



Meadowlark

The Newsletter of Genesee Valley Audubon Society
November/December 2011 Vol. 39, No. 2

Annual Appeal by June Summers

In the past year Genesee Valley has continued to promote environmental conservation through offering educational and awareness events. In January at the Mendon Pond Winterfest, GVAS led hikes to feed the chickadees. GVAS hike leaders offer information about habitat requirements and survival tactics the chickadees use to survive winter while introducing adults and children to the world of birds. In April and May GVAS volunteers offered presentations on the Rochester Peregrine Falcons and invasive plants in five libraries throughout the City of Rochester. Our volunteers also went into Honeoye Falls – Lima Elementary School and Rochester City School #19 to teach the students about the Peregrine Falcons as an endangered species.

This fall GVAS volunteers spent two mornings instructing small groups from area schools at Conservation Field Days in Ellison Park. Conservation Field Days is a program of the Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District. Each group had 20 minutes to learn about bird migration and play a migration game. While playing the game the students pretend to be migrating birds. They move from station to station being blown off course by a storm at one station or finding a wildlife refuge to rest and feed at another.

At the Coastal CleanUp in September, 20 girls and their coaches from the Hilton High School Swim Team joined us to pick up 350 pounds of trash at Braddock Bay.

GVAS used funds given in memory of Christine Sevilla and by Broccoli's Tree and Lawn Care to have 10,000 more of her Garden Villains brochures printed. These brochures are being distributed by the local DEC office, the Cornell Cooperative Extension, and GVAS.

GVAS volunteers assisted with the art auction and sale of Christine's works to raise money for the Genesee Land Trust preserve in her name. This wonderful wetland in the Caledonia area will be a great place to take a field trip when the boardwalk is constructed.

GVAS has continued our efforts to increase awareness of invasive plant species by working with the Seneca Park

Zoo presenting classes on native plants versus invasive plants in your garden for birds and other wildlife. In September GVAS partnered with the Cornell Cooperative Extension to offer a iMapInvasives.org workshop. The 15 workshop participants learned how to use the iMapInvasives.org web site to locate and map invasive species as part of the New York Natural Heritage Program's effort to track the spread of invasive species.

Unfortunately the Peregrine Falcons on our Rfalconcam.com didn't have a very good year on camera this year. Archer and Beauty appeared to be headed for a successful breeding season when Beauty laid her first egg.



However, she didn't lay another egg for ten days. This was far too long between eggs for the first one to be viable. Then some of our very observant Falcon Watchers figured out what was going on. Archer was two timing Beauty with another female falcon out at Kodak Park. The Falcon Watchers spent a lot of time there with their cameras with long lens and were able to figure out from her bands that the Kodak Park falcon came from Toledo, OH and her name is Unity. Peregrines are monogamous, so the stress of Archer two timing caused both nests to fail. We would have never known why the nests failed without our wonderful volunteers, the Falcon Watchers.

GVAS continues to offer entertaining and educational programs to our member and the public such as the Sonoran Desert Springtime on Nov. 15th and the Secret Life of Butterflies on Jan. 24, 2012.

I am certain that you can see the value of the programs that GVAS offers to the Rochester community. Please help us continue to make a difference by donating to this year's annual campaign.

Respectfully,

June Summers

Programs

Sonoran Desert Springtime

Tuesday, November 15, 2011, 7:30 pm
Brighton Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting Room
2300 Elmwood Ave., Brighton

The Sonoran Desert of Arizona with its saguaro cacti is the desert most people are familiar with. Despite an extreme temperature range from below freezing to well over 100 degrees F and rainfall of less than 15" a year, the Sonoran Desert supports over 1500 species of plants and animals. Join Bob and Carol Hinkelman as they visit national parks, wilderness areas, Nature Conservancy preserves and birding hotspots to learn how these plants animals survive the harsh desert climate.

