

Feathers

Goal: 700, One Bird at a Time, or Hawaii, Here We Come!

By Jim de Waal Malefyt

I have kept a Life List of Birds ever since I could check them off in Peterson's "A Field Guide to the Birds" which I purchased as a teenager in 1967 while living in northern New Jersey. One of the primary reasons to keep a list came from my admiration of one of my high school teachers who was an avid birder and leader of our Nature Outing Club. Before going off to college in Michigan the following year, I had tallied 182 bird species in New Jersey. A college trip to Florida in 1970 added 34 new birds to "My Life List." The professor critiquing my Florida journal wrote: Jim: An adequate and fairly detailed log of your observations during the trip. It is more detailed for birds than for other organisms perhaps reflecting your interest in ornithology."

After college my wife and I became environmental consultants for a New York City firm doing environmental reports for power plants and transmission lines throughout the US. Trips to states like Washington, Arizona, and California boosted my life list to 436 by 2012. After paying for much of our kids' college tuition and several weddings, we had enough funds to take some trips to regions of the US we had never seen. One of my childhood bird dreams was to see the rare Whooping Cranes at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas after reading about them in the National Geographic Society's book "Water, Prey, and Game Birds of North America." We joined with a Minnesota birding group for the Texas trip in 2012 and added 51 birds, boosting my life list to 492. We did see the Whooping Cranes and were gifted a book on them for traveling the longest distance. Several more trips with this Minnesota group to California and Florida and attending the Southwest Wings Festival in Arizona got me to 644. A trip to Alaska's mainland in 2012 for our 40th wedding anniversary and one to Alaska's western islands in the Bering Sea in 2018 put my life list in the American Birding Association (ABA) Checklist Area at 689.

It seemed that there were no more regions of the US where we could go to find eleven new birds to bump me over 700 birds. Then someone reminded me that the ABA had added Hawaiian birds to the ABA Area in 2017. Rather than getting to my goal of 700 one bird at a time (or per trip), we decided to bite the bullet and plan a trip to Hawaii early in 2019. We were already going to California, half way there, to visit our daughter's family over the New Year's holiday week.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

No President's Column for this issue

You, too, can contribute to Feathers!

- Do you have a birding story or photos that might be of interest to other birders?
- Have you led a field trip for HMBC?
- Have you written short prose or poetry on the subject of birds? We're starting a Writers' Page!
- Did you take a birding vacation?
- Do you have a favorite birding spot?

SHARE them with HMBC members by submitting them to:

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:
Denise Hackert-Stoner at DeniseHStoner@aol.com.

Send all paper submissions to:

Denise Hackert-Stoner

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12211

New printing of *Birding New York's Hudson Mohawk Region* is now available

Birding New York's Hudson Mohawk Region, a new printing of HMBC's classic book, is now available. A copy is \$20 for HMBC members and \$25 for non-members. An additional charge of \$5 for postage and handling will be added to the price per book. Contact Gregg Recer gregg_recer@alum.rpi.edu or (518) 899-2678 if you are interested in purchasing a copy. Checks should be made out to ***Hudson Mohawk Bird Club*** and should be sent to:

Gregg Recer

23 Scotch Mist Way

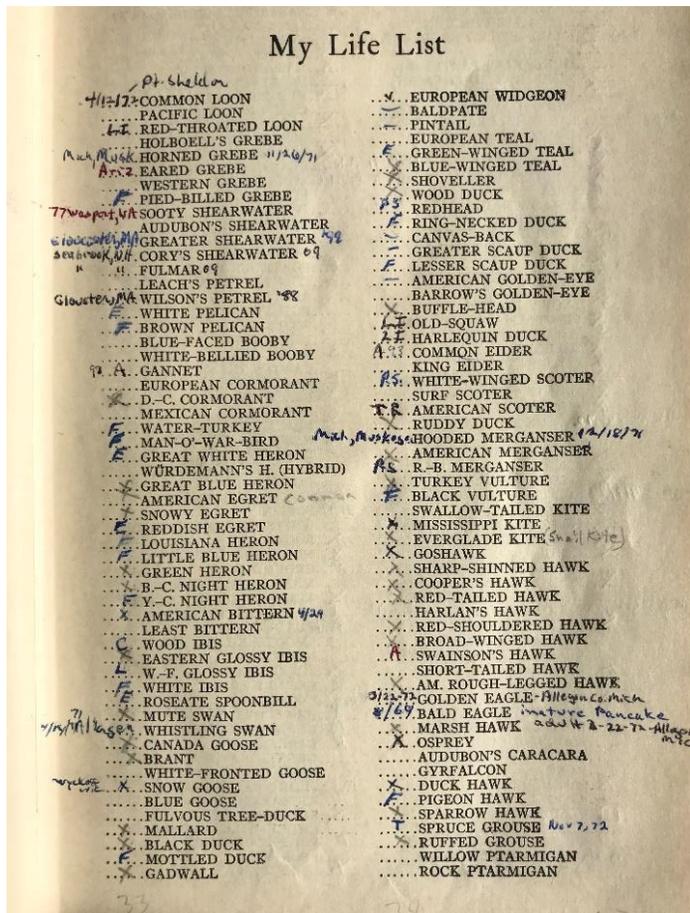
Malta, NY 12020

GOAL: 700 (continued.....)

