

Feathers

BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE HUDSON-MOHAWK BIRD CLUB, INC.

CAMP CHIRICAHUA IN SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA, JULY 11-22, 2007

by Hope Batcheller

It all began last September, when another young birder told me about a wonderful camp she had attended. Victor Emanuel Nature Tours Camp Chiricahua is a camp for high school-aged young birders, and is co-sponsored by the American Birding Association (ABA). Before I knew it, everything had fallen into place: approval by my parents, registration, airplane tickets, and generous scholarships from the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club and the ABA. I was ecstatic, and couldn't wait until July 11th—the day Camp Chiricahua began.

Upon my arrival in Tucson, AZ, I was greeted by the two leaders: Dave Jasper and Rob Day. Soon, I and several other campers were shuttled back to the hotel, where we met Lia Sansom, the counselor, and the rest of the 14 campers. Of course, nobody could wait to start birding, so we walked (or should I say ran?) around the hotel courtyard finding as many birds as possible. When everyone had arrived and brief introductions had been made, we headed to Sweetwater Wetlands for our first “real” birding. By the end of the day, I was exhausted, but excited for the eleven days that lay ahead.

Our first few days were spent in Portal—a very small town (perhaps more accurately described as a community) in the Chiricahua Mountains. Although you might think that birding in a town isn't the best, Portal was an exception. Blue-throated, Violet-crowned, and Broad-billed Hummingbirds could be seen from the picnic tables in front of the general store. Elf Owls roosted in a tree near the post office, and Cassin's Kingbirds were everywhere. Most mornings, we would all get up early and walk along “Main Street,” (a quarter-mile dirt road) seeing Summer Tanagers, Bridled Titmice, Canyon Towhees, and much more. In addition to

– continued on Page 55



Camp Chiricahua leader Dave Jasper presents a young Gambel's Quail to camp participants. This bird had apparently been imprinted on humans and had little objection to being handled.

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CAMP CHIRICAHUA CONT.



White-winged Dove

Anna's Hummingbird



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HMBC Board Meetings

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

Newsletter Contributions Desired

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

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

Please send all *electronic* submissions *via e-mail* to:

Chris Grossman at bgrossman@nycap.rr.com

Send **all** paper submissions to:

Chris Grossman

7 Nott Rd.

Rexford, NY 12148

the birding, the people of Portal were very friendly to us, making for a wonderful stay.

Every morning and afternoon, we would clamber into the vans (fighting for shotgun, of course) and go birding as a group. One day we birded the desert around Portal, where we saw Bendire's Thrasher, Eurasian Collared-Doves, Roadrunners, Barn Owl, and other desert species. Another day, we hiked up South Fork, which yielded Red-faced Warbler, Mexican Chickadee, Painted Redstart, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Arizona Woodpecker, and more. At other places we saw Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Elegant Trogon, Western Wood-Pewee, Grace's Warbler, Yellow-eyed Junco (got yellow eyes!), and several additional southeastern Arizona specialty birds.

While we were in Portal, two visiting British birders (John and Judy Geeson) mentioned a very unusual find: a probable Crescent-chested Warbler feeding a fledgling. The Crescent-chested Warbler itself would be a fourth North American record, let alone the fledgling, which would constitute the first breeding record in North America. Of course, we followed their directions to the birds, with hopes of confirming their sighting. After we waited around for several minutes and walked down the road a bit, we were beginning to get discouraged, when suddenly... "THERE IT IS!!!" The excitement level was unbelievable. Several people, myself included, got photos, and others documented it by field notes and sketches. Unsurprisingly, this was the main topic of discussion for several days to follow (eventually we stopped stumbling over the bird's name, too), and we thanked the Brits profusely.

For those of you who don't know about Dave Jasper, he is a resident of Portal and an expert on the local flora and fauna, in addition to being quite the character. His specialty is night birds, so we were lucky enough to see (not just hear) six species of owls. By putting a bright flashlight to his forehead and searching for the owls' eye shine, he gave us incredible looks at Flammulated, Spotted, Barn, and Elf Owls, plus Whiskered and Western Screech-Owls. If you ever go owling with Dave Jasper (which everyone should), prepare for some great sightings (but be sure to stand still)!

