

Feathers

The 84th Schenectady CBC

by Larry Alden
Compiler

The 84th Schenectady CBC (Audubon CBC #114) was held on Saturday, December 14, 2013. Twenty-six participants in nine field parties took part. Many aspects of a Christmas Bird Count depend on the weather in the preceding week. This year was no different. The week preceding the Schenectady CBC consisted of temperatures that hovered around freezing on Monday and Tuesday, then dropped to the single digits and teens on count day. Several small snow events coated the ground through the week, but these amounted to an inch or less on count day. The Mohawk River, the main water body in the count circle, was open water three days before the count but mostly frozen on count day. Ponds were frozen over and streams were partially open.

Light snow fell throughout the day, but roads were passable and the main storm came overnight Saturday, dropping nearly a foot of snow by Sunday. Visibility was somewhat limited in the late afternoon, though. Temperatures ranged from a low of 9° to a high of 14°, and winds were overall light, although some localized breezes made for uncomfortable wind chills.

The prolonged drop in temperature leading up to count day closed up much of what was open water earlier in the week. This accounted for low duck and gull numbers, although Sector G (Rotterdam) had enough open water to get over 600 ducks, including a count record three GREEN-WINGED TEAL. Aside from the usual MALLARDS and AMERICAN BLACK DUCKS, singles of MUTE SWAN and COMMON GOLDENEYE, and five COMMON MERGANSERS were all the ducks found. A DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT was a surprise given the conditions. This was only the fifth time this species has been recorded on this count and the second year in a row.

Nine GREAT BLUE HERONS were certainly a surprise and the total of eight BALD EAGLES (all adults) was near the record high of ten. No unusual hawks were seen, and gull numbers were quite low with only 47 individuals of the three common species. Pre-dawn owling paid off for two field parties, netting five EASTERN SCREECH-OWLS and four GREAT HORNED OWLS.

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President's Corner

Today, Tuesday, March 11th. I go outside, the birds are singing, it's a warm 47 degrees, the sun is shining and all is well. The bluebirds are gathering around the bluebird boxes on the golf course where I walk my dog. The cardinals are singing. Reports of the arrival of blackbirds and killdeer are spreading. (And reports of Snowy Owls have diminished greatly). Spring is here. The birds know it even if there is snow on the ground. The birds know it even if it is supposed to snow tomorrow and the temps are supposed to go down into the single digits yet again. A little birdie told me "Spring is definitely here".

And what's the club up to these days? Our annual meeting is scheduled for next month, on April 16. Come, enjoy the camaraderie ... listen to our great speaker (the fabulous Rick Wright), have a good dinner, hear all of the committee reports and vote on next year's board of directors. By the time you receive this edition of Feathers, your invitation should have already been delivered to you.

- Planning continues for our hosting of the NYSOA Annual Meeting in 2015, targeted for the fall of next year. We have begun our search for a speaker of renown and for a venue suitable for the size and scope of the conference. If you're interested in participating in the planning, please let us know.
- Read about our nascent Adopt-a-School program in the article "One Heck of a First Step" elsewhere in this edition of Feathers. If you're interested in participating in this program, please let us know.
- Many conservation letters have been mailed on the club's behalf. We are in process of strategizing best ways to keep all members abreast of issues that the club has been active in supporting and what issues we all, individually, can support.
- Field trips have continued throughout the winter and are now picking up in frequency as warmer weather approaches. Find out about upcoming field trips on our website HMBC.net and HMBirds.
- Our very popular monthly programs continue with an excellent series of speakers lined up through the spring and summer. See info about these programs on our website HMBC.net and HMBirds.

And there's always more happening. Feel free to call me or email me, I love hearing what you have to say about the club, about the birds and about birding in our area.

Jory Langner
president@hmbc.net

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:

HMBC Contact Information
BIRDLINE of EASTERN NEW YORK:
E-mail: contact@hmbc.net
HMBC website: <http://hmbc.net>

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

Send all paper submissions to:

Chris Grossman
7 Nott Rd.
Rexford, NY 12148

Save the date

The HMBC Annual Meeting will be Wednesday, April 16, 5:30 pm – 9:00 pm at the Century House.

A Birding Milestone

Scott Stoner saw his 700th ABA area bird, a LA SAGRA'S FLYCATCHER, at Matheson Hammock county park in Miami-Dade county, Florida on January 15, 2014, on a trip with Denise. Number 699 was PURPLE SWAMPHEN two days earlier in Pembroke Pines, Florida. As a young birder decades before that, the "600 club" was this elite, mystical, nearly unreachable goal. 700 was then unimaginable, and Scott is absolutely thrilled!