From California we flew to Honolulu on O'ahu. A new bird, the Zebra Dove, met us inside the airport's open-air parking garage. That evening we drove to our hotel in Waikiki and awoke in the morning to dozens of White Terns flying below our hotel window over trees surrounding Fort DeRussey. After a quick breakfast we headed out to this park area and discovered a number of introduced bird species like the Red-vented Bulbul, White-rumped Shama, Yellow-fronted Canary, Common Waxbill, Java Sparrow, and my 700th ABA Area bird species – the Red-crested Cardinal, introduced around 1930 from South America.

With the pressure off to reach 700 birds, we relaxed and visited the east, north, and west sides of O'ahu. On the north shore near the closed James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge, due to the partial US government shutdown, we visited an ancient Chinese cemetery where seven Bristled-thighed Curlews with their long, decurved bills, were resting. This was a bird I had missed in my last Alaskan trip (see Feathers Vol. 78 No. 4). Another highlight was walking along nesting Laysan Albatrosses at their breeding enclosure at Ka'ene Point State Park.

After O'ahu, we flew to the island of Maui where we had good views of some of Hawaii's endemic honeycreepers. We observed several honeycreepers like the iconic scarlet 'iwi with its black wings and long decurved bill for probing flowers at the high elevation Hosmer's Grove. I was able to photograph many Apapane and Maui 'Amakihi. On a guided nature hike into The Nature Conservancy's restricted access Waikamoi Preserve we heard the endangered 'Akohekohe and uncommon Maui Parrotbill. We saw several other endangered birds like the Hawaiian State Bird, the Nene goose, Hawaiian Coot, and the endemic race of the Common Moorhen and Black-necked Stilt. Our Hawaiian trip ended with a total of 31 new bird species, bringing my life list up to 724 and a ranking of 145 in the ABA Checklist Area.



GOAL: 700 (continued.....)



Red-crested Cardinal (#700)



'Iwi



Bristle-thighed Curlew



Maui 'Amakihi

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Saturday, April 6, 2019 – Normanskill Farm/ NYS Museum

This morning's Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club field trip to Normanskill Farm began with temperatures in the 30s, gray skies, and lingering spots of snow on the ground, but ten participants ended up counting 41 species of birds before decamping to a special behind-the-scenes tour of the [New York State Museum ornithology collection](#) guided by Curator of Birds, Dr. Jeremy Kirchman.

The trip got off to a good start in the Normanskill Parking lot with the sighting of a pair of Common Mergansers swimming in the Normans Kill, as well as a pair of Eastern Bluebirds perched atop some nearby trees.

Between the old farm buildings and the community gardens, we had great looks at a pair of American Kestrels, a few Eastern Phoebes, recently returned Tree Swallows, and a singing Swamp Sparrow. In the woods beyond the hay fields, we found a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and some participants heard a distant Pileated Woodpecker.

Flyovers seen during the trip included Ring-billed Gulls, a Great Blue Heron, and a Wood Duck drake. Before the trip began, a few participants saw a small flock of Golden-crowned Kinglets and a Brown Creeper by the old Delaware Avenue bridge that crosses the Normans Kill.

The New York State Museum ornithology tour that followed was - as always - fascinating, given graciously with great enthusiasm and humor by Dr. Kirchman. Special thanks to Jeremy from the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club and the field trip committee for taking the time to offer this wonderful look at the Museum's collection and research. And thanks to all the field trip participants who showed up this morning - I know we all had a great time.

Full eBird report with photos at the following link:

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S54626384>

Tristan Lowery
Albany

Sunday, April 7, 2019-Vischer Ferry Preserve

Fifteen eager participants met this morning at 8:00 am at Vischer Ferry Preserve for the HMBC Field Trip. After crossing the Whipple Bridge a few of us heard and then saw a RUSTY BLACKBIRD briefly. We then worked our way west on the towpath where we spotted a variety of beautiful, dabbling ducks including BLUE-WINGED TEAL, NORTHERN SHOVELER, GADWALL, AMERICAN WIGEON, GREEN-WINGED TEAL, and WOOD DUCK. Also present were BUFFLEHEAD, RING-NECKED DUCK, HOODED MERGANSER, and PIED-BILLED GREBE. Kudos go to Naomi, whose middle name is "Kestrel", for finding and positively identifying a distant AMERICAN KESTREL perched in a tree. After traveling so far west on the towpath, we decided to continue with the 3-mile loop by going through the woods to get back to the main entrance. Most of the loop through the woods was very quiet birdwise, but a few heard an EASTERN TOWHEE and all of us heard a CAROLINA WREN. There were more ducks in the wet portion through the woods but no new species to add. Returning along the main path from the river we spotted a BALD EAGLE in the air and a perched GREAT BLUE HERON. Some of us saw a SAVANNAH SPARROW (not a common species at Vischer Ferry) along the main path as well.

