

Feathers

Southern Rensselaer Christmas Count *by Phil Whitney*



Red-shouldered Hawk, photo by Jim deWaal Malefyt

The 45th Southern Rensselaer Christmas Count was held on December 26, with 22 field observers and one feederwatcher participating, the best turnout in recent years. 57 species were recorded, slightly less than the 21st century average of 59. The total of 12401 individual birds was well below average, but five species (COMMON MERGANSER, COMMON LOON, FISH CROW, RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD and COMMON GRACKLE) set 45-year high count records. The loons (one on Burden Lake, one flying south along the Hudson) were the first record for the species this century and only the third overall. Other welcome surprises were AMERICAN COOT (second time this century and fourth overall) AND RED-SHOULDERED HAWK (second and seventh). Several species were exceptionally low, including WILD TURKEY, HERRING GULL, MOURNING DOVE, BLUE JAY, AMERICAN TREE SPARROW and WHITE-THROATED SPARROW. Song Sparrow was absent from the count for the first time in 45 years. Other conspicuous misses were Golden-crowned Kinglet and Purple Finch. A warm November and December and plenty of open water may account for some of these results, but where were all the sparrows? 

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President's Corner



BOREAL CHICKADEE, and PINE SISKIN. Dress warmly; grab your binoculars and scope; and get out birding to chase the winter blahs away.

Wayne B'Rells has just completed the monumental project of scanning almost all the old issues of *Feathers* and converting them into pdf format. Bob Yunick has been storing all these in his home, and the backlog has required 25 cartons. The plan is to put these files up on the web on the Club's site. Although success is not certain, we are looking into low cost means to make these files searchable. We also considering making at DVD of the files available for a nominal cost. Our thanks to Wayne and Bob for their efforts.

Finally, the upcoming April *Feathers* is planned to be the first sent out in a digital format. As a test, *Feathers* editor, Chris Grossman, has taken the previous issue and made a duplicate in MS Word that retains much of the printed copy's fine quality and design. We are certain that you will be pleased with this new product that retains all the graphics and much of the style of the present paper form. The enclosed dues notice in this mailing has a line requesting members' email address. Please provide us with the one you wish to receive *Feathers* and other Club notices on. We presently have over 80% of these addresses, but would like to get the percentage above 90%. Of course, we will continue to send out hard copies to those who don't have email, but the format will be the new one.

— Bernie Grossman
President, HMBC 

HMBC Contact Information

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E-mail: contact@hmbc.net

HMBC website: <http://hmbc.net>

HMBC Board Meetings

HMBC Board meetings are open to all Club members. Meetings are held at Five Rivers Center or other local venues at 7:00 p.m., usually on the second Monday of odd-numbered months.

Newsletter Contributions Desired

- Have anything you think other birders would be interested in?
- Have a favorite birding spot you want to share?
- Are there any stories or photos that would inspire others?

Share them with the HMBC membership by submitting them to the addresses below:

Please send all *electronic* submissions *via e-mail* to: Chris Grossman at bgrossman@nycap.rr.com

Send **all** paper submissions to:

Chris Grossman
7 Nott Rd.
Rexford, NY 12148

Tomhannock Reservoir

Saturday, November 5, 2011

Twelve participants gathered on a chilly but sunny fall morning for this year's HMBC Tomhannock Reservoir trip. We began at 8:30 a.m. with the temperature around freezing. There was no wind to speak of, so viewing conditions were good across the water.

The area south of Route 7 was populated with Canada Geese as we gathered, but they were mostly departed for area fields by the time we got across the road to look. Common and Hooded Mergansers were joined by a smattering of Common Goldeneyes and Ruddy Ducks, and some of the Double-crested Cormorants which nest on the small island were still hanging around. Four distant scaup were too active to put a more accurate ID on.

We then gathered in carpools and began our trip counter-clockwise around the reservoir. At our first stop at Nortonville Road, we found a pair of Wood Ducks on the east side of the road, our only ones of the day. We also heard a Common Raven and had the first of several Bald Eagles fly over.

Our next pull-off, a spit of land leading out to a small island, gave us several good birds, including a flock of Ring-necked Ducks. A single Black Scoter was spotted past the island while a Horned Grebe provided excellent looks for everyone. A flock of Cedar Waxwings and a Red-breasted Nuthatch made an appearance, too.

Otter Creek was largely quiet, but there was a Great Blue Heron in the creek.

