



# THE OSPREY

May/June 2016 — Vol. XLI, No. 3

## WARBLERS ARE COMING!

JOIN A WALK TO SEARCH FOR THE  
JEWELS OF BIRD WORLD

.....  
Spring is the season which brings joy to the Birders' Hearts — the Warblers are arriving!! There are lots of walks to choose from.

Sunday, May 1 at 7:30 am

### Quogue Wildlife Refuge

Leader: **Gigi Spates** (631)765-1436.

Our Eastern LI Audubon Home is also home to many nesting birds and ducks. Our morning walk along well-groomed trails will take us past ponds, streams and both pine and oak woods. We will meet in the parking lot of the Refuge, located at 3 Old Country Road, Quogue. If you need more information call Gigi at (631)765-1436.

Saturday, May 7 at 9 am

### William Floyd Estate

Leader: **MaryLaura Lamont**  
(631)399-2030

The William Floyd Estate offers a variety of habitats to walk through and offers an excellent chance to observe various species of birds, particularly neotropical migrants such as thrush, tanagers, grosbeaks, vireos and numerous warblers. Bald eagles as well as shorebirds may be seen. Three mile walk, bring tick repellent. The Estate entrance is located at 245 Park Drive, Mastic Beach. From the entrance, proceed to the parking area.

Wednesday, May 11 and  
Sunday, May 15 both at 7:30 am

### Hunters Garden

Leader: **Eileen Schwinn** (516)-662-7751  
beachmed@optonline.net

Located on the west side of Route 51 in Northampton (border of Brookhaven and Southampton Townships, just north of Sunrise Highway), Hunters Garden is a DEC managed area which is truly unique. Vernal ponds and dirt trails lead us in a rather hilly section of the South Shore. Cuckoo, Scarlet Tanager, Vireos, Wood and Hermit Thrush, Gnat-catchers, as well as many different warblers, are likely to be seen. Dress for ticks, and bring a snack/water. We will meet at the clearing at the end of the dirt road (which will have an open yellow gate), approximately one mile from the Route 51 "entrance". No two days are the same – that's why we've scheduled two trips here!

Saturday, May 14 at 9 am

### Hallockville Farm & Hallock State Park

Leader: **MaryLaura Lamont**

The Hallockville Farm Museum and State Park is located at 163 Sound Ave, in Riverhead. During peak migration, we have

Turn to page 4 for more walks

## What's a Buffin?

And other questions of bird IDs

Sally Newbert

There are many tricky birds to identify correctly. Sharp-shinned Hawks and Coopers Hawks come to mind. I will not elaborate here, but size, the dark head and the shape of the tail are all clues. On the Coopers if the tail forms a C that is a good clue. I am not sure if that is when he is sitting, or flying. Now that will send you to the bird books to check.

We are approaching the few weeks of year when the warblers are migrating through and tricky IDs are going to be a challenge all of us. Those little gems of the forest move quickly, giving only a quick glimpse, a little piece of the bird. Sometimes all you hear is the song. I hope you came to Katie Kleinpeter's presentation at our last meeting for a spring tune-up on warblers.

Over the winter a small group of birders had some birding adventures that challenged our birding abilities. But first the humorous ones. One very cold day Rosemary Valente and I tried to do some car birding and tried to find a Tufted Duck that had been reported. We met a couple who were also looking over the scene. The majority of the bay had frozen and there were thousands of Scaup going up and down the river, like a little parade. There were a few other ducks thrown in there too including a good number of Buffleheads. Our fellow birdwatchers happily told us that some of the multitude of Scaup and Buffleheads on the river were Puffins. *Oh, how I wish they were, what a treat that would be.* Thus...Buffleheads no, now Buffins.

Continued on page 10

## The President's Corner

# Thank You Rachel Carson

**Byron Young**

I am sure that many of you have read Rachel Carson's book, *The Silent Spring*, warning about the dangers to all natural systems from the misuse of chemical pesticides such as DDT and other pesticides. That struggle continues as old hazardous pesticides are discarded in favor of newer chemical compounds to control unwanted insects and the potential diseases that they carry with little concern for the unintended consequences.

The point of my column is not to revisit the battle over controlling chemical compounds but to take a fresh look at a positive consequence of our actions to control such products in the past. The recovery our local Osprey population is the most often cited testament to the control of hazardous chemicals.

I would like to add a new member to that recovered community, one that is making its presence felt in places where it has been long absent, and that is the American Bald Eagle. How many of you have seen one of the growing numbers of Bald Eagles on Long Island? Viewing a Bald Eagle no longer requires travel to the Hudson Valley or other locations more far afield to find these marvelous birds of prey. This winter I have seen five Bald Eagles around Long Island; the latest addition was an adult Bald Eagle flying over the Mill River in Rockville Centre on March 9, 2016. This is probably one of the pair that has been observed with some regularity around Hempstead Lake State Park.

Until recently one had to travel off Long Island in hopes of seeing one of these magnificent birds. Not so today, with at least four nesting pairs and two or three pairs that are apparently searching for nest sites. One of our members, MaryLaura Lamont, was the first to report nesting Bald Eagles on Gardiner's Island in 2006. She followed that find by reporting a nesting pair on the William Floyd Estate in 2015. There are four verified active nests around the east end of Long Island and fortunately they are in areas that afford them protection for nesting and raising their young.