Secret Life of Butterflies

Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2012, 7:30 pm
Brighton Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting Room



2300 Elmwood Ave., Brighton

Did you watch the Monarch Butterflies in your garden this summer and wonder where they were going? Carol Southby, botanist and butterfly expert, will give us insight into the lives of Monarch caterpillar development, chrysalis formation, and emergence of the adult butterfly from the chrysalis. She will also let us in on some of the unusual behaviors of some of our other local butterflies.

GVAS Purple Martin Colony

Purple Martins that live east of the Rocky Mountains depend entirely on human beings for nest cavities and those that live north of the Mason-Dixon Line are declining in population. Therefore, GVAS is fortunate to have Rick Marx, Purple Martin expert extraordinaire, as our friend. Rick has been managing the Purple Martin colony at Hemlock Lake for GVAS for years. This year Rick recorded that 172 eggs were laid in the Hemlock Lake nest boxes, and 139 eggs hatched. Out of the 139 hatched eggs, 136 young birds were banded and 135 of them fledged.

Rick also manages other colonies including ones at Montezuma Audubon Center, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge and Pat Lynch's colony, which is featured on NewYorkWild.org.

Field Trips

November 19, 2011

Joni Dubner is missing the serenity of the woods. Therefore she will be leading a hike (no more than 2 hours) in Mendon Ponds Park. Come join her, walk a trail and feed the chickadees, tufted titmice & nuthatches while enjoying nature. Fun for the whole family!! All are welcome to participate in this outdoor adventure on Saturday, November 19, 2011. **We will meet at 9 am in the Nature Center Parking lot on Pond Rd off of Clover St** (the southernmost of the 3 park entrances off Clover) Dress for the weather (wear boots, warm clothes, etc.) Seed will be provided – donation optional.



February 11, 2012 - Valentine's Walk in the Woods

Joni & Jon Dubner will be leading a hike (no more than 2 hours) in Mendon Ponds Park. Come out, walk a trail and feed the chickadees, tufted titmice & nuthatches while enjoying nature. Fun for your sweetheart and the whole family!! All are welcome to participate in this outdoor adventure on Saturday, February 11, 2012. **We will meet at 9 am in the Nature Center Parking lot on Pond Rd off of Clover St** (the southernmost of the 3 park entrances off Clover) Dress for the weather (wear boots, warm clothes, etc.) Seed will be provided – donation optional.

Coastal CleanUp

On Sept. 17, 2011, GVAS sponsored the Coastal CleanUp at Braddock Bay Marina. We were joined by the Hilton High School Girls Swim Team. The girls and their coaches picked up 350 pounds of trash over one and half miles of coast line. Many thanks to the Hilton High Girls Swim Team, their coaches, and Lisa and AJ McKeown. We couldn't have done it without them.



Our hard-working Coastal CleanUp work crew

Hydraulic Fracturing in the Marcellus Shale, New York on the Verge

Many of us don't want to see gas well hydraulic fracturing come into New York State for many reasons: it is not clean energy and will add to global climate change; it will cause degradation of air quality and habitat for wildlife and humans; and it will possibly pollute drinking water. However, hydraulic fracturing is a freight train coming in our direction because alternative energy is not cheap enough to compete with inexpensive hydrocarbon energy sources.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has released the **Revised Draft SGEIS on the Oil, Gas and Solution Mining Regulatory Program (September 2011), Well Permit Issuance for Horizontal Drilling and High-Volume Hydraulic Fracturing in the Marcellus Shale and Other Low-Permeability Gas Reservoirs**. These proposed regulations regarding high-volume hydraulic fracturing (HVHF) are available for public comment. Comments will be accepted through 5:00 p.m. December 12, 2011. You may view this Draft SGEIS at the following site, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/75370.html>, and submit comments on a web-based form at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/76838.html>.

The DEC has also issued the **High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing Proposed Regulations**. These proposed rules take the recommendations from the draft SGEIS and give them the force of law, if finalized. Comments for this document may also be submitted on the same web-based form above.