Field Trip Reports

Waterfowl of the Hudson River South: Greene County – Coxsackie

Sunday, March 9, 2014

This was the waterfowl trip with no waterfowl...not one...not even a goose. The river was completely frozen with ships requiring an icebreaker to plow out a channel in front of them. The only birds on the ice were lots of HERRING GULLS and an immature GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL. The sharp eyes of Mark and Bruce found one BALD EAGLE perched in the trees on the other side of the river and another flying over the trees

Vosburghs Marsh was also completely frozen so we walked over the ice looking for blackbirds hoping for a rusty. A large mixed flock of RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS and COMMON GRACKLES in migration made a noisy appearance in some red cedars on 4-Mile Point Road but we couldn't find any rustys. Our group of eight people encountered twenty four species including a COMMON RAVEN which we heard before it flew over our heads. The best bird of the day was the HERMIT THRUSH that Mark Fitzsimmons spotted and which walked down 4-Mile Point Road in front of us allowing fairly close approach.

- Bill Cook

Upcoming HMBC Programs

HBMC Annual Meeting and Dinner

Fartbirds and Goats: Nighthawks in Legend and Lore

Speaker: Rick Wright

April 16, 2014 - 5:30pm - 9:00pm

The Century House

997 New Loudon Rd

Latham, NY 12110

The Common Nighthawk is just that: common and familiar to most of us. But for centuries, we weren't sure what to make of these strange evening visitors to our settlements and farms. Nowadays they're the most familiar of our American nightjars, but it took years, in some cases centuries, for common nighthawks to reveal many of their secrets. Explorers, ornithologists, and country dwellers have all contributed to the unraveling of this species' many mysteries, from its weird noises to its unorthodox chick-rearing practices. Rick Wright explores the fascinatingly unnatural history of everyone's favorite goatsucker, tracing the erratic path of these sharp-winged bug eaters through science and rumor, superstition and art.

Rick Wright is the Book Review Editor at Birding magazine and a Senior Leader for WINGS. His recent and forthcoming publications include the ABA Field Guide to the Birds of New Jersey (2014) and the Peterson Reference Guide to Sparrows (2015). Rick lives in northern New Jersey with his wife, Alison Beringer, and their chocolate lab, Gellert.

Upcoming HMBC Programs *(continued)*

From Sea to Sea: Birding Southern California

Speaker: Scott Stoner & Denise Hackert-Stoner

May 5, 2014 - 7:00pm - 8:30pm

William K. Sanford Colonie Town Library

629 Albany-Shaker Road, Loudonville, NY 12211

From the dramatic Pacific coast and Channel Islands to the vast inland Salton Sea, southern California offers a rich and varied avifauna to the visiting birder. Stretching between these two seas lies a string of changing habitats, each hosting its own treasures. From urban, to chaparral, to mountain, to desert, we explore each of these special places and their birds and other wildlife. Rarities like the Island Scrub Jay, Yellow-footed Gull and LeConte's Thrasher are a special treat as we enjoy the variety of scenery and other wildlife that enhances any visit to this land of extremes.

About the Speakers

Scott Stoner and Denise Hackert-Stoner are nature photographers, speakers, and birders in upstate New York. Their award-winning work has been exhibited widely in galleries across the Capital Region, and featured on the cover of *The Kingbird* (journal of the New York State Ornithological Association), as well as in the *Conservationist Magazine* and the 2013 book, *New York Wildlife Viewing Guide* (Watchable Wildlife Series).

They have won the Colonie Town Library's annual photo contest two years in a row (2012 and 2013) as well as the 2013 Fire Island National Seashore wildlife photo contest. Other recent awards for their photos include the 2013 Art for the IBA contest sponsored by the Friends of the Washington County Important Bird Area, and at the 2013 Hagaman Art Show.

Scott is past president of both the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club and the Audubon Society of the Capital Region, and teaches adult education bird courses for several area school districts. He has been Program Chair for the HMBC for more than 20 years. Denise is a field trip leader and past officer and director of the Bird Club.

Workshop on Using eBird

Speaker: John Kent

June 2, 2014 - 7:00pm - 8:30pm

William K. Sanford Colonie Town Library

629 Albany-Shaker Road, Loudonville, NY 12211

See a demonstration of how to use the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's eBird system to log and keep track of all your bird observations. Getting in the habit of entering a complete list of the birds you observe on each outing contributes to a large and rapidly growing database that is useful to researchers, conservation efforts, and other birders. It is easy to enter data from any computer or smartphone, and as your personal database expands it becomes more and more interesting to look at your own lists by year, county, state, etc. Use the overall database to effectively plan your birding and have the best chance of finding target species, near home

Upcoming HMBC Programs *(continued)*

or anywhere else - data is available not only throughout the entire U.S., but for most birding areas worldwide. See how you are doing compared to others in your county or state using the "Top 100" feature. Use the Hotspot Explorer to see what birds have been seen, and how recently, at your intended birding location before you go. See animated maps showing how the distribution of various species varies through the year.

