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Feathers

The 65th Troy CBC

by Larry Alden
Compiler

The 65th running of the Troy CBC was held on Saturday, January 4, 2014. As with the Schenectady count, the weather in the preceding week shaped this count. This year, the temperatures in the week before the count started around the freezing point then steadily plunged to sub-zero levels in the early morning hours on count day. This was combined with a snowstorm that dropped about 10 inches of snow on Thursday. Fortunately, roads were cleared by Friday and the wind dropped off overnight, providing ideal (but frigid) conditions for owling in the pre-dawn hours of count day.

Temperatures rose through the morning from a -7° low to 23° by late morning, then leveled off for the remainder of the day. Winds picked up a bit mid-morning, but generally conditions were good. Ponds and lakes (including the Tomhannock Reservoir) were frozen over, and only the fast-running streams and rivers had open water. Much of the running water was filled with floating ice, making it inhospitable for waterfowl.

Waterfowl diversity and numbers were low, but the ice also concentrated the birds and limited their movement through the day. Field parties were able to identify a few of the less common ducks in low numbers, including REDHEAD, RING-NECKED DUCK, LESSER SCAUP, WHITE-WINGED SCOTER, LONG-TAILED DUCK, and RED-BREADED MERGANSER.

GREAT BLUE HERONS, one of the half-hardy species usually found on this count, were absent on count day. With the temperatures as low as they were, any herons found would have been fool-hardy instead of half-hardy! Many raptors were seen in lower than normal numbers except for RED-TAILED HAWKS, and BALD EAGLES, which frequented those areas of open water in search of fish or fowl. Six ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS were better than some years.

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President's Corner

PROVOCATIVE?

Hello everyone. I hope that you're enjoying the wonderful migration this year. A few weeks ago, we had our annual meeting. I got to be re-elected. How sweet! Thank you.

To get things off to uncomfortable start ... You know how there's at least one thing that needs to be done, that's been sitting there on your desk and you've been looking the other way. Well that's what I raised at our Annual Meeting a few weeks ago.

Uncomfortable as these are, I decided to raise a number of items that we've been ignoring. In a "State of the Union" message, better yet, a "State of the Club" message. Here is a short recap for those of you who weren't there.

The club continues in great shape. Decades of great history behind us, decades of future history in front of us ready to unroll, all by just doing what we've been doing. Successful, stable, steady membership, solid finances, great programs, extensive and varied field trips, a website, a listserv, Feathers, the Sanctuary, etc. The club continues in great shape.

These activities and this infrastructure could only be accomplished by a huge effort of many people. So a very big THANK YOU to all the great people who have given their time, their expertise and their heart to keep the engines running, the engines that constitute the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club.. These people, these members, who have made all of this happen and continue to make it happen.

But what of the future? What is upon us that we aren't addressing? What are we ignoring? What's next for us? Here are some questions that I ask myself. Questions that I don't have answers for. Questions that I will be asking you.

1 -CLIMATE CHANGE We may do things as individuals to reduce our carbon footprint. As individuals. But what about the club? What is the club already doing and what do we want to do, if anything, in the future to acknowledge and to deal with this issue. We hear of a "good bird" in some location and we drive our cars to see it. I've done it. Many of you have done it as individuals. But as a club, what should our stand be? We drive to great birding spots in our neighborhoods, in our counties, in our region and across the state, not to mention driving to other states. To see

President's Corner *(continued)*

birds. Yes, it's fun, we learn by it, we contribute to citizen science, we become more aware of the environment and how important it is, and we

encourage others to learn and thereby to become supporters of a good environment. But all of this activity contributes to climate change. Should we continue what we've been doing? Should we, as a club, eliminate our field trips? Should we eliminate our programs? I'm not really suggesting this, but I have thoughts of "how can we act as a club to reduce our footprint?" What stake do we put in the ground? What governs us in this issue? I don't know the answers, but I do know that we need to start by asking the question. WE need to address this. This is too important to ignore.

2- FRACKING. What's the club stance? Good? Bad? Support it or protest it? Do we know enough? How do proceed? Do we just ignore it?

3- CROW HUNTING CONTEST in Greene County. It's legal. And the mass killing of birds simply to see who can kill the most goes on. Should the club take a stand?

4- PORT OF ALBANY'S EXPANSION OF GAS TRANSPORTATION BY RAIL. Gas better than coal? Risk of spillage and accidents? Business as usual? Our country, their country? What are the questions and do we involve our club?

5- NEW MEMBERS. Why do we want them? Really. And what are we willing to do and to spend to get new members?

6- YOUTH. What are you willing to do to attract young birders?