To find out more about hydraulic fracturing check out the Citizens Campaign for the Environment web page on hydro-fracking resources, http://www.citizenscampaign.org/special_features/hydro-fracking-center.asp.

Starting Dec. 1, 2011 check the GVAS web page, www.gvaudubon.org, for tips to include in your comments.



The Montezuma Muckrace 2011

By Lisa McKeown

Once again Genesee Valley Audubon Society sponsored a team in the 15th Annual Montezuma Muckrace, an annual fundraiser to benefit the Montezuma Wetland Complex. This 24 hour bird-a-thon was held September 9-10 in the Montezuma Wetland Complex.

The Genesee Valley Peregrines consisted of GVAS Audubon members, Don and Suzanne Broderick, Dana Mulhern, Carol Phillips and board member Lisa McKeown.

Don, Suzanne and Lisa met at the start of the race, 7:00 p.m. Friday night. In the short hour that we birded before dusk we were able to check off some common birds and catch a view of the Sandhill Cranes, a species that eluded us until near the end of last year's Muckrace.

The next morning all five of us met at the Montezuma National Wildlife Visitor Center to continue on with the Muckrace, which would end at 7:00 p.m. One of the first birds we saw that morning was the Trumpeter Swans. Then Dana found an American Bittern. As we drove north to the Knox-Marcellus marsh area we saw two Peregrine Falcons in the North Spring Pond area, just south of the NYS Thruway. Both were very near the road offering a spectacular view. Dana and Carol also saw our only Merlin of the day. Upon arriving at the Knox-Marcellus Marsh we were treated to 3 Peregrine Falcons harassing the ducks and playing with each other over the marsh area.

Around 11:45 a.m. we saw our first Bald Eagle, bring our species count to 62. We continued to search for more species including the elusive American Robin. About 15 minutes later we added a Red Tailed Hawk to our list, and had our second view of the Sandhill Cranes, which were hanging out in someone's backyard. Wouldn't we all love to have Sandhill Cranes in our backyards?

Still no sign of a Robin or a Common Grackle, so we decided to leave the vehicles and take a walk around Howland Island. Unfortunately, due to the excessive rain, the road normally taken to Howland Island was flooded. We walked for a short distance seeing no birds at all, when suddenly the silence was broken by the sounds of gun shots. Little did we know it was small game hunting season. We decided to hastily retreat back to our cars. Safely back at the Montezuma National Wildlife Visitor Center we regrouped and continued to search for the Robin. Our search was unsuccessful. The Genesee Valley Peregrine Falcons finished the 15th Annual Montezuma Muckrace with 75 species, but no Robins.

Genesee Valley Audubon Society

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P.O. Box 15512, Rochester, NY 14615-0512

GVAS: A chapter of the National Audubon Society

The vision of Genesee Valley Audubon Society (GVAS) is to promote environmental conservation. Our mission is to educate and advocate for protection of the environment, focusing on birds, wildlife and habitat.

Keep up-to-date with our web site, www.gvaudubon.org

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The Meadowlark is published the 1st of September, November, January, March, and April. Articles for the Meadowlark should be submitted four weeks prior to the date of publication. Send articles to Joanne Mitchell, 169 Black Walnut Dr., Rochester, NY 14615, or at jwmitchell@rochester.rr.com.

Meadowlark staff: *Editor & Layout*, Joanne Mitchell; *Business Editor*, vacant; *Printing*, Community News; *Distribution*, vacant.

GVAS GOES GREEN

The Meadowlark is on-line at www.gvaudubon.org. If you still want to receive a paper Meadowlark newsletter, do nothing and GVAS will still send you the newsletter. If you wish to view the Meadowlark on-line and not receive it via the mail, please notify Genesee Valley Audubon Society at the following email address: gvaudubon@rochester.rr.com

Please title the email "Meadowlark Newsletter" and include your full name and zip code from the address label on the Meadowlark. We will send you a reminder by email when a new issue is available on line. Thank you for helping GVAS "go green."