John Kent is an active birder in the Capital Region and beyond. He is an HMBC member and has served on the Board of Directors. He has been logging all of his observations on eBird since 2007. His eBird lists cover 21 states, with 100 or more species observed in 10 of those states.

Upcoming Audubon Programs

NYS Golden Eagle Telemetry Tracking & Eagle Feeder Program

Speaker: Tom Salo

April 17, 2014 : 7 PM - 8:30 PM

William K. Sanford (Colonie Town) Library 629 Albany Shaker Road, Loudonville, N.Y.

Tom Salo, the NYS Coordinator for the Appalachian Eagle Project, will present a fascinating program on how our neighboring chapter, the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society is capturing and outfitting migrating Golden Eagles with telemetry devices to track this NYS Endangered Species.

He'll also show some of the best local photographs from the Golden Eagle Feeder traps from the past 4 seasons. Of fourteen sites that have operated in New York, nine are in our neighboring Chenango, Delaware and Otsego counties.

Migration Celebration! at the Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center

Free and Open to the Public!

May 3, 2014 : 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center, 195 New Karner Road, Albany

- 8:00 am, 2 hour morning birdwalk and viewing of bird banding operation.
- Complimentary refreshments starting at 10:00 am.
- 10:30 am to 2pm, Kids can take the "MIGRATORY CHALLENGE" by making their way through six stations set up to give them the experience of challenges faced by migratory birds.
- 11am - "My How You've Changed - A Half Century of Changes in the Bird Life in New York" presentation given by Rich Guthrie, a Naturalist and Bird Expert who is a frequent guest commentator on WAMC's Vox Pop - 'Birding with Rich Guthrie.' He is a retired biologist from NYSDEC and a member of the Habitat Advisory Committee.

Rich will share with us his adventures and observations in birding starting with his childhood in Brooklyn, NY to his observations of changing bird migration patterns he sees today up and down the Hudson Valley.

On Nature

A Fish Story

by Denise Hackert-Stoner and Scott Stoner

We have all been amazed by spectacular moments in nature: gorgeous breeding displays, acrobatic flight, fancy plumage. We have all felt our hearts race as we witness a rare species for the first time. These are moments that birders have in common, and form the basis of many of our conversations with one another.

Recently, while visiting Everglades National Park in south Florida, we experienced one of these moments. But in this case the bird was not new or unusual, the plumage was ordinary, and the bird was engaged in a behavior that occurs every day of its life: eating. Despite these rather mundane details, the moment was no less mesmerizing or exciting.

The bird was a female Anhinga, a very common bird in and along Florida waters. When we first spotted her in the shallow water near the shore of Nine Mile Pond (where we were hoping to track down a White-crowned Pigeon to photograph) we couldn't help but notice the very large fish she was holding aloft, speared on her sharp bill. The fish was huge; larger than the bird's head. We were fascinated by the idea of how this process would work; if and how she would manage to consume the thing. From that moment and for the next seven minutes, we observed this very skilled and determined hunter as she prepared, fought for, and finally won her meal.



Her Prize

The fish was so big that the Anhinga could not flip it off her beak and swallow it in the water, so she brought it to shore. Once pulled off her bill the fish made a dash back to the water, only to be picked up again by the Anhinga. The bird took several moments to arrange the fish into the head-down position she needed to swallow it. There were several false starts and missed attempts, and the fish, remarkably still alive, almost got away again, but the Anhinga persisted. In the midst of the drama, the Anhinga was joined by a Black Vulture. At first it looked like the vulture was standing by in the hopes that the Anhinga would give up on, or drop the fish. Neither of the above being the case, the vulture took a more aggressive

approach, harassing the Anhinga, and even pulling the Anhinga's tail feathers! With a flap of her wings the Anhinga discouraged the vulture, who then stood by hopefully as the Anhinga continued the struggle.

On Nature *(continued)*



Swallowing her catch

Got it down!

Finally, after a long seven minutes, the Aninga succeeded in swallowing her hard-won meal, leaving the vulture looking downright disappointed.

It was a scene that plays out daily, all over the world; a bird making its living and facing the challenges of everyday life. But as we witnessed this simple yet beautiful sequence of events we felt like honored witnesses of life, of death, of the flow and continuum of nature. We came to the pond to see something rare. Instead we were awed to witness something fundamental.