Many other issues can be raised:

- **FERAL CATS** (feed/neuter/release, euthanize, or what?)
- **RACE** Why are the membership of the club so predominately white? Where are the non-whites?
- **WEALTH** Does the club attract only middle class members? What about people who are economically poor? Or fabulously wealthy?
- etc.

These are just some of what comes to my mind. What questions do you have?

What's next for us? I don't have the answers, but I do have some questions. This is about US, what WE want for the club. US, not me, not the board that you just elected, but US. All of us.

Expect to hear from me in the near future about this. And feel free to contact me; I'd love to talk with you.

Jory Langner
 president@[hmbc.net](mailto: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

Conservation

Conservation

The Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club has joined the **Preserve Plum Island Coalition**, whose mission is to preserve 840 acres of wildlife habitat from development. Plum Island is located on the tip of Long Island's North Fork, and approximately 90% of Plum Island is undeveloped. It is an important stop-over site and breeding ground for migratory birds, seals and other species. Plum Island has been recognized as:

- "Important Bird Area" – Audubon, New York
- "Critical Natural Resource Area" – US Fish and Wildlife Service
- "Peconic Bay Environs Critical Environmental Area" - Suffolk County, New York
- "New York State Significant Coastal Fish & Wildlife Habitat" – NYS Dept. of State
- "Environmental Stewardship Area" - Long Island Sound Study

Please visit the Preserve Plum Island Coalition website at www.preserveplumisland.org for the list of the other coalition members, to read about the cultural and natural history of the island and ways you can help protect Plum Island for wildlife!

Three letters have been written on behalf of the Club:

- To the USFWS, to reiterate our support of listing the Red Knot as **threatened** under the Endangered Species Act. The alert came from Audubon Society. Read about the Red Knot and how you can help by visiting the Audubon Action Center at <http://www.audubon.org/slides/add-your-voice-protect-red-knot-extinction>

- To Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Department of the Interior (with a copy to Dan Ashe, Director of the USFWS), regarding the decision to allow wind companies to obtain a **30-year** permit to kill eagles without prosecution by the federal government. The previous rule provided for a maximum duration of five years for each permit. The HMBC requested that the decision be re-evaluated and to reinstate the five year permit. The alert on this issue came from the American Bird Conservancy, and you may read ABC's comments opposing the 30-year eagle take permits at http://www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/collisions/wind_developments.html
- To President Obama, asking him to work with Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Western State Governors, to issue **improved** final plans that protect the remaining healthy habitat of the Greater sage-grouse. The alert came from the National Wildlife Federation. More information is available at the National Wildlife Federation Action Fund at <https://online.nwf.org/site/SPageNavigator/ActionCenter>

Remember to check out the Conservation Page on our website (hmbc.net) and click on Conservation Links to see what actions you can take to help protect birds and their habitat.

Thank you for caring.

Patti Packer
Conservation Chairperson

Field Trip Reports

Rhode Island Coast

Friday, March 28 – Sunday, March 30, 2014

An intrepid group of nine HMBC birders and guests braved a wet weekend in southern New England, making the most of the good weather at Sachuest National Wildlife Refuge near Newport RI, and then opting for a bail-out to Hammonasset Beach State Park in CT when the weather in RI turned really soggy. We had full morning of cooperative weather on Saturday at Sachuest, and the birds did not disappoint. Good quality views were had of all the expected sea ducks, especially HARLEQUIN DUCKS in very good numbers, but also BLACK SCOTER and SURF SCOTERS, COMMON EIDER, COMMON GOLDENEYE, BUFFLEHEAD and RED-BREADED single male NORTHER SHOVELER sitting amongst point was an oddity. Numerous COMMON LOONS varying stages of molt between winter and Fabulous scopes views were had of a huge flock SANDPIPERS and we had multiple flyover views of and GREAT CORMORANT. At the beginning of our distant view of a SNOWY OWL perched in the second beach. Later, at the beach, we re-found down in the center of the adjacent marsh for views. The beach also produced the usual batch of wave-chasing SANDERLINGS. In the afternoon, the weather deteriorated rapidly as the forecast major rain storm made its anticipated arrival. We tried scoping the birds at Watchemocket Cove in East Providence and added a few species – GREATER SCAUP and LESSER SCAUP, AMERICAN WIGEON and HOODED MERGANSERS. Turner Reservoir across the line in MA produced a large number of RUDDY DUCKS and COMMON MERGANSERS as the downpour intensified. At that point, we opted to call it a day early and headed back to the hotel.



