

# South Mountain Airs

## The Newsletter of the South Mountain Audubon Society

January – March 2014 Volume XXXIX #1 – The E-mail Edition

### SMAS Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) – Gettysburg Areas

Results of the SMAS CBC - #114:

Our Annual Christmas Bird Count for Gettysburg and Surrounding Areas took place on Saturday, 4 January, 2014. This is the year 2013 CBC and it was originally scheduled for Saturday, 14 December 2013; however, it was rescheduled for 4 January, 2014 due to the weather.

SMAS had 20 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. A number of people also participated by observing at their bird feeders and in their yard and on property areas.

A total of 78 species were seen with 7868 individual birds tallied for the overall count.

The species and individual totals this year compare with 72/8037 in 2012 and 71/4073 in 2013 respectively. Last year, the total count of individual birds was down by approximately 50%. This year it was about the normal average, near 8000.

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 file attachment for recipients of the e-mail edition.

### -- President's Note --

Three long time members of our Audubon Society passed away this past fall: Arlene Sandstedt, Dorothy Cogley and Art Kennell. Arlene and Dot spent many years in various positions on the board. Art was the long time Compiler of the Christmas Bird Count up to the year 2008. Art took amazing photos of songbirds and shared them with us and other societies often. Below is a poem Art liked and was read at his memorial service.

Deb Siefken, SMAS President

"Hawks are more dramatic,  
Owls more mysterious,  
and tanagers more colorful.

Rails are rarer,  
thrushes sing better,  
and swallows fly faster.

But warblers are the best  
test of a birder's spirit.  
Chasing them is the quintessence of birding;  
It requires ready ears, trained eyes,  
steady hands, and a determined mind."

## UPCOMING BIRD RELATED EVENTS

### **The 17th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)**

**The 2014 GBBC will take place Friday, February 14, through Monday, February 17. Please join us for the 17th annual count!**

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are.

GBBC checklists can be accepted from anywhere in the world!

Everyone is welcome - - from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy — and it helps the birds.

Participants tally the number of individual birds of each species they see during their count period. They enter these numbers on the GBBC website.

New participants must set up a free GBBC account to submit their checklists or use log-in information from an existing account for any other Cornell Lab citizen-science project.

You'll only need to do this once to participate in all future GBBC events.

The preceding information was taken from the GBBC home page. You can view all of the various sub-pages on the following GBBC web site, including how to participate:

<http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc>

As the count progresses, anyone with Internet access can explore what is being reported.

## 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 usually have a short social period with light refreshments afterward.

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

## UPCOMING MONTHLY PROGRAMS

### **Monday January 13th - Northern Saw-whet Owl Research Program**

For this month's program, Sandy Lockerman will present a program on the The Ned Smith Center's Northern Saw-whet Owl Research Program.

The program will cover the natural history of this small nocturnal bird and some of the results and discoveries made during the banding efforts for this species over the past 17 years.

Sandy is a licensed bird bander and has volunteered with the Ned Smith Center's Northern Saw-whet Owl Project since its inception in 1997. She is a long-time education volunteer with Hawk Mountain Sanctuary and is a board member of the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology.

Sandy works as an environmental educator for Dauphin County Parks and Recreation at Wildwood Park in Harrisburg, PA. Sandy and her husband Gary reside in Harrisburg. When not banding, they travel and, of course, go birding.

## Monday March 10th - “Adams County Birds – Identification & Separation of Selected Species”

Mike O'Brien, one of our SMAS members, will talk about identifying some of our common local species and telling some of the similar ones apart.

Examples include; distinguishing differences between our two crow species and the local ravens; comparing the two chickadees and their interbreeding here in the area of overlap along the Mason-Dixon Line; the two vultures; our accipiters and buteos; the local iterids, and probably some other ID challenges with our local species.

### 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 February 26th - **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 here with winter species such as Hermit Thrush, Winter Wren and Red-breasted nuthatch.

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. Facilities available.

## Wednesday March 12th - **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/drinks 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 the 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 when closing their eyes, diurnal birds are more likely to draw up the lower lid than to lower the upper eyelid? However, with nocturnal birds, it is more likely the upper lid will be lowered. Birds also possess the nictitating membrane, a sort of windshield wiper, found in vertebrates at the inner angle or below the lower eyelid which can be moved across the eye.

## SMAS ANNUAL LUNCHEON

**Save the Date – April 12th** - for our annual SMAS Luncheon

The annual SMAS Luncheon will be held as usual at the Hickory Bridge Restaurant, Orrtanna, PA at 11:30 AM.

After lunch, Deb Kline & Karen Lippy will dazzle us with photos and stories of their close encounters of the wild kind at Codorus State Park and elsewhere in “Views for our Kayaks.”

We will publish pricing and more information via email and in the next newsletter edition.

### **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, and there is usually an addition or two of some kind every few months. So look for these in the future. All are encouraged to offer suggestions on what you would like to see on the website. Contact information is listed 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 / devices.

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 often may 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	<a href="mailto:siefkend@embarqmail.com">siefkend@embarqmail.com</a>
Vice-President	Carole Simon	337-1662	<a href="mailto:carolesimon@embarqmail.com">carolesimon@embarqmail.com</a>
Secretary	Linette Mansberger	495-8137	<a href="mailto:Imcopperhead@aol.com">Imcopperhead@aol.com</a>
Treasurer	Mike Bertram	352-7936	<a href="mailto:the2nomads@hughes.net">the2nomads@hughes.net</a>
Director At Large	Nancy Locher	334-4768	<a href="mailto:nclocher@embarqmail.com">nclocher@embarqmail.com</a>
Director At Large	Rusty Ryan	642-9293	<a href="mailto:rryan@adamscounty.us">rryan@adamscounty.us</a>
Director At Large	Cy Deitz	253-0297	<a href="mailto:sdeitz1630@comcast.net">sdeitz1630@comcast.net</a>

### Committee Chairs

Conservation	Emily Cost	642-5840	<a href="mailto:emilyc@strawberryhill.org">emilyc@strawberryhill.org</a>
Education	Emily Cost	642-5840	<a href="mailto:emilyc@strawberryhill.org">emilyc@strawberryhill.org</a>
Field Trips	Mike O'Brien	642-6676	<a href="mailto:maddogobrien@gmail.com">maddogobrien@gmail.com</a>
Hospitality	Wendy South	359-5116	<a href="mailto:wendydance@hotmail.com">wendydance@hotmail.com</a>
Membership	Mike O'Brien	642-6676	<a href="mailto:maddogobrien@gmail.com">maddogobrien@gmail.com</a>
Programs	Bob Brandt	677-8323	<a href="mailto:brantownb@aol.com">brantownb@aol.com</a>
Publicity	Elizabeth Weller	339-8443	<a href="mailto:amazingheartfarm@comcast.net">amazingheartfarm@comcast.net</a>
Newsletter	Mike O'Brien	642-6676	<a href="mailto:maddogobrien@gmail.com">maddogobrien@gmail.com</a>

Please note our board members and officers are nominated near year-end each 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.

### **SMAS Annual Schedule Information**

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

Unless indicated otherwise, are 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 Newsletter 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 and 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 PA 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).