It is always a special treat to observe a Bald Eagle soaring high up in clear blue sky or if you are lucky enough to find one perched along the shore watching for prey or just soaking up some sun. Who knows why they perch in such spots, maybe it is just their way of watching over their kingdom. Since January I have seen three Eagles around the Carman's River and the William Floyd Estate, one over the Peconic River and one over the Mill River in Rockville Centre.

The one spot where you can view a Long Island Bald Eagle with a degree of certainty is from Osprey Point Park in Mastic. With the aid of a spotting scope or a good pair of binoculars you can find the nest along the shoreline opposite Osprey Point Park. My degree of certainty is no means a guarantee that you will find the birds being cooperative. However, if I were going to take someone looking for a Bald Eagle that is where I would head. Beyond that it is the simply being in the right place at the right time.

This is all good news! With the banning of DDT nearly 45 years ago in the U.S., the control of some other hazardous chemicals and the recovery efforts of dedicated state and federal biologists the Bald Eagle have been making a strong recovery in the Eastern US. This should be a reminder to all of us that we need to take the use of pesticides, herbicides and other dangerous chemicals very seriously, including trying as much as possible to stop using them altogether.

Likewise, we all need to examine our use of commercial fertilizers that often contain weed killers or other potential harmful products. Read with care the ingredients label on the lawn and garden care products that you purchase. Yes, we all want a nice looking yard but at what cost, and I am not talking about dollars and cents. Because of the tendency to over apply common lawn and garden care products we are adding nutrients and hazardous chemical that will ultimately discharge in our streams and local waters.

Each of our individual applications of chemical fertilizers and pesticides leads



*Juvenile Bald Eagle seen on Long Island from Terry Sullivan's new book My Sag Harbor Bird Notebook he will be joining us for the June meeting.*

to a bioaccumulation of chemicals in the food chain. Going back to the Osprey, it was not the direct application of pesticides that caused the problem. It was the bioaccumulation of these pesticides in the fish that they were eating which caused the egg shells to weaken.

Growing up in the State of Maine during the 1950's through 1960's it was rare to see a Bald Eagle, now there is a pair nesting on the lake I grew up on. This pair fishes in my cousin's trout pond, flying over my sister's house regularly in search of a trout dinner or some other fish from a neighboring lake. While all of our bird friends are nice there is something special about a Bald Eagle soaring across the winds against a pale blue sky or any sky for that matter. 🦅

# ELIAS MEETINGS

Monday, May 2, 2016 at 7:15 pm

## Finding Birds in New York

Corey Finger, who is originally from Saugerties but now lives in Queens, has been birding in New York State since he saw a Green Heron outside of Albany just over ten years ago. In that time he has learned that Bald Eagles don't scream, that gull identification can be very difficult, and that birding the Empire State is amazingly rewarding. Corey blogs at 10,000 Birds, the world's most popular birding blog. He is also the author of the forthcoming book, *The American Birding Association Field Guide to Birds of New York*. Join him for a well-illustrated and entertaining talk on finding birds in New York.



A Red-necked Grebe, Glaucous Gull and a Connecticut Warbler from Corey Finger's new field guide

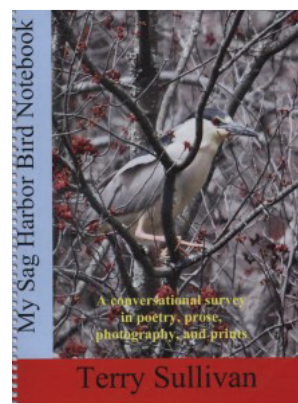
Monday, June 6, 2016 at 7:15 pm

## Terry Sullivan, Author & Photographer Presents *My Sag Harbor Bird Notebook*

Weather permitting we will be taking a short walk before the meeting.

Many local folks know Terry Sullivan as a singer of traditional Irish, African, Spanish, and Yiddish music. He followed the path of his mentor and friend, Pete Seeger, and sang onstage with him more than 100 times. For the last 20 years, he has also written stories about nature, including birding, following yet another mentor and friend, Larry Penny, who generously wrote the forward to Terry's new book, *My Sag Harbor Bird Notebook*. The book's subtitle is *A conversational survey, in poetry, prose, photography, and prints*. The tone of the book is a fireside chat illustrated by some spectacular shots, contrasted with some comedic flavor to the rest of the book.

Mr. Sullivan will read selections from the book, as well as present copies of his photos and drawings, while explaining how he's captured these striking images with a very basic technique you can adopt for your own local nature walks. Copies of the book will be available for signing.



Monday, July 11, 2016, meeting to begin at 7:00 pm

## Ornithological Fieldwork in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea

By Paul Sweet

The island of New Guinea is home to over 700 species of birds—that is, 700 and still counting. In the fall of 2014 Paul Sweet joined a team of vertebrate specialists from the American Museum of Natural History on an expedition to the highlands of Papua New Guinea—the nation that occupies the eastern half



of the island. The highlands are one of the most remote areas in the world. The expedition was in search of new specimens and new species. Sweet will talk about the adventures of fieldwork and discuss some of the expedition's discoveries.