MERGANSEER. A the rocks off the were seen in summer plumage. (100+) of PURPLE NORTHERN GANNET walk, we had a dunes toward the owl sitting excellent scope

Field Trip Reports *(continued)*

Sunday the rain was relentless in RI, but the radar showed the trailing edge was not too far west, so most of the group chose to take the route home through CT. Our target spot was Hammonasset Beach State Park, and the strategy worked well. We drove through torrential rain, but it had just about quit by the time we got to Hammonasset. There, among the highlights were several OSPREY and another SNOWY OWL that had apparently opted for preying on the newly-laid OSPREY eggs. We watched the owl being repeatedly chased off a nest platform by an osprey pair, but the owl was not to be deterred, and was eventually seen ingesting something from one of the nests that was presumed to be an egg. In addition to this drama, we added other good birds including GREAT EGRET, BALD EAGLE, NORTHERN HARRIER, KILLDEER and a first year ICELAND GULL. A small group of BRANT gave us a nice close flyover view and a walk through the cedars at Meig's Point produced several groups of sparrows including SONG SPARROW, FOX SPARROW and WHITE-THROATED SPARROW. Continuing back toward Albany, a few of us tried for a reported pink-footed goose in Hadley MA. We tried searching the big flocks of CANADA GEESE that we dispersed in a number of farm fields around the outskirts of town without success, but did add a single SNOW GOOSE and AMERICAN KESTREL for the trip list. Given the challenging weather, our overall trip list total of 63 species was respectable for the end of March, and certainly included a high percentage of high-quality species and views. Thanks to all the participants for making it a fun weekend.

- Cathy Graichen & Gregg Recer

Vischer Ferry Nature Preserve

Saturday, April 13, 2014

Last evening the HMBC Field Trip to Vischer Ferry Preserve was held with a remarkable turnout of 30+ enthusiastic birders including several new members or members-to-be. There was a surprising scarcity of birds as we walked east from the parking lot to the Water Authority road and then to the area near the Water Authority Pump House by way of the back ponds. Mostly seen were the common birds: BELTED KINGFISHER, EASTERN PHOEBE, AMERICAN ROBIN, RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD, COMMON GRACKLE, WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH, and SONG SPARROW. The back pond was almost devoid of birds except for a PIED-BILLED GREBE. The Spring Peepers seem to have taken over the Preserve as far as sounds go. Everyone was excited to see the AMERICAN WOODCOCK perform his display, though he seemed to close the show much too early. We briefly mistook a bat for the Woodcock. Besides the birds mentioned above that were seen by the majority, a few people also saw RUSTY BLACKBIRD, PALM WARBLER, GREAT BLUE HERON, and WOOD DUCK. In addition, in the morning during my scouting along the towpath going west I had a PALM WARBLER (this was Palm Sunday after all!), RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET, NORTHERN SHOVELERS, AMERICAN WIGEON, GREEN-WINGED TEAL, RING-NECKED DUCKS, BUFFLEHEAD, and HOODED MERGANSER. A VIRGINIA RAIL seems to be calling repeatedly in the morning and late afternoon just past the Whipple Bridge.

- John Hershery

Field Trip Reports *(continued)*

Vosburgh Marsh

Saturday, April 26, 2014

A rainy forecast kept the group small, but the five of us had a good morning of birding. Five grebes, four HORNED GREBES and A RED-NECKED GREBE, landed briefly on the river as I arrived at Coxsackie to meet the group. At the end of the trip, back at the boat launch, we had 2 OSPREY and 2 BALD EAGLES.

At Four Mile Point Road, we found that striped bass season has started. We saw a 44" bass that was caught before we arrived at the Scenic Hudson Park at the bottom of the hill. At Vosburgh Swamp (really mostly a marsh - now under NYSDEC ownership), we had fairly sparse waterfowl - MALLARD, AMERICAN BLACK DUCK, GREEN-WINGED TEAL, AMERICAN WIGEON, WOOD DUCK, COMMON MERGANSER and not-so-MUTE SWAN. A male swan at the southern end of the marsh has been vocalizing, heard last week and again today. Not only the grunts and growls you find on recordings, but also a buzzy whistle!

The best bird of the trip was a SNOWY EGRET at the marsh. Four SURF SCOTERS flew upriver past the point, and four GREATER YELLOWLEGS flew over vocalizing. The only warblers were PALM WARBLER and YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER.

The abundant spice bushes were in bloom with lots of small yellow flowers, skunk cabbage leaves were developing and the rue anemone was in bloom. The trail into the swamp has been nicely cleared (by DEC?) and someone had started collecting old bottles and cans into piles along the trail for later removal.

We bushwacked over to the river from the south end of the marsh and made a loop back to the end of the road. An Osprey was perched across the river along the Stockport flats.

