

# South Mountain Airs

## The Newsletter of the South Mountain Audubon Society

October - December 2014, Volume XXXVIII #4 – The E-mail Edition

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**WANTED** - Volunteers for the South Mountain Audubon Society (SMAS) board!!

Would you like to know more about the way SMAS functions but do not want to take on a chair position? If so, there are 1 or 2 openings for Director-At-Large. A DAL comes to the board meetings, which occur about 5 times a year, and contributes ideas, suggestions or offers advice. You do not have to be an experienced birder. You just need to be interested in the well being of our group. If you are interested, you can contact me - Deb, Carole Simon or Linette Mansberger. Our phone numbers and e-mail addresses are at the end of this newsletter.

### **FIELD GUIDE TO THE FUTURE:**

#### HALF OF NORTH AMERICA'S BIRDS AT RISK FROM GLOBAL WARMING

Half of the bird species in the continental United States and Canada are threatened by global warming. Many of these species could go extinct without decisive action to protect their habitats and reduce the severity of global warming. That's the startling conclusion reached by Audubon scientists in a new study.

Here in Pennsylvania, birds threatened by global warming include American Kestrel, Black-and-White Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, and Wood Thrush.

Of the species examined in the study, 314 are at risk. Of those, 126 species are at risk of severe declines by 2050, and a further 188 species face the same fate by 2080, with numerous extinctions possible if global warming is allowed to erase the havens birds occupy today.

"The greatest threat our birds face today is global warming," said Audubon Chief Scientist Gary Langham, who led the investigation. "That's our unequivocal conclusion after seven years of painstakingly careful and thorough research. Global warming threatens the basic fabric of life on which birds - and the rest of us - depend, and we have to act quickly and decisively to avoid catastrophe for them and us."

To understand the links between where birds live and the climatic conditions that support them, Langham and other Audubon ornithologists analyzed more than 40 years of historical North American climate data and millions of historical bird records from the U.S. Geological Survey's North American Breeding Bird Survey and the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Understanding those links then allows scientists to project where birds are likely to be able to survive - and not survive - in the future.

The study offers an invaluable new way for Audubon to discuss and address global warming by bringing the issue into backyards and neighborhoods across America. It also reveals areas that are likely to remain stable for birds even as climate changes, enabling Audubon to identify "stronghold" areas that birds will need to survive in the future.

The result is a road map for bird conservation in coming decades in a warming climate. The study provides a key entry point for Audubon's greater engagement on the urgent issue of global warming. Responding to the magnitude of the threat to our birds, Audubon is greatly expanding its climate initiative, aiming to engage a larger and more diverse set of voices in support of protecting birds.

Solutions will include personal choices to conserve energy and create backyard bird habitat, local action to create community climate action plans, state-based work to increase rooftop solar and energy efficiency, and our work in Important Bird Areas and other efforts to protect and expand bird habitats.

For more information, visit [Audubon.org/Climate](http://Audubon.org/Climate).

Deb Siefken,  
President, SMAS

## UPCOMING SMAS EVENTS

### **Saturday December 20th - SMAS Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) - Gettysburg Areas**

All are invited and welcome to join the South Mountain Audubon Society (SMAS) for the 2014 CBC. The SMAS 2014 CBC will be held Saturday December 20. 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 areas.

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](mailto:maddogobrien@gmail.com)

This will be the 115th 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 Program Presentations 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 October 13th - "An in-depth look at nesting bird populations at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; what have we learned?" - Presented by Andy Wilson

The 2nd Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas summarizes more than 1.2 million bird records, documented by 2,000 of Pennsylvania's birders during 2004-2009. We compare results with the first atlas, twenty years prior, and draw conclusions about the environmental changes that are causing the ups and downs among the state's 190 breeding bird species.

Andy Wilson has been an avid birder since childhood. In his native UK he was an Ecologist at the British Trust for Ornithology for 10 years before moving to PA for grad school in 2004 - just in time for the start of 2nd Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas (2nd PBBA) fieldwork. After six years as a 2nd PBBA point count technician, Andy took a lead on analyzing the wealth of atlas data, and, along with Dan Brauning and Bob Mulvihill, edited the second PA atlas book. Andy now lives in Frederick, MD, and is an Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at Gettysburg College.