Denise and Scott

One Heck of a First Step

By Jory Langner and Al Mapes

I approached the pre-K room at Bethlehem Children's School in Slingerlands earlier this week. On the door is a hand-painted sign, obviously drawn by the 3-5 year old class, which read "Shhhh Birdwatching in progress".

I walked inside the room and there at the first window are two small comfy chairs looking out the window. There are stuffed birds on the sill and pictures and drawings of birds all around the window. Outside there is a feeder. And the bird songs from outdoors are projected into the classroom by a baby monitor.

One Heck of a First Step *(continued)*

These 3-5 year olds can identify the birds by sight AND by song. They are learning the field marks. WOW.

The word that comes to mind is “heartwarming”. Here, sitting before me, are the birders and ornithologists of tomorrow, the conservationists of tomorrow. These are the people who will be carrying on the activities that we are doing today. My dream is that we touch hundreds, if not thousands of children from pre-K through college-age young adults. And that these children and young adults become the conservators of our earth who delight in watching and studying birds. That is a legacy that we all can be proud of.

And so the club’s Adopt-A-School youth program has started with great success at Bethlehem Children's School. A few weeks ago, Al Mapes and I taught some basics of birds and birding to students ages 3 to 13, with



some behind the scenes help from others. Our program was obviously a big hit with the students as well as the teachers. And we have more sessions planned in the upcoming months.

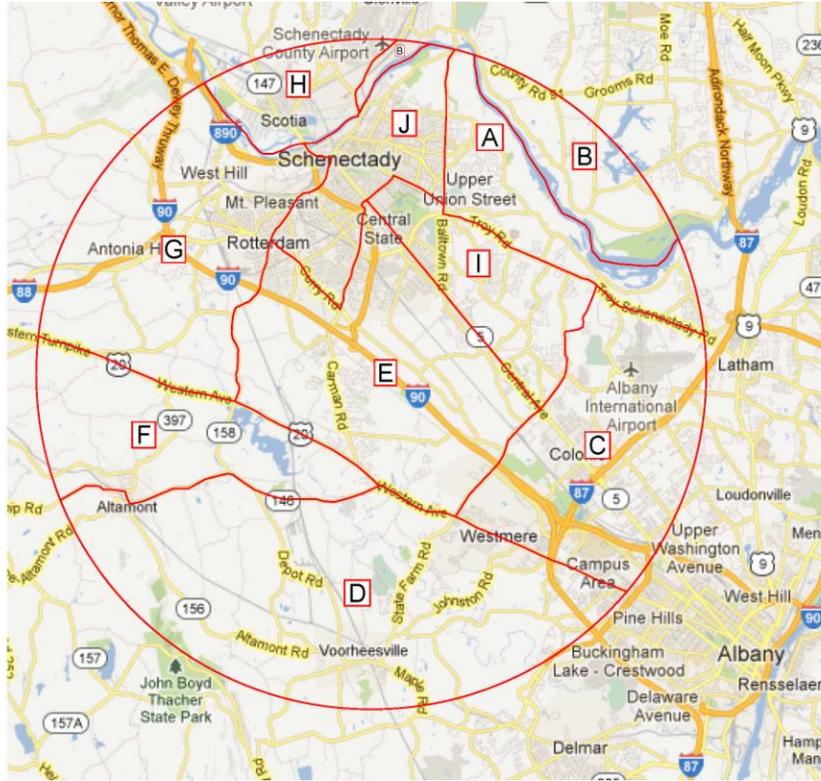
If there is a school nearby where you live or work, if there are students that you know, if there are teachers or administrators that you are friends with ... and you want to help create this legacy of birding children and young adults, join in with us. We’re creating our own way, we’re connected with Audubon, and we foresee a relationship with Cornell. If you’re interested, definitely contact us.

The 84th Schenectady CBC *(continued)*

Woodpeckers were found at lower than usual numbers, but two YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS were good, not having been found on the previous two counts. One each of the three common falcons put in an appearance, although the MERLIN was a count week bird only. HORNED LARKS were found for the first time in eight years.

Three RED-BREADED NUTHATCHES were found in a year when they do not seem to be widespread, and two WINTER WRENS were added for the first time in three years. A single RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET was seen on the count for the first time in six years. A count of 361 CEDAR WAXWINGS was close to the record high of 397, and 542 DARK-EYED JUNCOS was a count record.

The 84th Schenectady CBC *(continued)*



RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS were found in four sectors, and the single COMMON GRACKLE was the first on the count in 11 years. Although good numbers of AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES were seen, the total of 52 HOUSE FINCHES was the lowest since 1977. It looks like conjunctivitis may be taking its toll on this species.