- Alan Mapes

Ramshorn-Livingston Sanctuary

Sunday, April 27, 2014

Raptors, a singing BROWN THRASHER, and two very curious VIRGINIA RAILS were the highlights of this morning's Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club trip to the RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary in Catskill, Greene County. We were accompanied by Audubon New York Education Coordinator Larry Federman, who provided invaluable local knowledge, and shared interesting anecdotes. Our group numbered sixteen eager birders, whose enthusiasm was tempered only slightly by mostly cloudy skies, quite cool temperatures, and a moderate north wind. There was a general lack of passerine migrants, with only a few RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS noted. Forty-two species were observed by the group, a number enhanced by a migrating OSPREY, NORTHERN HARRIER, BROAD-WINGED HAWK, and a local SHARP-SHINNED HAWK that blasted through the trees directly in front of our party.

The walk out to the marsh along the old farm road was very quiet. Once we arrived at the three-story observation tower overlooking the marsh, we began to see and hear birds immediately.

Field Trip Reports *(continued)*

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/31316159@N02/14037313121/>

A flight of twenty-two DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS was well seen from the upper deck of the tower. They were heading north along the west side of the Hudson River. A BELTED KINGFISHER was perched up high overlooking RamsHorn Creek, and a GREAT BLUE HERON flew upstream. We could also hear a single MARSH WREN singing from the reeds, which is somewhat unusual as the composition of vegetation at this marsh has not been favored by breeding MARSH WRENS in previous years. Something to keep an eye on as the year progresses.

As we left the tower and continued towards the creek, we could hear two VIRGINIA RAILS giving "grunting" calls, one from either side of the gravel path. We stopped to listen for a few minutes, as their calling continued, from locations quite close to the path. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/31316159@N02/14040520755/in/photostream/>

A brief playback of a recorded call brought one of the rails out into the open to investigate:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/31316159@N02/14040974644/in/photostream/>

On the return leg from the marsh, some members observed a GREATER YELLOWLEGS calling in flight. Otherwise, the walk in was uneventful.

Thank you to all of today's participants, including several first-timers, I hope you enjoyed the trip as much as the leaders did. Special thanks to Larry Federman for being our guide, you are an ace. If you missed today's trip but would like to visit in the future, you can access this website, or their Facebook page for more information:
<http://www.audubon.org/locations/ramshorn-livingston-sanctuary>

- Tom & Colleen Williams

Birds and Breakfast at Five Rivers

Saturday, May 10, 2014

About three dozen birders braved the forecast of rain for the Club's annual Birds and Breakfast at Five Rivers Environmental Education Center in Delmar. With groups going out at 6, 7, and 8 AM, we scoured the Center's 500 acres of varied habitats for migrants, arriving breeders, and year-round residents.

Despite several bouts of rain, the groups were able to get out as planned, and the sun even came out by mid morning. We collectively tallied a surprising 82 species, helped by a total of 18 species of warblers!

We had both GREAT BLUE HERON and GREEN HERON, but no luck with the American Bittern reported on multiple days in the preceding week. Both SPOTTED and SOLITARY SANDPIPERS were along the Beaver Pond, as was a silent BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO. Five species of woodpeckers were seen, including great looks at a male PILEATED WOODPECKER actively working on a tree near the Heron Pond. Flycatchers included EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE, Least, GREAT-CRESTED, and EASTERN KINGBIRD, but Willow and Alder were not found. YELLOW-THROATED and RED-EYED VIREOS were present. CHIMNEY SWIFT was observed, along with TREE, BARN, and NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOWS. HERMIT, WOOD, and SWAINSON'S THRUSH were found, along with AMERICAN ROBIN and several EASTERN BLUEBIRDS.

Warblers were the real bonanza; the 18 species included: OVENBIRD (heard on many parts of the grounds), very active LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSHES along the Vlomankill, BLUE-WINGED, BLACK-AND-WHITE, a couple of NASHVILLE, COMMON

Field Trip Reports *(continued)*

YELLOWTHROAT, AMERICAN REDSTART, two CAPE MAY, NORTHERN PARULA, MAGNOLIA, BLACKBURNIAN, YELLOW, CHESTNUT-SIDED, both BLACK-THROATED BLUE and BLACK-THROATED GREEN, YELLOW-RUMPED, and PRAIRIE!

BOBOLINKS, FIELD SPARROW, and EASTERN MEADOWLARK were in the field but weather and timing precluded checking a further area for Savannah Sparrow. EASTERN TOWHEE, CATBIRDS, BROWN THRASHER, BALTIMORE ORIOLE, INDIGO BUNTING, and ROSE-BREASTED GROSBK rounded out the list.

Most folks had left but since Denise was still cleaning up after the breakfast, we counted it in the tally: a RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD came to the feeders!

Many thanks to the field party leaders: Tom Williams, Bernie and Chris Grossman, and Gregg Recer and Cathy Graichen, and to John Kent for meteorological support. A special thanks to Denise Hackert-Stoner for organizing and setting up the breakfast, and to Five Rivers for once again hosting this longstanding Club tradition.