At the spillway on the north end of the reservoir, we found few birds of note, but our regular stops on Ford Road provided some good birds, with one near Piser Hill Road giving us Hairy Woodpecker, a pair of Yellow-rumped Warblers, at least two Golden-crowned Kinglets, and White-throated Sparrow. Another house with a feeder further on contributed a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and our only Song Sparrow and House Finches of the trip. At one point, we saw three Bald Eagles in the air at one time! Although we had a good variety of

waterfowl, we saw no blackbirds or winter finches. Our total of 48 species was higher than average for this trip. When we ended at 12:15 p.m. back where we started, the air had warmed up to a pleasant 42°.

Species seen: Canada Goose, Wood Duck, American Black Duck, Mallard, Ring-necked Duck, Scaup species, Black Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Ring-billed Gull, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

— *Larry Alden*

Night Owls and Hot Dogs

Saturday, December 10

Every now and then a good plan comes together. But it didn't look like the December 10th Night Owls and Hot Dogs soiree was going to be one of them. The limited registration was getting alarmingly over-subscribed, largely from savvy anonymous phone messages left after-hours. Heavy rains during the week turned the roadways and campfire area into a veritable quagmire. And the morning ushered in the season's coldest temperatures, along with a biting northwest wind. On top of it all, owling is always a very iffy proposition.

Figuring the outdoor experience might likely be a bust, trip leader Craig Thompson started the gig with a comprehensive indoor show-and-

tell overview of local owls and their natural history. The crowd then gamely geared up to go brave the elements. While gathering the group along the Visitor Center entryway, Thompson was able to call up a screech owl deep in the Woodlot Trail. The excited crowd traded 2 handy "Super Sleuth" spy parabolas that magnified the faint call nicely. Upon entering the Woodlot Trail, another screech owl took up just across Game Farm Road, more vociferous than the first bird. No need for spy-ware!

So as not to "flush the covey", the group quickly moved on to the head of the Vlomankill Trail. Again, a faint screech owl trill filtered up from the far stream bank, but before long, the bird flew into the pine tree directly overhead and proceeded to entertain a thoroughly astonished crowd. Within seconds, a 2nd bird flew to a nearby tree for a rare owl duet. Some shuttling was seen among the canopy and some claim a third bird flew in nearby. Again so as not to dispute the birds' territorial imperative, the crowd, now getting both cold and hungry, quickly dispatched to the campfire.

Along the service road, the winds had died down. A nearly full moon broke bright and orange over the clear horizon. Various improbable viewing techniques to defeat the moon illusion were (only) discussed. The cold weather helped solidify both roadway mud and campfire quagmire.

Inescapably drawn to the sights and smells of the raging fire, the assembled crowd reveled in warm campfire camaraderie with Scott Stoner flipping dogs and Alan Mapes catching the icy moons of Jupiter in his birding scope. While tending the fire pit, the two were able to log eastern bluebird, great blue heron, northern harrier, dark-eyed juncos, black-capped chickadees and a flock of European starlings. A great time was had by all. Luck, it is said, is merely the residue of good planning.

— *Craig Thompson* 

Upcoming HMBC Programs

Upcoming HMBC Programs

On Safari in Namibia

Gregg Recer

Monday February 6, 2012

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Colonie Public Library

In this travelogue program, Gregg Recer will share photos from self-guided travels he, along with his wife Cathy and son Bryce, took through northern Namibia in 2010. Namibia, in southwestern Africa, is predominantly an arid country, famous for the skeleton coast and the huge sand dunes of the Namib Desert. However, the northern part of the country includes extensive savanna and riparian corridors that abound with not only “charismatic megafauna” similar to east Africa, but a tremendous variety of birds, including many southern-Africa endemics and old-world families such as ostrich, rollers, hornbills, bee-eaters, guinea fowl, babblers, weavers and waxbills. The program will explore several of Namibia’s excellent national parks, including the Namib-Naukluft, Etosha, Mahango and Mudumu.

Gregg Recer is a former HMBC president. He and his wife Cathy have been birding for nearly 25 years. They have travelled and birded over much of North America and have recently focused on exploring tropical birding locations.

All About Bluebirds - and More

John Rogers

Monday March 5, 2012

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Colonie Public Library

This quality PowerPoint presentation encompasses the life history of the Eastern Bluebird, nest box management, other birds that nest in bluebird boxes, and more. The focus is on bluebirds, but John also shares his passion for the natural world. With visually beautiful photographs, sounds, and a sincere, enthusiastic presentation style, this program is of interest to anyone who appreciates nature.