After reviewing our results from the morning we counted a respectable total of 47 species. And, of the 15 participants, 5 had one or more lifebirds. It would be great to see some of the newcomers as well as all the participants at future HMBC field trips.

John Hershey

FIELD TRIP REPORTS *(continued.....)*

Saturday, April 13, 2019 - Five Rivers EEC

Very mild temperatures and light winds offered ideal observing conditions for 15 birders at Five Rivers EEC in Delmar on Saturday morning. A pair of Killdeer watched us assemble from their elevated breeding platform on the roof of the visitors center. We walked for about three hours, covering some three miles of the extensive trail system. Interesting sightings included: a Virginia Rail calling from Heron Pond; Winter Wren singing in the woods near the Skeeter Bowl; two yellow Palm Warblers and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet foraging in the low shrubs at Wood Duck Marsh; an Eastern Meadowlark singing from the Wild Turkey Trail field; two Pine Warblers and two Louisiana Waterthrush singing along the Big Pine Trail and the Vlomankill.

Thank you to everyone who turned out for the trip. We had a lot of fun and some good discussions. We hope to see you all on future HMBC field trips, including next Saturday (4/20) back at Five Rivers.

Tom and Colleen Williams
Colonie

Five Rivers – April 20, 2019

With a break in the rain, about 15 hopeful birders met at Five Rivers EEC in Delmar at 7:30 to scour the grounds for arriving spring migrants. We set out, ever cognizant of the forecast of heavy rain starting around 9 AM. Covering field, thicket, marsh, and ponds from the visitor center to the Research Ponds and back, we collectively tallied 38 species. Highlights included two Cooper's Hawks, several Eastern Towhees, Eastern Meadowlark (first heard and identified from two fields away by Tom Williams!), a Hooded Merganser on the Fox Marsh pond, and several singing House Wrens. Warblers were conspicuously absent, although we did not have time to venture into the Vlomankill valley for the nearly-guaranteed Louisiana Waterthrush, which had arrived about 8 days earlier. We scurried back to the Visitor Center just before the rains hit, right at 9... A complete ebird list is below. With thanks to my co-leaders Denise Hackert-Stoner and Tom Williams, and meteorological support from John Kent!

Scott Stoner, Loudonville

Ann Lee Pond – April 27, 2019

Ten birders explored the trails around Ann Lee Pond in Colonie on a very cool, breezy morning. The pond itself was nearly devoid of birds as the wind drove them to less exposed areas. Tree and Barn Swallow were glimpsed occasionally, and a Belted Kingfisher flew back and forth several times. The water level was quite high from recent rains. Great Blue Herons were observed flying to and from the heronry located along Shaker Creek behind the south end of the pond. A calling Virginia Rail was a nice surprise in the cattail and reed marsh there as well.

Woodpeckers are a common sight at Ann Lee Pond with snags in a variety of habitats, and the group had terrific close up looks at a very handsome Yellow-bellied Sapsucker drilling sap wells on a tree just a few feet from the boardwalk across from the pasture. A small group of Yellow-rumped Warblers were foraging in that area of cover too. Other birds of note were a singing House Wren at the pasture, a singing Purple Finch in the woodlands by the south end of the pond, and two Dark-eyed Juncos on their way out of town.

Thanks to everyone who participated in today's trip! The weather was less than ideal but the birds were still around, just a bit harder to find. We hope to see you all on future HMBC trips.

Tom and Colleen Williams
Colonie

FIELD TRIP REPORTS *(continued.....)*

Wilson M. Powell Wildlife Sanctuary, Old Chatham - April 28, 2019

The temperature was in the forties, and the weather report was dire---steady rain beginning mid-morning, so I was delighted to have a few people show up for the joint Alan Devoe/Hudson Mohawk Bird Club field trip in Columbia County. With rain imminent, we decided to start birding close to the parking lot, where we heard a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. The field across Old Hunt Club Road had a singing Savannah Sparrow that perched cooperatively, and we got several Eastern Towhees along the road. The pond produced an Eastern Phoebe and Red-winged Blackbirds of both sexes, but no waterfowl. Since it still wasn't raining we decided to chance the woodland loop. We had good views of a male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker near Dorson's Rock. We always hope for warblers on this trip, but late April at this elevation seems a little too early. Nevertheless, as the rain began in earnest, a Louisiana Waterthrush sang loud and clear from the streambed along the red trail, and then perched on a branch above it to give us exceptionally satisfying views. It felt like he was teasing us and telling us to come back a little later in the season on a nicer day, when there will be more of us warblers!