- Scott Stoner

Mothers Day Walk at Five Rivers

Sunday, May 11, 2014

The Mother's Day walk at Vischer Ferry got off to a somewhat slow start with windy conditions that limited song bird activity and made ear-birding difficult. Nevertheless, with some perseverance the group of about 20 put together a solid morning list of 67 species. Highlights of the morning included a flyover GREAT EGRET, calling VIRGINIA RAIL and SORA, numerous ROSE-BREASTED GROSBKs and BALTIMORE ORIOLES and 12 warbler species including MAGNOLIA, BLACKBURNIAN, CHESTNUT-SIDED, CAPE MAY and NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH. Thanks to all the participants for contributing to a good day.

- Gregg Recer and Cathy Graichen

Upcoming HMBC Programs

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 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.

Upcoming HMBC Programs *(continued)*

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

Birds of the North Woods

September 8, 2014 : 7 PM - 8:30 PM

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

Michale Glennon, Adirondack Landscape Science Coordinator for the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) will talk about Conservation of Boreal Birds in the Adirondack Park, and threats to them from climate change and forest fragmentation among other land use planning issues that are concerns for boreal bird habitat.

This presentation is co-sponsored with the Hudson Mohawk Bird Club.

FREE and Open to the Public!

On Nature

Land of the Large Bills

by Denise Hackert-Stoner and Scott Stoner

Evening Grosbeaks are among my favorite birds. My first sighting was in “winter 1965” at our family home on Long Island. These large-billed (“gross beak”) birds graced our suburban yard, adding their noisy gregarious brightness of yellow, black, and white to an otherwise drab winter landscape.

Then they disappeared. Their great prevalence and joyous presence became virtually nonexistent.

What has happened to them, and why? Speculation and theory includes natural cycles, spruce budworm...but nothing that really convinces me of what happened to this magnificent bird.



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Moving to the Capital Region in the late '80s gave hope that I would once again see these great seed crackers. But only once, and only in far northern Saratoga County, where

On Nature *(continued)*

Denise and I saw a flock nearly 20 years ago. We've sought them since, to little avail.

We saw some in the Adirondacks a few years back, but both the looks – and the photos – were far from satisfying. Another flock that teased with disappeared. Yet out feeders and nary they had been,

Then, this past person in the Green in her yard. We went they were! We had



Copyright Denise Hackert-Stoner, Naturelogues 2014

beautiful as I could remember. Males, females, in the trees, in the bushes, at the feeders...We clicked away until our fingers were too cold or still to press the shutter. We had grosbeaks...the great large-bills of my youth were not gone. Mysterious still, and every bit as beautiful as I can remember, but they were there!

trip yielded a quick sighting of a treetop vocalizations and then another resulted only in cleaned-a grosbeak – merely evidence that feasted, and moved on.

March, we got a tip. A wonderful Mountains of Vermont had them over the next weekend, and there Grosbeaks!! As noisy, brash, and

Denise and Scott

2014 World Series of Birding

2014 World Series of Birding – Help Young Birders Become Lifelong Birders!

NYSOA's New York State Young Birders Club (NYSYBC) helps to ensure that passionate, committed conservationists will follow in our footsteps long after our own birding days have faded into the past. NYSYBC's scholarships program plays a vital role in carrying out this mission. As NYSYBC alumnus Jacob Drucker (now a student at Hampshire College) said,

"One of the fantastic things about NYSYBC is that it provides scholarships to its youth members, covering expenses for birding adventures that might otherwise not have been possible."

Our annual fundraising drive is now underway, to replenish the scholarship fund for this year's participants. We hope you'll help the young birders out with a donation as a sponsor of the club's World Series of Birding team. NYSYBC's *Razorbills* team is competing in the Youth Division of the World Series of Birding on May 10. Even if the WSB is over by the time you read this, it's not too late to make a donation!

NYSYBC has grown from 8 in 2008 to 40 today (not including 7 alumni members who are now Supporting Adult members). With the help of generous sponsors like you, over the last 4 years, we have awarded scholarships totaling more than \$11,000 to young birders! This year we hope to continue inspiring young birders to turn their current passion into a lifelong pursuit, by awarding scholarships to help them participate in special, youth-oriented birding and conservation programs.

2014 World Series of Birding *(continued)*

- To donate online, go to the NYSYBC donation page at <https://nybirds.org/membership/NYSYBC/donation.html>, read the instructions, and click the DONATE button. When you are on the final Paypal “review your donation” screen, be sure to click "Add instructions for NYSOA/NYSYBC" and then type "WSB" in the instruction box before you submit your donation. NOTE: You do NOT need a Paypal account to pay online. Just select the option to pay by credit card (on the Paypal screen).