After spending several days in Portal, we drove south and west into the heart of the Chiricahua Mountains: Rustler Park. We camped there for two nights, adding several birds to our list, including Greater Pewee, Olive Warbler, Short-tailed Hawk, and my nemesis Red Crossbill. It was at Rustler Park that we started paying more attention to the butterflies. Species included Mournful Duskywing,

Reakirt's Blue, Nais Metalmark, Four-spotted Skipperling, and Orange-edged Roadside Skipper, some of which are endemic to the Chiricahua Mountains. Rustler Park, at an 8,000 foot elevation, was also a nice break from the heat, so we were sad in that respect when it came time to leave.

Upon arriving at the San Pedro River Inn, where we spent three nights, we were almost immediately greeted by the songs of Botteri's Sparrow. This was soon followed by Tropical Kingbird (my 400th ABA area life bird!), Rufous Hummingbird (another nemesis bird!), multitudes of Blue Grosbeaks, Yellow-breasted Chat, and spectacular looks at a Great Horned Owl. Later that night and the next day, several of us had awesome looks at Barn Owls, and Lesser Nighthawks swooped mere feet from us. Day trips from here produced Berylline (talk about uncooperative...) and White-eared Hummingbirds, Common Ground-Dove, Gray Hawk, and several others. We left here on the last full day of camp, which was, perhaps, one of the most exciting days.

After leaving the San Pedro River Inn, we made our way to the legendary Patagonia Rest Stop and nearby, "The Shrine." As we were stepping out of the vans, a Thick-billed Kingbird called loudly and perched cooperatively on a dead tree. Soon afterwards, Varied Bunting, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, and Peregrine Falcon all made appearances. Although we tried for Black-capped Gnatcatcher at both Patagonia Lake State Park and Madera Canyon, and for the "regular" Flame-colored Tanager at Madera Canyon, we didn't see either. Nevertheless, we did get some other new birds along the way, such as Rufous-winged Sparrow and Montezuma Quail. After this eventful day, we made our way back to Tucson where we spent the night and said our good-byes before leaving the next morning.

Camp Chiricahua was an amazing trip, and I would highly recommend it to any young birder. Thanks go to Rob and Dave as our most excellent leaders, Rob as an accomplished chef, Lia as a counselor, and the other participants for making this an awesome trip. And last but not least, I thank the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club and the American Birding Association for their scholarships. I would go again in an instant! 

Hope Batcheller, age 15, lives in Petersburg, NY. You can see more of her photos from Camp Chiricahua at www.flickr.com/photos/saltospero/page2 and contact her at hope.batcheller@gmail.com.

2007 Guy Bartlett Century Run – May 19, 2007

Due to an error, the commentary for the Century Run was omitted from the last Feathers. Here is the complete Century Run report.

Rain-dampened Century Run Nets 159 Species – Best Since 1999

Despite cool, rainy unfavorable weather (again), 24 observers in 6 field parties reported 159 species of birds on the Club's 62nd Guy Bartlett Century Run on May 19, 2007. The group high of 125 species and the composite total of 159 species both represent best efforts since 1999, both ranking 23rd best in the 62-year history.

A slow moving low off the Carolinas moved north to New England during the count causing varying degrees of rain which increased through the day. The Albany weather station recorded 0.21 inches of rain by 1900 and air temperatures ranging only 46 to 51deg.F for the day.

Groups were afield from 0100 to 2100, quitting at or shortly before 2100 due to rain. Some groups chose to focus on limited geographic areas, such as A only at Saratoga Spa State Park, B only in Albany County and E only at Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve. Five of the six groups managed to find from one to ten species each, reported only by their group. These are noted later.

Best birds of the count were Ruddy Duck and Short-billed Dowitcher, both found by Group F. The former was reported for only the ninth time in 62 years, last in 2002; and the latter for only the seventh time, represented by only one individual at Watervliet Reservoir where 35 were seen the day before. The species was last reported in 1999.

The Olive-sided Flycatcher at Saratoga Spa State Park (Group A) was a neat find, 14th report, last in 1999; as was a Mourning Warbler at Vischer Ferry (Group E), 15th report, last also in 1999. It was pleasing to see some owls restored to this year's list.

As always, there were the missed birds: no Osprey, missed for the 6th time in the past eight years; no Northern Harrier or Red-shouldered Hawk; no Upland Sandpiper for the 5th consecutive year; 2nd consecutive miss of Fish Crow after years of its presence on the count; and 2nd consecutive miss of White-crowned Sparrow after noting it on 54 of the 62 counts.