John Rogers has maintained an extensive trail of bluebird nest boxes north of Syracuse for over 35 years, and has fledged over 12,200 Eastern Bluebirds. He is a recognized authority on bluebird trail management, and has done slide programs and workshops for hundreds of groups including in 10 states and 2 Canadian provinces. John was a co-founder of the New York State Bluebird Society in 1982 and elected a lifetime (volunteer) director in 2002. He is a recipient of the John and Nora Lane Bluebird Conservation Award from the North American Bluebird Society, and a past board member of that organization. John is a member of the Onondaga Audubon Society near Syracuse. He received a BA in Biology from SUNY Oswego.

HMBC Annual Meeting and Dinner

An Adventure at the Bottom of the World: The Birds and Wildlife of the Southern Ocean and Antarctica

Derek Lovitch

Monday April 2, 2012

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Location To Be Announced

HMBC Members will be invited by mail

Derek and Jeannette Lovitch, of Freeport Wild Bird Supply, spent three weeks in November 2010 on a boat touring the islands of the southern ocean and the Antarctic Peninsula. Join us for a multimedia presentation of their voyage which included the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, South Orkney Islands, and Antarctic Peninsula: penguins, albatrosses, seals, icebergs, and so much more!

Seasons of Five Rivers

Scott Stoner and Denise Hackert-Stoner

Monday May 7, 2012

7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Colonie Library

Many of us visit the Five Rivers Environmental Education Center in Delmar, but how well do we *really* know it?

From flowing streams to tranquil ponds, from fields to woods to feeders, Five Rivers’ varied habitats draw abundant wildlife to its 500 acres.

Along with its 225 bird species (70 breeding), Five Rivers offers turtles, frogs, and mammals, along with a wide variety of flowers: a feast for the naturalist in all seasons.

Join us for a program featuring this gem of a nature center. We hope to whet your appetite for HMBC’s Birds and Breakfast at Five Rivers on the following Saturday! 

Upcoming Audubon Programs

Unless otherwise specified, all programs to be held at William K. Sanford Colonie Town Library
629 Albany-Shaker Road, Loudonville, NY 12211
2nd Thursday of every month, monthly: September – June, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Annual Meeting
Suzie Gilbert, Author of Flyaway
Sunday, February 12, 2012
2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center
195 New Karner Road
Albany, New York 12205

Join us for a fun afternoon at the Audubon Society of the Capital Region Annual Meeting, Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center. Enjoy a guided snowshoe hike around the preserve, view the Center's exhibits, learn about ASCR's plans and activities, have some food and drink, and take your chances in a raffle and/or silent auction.

The Annual Meeting is the point in time when elections of officers and directors occur. You will receive more

information regarding this in the near future. This is your opportunity to meet the people who have volunteered to lead ASCR and plan the projects and activities that will be offered this coming year. Maybe you'll decide to join us!

Lastly, we are so pleased to sponsor Suzie Gilbert, author of the books *Flyaway* and *Hawk Hill* (*Hawk Hill* is a children's book). Suzie is known for her warm, engaging, and humorous talks about her endeavors as a bird rehabilitator. She'll be giving a one hour talk from 4 pm to 5 pm and will have books available for purchase and signing.

So, please mark February 12th on your calendar! Our snowdate, in case of inclement weather, will be Sunday, February 26th, same times. 

Mike Gann and Pete Trivilino completed the *last* bridge replacement job in the Reist Sanctuary the week before Christmas. The photos show both old and new bridges. 🍃.



Did you miss the American White Pelican... the American Golden Plover... or the Snowy Owl?

These were all reported in Region 8 last year (the counties of ALBANY, COLUMBIA, FULTON, GREENE, MONTGOMERY, RENSSELAER, SARATOGA, SCHENECTADY, SCHOHARIE, WARREN and WASHINGTON).

Did you miss the chance to try for the GRACE'S WARBLER seen recently in NY State for the first time?

Here's an easy way to get notified quickly the next time a rare bird is sighted here or, as warranted, in the Northeast. HMBC is starting a new Rare Bird Alert automated phone system on April 15, 2012.

The premise is pretty simple... if you

sign up, when a rare bird is reported, you will be called.