Kathy Schneider

Stillwater School and Lock 4 - May 4, 2019

Our trip had an unpromising start with no marsh birds or waders except nesting Great Blue Herons, due to the extremely high water levels. But once we got off the wet main trail, we were well-rewarded. We were a Hairy short of the woodpecker sixpack, with one daring Sapsucker foraging on the ground just in front of the crowd. Representing flycatchers we had Eastern Phoebe, a pair of Least, and a wheeping Great-crested. I was worried we'd only have Yellow-Rumped Warblers, but the more we looked the more we found, winding up with 10 species: Black-and-white, Northern Parula, American Redstart, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Yellow, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, and Wilson's. Wood Thrushes and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks sang and some of us saw a Blue-headed Vireo.

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S55802258>

Moving on to Lock 4, we added Nashville and Pine Warblers and both Waterthrushes, Solitary Sandpiper, and Warbling Vireo. Common Raven and Osprey both flew over. This spot has a good variety of habitat for its small acreage and it deserves more attention - it's like a scaled-down Peebles Island, but with fewer dogs.

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S55803015>

Thanks to all who came out in the gloom - see, it was totally worth it!

Naomi Lloyd

FIELD TRIP REPORTS *(continued.....)*

Birds and Breakfast - May 11, 2019

Despite a cool, windy start to the day at Five Rivers EEC that sent participants scrambling for previously stored warm clothing and hot beverages, the weather improved quickly during the morning and did not interfere much with the birding. Formalized groups went afield at 6am, 7am, and 8am, and other parties surveyed the grounds between 6:00am and 10:30am, approximately 35-40 people altogether. The surprising day-total tallied at the breakfast compilation was **92 species**, well above recent numbers. Wood-warblers accounted for 21 of that number. Some highlights:

Bald Eagle, Osprey and Broad-winged Hawk flyovers.

An American Kestrel flying out of the Wild Turkey Trail parcel with a snake in its talons.

Quite a few White-crowned Sparrows ground-foraging, allowing good views.

The warbler list- Blue-winged, Nashville, N. Parula, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine, Prairie, Bay-breasted, Black-and-white, Am. Redstart, Wilson's, Canada, Louisiana Waterthrush, Ovenbird, Com. Yellowthroat.

On behalf of the Field Trip Committee (Tom Williams, Naomi Lloyd and John Hershey) we wish to thank everyone for such a fine turnout and enthusiastic effort. Special thanks to group leaders Alan Mapes, Gregg Recer and Cathy Graichen. Also kudos to Five Rivers director Gina Jack and her crew for hosting the compilation event, and supporting the club throughout the year. We hope to see everyone again on future field trips!

Tom and Colleen Williams
Colonie

Vischer Ferry – May 12, 2019

About a dozen intrepid birders tried their luck in the cold rain at the HMBC VFNHP mother's day walk this morning. The conditions curtailed the morning after only a couple of hours and certainly made the birding more challenging, but we still had about 40 species with a few highlights including calling virginia rail and sora, solitary sandpiper, nice views of multiple white-crowned sparrows and rose-breasted grosbeaks, norther waterthrush, and wilson's warbler. Thanks to all who braved the elements.

Cathy Graichen & Gregg Recer

FIELD TRIP REPORTS *(continued.....)*

Schodack Island State Park – May 19, 2019

Ten birders met at Schodack Island State Park today for the club's annual foray through the high cottonwoods of riparian Rensselaer County.

As usual, the road into the park was productive with sharp ears picking out Tennessee, Canada, and Blackpoll Warblers among other, plus Swainson's Thrush. An Osprey occupied the nest platform near the CSX bridge.

Rain was in the forecast so we moved a bit quicker than usual along the path. On the way to the usual Cerulean Warbler nesting area we picked up 15 warbler species and the usual ubiquitous Ovenbirds, Wood Thrushes, Veerys, and American Redstarts.

The big disappointment was the lack of our target bird, the Cerulean Warblers who have been found in the park almost annually for decades. I hope this is just an off-year, but I worry that increasing park development may have driven them out. There has been one seen in nearby Papsannee Preserve this spring.

A complete list of the morning's species is in this eBird list. Sorry, I was tired and lazy and didn't include numbers of individual birds.

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S56506922>

Thanks to all who attended!