**Paul Sweet** is the collections manager in the Ornithology Department of The American Museum of Natural History in NYC. He was born in Bristol, England and has been interested in birds for as long as he can remember. After completing a degree in zoology at the University of Liverpool, he traveled widely in Asia and the Americas before working at the Raffles Museum in Singapore. In 1991 he moved to New York City to work at the American Museum of Natural History. 🐦



*Continued from page 1*

a good chance to see thrushes, vireos, warblers and more, on this walk past farm fields, woods leading up to views of Long Island Sound. There is a \$6 per person charge for this walk, which benefits the Hallockville Farm Museum Educational Program. Please call the Museum for information and a for a reservation at (631) 298-5292.

**Saturday, May 14 at 8 am**

## Terrell River County Park

**Leaders: Jay Kuhlman and Beth Gustin** (631)848-9883

Meet at the trail head, on the south side of Montauk Highway in Center Moriches. The parking area is directly across from Kaler's Pond Nature Center. The forest, marshland and bay beach provide habitat for Indigo Bunting, Black and White Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Saltmarsh Sparrow and Great-crested Flycatcher.

**Sunday, May 22 at 7:30 am**

## North Fork County Park

**Leader: Eileen Schwinn**  
(516) 662-7751

Located on the north side of Sound Ave. in Jamesport (Clearly marked with a sign, "North Fork County Park". Follow the long, paved driveway to the former hunting lodge parking area). We will visit vernal ponds, meadows and wooded areas. Each day is different in this relatively new Suffolk County Parkland, but we have the opportunity to see visiting migrants and nesting warblers, raptors, and thrushes. Dress for ticks, however, we will be on mowed paths for most of the walk.

**Wednesday, May 25 at 7:30 am**

## Rocky Point DEC Property

**Leader: Bob Adamo** (631) 369-1958

Meet at the parking lot #26 on the south side of the Rt.25A Bypass, approx. one mile west of Randall Rd., Shoreham, this location is also about 1/8 mile west of the turn off for Rt. 25A "proper", which runs through the Rocky Point Business District.

Parking Lot #26 (this number can't be seen from the road) is also 100 yards east of Broadway which deadends at 25A Bypass. Any questions, contact me at (631) 369-1958 or radamo4691@gmail.com.

**Saturday, June 4 at 8 am**

## South Fork Natural History Museum

**Leader: Eric Salzman**

**Co-sponsored by ELIAS and SoFo**

On this joint walk, expert birder, composer, and author Eric Salzman will explore the avian life of the meadow behind the South Fork Natural History Museum and the adjacent Greenbelt woodlands and wetlands. This walk will provide an opportunity to see and—especially—hear some of our locally breeding birds. The two-hour walk will be followed by a short introduction to the Eastern Long Island Audubon Society. For more information, reservations, and directions to SoFo, please call: (631) 537-9735.

*Additional Field Trips may be added if leaders become available, new walks will be on our website. Members who have given us their email address will be notified directly.*



## Three Nature Programs Offered by Group for the East End

**Saturday, May 7 (1 to 2:30 p.m.)**

### MAD ABOUT SEASHELLS

Program is in Hampton Bays

A FAMILY FUN PROGRAM

Long Island's ocean beaches are great places to search for evidence of near-shore creatures. We will meet on the west side of Shinnecock Inlet to comb the shoreline for seashells, crab shells, skate egg cases, and perhaps even a sand dollar! For reservations or more information, please contact Steve Biasetti at 631-765-6450 ext. 205 or sbiasetti@eastendenvironment.org.

tanagers, and others. Please bring binoculars. For reservations or more information, please contact Steve Biasetti at 631-765-6450 ext. 205 or sbiasetti@eastendenvironment.org.

**Sunday, May 15 (9 to 10:30 am)**

### SONGBIRDS ON THE MOVE

Program is in Cutchogue

Songbirds of all sorts migrate through the woods of eastern Long Island in mid-May. Join us for a short nature walk at the Downs Farm Preserve as we search and listen for warblers, vireos, thrushes, flycatchers,

**Saturday, May 21  
(all day and part of the night!)**

### 21ST ANNUAL FAUNA-THON FUNDRAISER

A FAMILY FUN PROGRAM  
All over the East End.

Group For The East End staffers and friends will wander far and wide, searching for mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, butterflies, and dragonflies. Can we beat our record of 266 species? Not without your help! So join one of our teams, make your own team, or pledge a donation. All Fauna-thon donations directly support the Group's environmental education programs. For more information, please contact Steve Biasetti at 631-765-6450 ext. 205 or sbiasetti@eastendenvironment.org.

# What to Do If You Find a Baby Bird

Eileen Schwinn

You're out in your yard, walking around, enjoying a lovely Spring morning, and you come upon a tiny baby bird. What to do? What not to do? Hopefully, the following will provide you with a quick guide to help you make the right decision!

First some mis-conceptions:

**MYTHS:**

**1. A baby bird on the ground is an abandoned bird**

**NOT TRUE!**

For some species – Robins among them – young birds leave the nest, and spend 2-5 days on the ground before they can fly. While on the ground, the young are cared for, protected and taught skills such as finding food, IDing predators, and how to fly.