The count total of 60 species was below the 10-year average of 61.8, but this is not surprising given the low temperatures on a mid-December count.

The 84th Schenectady CBC *(continued)*

114th CBC - Schenectady Count Circle - December 14, 2013

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I/J	FW	Total		
Snow Goose	CW										0		
Canada Goose	473	228	263	109	31	542	457	88	20		2211		
Mute Swan											1		
American Black Duck	6	1						30	3			40	
Mallard	68	253	63	125			12	574	29			1124	
Green-winged Teal							3				3		
Scaup species	CW										0		
Common Goldeneye	1											1	
Common Merganser							5					5	
Wild Turkey	34					7					41		
Double-crested Cormorant	1											1	
Great Blue Heron	1	1					2	5				9	
Bald Eagle (Adults)	4	1			1	1			1	1	8*		
Northern Harrier				2								2	
Sharp-shinned Hawk			1							1			2
Cooper's Hawk	1	1			1	2	1			1	7		
Red-tailed Hawk	6	7	13	5	7	12	2	4				56	
Ring-billed Gull	2	1	3			5	14	13				38	
Herring Gull			4				1	3				8	
Great Black-backed Gull								1				1	
Rock Pigeon	8			38	266	111	25	86	32	26	592		

Mourning Dove	42	30	30	70	13	36	102	53	10	386	
Eastern Screech-Owl	3			2						5	
Great Horned Owl	2			2						4	
Belted Kingfisher		1						1		2	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	13	6	3	8	1	9	1	4	2	47	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				2						2	
Downy Woodpecker	14	11	4	22	4	17	3	6	7	3	91
Hairy Woodpecker	2	2		7	3	3	3	2	2	24	
Northern Flicker		1	1			1	1			4	
Pileated Woodpecker		1		2		2				5	
American Kestrel								1		1	
Merlin							CW			0	
Peregrine Falcon			1							1	
Blue Jay	32	20	13	35	23	28	12	3	1	167	
American Crow	23	42	1117	332	28	42	85	6	2	1677	
Common Raven							1			1	
Horned Lark			20							20	
Black-capped Chickadee	39	28	5	122	46	39	10	24	9	2	324
Tufted Titmouse	7	6	1	29	14	9		1	2	1	70
Red-breasted Nuthatch				1	1	1				3	
White-breasted Nuthatch	28	9	2	24	3	7	5	10	7	3	98
Brown Creeper	2			1						3	
Carolina Wren	2	2		1		3				8	
Winter Wren		2								2	
Golden-crowned Kinglet				1	6		2			9	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				1						1	

Eastern Bluebird	8	11		11		13					43
American Robin	53	56	29	17		13	2	20	23		213
Northern Mockingbird	3		4	5	2						14
European Starling	304	386	646	57	11	400	142	3	3		1952
Cedar Waxwing		148		56		157					361
American Tree Sparrow	17	16	2	33	2	23	8	14			115
Song Sparrow	4		4	1	1		1	2			13
White-throated Sparrow	7	8	11	31	1	26	1	15			100
Dark-eyed Junco	27	39	72	98	49	92	33	113	15	4	542
Northern Cardinal	36	36	14	25	19	8	5	27	7	2	179
Red-winged Blackbird	15			4	32	12					63
Common Grackle						1					1
Brown-headed Cowbird				2		1					3
House Finch	2	2	1	27	2	5		13			52
American Goldfinch	8	21	10	78	21	55		10		10	213
House Sparrow	44	42	98	25	13	26		106	20	5	379
Total Birds	1342	1420	2472	1641	451	1629	1591	615	158	30	11348
Total Species	38	34	28	40	27	34	28	33	18	8	60
Count Week Species	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3

FW = Feeder Watcher

CW = Count Week (3 days on each side of count day)

* Bald Eagles - 8 adults. Bald Eagle total does not match the total reported by each individual party. Some eagles were seen by two or more parties. I used my professional judgment to make the final determination.

The 84th Schenectady CBC *(continued)*

Bold = record number or tied record for the count

Group A: Bob Yunick, Ted Hicks. 6:20 a.m. - 4:20 p.m. (7.5 hours, 5 miles on foot; 1.75 hours, 33 miles by car. Also 0.75 hours, 2 miles owling.)

Group B: Bernie Grossman, Chris Grossman, John Hershey. 8:00 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. (2.5 hours, 3 miles on foot; 4.75 hours, 37.3 miles by car.)

Group B1: Bernie Grossman. (2.5 hours, 3 miles on foot.) Birds seen included with Group B.

Group C: Gregg Recer, Cathy Graichen, Scott Stoner. 7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., less 1 hour for lunch (3.25 hours, 3 miles on foot; 5.25 hours, 56.1 miles by car.)

