siefken	677-4830	siefkend@embarqmail.com
Vice-President	Carole Simon	337-1662	carolesimon@embarqmail.com
Secretary	Linette Mansberger	495-8137	lmcopperhead@aol.com
Treasurer	Mike Bertram	352-7936	the2nomads@hughes.net
Director At Large	Nancy Locher	334-4768	nclocher@embarqmail.com
Director At Large	Rusty Ryan	642-9293	rryan@adamscounty.us
Director At Large	Cy Deitz	253-0297	sdeitz1630@comcast.net
<u>Committee Chairs</u>			
Conservation	Emily Cost	642-5840	emilyc@strawberryhill.org
Education	Emily Cost	642-5840	emilyc@strawberryhill.org
Field Trips	Mike O'Brien	642-6676	maddogobrien@gmail.com
Hospitality	Vacant		
Membership	Mike O'Brien	642-6676	maddogobrien@gmail.com
Programs	Bob Brandt	677-8323	brantownb@aol.com
Publicity	Elizabeth Weller	339-8443	amazingheartfarm@comcast.net
Newsletter	Mike O'Brien	642-6676	maddogobrien@gmail.com

Please note our board members and officers are nominated near year end every year and elections are held at the first regular public meeting each year which takes place in January on the second Monday of the month. All are invited. The chart above represents what we believe the composition of this year's positions will be, post election.

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).

113th Christmas Bird Count – South Mountain Audubon Society / 15 December 2012

No.	Species / Name	Count	No.	Species / Name	Count	No.	Species / Name	Count
1	Canada Goose	629	25	Mourning Dove	111	49	Hermit Thrush	1
2	Mute Swan	4	26	Great Horned Owl	5	50	American Robin	23
3	Wood Duck	2	27	Belted Kingfisher	4	51	Northern Mockingbird	63
4	American Black Duck	2	28	Red-headed Woodpecker	17	52	European Starling	869
5	Mallard	133	29	Red-bellied Woodpecker	43	53	Cedar Waxwing	87
6	Northern Shoveler	3	30	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	9	54	Yellow-rumped Warbler	16
7	Ring-necked Duck	9	31	Downy Woodpecker	45	55	American Tree Sparrow	8
8	Canvasback	4	32	Hairy Woodpecker	10	56	Field Sparrow	9
9	Hooded Merganser	21	33	Northern Flicker	24	57	Fox Sparrow	1
10	Ruddy Duck	14	34	Pileated Woodpecker	7	58	Song Sparrow	52
11	Great Blue Heron	4	35	Blue Jay	117	59	Swamp Sparrow	3
12	Black Vulture	27	36	American Crow	90	60	White-throated Sparrow	125
13	Cackling Goose	1	37	Common Raven	5	61	White-crowned Sparrow	9
14	Turkey Vulture	110	38	Carolina Chickadee	61	62	White-winged Crossbill	15
15	Bald Eagle	2	39	Black-capped Chickadee	3	63	Sparrow Species	6
16	Northern Harrier	4	40	Chickadee Species	40	64	Dark-eyed Junco	248
17	Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	41	Tufted Titmouse	73	65	Northern Cardinal	73
18	Cooper's Hawk	1	42	Red-breasted Nuthatch	9	66	Red-winged Blackbird	10
19	Red-shouldered Hawk	10	43	White-breasted Nuthatch	65	67	Eastern Meadowlark	10
20	Red-tailed Hawk	33	44	Brown Creeper	5	68	Common Grackle	9
21	Rough-legged Hawk	1	45	Carolina Wren	59	69	Purple Finch	5
22	American Kestrel	10	46	Winter Wren	1	70	House Finch	71
23	Say's Phoebe	1/CW	47	Golden-crowned Kinglet	14	71	Pine Siskin	4/CW
24	Ring-billed Gull	5	48	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1		American Goldfinch	39
	Rock Pigeon	285		Eastern Bluebird	108		House Sparrow	79
		S/T 1316			S/T 926			S/T 1831

Total Species Reported 71
Total Individuals Counted 4073