**2. Touched by a human, bird parents will abandon their young**

**NOT TRUE!**

Birds have a very poor sense of smell and very strong parental instincts. The parents may take a bit of time before resuming care of their young, but if you hear "squawking" or "fussing", be assured the parents are nearby and are anxious for **YOU TO LEAVE!**

**3. You can care for a baby bird as well as the parents**

**NOT TRUE!**

Baby birds need to be fed as frequently as every 10 to 20 minutes, from sunrise to sunset (and sometimes beyond!) And the food is frequently a mix of insects/grubs/worms and parental "juices" – something we humans are incapable of reproducing.

Water to a baby bird can also be fatal – it's not part of their baby bird diet, and can inhale it, causing serious problems.

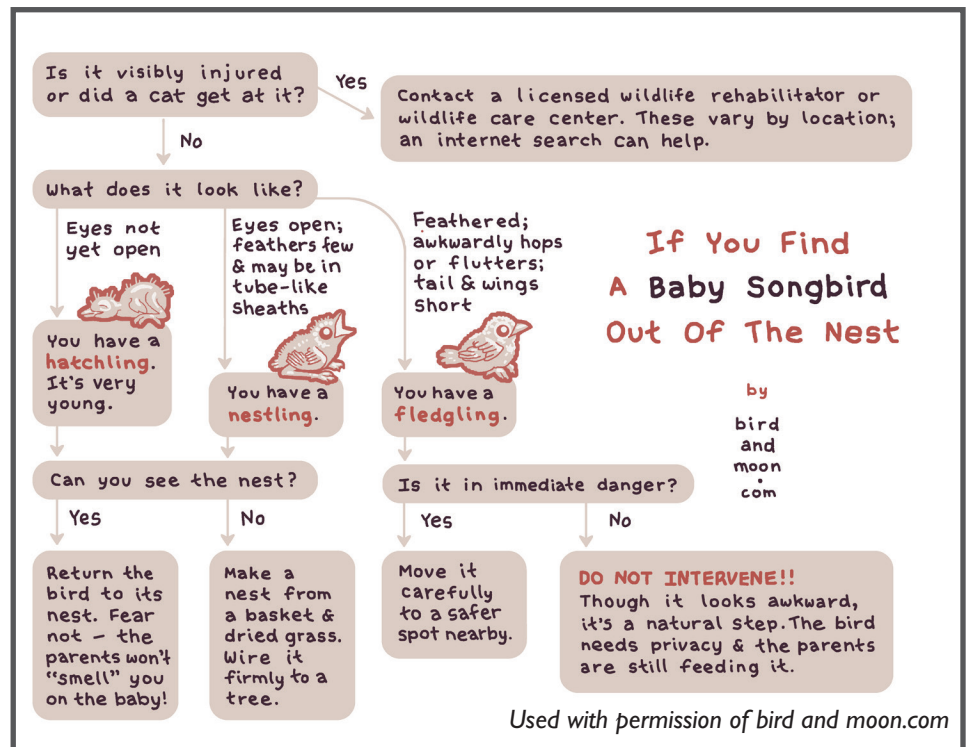
**NOW FOR SOME TRUTHS:**

- If you think the bird fell from a nest too soon (the result of a wind storm or some other natural disturbance), try to replace the bird INTO the nest again, if possible. If the nest is unreachable or has been destroyed, you can substitute a small berry basket or small tissue box, (perhaps cut down to size), lined with tissue, and placed in a shrub or suspend it from a branch, close to where you think the nest MAY have been located. The parents are still around.
- A fledgling (typically feathered and able to hop and flap) should be left alone – KEEP PETS and PEOPLE away, so the parents can continue to care for their young. If your neighborhood has feral or out-of-house cats wandering about, you may attempt to provide a fenced in area for the birds protection (admittedly, this takes some forethought and the best solution is to encourage ALL CATS to be INDOOR CATS). Don't move the young bird too far away from where you find it – the young are still dependent on the parents for survival and will quickly starve if moved to a new location. Moving the fledgling