Group D: Larry Alden, Jim Ries, Carol Blackwell. 5:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (1 hour, 1.5 miles on foot; 8.75 hours, 79 miles by car. Also 1.25 hours, 8.25 miles owling.)

Group E: Tom Williams, Colleen Williams, Naomi Lloyd. 7:25 a.m. - 1:35 p.m. (0.5 hours, 0.75 miles on foot; 5.75 hours, 45 miles by car.)

Group F: George Steele, Alan Mapes, Eric Molho. 7:15 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (4 hours, 2 miles on foot; 5.25 hours, 61 miles by car. Also 0.5 hours, 0 miles owling.)

Group G: Bill Lee, Jamie Taft, Janet Betlejeskie. 7:15 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. (2 hours, 4 miles on foot, 6.5 hours, 67 miles by car.)

Group H: Hank Stebbins, Kathleen LoGiudice, Carl George, Kurt Weiskotten. 8:15 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., less 1 hour for lunch (1.5 hours, 1.5 miles on foot, 3.75 hours, 22.4 miles by car.)

Group I/J: Steve Mesick, Jackson Mesick. 2:00 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. (1.25 hour, 1 mile on foot, 2 hours, 17.5 miles by car.)

Feeder Watchers: Jean & Paul Elisha

Notes: Hours rounded to the nearest quarter hour.

Upcoming Field Trips

APRIL

Friday, April 11, DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS, DELMARVA PENINSULA out-of-area trip May 30-June 1, 2014. See field trip description for particulars.

Sunday, April 13, VISCHER FERRY (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 at dusk.

Meet at the main entrance at 6:00 p.m. Bring a flashlight to aid in returning to the parking area.

Thursday, April 24, WOODCOCK AT FIVE RIVERS (Albany County, evening)
Coordinator: Ray Perry 475-0291 (Daytime only) rwperry@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Meet at 7:00 PM at the Visitor Center for a brief talk about the American Woodcock and its management at Five Rivers. We'll then stroll out the Service Road through managed areas and feeding swales to arrive at the Bat Barn area at a time good for watching and hearing the Woodcock do its thing. Bring binoculars and a flashlight and dress appropriately for the weather.

Saturday, April 26, VOSBURGH MARSH (Greene County, morning)
Coordinator: Al Mapes 439-4086 aamapes@nycap.rr.com

On this morning trip, we will hike to the marsh for waterfowl and migrant land birds. We will also check the Hudson River for waterfowl and Bald Eagles.

Meet at 8:00 am at the Coxsackie Boat Launch and car caravan to Four Mile Point Rd.

Sunday, April 27, RAMSHORN-LIVINGSTON SANCTUARY (Greene Co; morning)
Coordinator: Tom & Colleen 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 skirt RamsHorn Marsh and meander through a forested hillside. The early migrant residents will have returned by late April. We may encounter one of the first waves of neotropical migrants pushing northward. Ospreys, eagles and hawks are possible as well.

Upcoming Field Trips *(continued)*

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

MAY

Saturday, May 3, PEBBLES ISLAND STATE PARK (Saratoga County; morning)

Coordinator: Gary Goodness 862-9260 goodness@nycap.rr.com

Peebles Island in early May is an ideal environment to watch spring migration. The variety of habitat ensures 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.

Sunday, May 4, PAPSCANEE ISLAND NATURE PRESERVE (Rensselaer County; morning)

Coordinator: Don Gresens 370-3923 dgresens@nycap.rr.com

This field trip will take us to the different habitats of Papscanee Island Preserve consisting of deciduous forest, cultivated farmland and freshwater marshes where we will see a variety of bird species. Swallows, herons and Wood Ducks can be seen in the wetland areas. Early returning resident species could include Least Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and both Baltimore and Orchard Oriole. Veery, Wood Thrush and American Redstart are common, along with several other warbler and vireo species.

Meet at 7:00 a.m. in the Kmart parking lot on Route 9 and 20 in East Greenbush to carpool, since parking at the preserve is limited.

Saturday, May 10, BIRDS & BREAKFAST AT FIVE RIVERS (Albany County; morning)

Coordinators: Scott Stoner and Denise Hackert-Stoner 785-6760 scottjstoner@aol.com

Peggy Rudis 371-5051 peggyrudis@msn.com

Our annual celebration of the arrival of spring will be held at Five Rivers Environmental Education Center 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.

Sunday, May 11, VISCHER FERRY NATURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVE MIGRANTS (Saratoga County; morning)

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 herons and rails.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the main entrance of VFNHP on Riverview Rd. next to the Whipple Bridge.