The field party participants are listed below with an asterisk indicating the group's compiler(s); and the species found only by that group.

As I wrote last year, "Here's to better weather next year."

Group A – Ron Harrower*. Exclusively Saratoga Spa State Park, 0400-1200, 75 species. Ruffed Grouse, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Tennessee Warbler and Pine Warbler.

Group B – Steve Chorvas, John Roosenberg and Larry Alden*. Exclusively Albany Co., 0300-2050, 125 species. Wilson's Snipe, Carolina Wren, Winter Wren and Cedar Waxwing.

Group C – Roger Miller, Mike Crevier and Tom Palmer*. Towns of Florida, Glen, Root, Charlestown, Canajoharie and Minden in Montgomery Co.; Town of Perth in Fulton Co.; and Towns of Duanesburg and Princetown in Schenectady Co. 0500-1930, 95 species.

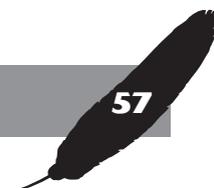
Group D – Chad Witko, Corey Finger*, Will and Danika Raup. Five Rivers EEC, Black Creek Marsh, Partridge Run, Alcove and Basic Creek reservoirs, Holt and Deer Hollow preserves, Stanton Pond, Cossackie Reservoir, Cossackie Creek Grasslands Preserve, Cossackie boat launch, Coeymans Landing, Dunn Memorial Bridge, Papscaene Island, Rensselaer Tech Park, Cohoes Flats and Vischer Ferry. 0100-2100, 123 species. Black-billed Cuckoo, Common Nighthawk and Worm-eating Warbler.

Group E – Hope* and Mary Batcheller, Jocelyn Cole-Calkins, Marne Onderdonk and Phil Seward. Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve. 0700-1300, 70 species. Mourning Warbler.

Group F – Carl George*, John Hershey, Jean Holcomb*, Bill Lee, George Shaw, Nancy Slack*, Hank Stebbins and Kurt Weiskotten. Watervliet Res., Black Creek, Meadowdale, Thacher Park, Cole Hill, Basic and Alcove res., Stanton Pond, Dunn Mem. Bridge, Papscaene Park, Cohoes, Round and Saratoga lakes, Woods Hollow Preserve and Cold Spring Road. 0500-1900, 114 species. Pied-billed Grebe, White-winged Scoter, Ruddy Duck, Semi-palmated Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Black Tern, Horned Lark, Purple Martin, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Vesper Sparrow.

— Robert P.Yunick

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|-----|
| Common Loon | | | d | | f |
| Pied-billed Grebe | | | | | |
| Double-crested Cormorant | | | d | e | f |
| Least Bittern | | b | | d | |
| Great Blue Heron | a | b | c | d | e f |
| Green-backed Heron | | b | c | d | f |
| Mute Swan | | b | | d | f |
| Canada Goose | a | b | c | d | e f |
| Wood Duck | a | b | c | d | e f |
| Green-winged Teal | | b | | | |
| American Black Duck | a | b | | | |
| Mallard | a | b | c | d | e f |



| | | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Blue-winged Teal | b | d | | |
| Gadwall | b | d | f | |
| Ring-necked Duck | | d | f | |
| White-winged Scoter | | | f | |
| Hooded Merganser | a | b | c | f |
| Common Merganser | | c | d | |
| Ruddy Duck | | | f | |
| Turkey Vulture | b | c | d | f |
| Bald Eagle | b | d | f | |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sharp-shinned Hawk | | c | | f | | |
| Cooper's Hawk | | b | c | | | |
| Broad-winged Hawk | | c | | f | | |
| Red-tailed Hawk | | b | c | d | f | |
| American Kestrel | | b | c | d | | |
| Peregrine Falcon | | b | d | f | | |
| Ruffed Grouse | a | | | | | |
| Wild Turkey | a | b | c | d | f | |
| Virginia Rail | a | b | c | d | f | |
| Sora | | b | d | f | | |
| Common Moorhen | | b | d | | | |
| Semipalmated Plover | | b | d | f | | |
| Killdeer | | b | c | d | f | |
| Greater Yellowlegs | a | | | | f | |
| Lesser Yellowlegs | | | d | | f | |
| Solitary Sandpiper | | b | c | d | f | |
| Spotted Sandpiper | | b | c | d | e | f |
| Semipalmated Sandpiper | | | | | f | |
| Least Sandpiper | | b | d | f | | |
| Short-billed Dowitcher | | | | | f | |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wilson's Snipe | b | | | | | |
| American Woodcock | b | d | | | | |
| Bonaparte's Gull | b | d | | | | |
| Ring-billed Gull | b | c | d | f | | |
| Herring Gull | b | d | f | | | |
| Great Black-backed Gull | b | d | f | | | |
| Black Tern | | | | f | | |
| Rock Pigeon | a | b | c | d | f | |
| Mourning Dove | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Black-billed Cuckoo | | | d | | | |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo | b | | e | | | |
| Eastern Screech-Owl | b | c | | | | |
| Great Horned Owl | a | b | d | | | |
| Barred Owl | b | d | | | | |
| Common Nighthawk | | | d | | | |
| Chimney Swift | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Ruby-throated Hummingbird | a | b | c | d | f | |
| Belted Kingfisher | | b | c | d | f | |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | a | b | c | d | f | |
| Downy Woodpecker | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Hairy Woodpecker | a | b | c | e | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Northern Flicker | | b | c | d | f | |
| Pileated Woodpecker | | b | c | d | e | |
| Olive-sided Flycatcher | a | | | | | |
| Eastern Wood-Pewee | a | | d | e | | |
| Alder Flycatcher | | | d | e | f | |
| Willow Flycatcher | | b | c | d | e | f |
| Least Flycatcher | | b | c | d | e | |
| Eastern Phoebe | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Great Crested Flycatcher | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Eastern Kingbird | | b | c | d | e | f |
| Horned Lark | | | | | f | |
| Purple Martin | | | | | f | |
| Tree Swallow | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Northern Rough-winged Swallow | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Bank Swallow | | b | d | e | f | |
| Cliff Swallow | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Barn Swallow | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Blue Jay | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| American Crow | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Common Raven | | b | c | d | f | |
| Black-capped Chickadee | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Tufted Titmouse | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Red-breasted Nuthatch | | b | c | d | f | |
| White-breasted Nuthatch | a | b | c | d | e | |
| Brown Creeper | | b | d | e | | |
| Carolina Wren | | b | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| House Wren | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Winter Wren | b | | | | | |
| Marsh Wren | a | b | d | f | | |
| Golden-crowned Kinglet | b | c | | | | |
| Ruby-crowned Kinglet | | | | | | f |
| Blue-gray Gnatcatcher | a | b | d | e | f | |
| Eastern Bluebird | | b | c | d | | |
| Veery | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Swainson's Thrush | a | | | e | f | |
| Hermit Thrush | a | b | | | | |
| Wood Thrush | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| American Robin | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Gray Catbird | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Northern Mockingbird | | b | d | | | |
| Brown Thrasher | | b | c | d | | |
| Cedar Waxwing | | b | | | | |
| European Starling | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Blue-headed Vireo | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Yellow-throated Vireo | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Warbling Vireo | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Red-eyed Vireo | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Blue-winged Warbler | a | b | c | d | f | |
| Tennessee Warbler | a | | | | | |
| Nashville Warbler | | b | c | | | |
| Northern Parula | a | b | d | e | | |
| Yellow Warbler | a | b | c | d | e | f |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chestnut-sided Warbler | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Magnolia Warbler | a | | c | d | e | f |
| Black-throated Blue Warbler | a | | c | d | e | f |
| Yellow-rumped Warbler | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Black-throated Green Warbler | | b | | d | | f |
| Blackburnian Warbler | | b | | d | | f |
| Pine Warbler | a | | | | | |
| Prairie Warbler | | b | | d | | f |
| Bay-breasted Warbler | a | | | | e | |
| Blackpoll Warbler | a | b | | d | e | f |
| Black-and-white Warbler | a | b | c | d | | f |
| American Redstart | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Worm-eating Warbler | | | | d | | |
| Ovenbird | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Northern Waterthrush | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Louisiana Waterthrush | a | b | c | d | | |
| Mourning Warbler | | | | | e | |
| Common Yellowthroat | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Wilson's Warbler | | | c | | e | |
| Canada Warbler | a | b | | d | e | f |
| Scarlet Tanager | a | b | c | d | | |
| Northern Cardinal | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Rose-breasted Grosbeak | | b | c | d | e | f |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Indigo Bunting | | b | c | | | |
| Eastern Towhee | | b | c | d | | f |
| Chipping Sparrow | a | b | c | d | | f |
| Field Sparrow | | b | | d | | |
| Vesper Sparrow | | | | | | f |
| Savannah Sparrow | | b | c | d | | f |
| Song Sparrow | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Swamp Sparrow | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| White-throated Sparrow | | b | c | d | e | |
| Dark-eyed Junco | | b | | d | | f |
| Bobolink | | b | c | d | | f |
| Red-winged Blackbird | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Eastern Meadowlark | | b | c | d | | f |
| Common Grackle | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Brown-headed Cowbird | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Orchard Oriole | | | c | d | e | |
| Baltimore Oriole | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| Purple Finch | | b | c | d | | f |
| House Finch | | b | c | d | | f |
| American Goldfinch | a | b | c | d | e | f |
| House Sparrow | a | b | c | d | | f |
| Species | 75 | 125 | 95 | 123 | 70 | 114 |