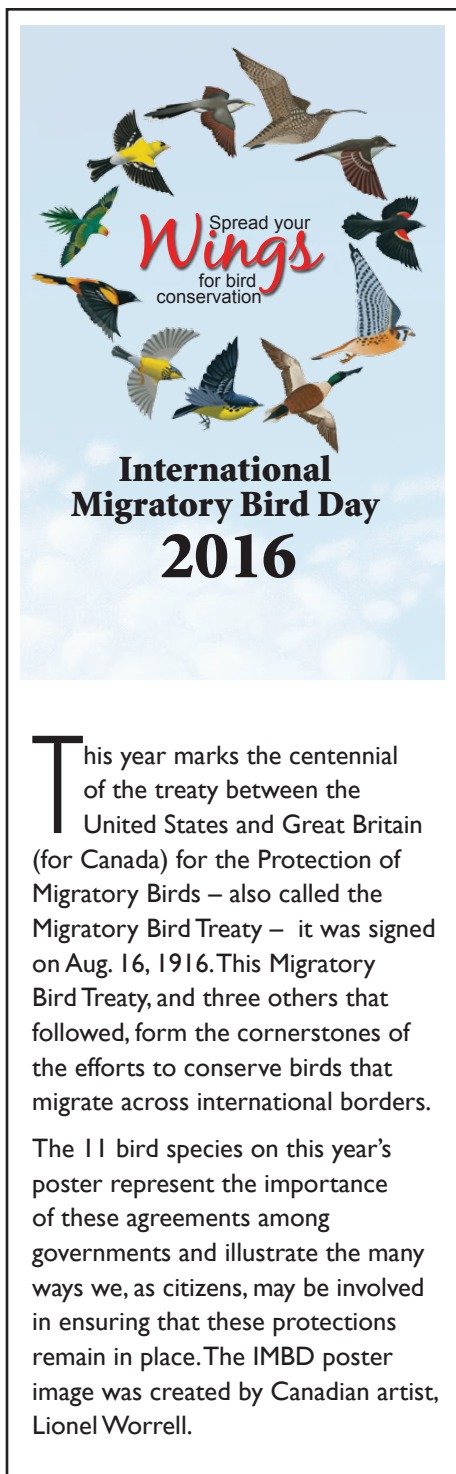
to dense shrubbery is a satisfactory solution – tough for a cat to penetrate.

- A found baby bird, if uninjured, should NOT BE TAKEN to a wildlife rehabilitation center. As harsh as this sounds, the rehab center rarely has the resources to care for the many baby birds well-meaning birdwatchers find. A rehab center is a hospital, and bringing a healthy baby bird to a facility to prevent them from being injured makes no more sense than raising healthy human children at a hospital to prevent them from becoming sick. It may make you feel better to "drop the bird off and be done with it", but the best thing to do, unfortunately, is to leave the bird alone. Nature, as we all know, is not always kind – but be assured that, in this and so many cases, the parents know best!

**And remember, if you do handle the baby bird, be sure to wash your hands very, very well – there could be parasites or other nasties on that baby bird, which could cause you to become ill.**



Used with permission of bird and moon.com



This year marks the centennial of the treaty between the United States and Great Britain (for Canada) for the Protection of Migratory Birds – also called the Migratory Bird Treaty – it was signed on Aug. 16, 1916. This Migratory Bird Treaty, and three others that followed, form the cornerstones of the efforts to conserve birds that migrate across international borders.

The 11 bird species on this year's poster represent the importance of these agreements among governments and illustrate the many ways we, as citizens, may be involved in ensuring that these protections remain in place. The IMBD poster image was created by Canadian artist, Lionel Worrell.

# International Migratory Bird Day

## Spread Your Wings for Bird Conservation

Through many events held throughout the Americas, IMBD celebrations will explore how birds have inspired some of the most significant environmental conservation actions. For generations, migratory birds have connected communities across continents, providing unique opportunities for international collaboration and inspiring people to improve conditions for birds, all wildlife, and for ourselves.

National and international cooperation is an essential step toward safeguarding the world's migratory birds, whose long-distance flights often cross political borders, exposing them to widely varying conservation philosophies and laws. "This year's International Migratory Bird Day is a celebration of the capacity of individuals to compel world leaders to prioritize migratory bird conservation," says Dr. Susan Bonfield, Executive Director of Environment for the Americas. "Collaboration and a commitment to actions that protect migratory birds along their entire flyways, and throughout their lifecycles, are crucial to safeguarding migratory populations."

This year's theme celebrates the capacity of citizens of every country to support programs and laws that safeguard birds and their habitats, including a landmark treaty that has protected nearly all migratory bird species in the U.S. and Canada for the last century. By working together towards this common cause, we hope to initiate another century of bird conservation.

Although IMBD is traditionally celebrated in Canada and the U.S. on the second Saturday in May, in reality every day is bird day, and programs, festivals, and other events occur throughout the year, when it works best for organizers—and for the birds.

Ultimately, the goal of IMBD is to connect people to nature through birds, no matter when that is, and to help people understand the importance of bird conservation.

Participants at more than 700 locations from Argentina to Canada and the Caribbean will learn how laws, regulations, treaties, and other protections benefit migratory birds, the symbolic harbingers of the seasons. Many of these events will include habitat restoration activities, educational presentations highlighting the theme, bird walks, and creative art activities.

Now in its 26th year, IMBD has grown from a one-day event into a framework underpinning hundreds of projects and programs year-round. IMBD is coordinated by Environment for the Americas, which provides bilingual educational materials and information about birds and bird conservation throughout the Americas. Their programs inspire children and adults to get outdoors, learn about birds, and take part in their conservation.

**To celebrate IMBD, Eastern Long Island Audubon Society is planning a bird walk at The William Floyd Estate on May 7th. Join MaryLaura Lamont at 9 am.**

ELIAS is now using Constant Contact, an email notification service, to send notices about meetings and walks. An email will go out few days before the event. As renewals come in we will add your email to our list if it is included with your renewal.

If you have not been added and would like to be, please send an email to [eliasopsprey@optonline.net](mailto:eliasopsprey@optonline.net).