- If you wish to donate with a check, please make it out to NYSOA with “NYSYBC WSB” in the memo line and send it to **Carena Pooth, 22 Brothers Rd., Poughquag, NY 12570.**

We – and especially the young birders – thank you very much for your support!

Carena Pooth, NYSYBC Adult Chair

carena@prodigy.net

The New York State Young Birders Club (NYSYBC) is a special project of the New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA).

www.nysyoungbirders.org

<http://www.nybirds.org>

The 65th Troy CBC *(continued)*

Gulls were interesting this count. While HERRING GULL and GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL numbers were about normal, RING-BILLED GULL numbers were the lowest since the winter of 2000-01. Six each of ICELAND and GLAUCOUS GULLS were good. Owls were represented by GREAT HORNED OWLS and EASTERN SCREECH-OWLS. The seven GREAT HORNED OWLS, reported from three sectors, were the most found on this count in over 10 years. Six BELTED KINGFISHERS were astonishing given the conditions.

One benefit to the weather was that the snow and cold temperatures tended to drive birds to bird feeders, including some that don't usually frequent feeders like NORTHERN FLICKERS and YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS. Woodpecker numbers were very good, with record numbers of RED-BELLIES, YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS, and PILEATED WOODPECKERS. COMMON RAVENS had a record of six. Look for this to increase even more in future counts.

Roadsides, where plows uncovered grass, attracted sparrows and other seed eaters. The 797 HORNED LARKS broke the count record, which is surprising given the gradual loss of open land, but most of these were found in only two sectors. This number of larks probably accounts for the record number of LAPLAND LONGSPURS (5), since these species are usually found associating with each other.

The 65th Troy CBC *(continued)*

CAROLINA WRENS continue to be found in good numbers, and moderate numbers of AMERICAN ROBINS perhaps presaged the three HERMIT THRUSHES, a new count maximum. A male EASTERN TOWHEE at a feeder was quite a surprise, having not been recorded on this count since 1976-77. Nine SAVANNAH SPARROWS set a record, but that was eclipsed by discovery of a LINCOLN'S SPARROW, new to the count, at a feeder.

Only a handful of blackbirds were seen, but a group of four RUSTY BLACKBIRDS was a commendable find, representing only the third time this species has been recorded on count day and the first ones since 1967-68. Winter finches were completely absent this year except for a single PURPLE FINCH (although two RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES, another irruptive species, were found.)

Finally, four species were seen in the count week (the three days preceding the count and following the count day) but not on count day: GREAT BLUE HERON, SANDHILL CRANE (assuredly the same two individuals found in count week last year), AMERICAN KESTREL, and GRAY CATBIRD.

Some species missed were Wild Turkey, Merlin, and Golden-crowned Kinglet. Ruffed Grouse was not seen for the second year in a row, likely representing the new norm for this once common species.

The total of 69 species found on count day was above the average of 67.6 over the preceding 10-year period. This is good considering the harsh conditions, and is a reflection on the hard work put in by 18 birders in seven field teams.

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.

114th CBC - Troy Count Circle - January 4, 2014

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	X	Total
CANADA GOOSE	5	58	788	13	305				1169
AMERICAN BLACK DUCK		2	6	29	55				92
MALLARD		12	165	175	261	1	2		616
REDHEAD			1						1
RING-NECKED DUCK			1		1				2
LESSER SCAUP			4						4
WHITE-WINGED SCOTER				1					1
LONG-TAILED DUCK				1					1
COMMON GOLDENEYE		1	64	73	79	9			226
HOODED MERGANSER			17						17