HMBC FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Hudson and Nancy Winn Preserve Sunday, May 27, 2007

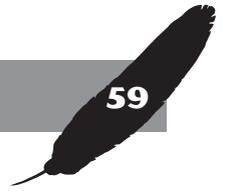
Six birders joined the leader on a late May morning that started with a few sprinkles of rain but quickly cleared. At the meeting place in Altamont early arrivals were able to get looks at BALTIMORE ORIOLE, PILEATED WOODPECKER, and CHIMNEY SWIFT. At the Preserve, the birds were challenging but 31 species were tallied. Thrushes were well represented with VEERY, WOOD THRUSH, HERMIT THRUSH, and AMERICAN ROBIN seen. Woodpeckers including DOWNY, HAIRY, YELLOW BELLIED SAPSUCKER, and NORTHERN FLICKER also made a good showing. Warblers, however, were scarce, with only BLUE WINGED, BLACK THROATED GREEN, COMMON YELLOWTHROAT, and OVENBIRD putting in appearances. The bird of the day was undoubtedly THE YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO, seen by only a couple of the members of the group but heard by others. The remaining list included WILD TURKEY, EASTERN WOOD PEEWEE, GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER, RED-EYED VIREO, BLUE JAY, AMERICAN CROW, COMMON RAVEN, BLACK CAPPED CHICKADEE, TUFTED TITMOUSE, WHITE BREASTED NUTHATCH, BROWN CREEPER, SCARLET TANAGER, EASTERN TOWHEE, SONG SPARROW, HOUSE SPARROW, DARK EYED JUNCO, INDIGO BUNTING, and AMERICAN GOLDFINCH.

— Jennifer Hamilton

Vischer Ferry Nature Preserve Saturday, September 7, 2007

About twenty eager birders gathered at the main entrance to the Vischer Ferry Nature Reserve in Clifton Park, NY, on a warm, humid, and overcast day. We walked around the “long loop” to experience what turned out to be a quiet day. Perhaps the fall migration was blocked by the weather patterns. There was a pair of NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOWS on the power lines and an EASTERN SCREECH OWL responded to iPod calls near the Ring of Pines. A PINE SISKIN was spotted among a big flock of CEDAR WAXWINGS. Only one warbler, a CANADA WARBLER, was seen, however, there were many WOOD DUCKS and BLUE-WINGED TEAL. We had thirty nine species. Some of the more interesting species were: GREEN HERON; BELTED KINGFISHER; RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER; EASTERN WOOD-PEEWEE; EASTERN PHOEBE; WARBLING VIREO; NORTHERN. ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW; CAROLINA WREN; GRAY CATBIRD; CEDAR WAXWING; CANADA WARBLER; EASTERN TOWHEE; PURPLE FINCH; and PINE SISKIN.

— Chris and Bernie Grossman



Monthly programs are open to the public and are held at 7:00 PM at William K Sanford (Colonie) Town Library or Five Rivers Environmental Education Center in Delmar.