**DON'T FORGET TO  
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!!**

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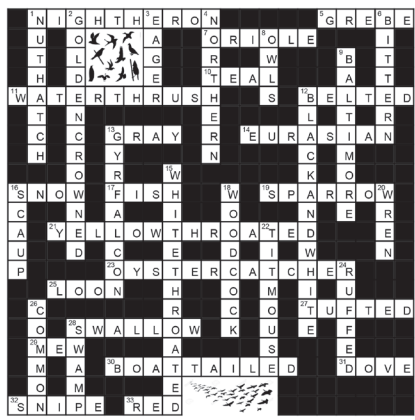
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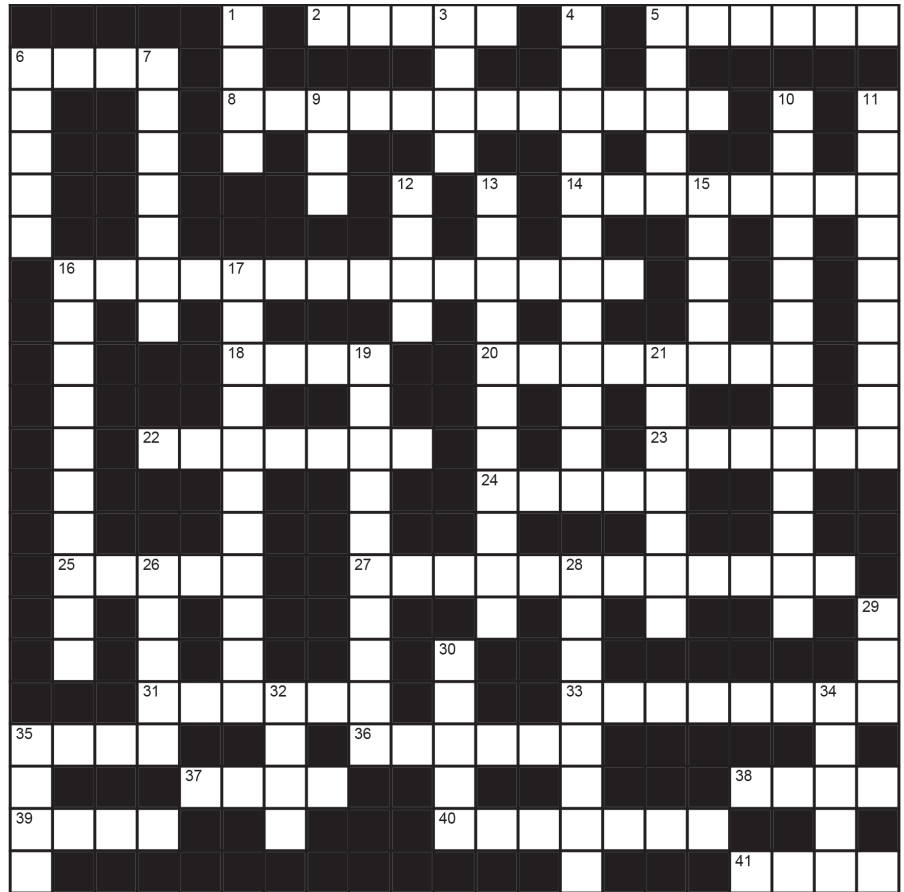
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Audubon  
on Facebook!**

### Answers to last issue's puzzle Either Or... by Tom Moran



## Spring into Summer Tom Moran



### Across

- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Finch, Sparrow
- 5 First word of this bird with 18 across not to be confused with a White-faced one
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_ Sparrow, strong chest spot
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_ Sandpiper or Plover
- 14 NYSOA's quarterly publication title
- 16 \_\_\_\_\_ Warbler, was seen at Connetquot again this spring
- 18 Second word of 5 across
- 20 Look for the injured wing display
- 22 Indigo \_\_\_\_\_
- 23 \_\_\_\_\_ Sandpiper. Seen at Cedar Beach this spring
- 24 \_\_\_\_\_ Waxwing
- 25 Snowy or Great
- 27 \_\_\_\_\_ Grosbeak
- 31 Often associates with 4 down
- 33 \_\_\_\_\_ Sandpiper the one without the white slash at base of neck, has a bold eye ring.
- 35 A rare sighting for LI, seen at Forest Park 2005. Black-throated \_\_\_\_\_, not Blue or Green.
- 36 Northern \_\_\_\_\_, clean white with black wing tips. It is fun to watch it dive into the ocean.
- 37 Cupsogue sandbars are a good place to find a variety of this family of birds
- 38 Mourning \_\_\_\_\_
- 39 Common or Red-throated
- 40 Northern \_\_\_\_\_ erstwhile Marsh Hawk
- 41 \_\_\_\_\_ Siskin

### Down

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Crow, smaller and has a weaker and more nasal caw than the American
- 3 Mute, Trumpeter, Tundra...
- 4 Often associates with 31 across
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ winged Teal.
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_ Owl, a visitor from the northern tundra.
- 7 Gray, common winter duck
- 9 Cape \_\_\_\_\_ Warbler. Can be a good place to see warblers and hawks
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_ Nuthatch
- 11 \_\_\_\_\_ Hawk
- 12 \_\_\_\_\_ Owl, because they like to nest in them
- 13 Great \_\_\_\_\_ Gull
- 15 Barnacle, Ross, Pink-footed...
- 16 Greater or Lesser
- 17 The avian magnetic compass receptor appears to be a light-dependent, wave length-sensitive system that functions as a polarity compass... or how scientists describe how birds follow compass directions.
- 19 Entertaining to watch as a group charges receding waves and retreats from incoming ones.
- 21 Active in the daytime.
- 26 \_\_\_\_\_ Duck, a common, stiff-tailed winter duck.
- 28 American \_\_\_\_\_, a wood warbler, male is black and orange.
- 29 Blue, Scrub...
- 30 House, Purple...
- 32 Horned \_\_\_\_\_
- 34 Common \_\_\_\_\_, a fairly regular visitor to the Hampton Bays water tower.
- 35 They're not Bagels! They're just-(singular).

