

Learning to Love Piping Plovers

by Monica Grabin

On August 8th, YCAS joined with the Maine Audubon Society to present another Piping Plover Experience for Nature Safari Campers at the Wells Reserve. Kim Scantlebury, Maine Audubon's Piping Plover/Least Tern Project Outreach Specialist, joined Monica Grabin from YCAS, Ellen Gawarkiewicz, coordinator and leader of Wells Reserve's summer camp program to teach seven campers, aged 8-12, about piping plovers and how to protect them.

Afterwards we grabbed binoculars and headed down to the beach to see if we could find any ourselves. We did! No babies were seen, but all had excellent views of adult plovers in the dunes. After returning to the barn at the Reserve, Monica shared her piping plover song. The campers had a great time and will be excellent stewards of piping plovers on Maine's beaches.

Thanks to Ellen, Kim, and all the other staff who helped to make this happen. If you know of a summer program that would like to host a piping plover workshop next year, please contact Monica Grabin at YCAS. She'll be happy to help bring it to your area.



Thanks for Supporting the Birding Challenge

by Pat Moynahan

We would like to thank everyone who supported this year's Birding Challenge 2013. Your commitment to our community is greatly appreciated and has allowed us to reinvest in local conservation efforts and environmental education in York County. This year's contributions have been made to the Puffin Project which supports seabird restoration on Stratton Island and educational nature programs for school aged children.

In addition to the many individuals, the following businesses participated in the Birding Challenge 2013: Alfredo's Italian Pizza, Wells; BB Burner Service, Biddeford; Brady Construction, Biddeford; Bergen and Parkinson, LLC, Kennebunk; Bob and Mike's Mini Mart, Saco; Buffleheads Restaurant, Biddeford; Esty Optical, Saco; Chiropractic Family Wellness, Scarborough; Cote-Dow Accounting Services, Bar Mills; Dietz Associates, Kennebunk; High Lonesome Ecotours, Sierra Vista, AZ; LO ink Specialties, Kennebunkport; Nature's Gifts, Kennebunk; New Morning Natural Foods, Kennebunk; Ray's Auto Tech, Biddeford; Rheault's Furniture, Biddeford; Rogers and Hutchins PC CPA, Kennebunk; Saco and Biddeford Savings Institution, Saco; Saco Valley Autocare, Saco;

Shady Brook Farm, Biddeford; Spahr and Dabrowski Design and Environmental Analysis, Kennebunk.

We thank everyone who participated by organizing the event, birding the day, and/or making a contribution. Each of you was an important part of the success of the Birding Challenge 2013.

(Saw-Whets continued from previous page)

The first was from Manomet, MA, the other from Falmouth and one from Vinalhaven. All were females. Ten of our Saw-whets have been recaptured in nets from MA, CT, NY, NJ, PA, and MD. (the last in Dave Brinker's!)

Of the well over 400 saw-whets captured at Wells Reserve, the highest percentage has been females. One theory attempting to explain this difference is that males may have territories they are unwilling to risk loosing and so over winter there. One thing I know for sure, Wells Reserve is not on what one would consider a migratory flyway for Saw-whets. The number of saw-whets we have captured compared to those at the banding station in Freeport, which is located along a ridge line that the birds follow, is quite low. However, EVERY OWL who comes to our nets is frosting on the cake.