The Boreal:

America's Last Great Conservation Opportunity

Matt Medler

Monday, October 1, 2007, 7:00 PM
William K Sanford (Colonie) Town Library

Stretching from Alaska to Newfoundland and encompassing over 1.5 billion acres, the Boreal Forest is North America's last remaining wilderness. More than 80% of the Boreal is still ecologically intact, amounting to a quarter of the world's remaining untouched forest and providing the breeding area for as many as three billion birds. It is only because of the Boreal that so many of our most cherished birds are still common migrants and winterers. Bufflehead, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Cape May Warblers, White-throated Sparrows, and Rusty Blackbirds, to name a few. But the Boreal Forest region of Canada also supplies U.S. consumer demand for cheap tissue paper, newsprint, lumber, and energy the impetus behind an increasingly unsustainable use of the habitats that Boreal birds rely upon. Matthew will take us on a pictorial tour of this remarkable but still little-known part of our world and will show how we can help save the birds of the Boreal through some simple actions.

Matthew Medler is the Science Coordinator for the Boreal Songbird Initiative. He previously worked at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and has ornithological field experience in Sweden, Costa Rica, Brazil, Mexico, and New Zealand. Born and raised in the Capital District, he maintains a strong connection with this region.

HMBC's First Fall Social

Sunday, October 28, 2007, 1:00 PM
Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar

The Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club will present its first Fall Social, at Five Rivers, starting at 1:00 PM. There will be birding groups leaving from the Interpretive Building at 1:00, and we will bird Five Rivers for several hours. We will meet at the pavilion near the Bat Barn at 4:00 for a cook-out and picnic.

HMBC will provide hot dogs and hot chocolate, as well as all dishes and utensils. If you would like to bring a salad or dessert or other picnic favorite to share feel free to do so. This is not required, however.

If you plan to attend this fall event, you MUST call the organizers, Scott and Denise Stoner at 785-6760, no later than Monday, October 22, as we will need a count for food purchasing.

We hope to have a good turn-out at what should be a fun afternoon of birding and picnicking!

Polar Bears of Churchill

Bernie Grossman

Monday, November 5, 2007, 7:00 PM
William K Sanford (Colonie) Town Library

In November, 2006, Bernie and Chris Grossman took a trip to Churchill, Manitoba, to view polar bears. Over a three day period, they saw at least 150 of them as well as other mammals such as moose, dog, and red and arctic fox. The talk will provide an introduction to the polar bear, a brief history of Churchill and describe why it provides a unique location for viewing them. Many photos taken by the Grossmans and other tour participants will illustrate the talk.

Bernie Grossman grew up near Chicago, IL, and earned a BS and Ph. D. in Chemistry. He and his wife Chris started birding while studying at SUNY/Stony Brook in the late 1960s, and they continued this while living in Utica, NY, where he taught chemistry at Utica College. In 1974, they moved to the Capital District where he worked as a chemist at Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory until he retired at the end of 2005. They have been members of HMBC for over 30 years, and he is presently the Club's President.

New York's Montane Specialist: Bicknell's Thrush

Julie Hart

Monday, December 3, 2007, 7:00 PM
Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar

HMBC Holiday Party and Program - Bring a dessert to share if you wish.

New York's montane forests are home to a unique, high-elevation bird community that includes the elusive Bicknell's Thrush, the only bird endemic to the northeast region. Bicknell's Thrush have adapted to this extreme environment in a number of ways, most notably with a unique breeding system and unusual food habits. There are a number of management and conservation issues facing Bicknell's Thrush and other high-elevation birds, including acid rain, climate change, wind power development, recreational development, and timber management. A high-elevation

songbird monitoring program, Mountain Birdwatch, was initiated in 2000 to provide baseline information for making sound stewardship decisions about these montane issues. This annual point-count survey pays special attention to Bicknell's Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, and Winter Wren. Approximately 120 routes are surveyed annually throughout New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. The results have been used to monitor population levels, create a habitat map, provide site-specific information to guide development decisions, and identify priorities for land conservation. Specific information for New York will be presented, including the distribution of Bicknell's Thrush, Mountain Birdwatch route locations, survey results, and volunteer opportunities.