Here's how it works:

- You sign up to be part of our Rare Bird Alert when you pay your annual dues. Register your phone number(s) with us.
- When a rare bird is reported in our area or you report a rare bird in our area, one of the club's designated members needs to be contacted. Once contacted, this designated member will jump into action.
- The designated member will validate the sighting as best as they can, and then call OneCallNow (see below) to leave a voice recording with details about the bird, including pertinent directions and instructions. OneCallNow will automatically call everyone on our list

and play the recording to you or your answering machine. If your number is busy, it will continue to call back.

Our Rare Bird Alert is based on the commercially available OneCallNow system, which is a very inexpensive automated calling service provided to groups for uses just like a rare bird alert. It is used for at least two other rare bird alert systems that we know of, and maybe more.

To join, simply register when you pay your annual dues, coming in February. The annual statement will include an area specially for this service. The cost will be \$8 per year, which is simply the total cost of OneCallNow divided by an estimate of the number of people to sign up. Any questions, feel free to contact Jory Langner at (518) 573-7999 or BirderJory@gmail.com.



Southern Rensselaer Christmas Count — *continued*

SPECIES	A	B	C	E	G	H	J	Feeder	Circle
Canada Goose	1084	50	21	28	289	1665	140		3277
Mute Swan					5				5
American Black Duck	1					4	12		17
Mallard	55	65	20	26	32	54	26		278
Northern Pintail	1								1
Hooded Merganser		4	1		2		2		9
Common Merganser	35	32	200			6			273
Ruffed Grouse					1				1
Wild Turkey	22		1				1		24
Common Loon	1		1						2
Bald Eagle	5					1			6
Northern Harrier	1	1		2					4
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1			1		1	2	1	6
Coopers Hawk	3	1				1			5
Red-shouldered Hawk			1						1
Red-tailed Hawk	8	12	3	8	2	5	13	1	52
American Kestrel							1		1
Merlin						1			1
Peregrine Falcon						1			1
American Coot						1			1
Ring-billed Gull	68	34	1		1	40			144
Herring Gull	9	2	3			16			30
Great Black-backed Gull	3	1				4			8
Rock Pigeon	691	57	2	45	3	57	18		873
Mourning Dove	5	12	36	40	6	3	8	12	122
Belted Kingfisher	1	3			1	1			6
Red-bellied Woodpecker	4		1	2		1	2	1	11
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		1				1			2
Downy Woodpecker	4	5	13		5	3	5	1	36
Hairy Woodpecker	1	1	3	1	4		5	1	16
Northern Flicker	1	1			1			1	4
Pileated Woodpecker	1				1	1	1		4
Blue Jay	7	1	10		6	4	21	5	54
American Crow	918	195	60	385	48	275	91	14	1986
Fish Crow	8								8
Common Raven				2	1		2		5
Horned Lark		60							60
Black-capped Chickadee	23	28	93	18	72	7	68	9	318
Tufted Titmouse	10	7	17	5	18	3	15	3	78
Red-breasted Nuthatch			1					1	2
White-breasted Nuthatch	7	5	6	4	7	3	8	1	41
Brown Creeper	1								1
Carolina Wren	1	1			1	1		1	5

Southern Rensselaer Christmas Count — *continued*

SPECIES	A	B	C	E	G	H	J	Feeder	Circle
Eastern Bluebird	1	7	15	8	6	12	14		63
American Robin	294	27	17	13	17	23	66		457
Northern Mockingbird			3	1	1	4	1		10
European Starling	1084	129	119	400	335	145	257	35	2504
Cedar Waxwing		9			6				15
American Tree Sparrow	3				3	5		1	12
White-throated Sparrow	8	1	1			5		3	18
Dark-eyed Junco	9	29	32	12	92	3	57	7	241
Northern Cardinal	3	4	15	3	7	15	5	5	57
Red-winged Blackbird	810						10		820
Common Grackle	45								45
House Finch	1	7	23		10	7	2	8	58
American Goldfinch	13	13	24	4	27	10	42	10	143
House Sparrow	4	62	15	5	8	40	45		179
Total individuals	5255	867	758	1013	1018	2429	940	121	12401
Total Species	42	34	31	22	33	38	30	21	57

Contributors:

- Section A Will Yandik, Steve Yandik
- Section B Peggy Rudis, Kate Storms
- Section C Phil Whitney, Marjorie Whitney, Jim deWaal Malefyt, Sandy deWaal Malefyt
- Section E Gary Goodness, Don Gresens, Larry Deyss, Bernice Gawron, Jesse Jaycox
- Section G Steve Mesick, Gregg Recer
- Section H Bill Lee, Carol Blackwell, Jim Ries, Jaime Taft, LeRoy Suess
- Section J Debbie Shaw, Nancy Kern
- Feeder Naomi Lloyd 

FEBRUARY**MOHAWK RIVER/COHOES TO CRESCENT****Saturday, February 11**

Albany County; morning

Coordinator:

Bill Lee

374-3426

bileej@hotmail.com

This area, including Cohoes Falls and Simmons Island, offers a great opportunity to study gulls and waterfowl that winter along the Mohawk River. We will look for Glaucous, Iceland and Lesser Black-backed Gulls often present in small numbers in the winter. This trip will be a good introduction to the many fine vantage points along the Mohawk.

Meet at the NY State Dam Recreation area behind the U-Haul Rental in Cohoes at 8:30 a.m. From I-787 going north, turn right onto Route 470 (Ontario Street) in Cohoes. Then turn left onto Clark Ave. and proceed to the end.

CAPE ANN and NEWBURYPORT/PLUM ISLAND**Saturday-Monday,****February 18-20** (weekend)

Coordinator:

Bernie Grossman

518-399-9159

bgrossman@nycap.rr.com

Cape Ann and the Newburyport/Plum Island, Massachusetts areas are prime winter birding locations. We will spend Saturday on Cape Ann's shoreline looking for white-winged gulls, wintering sea ducks such as Harlequins, scoters, eiders and loons as well as other winter visitors like Purple Sandpipers and Guillemot. Sunday will be spent at Newburyport and Plum Island searching for more sea birds, Harriers, Snowy Owl, etc. Monday morning is catch-up time where we will pick up any spots and target species missed. Plan for 2-3 nights in a motel. By Club policy, this overnight trip is for members with non-members accommodated if room is available and with the leader's approval. Contact Bernie Grossman by January 20 to reserve a spot and for housing information.

RESERVATIONS FOR WINTER RARE BIRD TRIP

(February/March)

Tuesday, February 21

Coordinator:

Bill Lee

374-3426

bileej@hotmail.com

If any especially rare bird is reported in our general area, we plan to take a trip to look for it. This is usually a day trip, but sometimes requires an overnight stay. To get on the notification list for alert and trip details, contact the coordinator. In 2010, participants have seen Northern Hawk Owl, Ivory Gull and Tufted Duck.

FORT EDWARD and FORT MILLER

Saturday, February 25

Washington County;
afternoon through dusk

Coordinator:

Gregg Recer
899-2678

gregg_recer@alum.rpi.edu

Short-eared Owls are seen most winters in the Fort Edward Grasslands, an Important Bird Area in Washington County.

Snowy Owls have also been seen here in recent years. Wintering hawks, including Rough-legged, Red-tailed, Northern Harriers and perhaps a Bald Eagle or Peregrine Falcon are another feature of this area. Also, wintering field birds such as Horned Lark, Snow Bunting, and possibly Lapland Longspur and Northern Shrike. Depending on conditions on the river, we may also search for waterfowl along the Hudson in Fort Miller.

Meet at 12:30 p.m. in the Park-and-Ride lot in the Malta Business Park. Coming From the south on I-87 (the Northway), take Exit 12 and stay to the right, heading east on Route 67 toward Route 9. (From the north, go $\frac{3}{4}$ around the traffic circle to head east on Route 67) At the next traffic circle after the highway, take the first right into the business park and turn right again to the parking area. This trip will be practically all car birding, but access can be limited in places, so we will need to carpool in as few cars as possible.

MARCH

WATERFOWL OF THE HUDSON RIVER SOUTH

Sunday, March 4

Greene county; morning

*Joint trip with the
Alan DeVoe Bird Club*

Coordinator:

Bill Cook
851-2678
cook@sunycgcc.edu

On this spring morning, we will search the Hudson River from Coxsackie to Catskill where waterfowl usually congregate on their way north. There is also a good chance of seeing Bald Eagles.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Coxsackie Boat Launch. Take the NYS Thruway to Exit 21B (Coxsackie - Route 9W), follow 9W south for about 2 miles to Route 385. Go left (east) on Route 385 (Mansion Street) and continue straight to the Hudson River where the road bears left into the boat launch site.