COMMON MERGANSER	16	25	67	46	9			163
RED-BREASTED MERGANSER			1					1
GREAT BLUE HERON			CW					0
BALD EAGLE	4	2	5	14	6	2		17
NORTHERN HARRIER							1	1
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK			1			1		2
COOPER'S HAWK	1					1		2
RED-TAILED HAWK	8	11	21	21	19	13	9	102
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK	2	2	2					6
SANDHILL CRANE							CW	0
RING-BILLED GULL			2	48	15	2		67
HERRING GULL			445	126		90		661
ICELAND GULL			4	2				6
GLAUCOUS GULL			2	2		2		6
GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL			151	368		90		609
ROCK PIGEON	58	33	93	247	147	252	10	840
MOURNING DOVE	19	133	62	19	15	29	23	300
EASTERN SCREECH-OWL		2						2
GREAT HORNED OWL	1	4					2	7
BELTED KINGFISHER	2		2				2	6
RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER	16	16	7	5	4	4	13	65
YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER	2	3	2	2		2	1	12
DOWNY WOODPECKER	17	31	13	10	5	6	16	98
HAIRY WOODPECKER	2	9	1	1	1	1	9	24
NORTHERN FLICKER		3	8		2		2	15
PILEATED WOODPECKER	7	1	1	2	4		2	17
AMERICAN KESTREL							CW	0
PEREGRINE FALCON						1	1	2
BLUE JAY	62	58	43	9	19	40	52	283
AMERICAN CROW	270	351	438	281	278	550	56	2224
FISH CROW				13	2			15
COMMON RAVEN	2		2	2				6
HORNED LARK	500	13	278	6				797
BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE	70	149	54	20	17	46	66	422
TUFTED TITMOUSE	8	45	28	7	2	5	11	106
RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH	1		1					2
WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH	7	26	19	12	8	9	12	93
BROWN CREEPER			1					1
CAROLINA WREN	2	3	1	3	1		4	14
EASTERN BLUEBIRD	25	22	8	2	3	12	14	86
HERMIT THRUSH		1			1		1	3
AMERICAN ROBIN	245	290	247	33	456	65	235	1571
GRAY CATBIRD							CW	0
NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD		1		2	2		3	8
EUROPEAN STARLING	320	48	35	162	736	278	52	1631
CEDAR WAXWING	8	48			1	98	45	200
LAPLAND LONGSPUR			5					5
SNOW BUNTING	15	121	61			110	81	388
EASTERN TOWHEE						1		1
AMERICAN TREE SPARROW	42	65	10	5	10	27	39	198
SAVANNAH SPARROW			9					9

SONG SPARROW	2	7	6	4	6	1	8	34	
LINCOLN'S SPARROW					1			1	
WHITE-THROATED SPARROW	22	31	11	9	5	2	34	114	
DARK-EYED JUNCO	124	269	110	40	42	112	65	762	
NORTHERN CARDINAL	17	30	16	21	6	12	29	131	
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD		1						1	
RUSTY BLACKBIRD					4			4	
BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD		6	1					7	
PURPLE FINCH	1							1	
HOUSE FINCH	18	7	4	4	6	3	23	65	
AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	32	32	25	3	9	36	30	167	
HOUSE SPARROW	50	99	57	104	29	131	28	498	
Total Birds	1987	2062	2759	2027	3140	1884	1164	1	15008
Total Species	37	42	47	43	43	34	38	1	69
Count Week Species				1		1	2		4

* BALD EAGLES - 8 adults, 9 immatures. 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.

Bold = record number or tied record for the count CW = Count Week (3 days on each side of count day)

Group A: Jeremy Kirchman, Alyssa FitzGerald, Alison VanKeuren. 6:30 a.m. - 7:00 a.m. and 7:15 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. (1.5 hours, 1.5 miles on foot; 7 hours, 49 miles by car. Also 0.5 hours, 7 miles owling.)

Group B: Larry Alden, Steve Chorvas. 5:30 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. (0.5 hour, 0.25 miles on foot; 9.25 hours, 68.7 miles by car. Also 1.25 hours, 14.6 miles owling.)

Group C: Rich Guthrie, Jocelyn Cole, Jory Langner, Will Raup. 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (1.5 hours, 1 mile on foot; 7.5 hours, 49 miles by car.)

Group D: George Steele, Alan Mapes. 5:00 a.m. - 5:20 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (4.5 hours, 4 miles on foot; 5.5 hours, 32 miles by car. Also 0.25 hours, 0 miles owling.)

Group E: Bill Lee, Jamie Taft, Mark Fitzsimmons. 7:10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (4.25 hours, 3.5 miles on foot; 5 hours, 69 miles by car.)

Group F: Jim de Waal Malefyt, Naomi Lloyd. 7:15 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (0 hours, 0 miles on foot; 7.75 hours, 72 miles by car.)

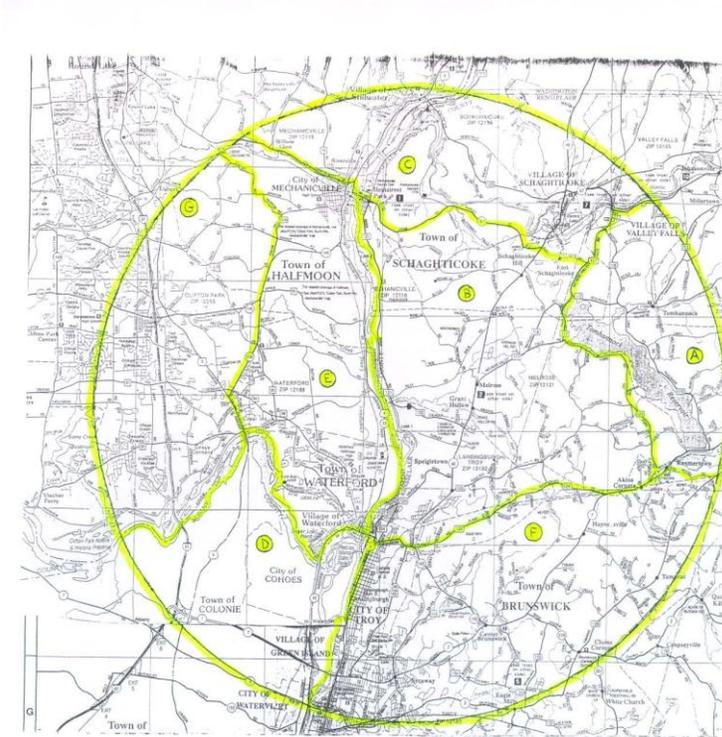
Group G: Steve Mesick, Jackson Mesick. 6:30 a.m. - 5:15 p.m. (1 hour, 0.75 miles on foot, 8.25 hours, 82 miles by car. Also 1.5 hours, 12 miles owling.)