Julie Hart is the coordinator of Mountain Birdwatch with the Institute of Conservation Ecology. She has spent the

last two summers surveying Bicknell's Thrush throughout their range, including Mountain Birdwatch surveys and demographic studies of this rare species. She also assists many other ecology programs at ICE involving both birds and butterflies. Prior to working with mountain songbirds, Julie spent five years traveling around the world studying birds. She spent time monitoring Common Loons in New Hampshire, surveying Golden-winged Warblers in the Catskills of New York, protecting Common and Roseate Terns in Maine, researching Kokako in New Zealand, searching for Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Arkansas, and recording breeding birds throughout New York and Vermont. She worked in the bird conservation departments at Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology where she was involved with national bird conservation initiatives such as the Important Bird Areas Program, the Audubon WatchList, and Partners in Flight. 

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, October 6

GEORGE LANDIS ARBORETUM

Coordinator: George Steele
842-9305
silphidae@aol.com

Enjoy the fall foliage at the Landis Arboretum while on a walk looking for resident and fall migrating birds. The Arboretum offers a beautiful view of the Schoharie Valley with a mix of woodland and open field habitats. The walk will be over easy trails and cover about a mile. Dress in layers appropriate for early autumn weather. Meet at the Arboretum at 2:00 PM

Saturday, October 13

SARATOGA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK (Saratoga County; morning/noon)

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

The battlefield is a nice place to bird in mid-fall. Foliage color should be good as we walk a portion of the Wilkinson Trail through grasslands and woodlands in search of bluebirds, woodpeckers and sparrows. In recent years this trip has found Fox Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Eastern Bluebird, Red-headed Woodpecker, and Raven. Plan to hike about 2 miles along the trail (hilly in places). Wear bright-colored clothing as there is hunting on lands adjacent to the park. The National Park Service charges a fee for walking this trail. Meet at the visitor center at 9 am.

Saturday, November 3

TOMHANNOCK RESERVOIR (Rensselaer County; morning)

Coordinator: Larry Alden
861-6087
overlook@nycap.rr.com

Join us for a morning trip that circumnavigates the Tomhannock Reservoir. We should find a good variety of waterfowl as well as migrant and resident passerines and possibly shorebirds. Rarities such as Ross' Goose and Gray Kingbird have turned up at the Tomhannock in the fall, and we often find a Bald Eagle or two. Meet at 8:30 AM at the parking area at the intersection of Lake Shore Dr. and NY Rt. 7 at the west end of the causeway. Bring a scope if you have one.

Saturday, December 8

NORTH COUNTRY GRAY PARTRIDGE HUNT (Franklin County; all day)

Coordinator: Bill Lee
374-3426
bileej@hotmail.com

Small numbers of Gray Partridge may be making their last stand in NY State just south of Malone in Franklin County. Cape Vincent & Massena populations have apparently been wiped out by a succession of severe winters. With snow cover, the birds should be readily visible from road edges. Call the coordinator for details. 

A Gathering of Shorebirds

Edward M. Sessa

Across

1. ___ Rica
 6. Count some sheep
 11. Word play
 14. Made a choice
 15. Marissa of "My Cousin Vinny"
 16. Wrath
 17. *Shorebird love musical?*
 19. Tire pressure unit
 20. Buffalo's Great Lake
 21. Tavern pints
 22. Absolutely perfect
 24. Steak option
 26. ___ about (approximately)
 27. *Shorebirds direct traffic pattern?*
 32. "Time" unit
 36. Airport security needs
 37. "Blue" at the Musea Picasso
 38. Cut at the mill
 39. Got off one's duff

41. Peter the Great, eg.
 42. Poems of praise
 43. It's hailed in NYC
 44. Santa-Prancer connection
 45. *Shorebird from the Cote d'Azur?*
 49. There are two in Aristotle
 50. Choose not to vote
 55. Show flexibility
 57. Golden Fleece ship
 59. Frank or Boleyn
 60. Romanian coin
 61. *Amorous shorebirds?*
 64. Type
 65. Russian skater Sokolova
 66. Speck in the ocean

67. "___ the season..."
 68. Aired again
 69. Fabric colorers

Down

1. Halley, e.g.
 2. Verdi work
 3. Part of a flight
 4. Former CIA director George
 5. Sum up
 6. Designer
 7. Box in a theater
 8. Flightless birds
 9. Slithery fish
 10. Support for a pier
 11. *Shorebirds clamoring for photos?*
 12. It can be major or minor

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| 67 | | | | | 68 | | | | | | 69 | | | | |