Naomi Lloyd
West Sand Lake

FIELD TRIP REPORTS *(continued.....)*

Normanskill Farm - 5/25 (and 5/23 addendum)

Fifteen birders met this morning for our annual Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club field trip to Normanskill Farm in Albany. While spring migration has dropped off noticeably in just the last day or so, we still managed to see or hear 54 species in nearly three hours of birding in some very pleasant weather.

We started by heading up Normanskill Drive, which abuts a wooded gully, and where I'd found three **Bay-breasted Warblers** on my walk to the meet-up spot before the official start of the trip. We were able to relocate one of these, along with the first of several Blackpoll Warblers we would see. These were the only through-migrant warbler species we observed, to which we added locally-breeding Yellow Warbler, American Redstart, and Common Yellowthroat.

We had good looks at the usual Normanskill crowd-pleasers like Wild Turkey, Belted Kingfisher, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Cedar Waxwing, Bobolink, and Baltimore Oriole (Rose-breasted Grosbeak was heard but not seen). Other highlights included several Spotted Sandpipers and one Solitary Sandpiper, at least one Ruby-throated Hummingbird, a drumming Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (we saw or heard five local species of woodpecker, missing Pileated), and three species of swallows (Northern Rough-winged, Tree, and Barn).

As I always do, I got to the farm early and saw several species not seen on the official trip - including **Swainson's Thrush** - which brought my morning total to 59 species.

I was at Normanskill Farm on Thursday morning as well, when there was more evidence of spring migrants. Warblers that day included **Northern Waterthrush**, **Tennessee Warbler**, Magnolia Warbler, **Bay-breasted Warbler**, and Blackpoll Warbler. Perhaps my most interesting find of the day was a *Catharus* thrush that I saw only briefly, but was able to record as it called for nearly half a minute. I correctly suspected I was hearing a **Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's**-type call, but opinion on the forum at xeno-canto.org is that the daytime calls I recorded can't be ascribed to one species over another.

Thanks to all who came out this morning! Remember, we have two more field trips this three-day weekend, both of which will be heading to higher ground: [Fox Hill Road and Desolation Lake Road](#) in Saratoga County tomorrow morning, followed by [Partridge Run Wildlife Management Area and Rensselaerville State Forest](#) in Albany County on Monday morning.

Good birding!

Tristan Lowery
Albany

FIELD TRIP REPORTS *(continued.....)*

Fox Hill Road – May 26, 2019

The Sunday morning HMBC field trip to Fox Hill Road in the remote northwest corner of Saratoga County was a big success with a full capacity of 15 enthusiastic participants. We met at Saratoga County Airport which was actually where some of the best birds were found. Like John Kent reported today in Selkirk, we had a real wave of Tennessee Warblers singing loudly in the trees lining the airport driveway (I estimate 15 or more). I arrived early but most birders missed the largest concentration of the Tennessees because a Cooper's Hawk flushed most of them leaving only one or two left still singing. At least one Blackpoll Warbler was also spotted in these trees. Also, seen at the airport was a specialty of this hotspot, Grasshopper Sparrow. Other birds spotted or heard by various birders here include Wild Turkey, Indigo Bunting, Savannah Sparrow, and Barn Swallow.

Next was an ear-popping ride to higher ground and the 1000 Acre Swamp in the Town of Edinburg. One of the best birds here for those who have the ears to hear the drumming was a Ruffed Grouse. Another crowd pleaser was the beautiful song of the Winter Wren, though I don't know if anyone actually got to see the bird. The group spent a lot of effort trying to sort out various warbler songs only to end up humbled by the fact that many warblers can sound almost the same. Likewise what we thought was a singing Pine Warbler turned out to be a Dark-eyed Junco instead. We pinpointed the song of a Canada Warbler but were not able to locate the bird who seemed determined to stay well-hidden. Among warblers that many had good looks at were Magnolia, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and American Redstart. We spotted a Broad-winged Hawk, a common raptor in this habitat. One of the more unusual sightings was a Chimney Swift seen by some at Albia Pond. Besides the birds, I think everyone enjoyed the remote forested and wetland habitat of 1000 Acre Swamp, Albia Pond, and Ireland Vly. Some of the flower buffs enjoyed the Painted Trilliums at Albia Pond.

There were few rare or special birds found for the morning but our final total was a very respectable 67 species. Thanks to everyone for participating and helping to make this trip an enjoyable experience!

John Hershey, coordinator

Partridge Run – May 27, 2019

Ten birders explored southwestern Albany County's higher elevation spots this morning. The weather was great, and the insects were biting, but not quite as eagerly as when I was scouting for the trip yesterday morning. At Rensselaerville State Forest, we found a number of expected higher elevation breeders -- many blackburnian warblers and magnolia warblers, purple finches, golden-crowned kinglets, a yellow-rumped warbler, several black-throated blues, Veery, Hermit and Wood Thrushes, Brown Creepers, and other expected RSF breeders.