## The Asa Wright Preserve in Trinidad

Carl Starace

In early March Sally Swain and I visited an island on the edge. That is to say Trinidad and neighboring Tobago are just a handful of miles from the South American continent and specifically the shores of Venezuela. It is this proximity that makes Trinidad unrivaled by any of the Caribbean isles when it comes to the diversity of its bird life.

We came to choose Trinidad this winter after my web searches turned up so many exquisite and even bizarre species of birds, it also included the chance to visit a renowned birders lodge. But there was something else. In the mid-nineteen sixties I visited the home of a well-known bird artist named Don Eckleberry. Don and Virginia Eckleberry lived in a neighboring town of Babylon, Long Island. A friend of mine had begun interviewing Long Island's leading naturalists and bird artists for his local quarterly magazine called, "Wetlands". Don Eckleberry was then artist in residence for National Audubon and had been illustrating various bird books. Our visit was an eye opener as he showed us his studio which contained many large bird canvases of America's avifauna. Some years later I read that the Eckleberry's had visited Trinidad many times, staying at an estate where he painted the bird life of the Arima Valley. The owners of the estate, Asa and Newcombe Wright had come on hard times and needed to sell the house and its 120 acres. The Eckleberry's con-

vinced them to put a temporary hold on the idea. Don believed this precious valley needed preservation and he was ultimately successful in his efforts. The large and quite grand original homestead was built in 1908 and would become the Asa Wright Lodge, a lodge for birders and one of the oldest, (44 years), in the New World.

The day of our flight from Denver was a long one as we were shifted from one plane to the next, (broken air conditioning). Those extra three hours meant we didn't arrive at our cabin in the valley until after midnight. But this in no way stopped us from rising before dawn to listen to the multileveled chorus of birdsong. In that half light, with the loud and constant *Kisk-ka-dee* of the Great Kiskadee, to those even higher raucous vocalizations of Orange-winged Parrots, the trills and gurgles of Crested Oropendolas and ground level *tsips*, chips and twitters of hummingbirds, tanagers and their allies. It wasn't until we saw the Honeycreepers, that we felt the joy that comes with a return to the Neotropics. We entered the grounds and proceeded up the stairs to the main



*Purple Honeycreeper pair below the veranda of the "Great House" at the Asa Wright Preserve*

level of the great house. Passing a large dining area we entered a long hall whose walls were graced by paintings, (some by Don Eckleberry), and large framed photos of some of the Arima Valleys most sought after avifauna. Out on the superb three sided veranda were tables with lounging sofas and scopes on tripods set up for guests to use. In one corner a hot beverage kiosk. Birders stood along the railing, some eyes gazed out upon this long, densely treed and high sided valley. Its trees were as tall and vividly green and untouched as any we'd seen in Central or South America. Other eyes were glued to the line of hummingbird feeders and large wooden trays filled with slices of watermelon and papaya. These were set out each morning for Blue-grey and Bay-headed Tanagers, Green and Purple Honeycreepers, Cocoa and Spectacled Thrushes and other brilliantly colored passerines that flew in for this feast. In that first forty minutes on the veranda with sightings of several Plumbeous Kites, Short-tailed Hawk, a Crane Hawk, perched, a Channel-billed Toucan, Tufted Coquette, Ruby Topaz and several Copper-rumped Hummingbirds Sally and I understood why the Asa Wright Lodge and Arima Valley are so revered by birders the world over. And we hadn't yet walked any of its myriad trails.

*To be continued...*

Carl Starace, Niwot, Colorado 

*Long Tongued Bats each evening at Hummingbird feeders*



*Crested Oropendola nests in Arima Valley*





# Keep an Eye on the Sky - Those Big Birds are Back!

Is there anyone who does not react to seeing a large bird in the wild? How about seeing a Bald Eagle fly overhead! Its got to make you gasp! On that note here is what we heard from Larry Penny.  
 Editor's note.

## Larry Penny

The South Fork is alive and well. On Wednesday the 17th of February, two Turkey Vultures were intimately sailing back and forth over NYS 25 between Riverhead and Aquebogue. On the following day a Raven was perched atop utility wires looking quite at home in Watermill. An Osprey was seen during the same week by Officer Janke of the Southampton Town Police over Sagaponack Pond.

In other words, the BIG BIRDS are back. But most spectacular of them all are the Bald Eagles. MaryLaura Lamont has a pair on their nest and incubating at the William Floyd Estate in Mastic. The pair on Mashomack, Shelter Island is busily attending to matrimonial duties and most likely, the oldest breeding pair on Long Island is on their 10-year-old or older nest on Gardiner's Island and taking care of business.