Upcoming Field Trips *(continued)*

Saturday, May 17, CENTURY RUN (NYS Region 8; all day)

Compiler: Bob Yunick 1527 Myron Street, Schenectady, NY 12309

377-0146 anneboby@aol.com

This is the Club's 69th Guy Bartlett Century Run, where teams of birders try to find as many species of birds as they possibly can in a single day within the eleven county NYS Region 8. Each group must stay together and jointly identify species reported.

The Century Run is not so much a field trip, but a challenge where you or your group tries to identify as many birds as possible in a 24 hour period. Groups informally compete for bragging rights, but in actuality, the Century Run provides a good snapshot of what's out there in a single day. A good Century Run (so named for the goal of reaching a "century", or at least 100 species) calls for good planning to hit a wide variety of habitats at the right time. Some groups try to cover the whole HMBC area, others limit themselves to a smaller geographic area – a single county, town, etc. Also, there's nothing that says you can't go out on your own, where you want and at your own pace, to see what you can see.

Reports must be mailed to the compiler by May 28th in order to be counted and published in "Feathers." Also, please e-mail Birdline (birdline@hmbc.net) with the total species and highlights for your group.

Sunday, May 18, SCHODACK ISLAND STATE PARK (Rensselaer County; morning)

Coordinator: Tom & Colleen Williams 857-2176 trwdsd@yahoo.com

Schodack Island State Park sits along the eastern shore of the Hudson River just south of Castleton-on-Hudson. 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 Cerulean Warblers, and a Great Blue Heron rookery. Resident songbirds are plentiful.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Kmart plaza on Rt. 9 and 20 in East Greenbush to carpool. There will be a per car fee charged at the State Park.

Sunday, May 25, MALTA TECH PARK TRAILS (Saratoga County; morning)

Coordinators: Susan and Tom Beaudoin 584-8116 sambeaudoin@gmail.com

This trip will consist of walking on trails and the sidewalks along the roads within the Malta Tech Park. Both have gentle to moderate uphill sections. On the trails we will be listening and looking for Veeries, Wood and Hermit Thrushes, warblers, flycatchers, Scarlet Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and other woodland species. The roadside sidewalks provide opportunities to see or hear Indigo Buntings, Eastern Towhees, Eastern Bluebirds, sparrows and raptors.

NEW MEETING PLACE: Please note we will not be meeting at the Malta Park and Ride as in previous trips. Instead we will meet at 7:30 am at the Luther Forest Athletic Fields. To reach the fields from exit 12 of the Northway, go east on Rt. 67. When you reach the Route 9 roundabout go south (right) to the next roundabout, and go left (east) onto Stone Break Road. When you reach another roundabout, take a right onto Rocket Way. The entrance to the athletic fields will be on your right, less than a quarter of a mile from the roundabout.

Upcoming Field Trips *(continued)*

[Friday-Sunday, May 30-June 1, DELMARVA PENINSULA](#) (Out-of-area; overnight stays).

Coordinators: Gregg Recer & Cathy Graichen 899-2678 gregg_recer@alum.rpi.edu

**RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR THIS TRIP, deadline is April 11, 2014*

This trip provides excellent opportunities to see southern breeding specialties such as Blue Grosbeak, Summer Tanager, Brown-headed Nuthatch and a variety of southern wood warblers. We can also expect a good variety of herons, egrets and spring-plumaged shorebirds. We plan to leave first thing Friday morning, stopping at Edwin B. Forsythe NWR (Brigantine) in NJ, and then taking the Lewes-Cape May ferry over to DE. Other potential birding locations include Chincoteague NWR in VA, Bombay Hook NWR and the Little Creek/Port Mahon area in DE and Pokomoke Swamp and Blackwater NWR in MD. There will be a limit of 10 participants (including the coordinators) for this trip.

Contact the coordinators for reservations and logistics details.

JUNE

Saturday, June 7, DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS, ADIRONDACK TOUR out-of-area trip June 28, 2014. See field trip description for particulars.

Sunday, June 8, MOSHER MARSH (Saratoga County; morning)

Coordinator: Ellen Pemrick 882-9163 lnmp@nycap.rr.com

Mosher Marsh is a 43-acre preserve donated to the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy in 2008. Located in the Town of Amsterdam, it is a mix of wetlands, grasslands, and second-growth forest with trails that loop around the property. We will look for various bird species including Common Yellowthroat, Marsh Wren, Green Heron, and Bobolink. Be prepared for wet grass and muddy trails.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Amsterdam Park and Ride lot on Rt. 30 next to Thruway exit 28. Parking is limited at Mosher Marsh, so carpooling is encouraged. Mosher Marsh is on the west side of Manny's Corners Road approximately 0.5 mile north of Route 67.