At Fawn Lake Road at Partridge Run WMA, we added a number of lower-middle elevation birds, like Eastern Kingbird, Baltimore Oriole, Ruby-Throated Hummingbird, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-Sided Warbler, American Redstart. and Alder Flycatcher, among others. Also present were a number of Rose-breasted grosbeaks, a flock of Cedar Waxwings, a few Broad-Winged Hawks, a Bald Eagle, and a distant Scarlet Tanager. Our sole passage migrants were both found by Lindsey Duval - a softly calling Swainson's Thrush and a singing male Wilson's Warbler. Also notable was a singing Prairie Warbler, the first I've encountered at Partridge Run.

Thanks to all who came out.

Zach Schwartz-Weinstein

Upcoming HMBC Programs

Date and Time: June 3, 2019, 7-8:30pm

Location: Five Rivers Environmental Education Center

Speaker: Meteorologist Jason Gough

Meteorologist Jason Gough is looking forward to spending some time with the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club in early May. Jason notes that birders all have a unique connection to the weather, as do the birds we observe! Jason has a true appreciation of birds and their bioengineering, and explains that, "As advanced as we are at aviation physics and mechanics, we got nuthin' on birds."

In his open discussion on May 6, Jason hopes to answer some of our many questions and to teach us a little bit about how and why our weather works. He hopes that it will enhance our birding experiences and looks forward to learning from birders as well!

Bring your questions about the weather!!

Jason Gough was born and raised in Albany. He graduated from Albany High School and attended Auburn University. He transferred to and received his degree in meteorology from the University of Maryland. (It should be noted that he is a huge fan of Auburn Football and goes to at least one game a year there).

While at Maryland, he interned at WJLA for a summer. The station created a paid position to keep him on as a weather producer and forecaster. After he graduated, he took his first on-air position in Corpus Christi, Texas in August 2001.

He returned to Albany to WNYT, where he was on air for 13 years. He made the decision to leave the station to pursue the fight to pass the Child Victims Act into law, which happened back in February. He also set out to lobby for funding for his television show, Wine About the Weather, which he will continue to do until the end of March.

Lastly, he hosts a website, jasonsweather.com. It has all kinds of forecasts, blogs and articles on weather that he regularly updates. You can sign up for a daily delivered email (6am) and request a personal forecast for something you have going on.

UPCOMING ASCR PROGRAMS

No ASCR programs to announce at this time

WRITERS' PAGE

Solstice Watch

Denise Hackert-Stoner

Tonight a band plays in the park.
All around the gazebo
Children, giddy with school ending,
Zig on skateboards and zag on bikes,
As we in our seats
Bounce to Joplin and sway to Sondheim.
And all of us,
Ziggers, zaggers, bouncers and swayers,
Are held in the long, evening rays of spring's last sun,
As we ride "What I Did for Love"
To summer.
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ARTISTS' PAGE

No Submissions for Artists' Page for this issue

MOHAWK HUDSON LAND CONSERVANCY REQUESTS HMBC ASSISTANCE

Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy (MHLC), the Capital Region land trust, has launched a new initiative to monitor bird species on their 18 preserves across Albany, Schenectady and Montgomery counties. In April, MHLC hosted their first eBird training to build a constituency of citizen scientists skilled at bird identification to begin the process of cataloging the bird species that utilize preserve lands. MHLC is looking for HMBC members to help in this effort!

As peak breeding season approaches, MHLC is looking for birders to complete eBird lists for all our 18 preserves to gain an understanding of the breeding population at each location. We thank you in advance for applying your birding skills to help us inform our conservation and management of preserved lands. Please [visit our website](#) to find an MHLC Preserve near you and start eBirding today!

HMBC TREASURER'S REPORT 2018-2019

The report below compares the Club's income and expenses for the fiscal year that ended on March 31, 2019 (the "Actual" column) with the budget approved by the HMBC Board at the beginning of that year. As the report indicates, both our income and expenses were below budget estimates, and we ended up with a net gain of \$370.29. The Club's account balances totaled \$46,954.33 as of March 31st.