WASHINGTON COUNTY WATERFOWL

Sunday, March 18

morning

Joint trip with

Southern Adirondack Audubon

Coordinators:

Joyce Miller,
justlookitup@yahoo.com
Lindsey Duval
eccentricvirgo@gmail.com

Register by 7 p.m. on March 17

Join us as we search the Hudson for migrant waterfowl such as Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Ring-necked Ducks and Mergansers. In recent years, Horned Grebe, Canvasbacks and Tundra Swans have been lifebirds for many.

Meet at the Schuylerville Central School on Route 29. The trip is limited to the first 12 who register. Contact one of the leaders before 7 p.m. on March 17 to register and for meeting time. Dress warmly and bring a beverage/snack, your binoculars and a scope if you have one. We will carpool. Trip will end late morning. You will be contacted if the trip is cancelled due to weather.

APRIL**VISCHER FERRY****Sunday, April 1**

Saratoga County; evening

Coordinator:

John Hershey

371-3114

hersheyj@nycap.rr.com

We will start out on this trip looking for spring waterfowl such as American Wigeon, Green and Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Wood Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser and Pied-billed Grebe. Rusty Blackbirds are also a possibility. We will linger until after dusk to listen for nocturnal bird sounds from rails, woodcocks and owls. With a little luck we may get to see an American Woodcock displaying in the moonlight.

Meet at the main entrance at 5:45 p.m. Bring a flashlight to aid in returning to the parking area.

WOODCOCK AT FIVE RIVER**Thursday, April 26**

Albany County; evening

Coordinator:

Craig Thompson

475-0291 (Daytime)

During a meandering to the Woodcock site, we will look for other early spring birds. Woodcock flight time is expected to be around 8 p.m. Bring binoculars and a flashlight.

Meet at 7:00 p.m. at the Five Rivers Interpretive Building.

RAMSHORN-LIVINGSTON SANCTUARY**Saturday, April 28**

Greene County; morning

Coordinator:

Tom Williams

857-2176

trwdsd@yahoo.com

RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary, located in the Village of Catskill, is 436 acres of tidal marsh and swamp, upland forests and fallow farm fields. Two miles of trails follow an old farm road to a 28-foot observation tower, then meander through forests and skirt RamsHorn Marsh. The early migrant residents will have returned by late April, (herons, rails, thrushes, catbirds, thrashers and sparrows). We may encounter one of the first waves of vireos, gnatcatchers and warblers pushing northward. Ospreys, eagles and hawks are possible as well.

Meet promptly by 7:30 a.m. at Colonie Center in Albany, Sears Auto Center at the intersection of Central Avenue and Wolf Road. We will be on the Wolf Road. side of Sears Auto Center. Alternatively, you can meet up with the group at Exit 21 of the NYS Thruway (Catskill) by 8:15 a.m. Contact the trip leader if you plan on attending.

MAY

BASHAKILL WMA

Saturday, May 5

Southern Catskills; all day

Coordinator: Bernie Grossman

399-9159

bgrossman@nycap.rr.com

The Bashakill is an important birding area in Southern New York and is a good spot to find early migrants, especially the more southern warblers like the Hooded and Worm-eating. We'll also look for waders, shorebirds and waterfowl. Bring scopes, binoculars, a hat, boots and sunscreen. Plan to eat lunch there.

Meet promptly by 5:30 a.m., Colonie Center in Albany, Sears Auto Center at the intersection of Central Avenue and Wolf Road. We will be on the Wolf Road side of Sears Auto Center to set up car pools. Cost sharing expected.

PEEBLES ISLAND STATE PARK

Sunday, May 6

Saratoga County; morning

Coordinator:

Gary Goodness

862-9260

goodness@nycap.rr.com

Peebles Island in early May is an ideal environment to watch the spring migration. The variety of habitat insures a plethora of birds; expect to see songbirds, sandpipers, waterfowl and the rest of an early mix of migrants.

Meet in the parking lot on Peebles Island at 8:30 a.m. There may be a State Park parking fee, so ride with a friend if you can.

BIRDS and BREAKFAST AT FIVE RIVERS

Saturday, May 12

Albany County; morning

Coordinators:

Scott Stoner and

Denise Hackert -Stoner

785-6760

scottjstoner@aol.com

Our annual celebration of the arrival of spring will be held at Five Rivers on Game Farm Road in Delmar. The center has an excellent trail system through a variety of habitats. You can expect to see and hear a number of resident and migrant species including Canada Geese with their newly hatched goslings, Eastern Bluebirds feeding their young and (hopefully), a number of different warblers.