Saturday, June 14, H.G. REIST SANCTUARY (Schenectady County, morning)

Coordinator: Don Gresens 370-3923 dgresens@nycap.rr.com

Join us at the Club's sanctuary to look and listen for summer and year-round resident species and to try to add new species to the sanctuary's bird list. The sanctuary is a woodland habitat, so woodland species are the highlight of this trip. Several species of thrushes, flycatchers, vireos and warblers as well as woodpeckers, wrens, and Scarlet Tanager have been observed here. The walk is on easy, level trails.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Hummingbird Manor entrance on Oakmont Street in Niskayuna.

Sunday, June 15, BIRDING SCHOHARIE COUNTY (Schoharie County; morning-early afternoon)

Coordinators: Tom & Colleen Williams 857-2176 trwdsd@yahoo.com

Upcoming Field Trips *(continued)*

We will spend the morning visiting sites that will introduce participants to a variety of habitats and many of the resident birds of Schoharie County. Old Route 30 on the eastern side of Max V. Shaul State Park rises above the creek and hosts a diverse group of woodland birds. Canada, Black-and-white and Cerulean Warblers breed there, and Cliff Swallows are seen along the creek by the Route 30 bridge. We will also stop at the NY Power Authority site in North Blenheim, which offers a visitors center observation area, before continuing on to the nature trail there. This area consists of open scrub, edge and marsh habitat, along with the nearby reservoir.

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at Colonie Center in Albany, Sears Auto Center at the intersection of Central Ave. and Wolf Rd. We will be on the Wolf Rd. side of Sears Auto Center. Please contact the trip coordinator if you plan to attend.

Saturday, June 21, CHERRY PLAIN STATE PARK (Rensselaer County; morning)

Coordinator: Phil Whitney 377-9050 philandmarjwhitney@earthlink.com

Cherry Plain State Park is situated on the Rensselaer Plateau of the Capital District. The relatively high elevation, cool climate and a variety of forested and wetland habitats make this a good area for northern species. Nesting species include Least Flycatcher, Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Common Raven, Broad-winged Hawk, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Black-and-White and Yellow-rumped Warblers. Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Veery, Hermit Thrush and Winter Wren also nest here.

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Hannaford parking lot on the right side of Route 43 just past the intersection of Route 150 in West Sand Lake to carpool to the park.

Sunday, June 22, DYKEN POND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER (Rensselaer County; morning)

Coordinator: Jim de Waal Malefyt 283-2362 dewaalmalefyt@gmail.com

Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center is located on the Rensselaer Plateau near Cropseyville. It is elevated wet woodlands with a system of loop trails. This trip will take the group down to the edge of the pond, then through thick woodlands, across the boardwalk at Dustin Swamp and back to the entrance road. Birds such as Blackburnian, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green and Magnolia Warbler, Ovenbird, and Blue-headed Vireo are common, along with Scarlet Tanager, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco. It is a wet environment so proper footwear is advised.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Walmart Plaza on Route 7 (760 Hoosick Road) in Troy, at the plaza entrance directly across the road from Dunkin' Donuts.

Saturday, June 28, ADIRONDACK TOUR (Hamilton, Franklin, Essex Counties; morning-afternoon)

Coordinators: Tom & Colleen Williams 857-2176 trwdsd@yahoo.com

RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR THIS TRIP, DEADLINE IS SAT., JUNE 7TH

Our first stop will be at the outlet of **Little Tupper Lake**, and the bog along Sabattis Circle Rd. Common Loons can be seen on the lake, and the bog and vicinity holds Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Northern Parula and Lincoln's Sparrow. Stop number two will be the **Visitor Interpretive Center at Paul Smiths and Heron Marsh**, where we will look for American Bittern. The next destination is **Bloomingdale Bog and Bigelow Rd.**, where we'll hope to find boreal specialties such as Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Black-backed Woodpecker, and Olive-sided Flycatcher. The **Intervale Lowlands** just outside of Lake Placid will be the final stop. Intervale Lowlands is a 135 acre nature preserve along the West Branch of the Ausable River. It is comprised of forested areas, grasslands, wetlands, and aquatic habitats. We'll walk the loop trails,

looking for Mourning Warblers and a variety of other summer resident species. There will be a limit of twelve participants (including the coordinators) for this trip. Contact the coordinators for reservations.

Meet at 5:30 a.m. at the Latham Farms Park 'N Ride location, at the right edge of the Hannaford parking lot, off of Erin St. in Latham. We should arrive back in Latham between 5:00-6:00 p.m.

Feathers

Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club

c/o Five Rivers EEC

Game Farm Road

Delmar, NY 12054