13. Moonwalker Armstrong
 18. Stallion's mate
 23. Give one's blood, e.g.
 25. Chowed down
 26. Seine feeder
 28. Greek weeper of myth
 29. 60's campus protest grp.
 30. River near Beijing
 31. Certain cameras, for short
 32. "Time ___ the essence"
 33. Shia cleric Mogtada
 34. *Lovely chatty shorebirds?*
 35. Open with a pop
 39. Berlin laments
 40. Cry at Fenway
 44. IV monitors
 46. Knife maker
 47. Scrappy guy?
 48. Orchestral wind instrument
 51. Yellow flowered weed
 52. Sanibel lizard
 53. Bury
 54. Tree houses?
 55. Touched down
 56. Place for a hero
 57. Declare
 58. Soap actress Sofer
 62. Corrida cheer
 63. Tiny tyke

Solution may be found on page 63

We are looking for someone to take over webmaster duties for HMBC. The present webmaster cannot continue. The amount of time necessary will vary depending on how much interest a new webmaster brings to the table.

If you are experienced and want to give the website a brand new look, that would be wonderful. If you have a strong interest in computers and no previous webpage experience, we will try to teach you what you need to know to keep the present website updated. In the latter case, your time commitment once trained could be as little as an hour a month.

If you have a special interest in computers and would like to be the HMBC webmaster, please do not hesitate to let us know by contacting either

Bernie Grossman bgrossman@nycap.rr.com

or

Barb Putnam barbolink1@earthlink.net.

OVERFISHING ALERT

ACT NOW FOR MARBLED MURRELETS AND OCEAN LIFE



Millions of Marbled Murrelets once nested along the U.S. Pacific coast. These unique birds are listed as threatened species under the Endangered Species Act, largely due to habitat loss. But now scientists say that overfishing may have played a significant role in their decline. *Take Action Now!* Marbled Murrelets depend heavily on sardine populations for food. During the 1930's and 1940's, the U.S. demand for sardines for fish meat and fish oil exploded. The sardine fishery that supplied Monterey Bay's Cannery Row became the largest fishery in North America. Unfortunately, decades of unrestrained fishing eventually resulted in the crash of the Pacific sardine population and collapse of the fishery, contributing to the near demise of the Marbled Murrelet.

With the loss of the Pacific sardine population, today Marbled Murrelets have been forced to change their diets to less nutritious species like tiny shrimp-like krill. A recent study conducted by the University of California at Berkeley found that Marbled Murrelets are spending considerably

more time feeding to acquire the nutrition they need, and do not have enough energy to devote to breeding. According to the study, as high as 90% of the Marbled Murrelets aren't breeding every year, contributing to the marked decline in their population. Scientists have indicated that this decrease in the Marbled Murrelet population is an early indicator of what to expect with coastal ecosystems around the country if we continue overfishing. *It's time to end overfishing!*

Despite the high-profile collapse of valuable fisheries including Pacific sardines and Atlantic cod, reckless overfishing continues to put our fish, birds, and all of ocean life at jeopardy. Overfishing is known to be occurring on 48 stocks or 20% of the assessed fisheries in U.S. waters, with cascading impacts on ocean ecosystems. These unsustainable fishing practices threaten the future of birding, scuba diving, fishing, and seafood, but it also has broad consequences for seabirds, sea turtles, seals, and other forms of marine life. The NMFS is taking public comments as it revises its rules for overfishing and environmental review. *Protect ocean life!*

Send a letter to the following decision maker, Dr. William Hogarth, Director, NOAA Fisheries

Below is the sample letter:

Subject: New National Standard 1 and NEPA Guidelines Must Use a Precautionary Approach to End Overfishing and Restore Ecosystems

Dear Dr. William Hogarth,

Fisheries are collapsing in America's oceans and around the world, with tragic impacts for all of marine life. The need for the precautionary ecosystem approach to fishery management is long overdue. Your proposed rule on National Standard 1 will ensure that Fishery Management Councils to err on the side of caution in setting annual catch limits and sets the stage for

Toll-free Dead Bird Reporting Hotline

In an effort to further study the West Nile Virus and other causes of bird mortality, the USDA with the help of the New York State Health Department has established a toll-free hotline number so New York State residents can report dead birds in their community:

(866)-537-BIRD (2473)

Report all dead birds you find to this number, and encourage your neighbors and friends to do the same.

Feathers

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

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