An early group will meet in the parking lot at 6:00 a.m. The building will open at 6:45 a.m. with coffee flowing. Groups will leave at 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. You may join one of these groups or go out on your own as we try to find as many species as possible. We'll rally at 10:30 a.m. for coffee, doughnuts, bagels, fresh fruit and a list compilation. The breakfast is free, but donations are accepted.

**VISCHER FERRY
MIGRANTS**

Sunday, May 13

Saratoga County; morning

Coordinators:

Gregg Recer and

Cathy Graichen

899-2678

gregg_recer@alum.rpi.edu

This is one of the club's most popular spring trips. We will explore this varied site for warblers and other songbirds as well as marsh species including rails and bitterns.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the main entrance next to the Whipple Bridge.

CENTURY RUN

Saturday, May 19 (all day)

Compiler:

Bob Yunick

377-0146

1527 Myron Street

Schenectady, NY 12309

Coordinator:

Larry Alden

861-6087

overlook@nycap.rr.com

Each group must stay together and jointly identify species reported. Reports must be mailed to the compiler by May 29 in order to be counted. Also, please call or email *Birdline* with the total species and highlights for your group. Note: You can contact Larry Alden if you have any questions or need suggestions. Also let Larry know if you need people to fill out a group or are interested in joining a group; he may be able to make a match.

NOTE: The compiler MUST have your results by SATURDAY MAY 28 in order to be counted and published in *Feathers*.

**SCHODACK ISLAND STATE
PARK**

Sunday, May 20

Rensselaer County; morning

Coordinator:

Tom Williams

857-2176

trwdsd@yahoo.com

Schodack Island State Park sits off the eastern shore of the Hudson River just south of Albany. Approximately seven miles of Hudson River and Schodack Creek shoreline bound the 1,052 acre site. A portion of the park shelters a Bird Conservation Area (BCA) that is home to Bald Eagles, Cerulean Warblers and a Great Blue Heron rookery. Spring migrants and returning residents are plentiful. Expect high numbers and a diversity of birds.

Meet at 7 a.m. at the Kmart Plaza on Routes 9 and 20 in East Greenbush to carpool as there may be a per car fee for the State Park.

MALTA TECH PARK TRAILS

Saturday, May 26 (morning)

Coordinators:

Susan and Tom Beaudoin

584-8116

smbeaudoin@gmail.com

This trip will consist of hiking two different trail systems in the Malta Tech Park, as well as walking some of the sidewalks along the roads within the Tech Park. Both have gentle to moderate uphill sections. The first trail is off Hermes Road and is a narrow foot/mountain bike path through a forested area along a ridge. Singing Hermit Thrushes and Veeries are common. From this trail we will connect to the 100 Acre Wood trail system located off of Stonebreak Road. These trails are broader, covered with wood chips, and have stone benches and bridges crossing small streams. Here warblers, flycatchers, Scarlet Tanagers, Wood Thrushes and other woodland species can be found. Along the roadside we will look for Indigo Buntings, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Eastern Towhees, Eastern Bluebirds, sparrows and raptors.

Meet at 12:30 p.m. in the Park-and-Ride lot in the Malta Business Park. Coming From the south on I-87 (the Northway), take Exit 12 and stay to the right, heading east on Route 67 toward Route 9. (From the north, go $\frac{3}{4}$ around the traffic circle to head east on Route 67) At the next traffic circle after the highway, take the first right into the business park and turn right again to the parking area.

FORT EDWARD

GRASSLANDS IBA

Sunday May 27

Washington County; morning

Coordinator:

Scott Stoner

785-6760

scottjstoner@aol.com

Field Leader:

Laurie LaFond

President

Friends of the IBA

Joint Trip with the Friends of the IBA

In this morning trip, we will hike and carpool/caravan around the Fort Edward Grasslands IBA, in search of Eastern Meadowlark, Bobolink, American Kestrel, grassland sparrows, Eastern Bluebirds and a variety of warblers. Upland Sandpipers may also be present in the area.

Start time is 8:00 a.m. Call the Coordinator by May 23 to pre-register and obtain starting location, at 785-6760 .

Feathers

Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club
c/o Five Rivers EEC
Game Farm Road
Delmar, NY 12054

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