

South Mountain Airs

The Newsletter of the South Mountain Audubon Society

October – December 2015, Volume XXXVIX #4 – The E-mail Edition

Please note the CHANGE IN SMAS PUBLIC MEETING NIGHTS beginning in 2016

After conversations with Audubon members from neighboring chapters, our Board discussed the possibility of moving our regular monthly meetings to the THIRD Monday night of meeting months. Our usual schedule of meeting on the second Monday night conflicts with York and Conococheague Audubon chapters. Because there are times when we want to share resources or attend a meeting of another chapter, South Mountain is going to try a new schedule. We anticipate this change to happen in March of 2016. (Our first meeting in 2016 will follow the old schedule and we will meet on the second Monday, January 11, 2016 at 7:30 PM.) If you have any input or feedback regarding this change, please contact one of the officers listed at the end of this newsletter. Please watch the quarterly newsletters in 2016 for the dates of upcoming meetings.

UPCOMING BIRD RELATED / OTHER EVENTS

Saturday December 19th - **SMAS Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC)** - Gettysburg Areas

All are invited and welcome to join South Mountain Audubon Society (SMAS) for the 2015 CBC.

The SMAS 2015 CBC will be held Saturday December 19. 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

This will be the 116th 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 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 throughout the year at the end of this edition.

UPCOMING SMAS MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Monday October 12th - **TBA - Presentation** - Doug Gross

Doug is a Wildlife Biologist with the Pennsylvania Wildlife Commission Endangered and Non-gamebird Section.

Monday November 9th - **Native Plants: How They Attract Birds and Other Wildlife** - Alice Simmons

Alice Simmons

Alice has been a gardener since she was a child, working in her family vegetable garden and having her own flower bed. Alice became a Lancaster County Master Gardener in 1996 and began her interest in Native plants in 2000 by attending her first Native Plant Conference at Millersville University. Alice married her husband, Tom, and moved to York County where they share their interest in native plants, wildlife and birds. Tom is a past president of the York Audubon Society.

Her volunteer work as a Master Gardener includes working with elementary-age children in environmental education, helping with native plant sales by the York County Master Gardeners, volunteering at the York Fair at the Master Gardener native bees display and monitoring native plants and pollinators at the Penn State Research Farm in Landisville.

Her talk on native plants and how they attract birds and other wildlife will feature photographs of native plants at various times of the year and some of the wildlife that depend on them.

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 14th - **Codorus State Park / Lake Marburg**

Pennsylvania's 3,490-acre Codorus State Park is in the rolling hills of southern York County about 3 miles southeast of Hanover, PA. The 1,275-acre Lake Marburg, is centered in the park with 26 miles of shoreline and is a rest stop for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. There is no entry fee for PA State Parks.

Meet in parking area between Burger King and CVS on US Rte #30 (York Street) near its intersection with US #15 in the shopping area where Staples and CVS are located - across the street from Walmart. We will carpool to the extent possible. Bring binoculars, a scope if you have one, snacks, drinks, lunch per personal choice and apparel as dictated by the forecast weather. Meeting time is 8:30 AM with return in mid-afternoon. For those wishing to drive direct, we will rally at the Park Headquarters probably a bit past 9 AM. If you plan to go direct please still notify the trip leader so we know you plan to attend in case the trip is canceled or moved to another date and or time.

Saturday November 21st - **“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 the name “Ball” and 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 \$4 per car. There is no toll returning westbound. If you want to drive direct we meet at 9 AM at the information center in Cambridge, MD upon entering town from the Choptank River bridge. From here we caravan to the refuge. Call leader to make arrangements.

There is an entry fee at the refuge per car (\$3 our last visit) paid at the entry HQ. Depending on trip attendees with Senior Passes (America The Beautiful / Golden Age), 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.

Feathery Factoid (The Quiz Version) :

Which bird is credited with being the dumbest?

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

SMAS has a Website which is being added to on a regular basis.

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. Many of these are in place. 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

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

SMAS Annual Schedule Information

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

Unless indicated otherwise, all meetings are held on second Mondays of the month 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. ***See opening item in this newsletter regarding our plans to change meetings to the third Monday of the month, probably beginning in March 2016.***

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 every year 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 as well as their drink(s) of choice. Complete information to include the picnic location is provided in the 3rd Quarter newsletter.

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).

Feathery Factoid Quiz Answer:

The domestic turkey.

The dim-witted birds sometimes appear reluctant to come in out of a driving rain, and may freeze to death on cold nights, even if warm shelter is only several meters away.

They are also prone to panic, and on one known occasion over 13,000 turkeys trampled themselves to death on a California ranch when a low-flying jet roared over.

OTHER SMAS RELATED INFORMATION

<u>Board Members</u>	Point of Contact	Telephone	Email address
President	Linette Mansberger	495-8137	Lmcopperhead@aol.com
Vice-President	Deb Siefken	677-4830	siefkend@embarqmail.com
Secretary	Kathy Gelner (202)	471-0300	klgelner@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Mike Bertram	352-7936	the2nomads@centurylink.net

Director At Large	Nancy Locher	334-4768	nclocher@embarqmail.com
Director At Large	Betsy Griffiths	334-3824	Elizabeth.Griffiths@stockton.edu
Director At Large	Cy Deitz	253-0297	sdeitz1630@comcast.net
Director At Large	Carole Simon	337-1662	carolesimon@embarqmail.com

Committee Chairs

Conservation	Vacant	337-1662	
Education	Vacant	337-1662	
Field Trips	Mike O'Brien	642-6676	maddogobrien@gmail.com
Hospitality	Vacant		
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Programs	Bob Brandt (703)	615-8002	brantownb@aol.com
Publicity	Cynthia Chambers	624-4397	cynthiachambers@embarqmail.com
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