Group X: Report to HMBirds of a Peregrine Falcon at a different location than the one seen by Group F.

Notes: Hours rounded to the nearest quarter hour.

The 65th Troy CBC *(continued)*

Troy CBC area



Sector	Assigned Water Bodies
A	Tomhannock Reservoir
B	Hudson River from Route 4 bridge north to Lock 1
C	Hudson River north of Route 67, Hoosic River
D	Mohawk River east of Route 9, Hudson River south to northern tip of Green Island
E	Hudson River north of Lock 1 and south of Route 67
F	Hudson River south from north tip of Green Island (south of 103 rd Street in Troy)
G	Mohawk River west of Route 9

Upcoming Field Trips

JUNE

Saturday, June 7, DYKEN POND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER (Rensselaer County; morning)

Coordinator: Jim de Waal Malefyt 283-2363 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 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.

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.

Upcoming Field Trips *(continued)*

JULY

Saturday, July 5, FULTON COUNTY - LEADER'S CHOICE (Fulton County; morning)

Coordinator: David Harrison (908) 892-5495 david.harrison57@earthlink.com

Possible destinations in this Adirondack Foothill area of Fulton County include Jackson Summit, Cline Road and Powley-Piseco Road. There is potential for many of our northern breeders with about 15 species of warblers possible, including Mourning Warbler. And who knows what other species may surprise us in this under birded part of the region?

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at Dunkin' Donuts in Broadalbin located at the intersection of Rtes. 29 and 30.

Saturday, July 12, SCHENECTADY CENTRAL PARK (Schenectady County; morning)

Coordinator: Don Gresens (269-9161) dgresens@nycap.rr.com

Leader: Robert Ramonowski

Schenectady Central Park will be the focus of this morning walk. This park is a little jewel of nature in the middle of an urban setting. Although it seems to host a lot of activity, there are quiet wooded areas with small streams and wetlands. Birds known to breed in the park include Great Crested Flycatchers and all the local woodpeckers. An added bonus will be the Rose Garden in full bloom.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the parking area on Ptl. Arthur Charles Lane near the tennis courts. Ptl. Arthur Charles Lane is off Central Parkway on the northwest and Fehr Avenue on the southeast.

AUGUST

Friday, August 8 DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS, [CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY, out-of-area trip September 12-15. See trip description for details.](#)

Sunday, August 10, PEBBLES ISLAND STATE PARK / COHOES FLATS (Saratoga/Albany Counties; morning)

Coordinator: John Hershey 371-3114 hersheji@nycap.rr.com

The wooded areas of Peebles Island are good for seeing a variety of songbirds including early migrant warblers. The river area and rocky flats around the island are usually good for Peregrine Falcon, Osprey, Bald Eagle as well as sandpipers, yellowlegs, herons, egrets, Chimney Swifts and ducks. From the meeting place, we will check out the Cohoes Flats and then consolidate vehicles before proceeding to Peebles Island since there is a fee for each car entering.

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.

August 24- August 30, COUNTING COMMON NIGHTHAWKS (Albany County; evenings)

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

The Common Nighthawk is a member of the "goatsucker" group that also includes whip-poor-wills. It is an aerial insectivore that feeds on the wing at dusk and dawn. They breed throughout much of North America, although they may be in decline as they are no longer observed during the summer in many urban and suburban areas.

Upcoming Field Trips *(continued)*

In the Capital Region, the bulk of migration occurs from mid-August until early September with the peak around August 24-25th. Continuing an informal project that was begun in 2012, we will observe the skies each evening (weather permitting) between the 24th and 30th of August, recording our sightings for a final summary. We will conduct our viewing from the parking lot at the Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center, located on Rt. 155 (New Karner Road) in Albany. Bring a chair and binoculars. We will begin each night at 6:00 p.m.

Feathers

Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club

c/o Five Rivers EEC

Game Farm Road

Delmar, NY 12054