Monday November 10th - "Pennsylvania's Wild Pheasant Recovery Areas" - presented by Brandon Black

Brandon will talk about Pennsylvania's wild pheasant recovery areas. The Pennsylvania Game Commission traps and transfers wild pheasants from western states, reintroducing them into suitable habitat within our state. The Game Commission currently has four wild pheasant recovery areas which they intensively monitor in hopes of obtaining populations levels that will support hunting.

Brandon Black is a Wildlife Biological Aide for the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

We do not hold a program for the month of December due to conflicts with many members holiday schedules.

### 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 October 15th - "Antietam National Battlefield"

We will visit the Antietam National Battlefield at Sharpsburg, MD. We hope to see resident birds as well as 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 leader's house, Mike O'Brien, #231 Carroll's Tract Rd, Fairfield, PA at 8 AM with return by 2 to 3 PM. (see next item for directions.)

#### Saturday November 22nd - "Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge"

We will travel to Blackwater NWR in Dorchester County, near Cambridge Maryland. There should be early resident winter birds and late passage migrants including shorebirds, raptors and waterfowl. The refuge is billed as the largest Bald Eagle gathering spot in the Eastern USA outside of Florida. Departure time is 6 AM.

The field trip will leave from the trip leaders home at #231 Carroll's Tract Road, a Tee intersection with PA Rte #116, at the Fairfield Post Office. #231 is about a half mile down Carroll's Tract Road on the right, the second driveway on the right after crossing the intersection with Bullfrog Road and Mt. Hope Road; the house sets back several hundred feet from the driveway entrance. There is no mailbox. A standard green fire sign with 231 on it is attached to the lower trunk of a small tree where you turn in. Immediately beyond the driveway is a mail box displaying 75 Sugarloaf Lane for the next house, which also sets well back.

**Please contact the trip leader if you plan on going on this trip so any questions may be answered and logistics such as carpooling can be arranged.**

We will try to carpool to the extent possible depending on how many people sign up for the trip. If you wish to drive separately, or arrange for an overnight stay on your own, please let the leader know so arrangements can be made for meeting up with the group, and so you can be contacted if trip is canceled, postponed or weathers out.

Bring binoculars, a scope if you have one, and lunch, snacks and drinks per personal preference. Bring appropriate apparel as dictated by the forecast weather for the day of the trip.

This is an all day field trip. Meeting time is 6:00 AM with return after dark. Travel time will be a bit over three hours – each way. We will likely stop on the return and eat dinner. If you drive separately, the eastbound toll at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge is \$6 per car. There is no toll returning westbound.

There is an entry fee at the refuge per car (\$3 our last visit) paid at the entry HQ. Depending on trip attendees with passes, all attendees may be covered. In any case, refuge personnel do not usually approach visitors in this regard, and it becomes up to all individually as to how to handle it. We will enter HQ bldg to use the facilities.

#### Saturday December 20th - Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) - Gettysburg Areas

All are invited and welcome to join SMAS for the 2014 CBC. Please see info above, under upcoming events.

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

SMAS has a Website. 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. There are also some chapter location specific area checklists. More are being added. All are encouraged to offer suggestions on what you would like to see on the website. Contact info is 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 archive 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 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 quarterly issues which we archive on the site. We have put the past issues here since we started the electronic edition.

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@centurylink.net">the2nomads@centurylink.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>
<u>Committee Chairs</u>			
Conservation	Emily Cost	642-5840	<a href="mailto:emilycost@yahoo.com">emilycost@yahoo.com</a>
Education	Emily Cost	642-5840	<a href="mailto:emilycost@yahoo.com">emilycost@yahoo.com</a>
Field Trips	Mike O'Brien	642-6676	<a href="mailto:maddogobrien@gmail.com">maddogobrien@gmail.com</a>
Hospitality	Vacant		
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>

## **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 case 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 location, 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).