Ellen

Category Description	4/1/2018 - 3/31/2019		
	Actual	Budget	Difference
INCOME			
Annual Meeting Income	2,150.72	1,400.00	750.72
Book Sales	90.00	150.00	(60.00)
Dues Income	3,240.82	4,000.00	(759.18)
Interest	238.56	190.00	48.56
Other Income	263.60	500.00	(236.40)
Reist Sanctuary - Contributions	90.00	250.00	(160.00)
Sales Income	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sam Madison Memorial Fund	65.00	150.00	(85.00)
Transfer from Account Balances	0.00	3,085.00	(3,085.00)
TOTAL INCOME	6,138.70	9,725.00	(3,586.30)
EXPENSES			
Annual Meeting Expenses	1,391.92	1,400.00	8.08
Bank Charges	0.00	0.00	0.00
Charity	315.36	1,500.00	1,184.64
Conservation	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dues	50.00	50.00	0.00
Insurance	703.59	725.00	21.41
Junior Activities	0.00	100.00	100.00
Mailing	118.61	200.00	81.39
NYSOA	50.00	150.00	100.00
Office	10.08	50.00	39.92
Palmer-Samuelson Bequest	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Printing	261.63	400.00	138.37
Program	864.57	1,500.00	635.43
Publicity & Marketing	0.00	250.00	250.00
Sam Madison Award	253.00	350.00	97.00
Sanctuary Maintenance	0.00	200.00	200.00
Sanctuary Mitigation Account	561.61	500.00	(61.61)
Social	116.05	150.00	33.95
Uncategorized	25.00	0.00	(25.00)
Web Site Hosting	1,046.99	200.00	(846.99)
TOTAL EXPENSES	5,768.41	9,725.00	3,956.59
Net Difference:	370.29	0.00	370.29

ON NATURE

Canyon of the Hudson

By Denise Hackert-Stoner

Standing on the banks of the Hudson River in Westchester County (Croton Point Park in Croton-On-Hudson and McEachron Park in Hastings on Hudson offer nice viewing points) you can't help but notice it: a vertical wall of rock looming over the river like a sentry. This great wall of rock, called the Hudson River Palisades, forms a canyon of the lower Hudson River and offers a fascinating piece of geologic, human, and conservation history right in our own backyard.



Palisades from Hastings-On-Hudson

The Palisades stretch from Jersey City to Nyack, NY, a length of about twenty miles. They rise quickly, from a height of three-hundred feet to five-hundred and forty feet at their highest point near the State Line Lookout, accessed from the Palisades Interstate Parkway. The lookout has its own (unnumbered) exit from the Parkway and it is worth a visit. You can begin a hike from there, or enjoy the cross-country ski trails. You can visit the Lookout Inn, a gem of a WPA-era snack bar/book store, where you can enjoy lunch while browsing through their nice selection of books on the history of the Hudson Valley. While there, don't forget to enjoy the view! You will be standing at the height of the canyon, where you will be able to see the fence-like structure of the palisades up close, while taking in the vast and mighty River itself.



Lookout Inn, State Line Lookout



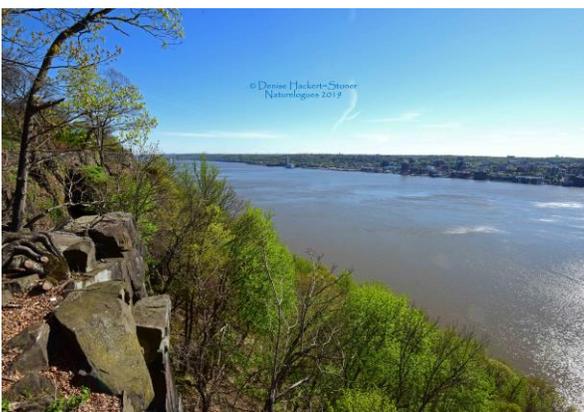
Palisades from State Line Lookout

The history of these striking cliffs dates back 200-million years, to the end of the Triassic period, during that very active volcanic time that brought about one of the greatest extinction events of earth's history. During this tumultuous period, magma was pushed up into the sandstone and hardened while still within the sandstone. Over the centuries, the sandstone eroded, exposing the basalt rock left from the magma.

When the explorer Verrazano first saw the cliffs he remarked at their resemblance to a picket fence, and that idea stuck, the name Palisades referring to the defensive fence made of stakes. The cliffs have been part of history, influencing the Revolution, and providing the setting of the most famous duel in American history, between Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton (as well as at least eighteen other duels!).

During the late 1800's the Palisades were heavily quarried, their ancient rock used in the formation of railroad track bed. The destruction during the 19'th century led to preservation in the 20'th, as these unique cliffs and the land surrounding them were preserved. The first loud voice calling for preservation came from the Federation of New Jersey Women's Clubs, and their shouts led to the formation of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission in 1906. Soon after that, when a proposal to move Sing Sing Prison from Ossining to Bear Mountain was raised, another wave of conservation efforts resulted in the formation of the Highlands of the Hudson Forest Preserve, Bear Mountain State Park and the Palisades Parkway. The prison was never moved, and the "Canyon of the Hudson" was preserved, along with much of the land around it.

Today we can enjoy these twenty miles of rock majesty from both sides of the Hudson. Looking at the Palisades from the east side toward the west gives us a nice view of the cliff-face. Enjoying the closer views offered at the many viewing areas along the Parkway gives us a sense of the height of these cliffs, and an appreciation of their structure. From either side, we can enjoy the river that runs beneath the rocks, the beautiful, fragile, damaged, resilient Hudson.



UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, June 1, CHERRY PLAIN (Rensselaer County; morning)

Coordinator: **Naomi Lloyd** 518-596-5964 naomi_kestrel@yahoo.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 9, GALWAY NATURE PRESERVE (Saratoga County; morning)

Coordinator: **Ellen Pemrick** 518-882-9163 lnmp@nycap.rr.com

Galway Nature Preserve is a property owned and managed by Saratoga PLAN. It contains about 2.5 miles of trails that meander through forest, marshland, and pond habitat. On this trip, we will walk the trails looking – and listening – for warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other woodland species. We'll also explore the adjacent farm fields. In past years, we've found Indigo Bunting, Eastern Kingbird, Scarlet Tanager, and nesting Eastern Wood-Pewees.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the preserve parking lot. Directions: <http://www.saratogaplan.org/explore/public-preserves-trails/galway-nature-preserve>.

Saturday, June 15, LOST VALLEY STATE FOREST (Montgomery County; morning)

Coordinator: **David Harrison** 908- 892-5495 david.harrison57@earthlink.net

Lost Valley State Forest, Schoharie Creek Preserve and Butler Rd. in Montgomery County are close together and offer three different habitat types. Lost Valley SF (1000 ft. elev.) in the next year or two should have good Mourning Warbler habitat since it was partially logged about two years ago. Schoharie Creek Preserve has a 1.3 mile loop trail, starting and ending at the preserve parking lot, which passes by a series of waterfalls along Wilsey Creek. The terrain and habitat along Butler Road looks good for Worm-eating Warbler and Acadian Flycatcher, although neither have been detected yet.

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the NYS Thruway Exit 27 Park 'N' Ride on Rt. 30 in Amsterdam.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS *(continued.....)*

Sunday, June 16, DYKEN POND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER (Rensselaer County; morning)

Coordinator: Naomi Lloyd 518-596-5964 naomi_kestrel@yahoo.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, around 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.

Sunday, August 11, PEBBLES ISLAND STATE PARK/COHOES FLATS (Saratoga/Albany Counties; morning)

Coordinator: **John Hershey** 518-371-3114 hersheyj@nycap.rr.com

The wooded areas of Peebles Island are good for seeing a variety of songbirds. The river area and rocky flats around the island are usually good for Peregrine Falcon, Osprey, Bald Eagle as well as shore birds, 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.

If weather or water conditions are unfavorable for this trip, it may be rescheduled for Sunday, August 18. Please check the Club Calendar at <https://hmhc.net/calendar-date> to verify that the trip will be taking place on the expected date!

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

Sunday, August 25 through Thursday, August 29, 2018, COUNTING COMMON NIGHTHAWKS (Albany County; evenings)

Coordinators: **Scott Stoner & Denise Hackert-Stoner** 518-785-6760 scottjstoner@aol.com (8/25-8/27) and **Tom and Colleen Williams** 518-857-2176 trwdsd@yahoo.com (8/28-8/29)

The Common Nighthawk is an aerial insectivore that feeds at dusk and dawn. It breeds throughout much of North America, although in decline as it is no longer observed during the summer in many urban and suburban areas. A long-distance migrant, Common Nighthawks often travel in large flocks, on one of the longest migration routes of any North American bird. Most travel over land through Mexico and Central America to reach their wintering grounds in southern South America. Common Nighthawks are also among the last migrants to return to their breeding grounds in spring. In the Capital Region, the bulk of southbound migration occurs from mid-August until early September with a peak around the end of August.

We will conduct our viewing from the parking lot at the Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center, located at 195 New Karner Rd. (Rt. 155) in Albany. Bring a chair and binoculars. We will begin each night at 6:00 p.m.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS *(continued.....)*

Saturday, August 31, HUYCK PRESERVE/MYOSOTIS LAKE (Albany County; morning)

Coordinator: **John Kent** 518-424-2234 jwkent@fastmail.fm

We will walk the shore of Myosotis Lake looking for migrating warblers, vireos, kinglets, and flycatchers in the shrubby habitat of the Lake Trail. Bald Eagles, all three local falcon species, and several species of hawks have been seen on some of the past years' trips. Depending on the water level, the mudflats at the north end of the lake often host migrating shorebirds. It may be necessary to walk through some mud to get a view, so be prepared. From there we will continue through the woods to Lincoln Pond, where we will check for waterfowl and herons. The total walking distance is around 1.5 miles.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at New Scotland Town Hall on Route 85 for carpooling. Parking at Myosotis Lake is limited.

Feathers

Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club

c/o Five Rivers EEC

56 Game Farm Road

Delmar, NY 12054