Ten Bald Eagles both immature and adult have been hanging around Sagaponack Pond according to the number one Eagle watcher and photographer on the South Fork, Greg Boeklin. The carp have been active in that pond lately and the Eagles may be feasting on them.

Terry Sullivan has a smashing photo of one of these Bald Eagles in his new book, *My Sag Harbor Bird Notebook*. The book, by the way, is available at ACE Hardware on 114 in Sag Harbor, the SOFO Museum and Wild Bird Crossing in Bridgehampton or come to the ELIAS meeting on July 11. 🦅



Juvenile Bald Eagles perched over Sagaponack Pond from Terry Sullivan's Book, *My Sag Harbor Bird Notebook*

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*If you have a favorite organic farm, send us a note at [eliasosprey@optonline.net](mailto:eliasosprey@optonline.net) and we will let people know in the next issue.* 🦅

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*Continued from page 1*

On another occasion when we were at Cedar Beach on the Sound, it was a lovely, calm sunny day and people were out enjoying the good weather, a few women were telling us we were looking at Buffleheads. *Hmmm* Buffleheads, no they were clearly Long-tail Duck but who's telling.

Several ELIAS members have decided to take the 200 challenge that Joe Guinta organizes. Others have challenged themselves or are working towards being listed with New York Ornithological Association where 200 is the minimum to join the list.

In pursuit of our 200, Tom Moran, Rosemary Valente and I took off for Montauk after the ELIAS trip to Elizabeth Morton Wildlife Refuge. We proceeded around Montauk stopping at the overlook, and Camp Hero where we hunted fruitlessly for the King Eider and the Razorbills that had been reported. But no luck, either our scopes were not good enough or numbers of Surf, White-winged and Black Scoters and rolling surf kept them hidden from us.

We also heard reports that there had been Eared Grebes on Fort Pond Bay. They are pretty rare on this coast. So off we went. Stopping first at South Lake Drive. We spotted a few Horned Grebes, a similar, but not an uncommon species that winters here.

Proceeding around the lake and making a few more stops we came to the Edward Ecker Sr. Park and Memorial Fishing Pier. There, we were pretty sure we found Eared Grebes. We based our decision on the feeding behavior — they were

frequently diving, the head shape, and neck coloration. However they were pretty far out and seen only through a scope. Both Eared Grebes and Red-necked Grebes are pretty rare in this part of the country so either would be a good bird to find. These bird would not be hard to identify in their breeding plumage. But in the drab grays and whites of their winter garb it is a different story.

We were happy to report our nice find. By that time, some of our cell phones and camera batteries were dying and as a result, no photos.

Ah, but life is not always kind or easy. A few minutes later, another report on the nyslistserv came in, better birders than we think we are, were reporting Red-necked Grebes and Red-throated Loons. *Hmmmm*, well that might just be a problem. Tom wondered "Is it possible one rare bird flew out and another flew in?" I guess it is. Or, did we see a Red-throated Grebe?

By that time we had left, but decided to return. On our return trip, there were

young people in pick-up trucks along Navy Beach shooting skeet over the bay. No birds were left.

The next day Tom decided to return and see if he could get a picture of the birds we saw. Would they still be there? This time he was fully prepared with batteries charged, scope and I hope a snack. Neither Rosemary or I could go that day. He came back with a dandy digiscoped photo. The bird on the left looked like the bird we saw. PERFECT! But, these are the same bird. One is facing away and the bill seems smaller. Now what?

I uploaded the photo to Merlin a part of Cornell Ornithology Lab's website. I told Merlin where the eye was, where the tail was. The left-hand bird came up with 3 possibilities a Pied-billed Grebe, (no way), a Horned Grebe or a Red-Necked Grebe. The right-hand bird, Merlin identified as a Red-necked Grebe. So I guess that is what we saw far out on Fort Pond Bay.

If you would like to write about a bird ID that you found challenging, please send it in to *The Osprey*. 🦅

*The two grebes spotted on Fort Pond Bay. They are both Red-necked Grebes, but are challenging to identify. Photo by Tom Moran.*



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## FROM OUR BIRD WALKS

### Elizabeth Morton Wildlife Refuge

#### TURKEYS, CHICKADEES AND WAXWINGS, OH MY!

SATURDAY, MARCH 5 What a place to visit. No rarities, but 23 species of regulars were there. The recent snow (not too much) meant the paths were snow covered but easily passable. There is just no place else where the birds are so accessible. Landing on your hands, following you around. It is a birders' dream, now all we need are some rarities.



### North Fork County Park

#### TURKEY VULTURE CHECKS US OUT

SATURDAY, APRIL 9 This newly established park in Northville, with the entrance on Sound Avenue, is a nice new addition to Suffolk County Parks. It has a variety of fresh water wetlands, with ponds ranging from temporary rain fed depressions to larger more permanent ponds. It can be a wonderful stop-over for migrating birds or a good place to nest for others. With many wide open paths, it presents good hiking opportunities. for us humans. On our hike we encountered about 26 species of birds.



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