



The **OSPREY**

March/April 2014— Vol. XXXIX No. 2

Mute Swans, iconic and under attack!

Larry Penny

There isn't a year that goes by that at least one local newspaper doesn't picture a swan or two. There was that famous one a few years ago. A swan had been shot clear through with an arrow but was still walking around Grangibel Park in Riverhead, arrow and all. Wildlife rehabilitators removed the arrow and the swan survived to swim and grace the park once more. Five or six years ago the *East Hampton Star* featured a front page photo of a mother Mute Swan with three little Cygnets on her back moseying around in the Town Pond. Before I saw that photo I thought that Cygnets riding on Mom's back was a myth, apparently it isn't. In East Hampton Village generation after generation of swans have lived on Town Pond. Has the Mute Swan become the unofficial "village bird"?

The Mute Swan is perhaps the only member of the local swans, geese and ducks group that doesn't migrate from north to south come winter. In Eurasia where the

species originated, it is also not much of a migrator, either. On the South Fork some Mute Swans do go south for the winter, but only to coastal ponds situated on the edge of the ocean. These ponds are the last to freeze and Swans try not to get frozen in the ice, although it has happened from time to time. In East Hampton some of the Swans walk south to their wintering grounds rather than fly and occasionally get hit by passing vehicles. The Wildlife Rescue Center of the Hamptons rescues and rehabilitates several injured Mute Swans each year.

There are at least eight swan species throughout the world. Two are in South America, one in Australia and New Zealand, three in Eurasia. The two in North America, the Tundra and Trumpeter, breed in the far north and migrate as far south as Central America for the winter. Occasionally you will see them on Long Island.

The Mute Swan has been in this country since the mid-1800s. It has slowly spread

west and a few are even found in California. It is the largest of the swans, males reaching 26 pounds or more, and except for the two American cranes and, perhaps, a turkey or two, is our largest bird.

Mute Swan pairs raise their Cygnets in a family that parallels the American family, the kind represented by Blondie and Dagwood in the comics, the Nelsons of old TV, the Aldriches of old radio. A kind of family that stuck together through thick and thin, a kind of family that sociologists

Mute Swan pairs raise their Cygnets in a family that parallels the American family,

tell us is no longer typically American.

The male and female Mute Swans form a conjugal couple and while they are not completely monogamous the way the Bewick Swans of Asia are, they stick together for many years in a row. Occasionally the older male, the cob, is ousted in favor of a younger one by the female. The female, or "pen", lays on average six to eight eggs each April or early May in a nest of rushes and other grassy filaments on the ground near the water's edge. She incubates for almost a month. Like most of our duck and geese species, the Cygnets hatch out and immediately take to the water as they are precocial (i.e. the young are relatively mature and mobile from the moment of hatching). They share this ability with the young of the Piping Plover, Bobwhite, Turkey, and Pheasant who are also precocial.

The parents stay together and fuss over the young, help them feed and carefully guard them. The male can be extremely pugnacious during their upbringing and



SALLY NEWBERT

The Mute Swan has been an Inspiration for generations of artists and musicians, and fed at local ponds by generations of children. The DEC wants to rid the state of this species.

Continued on page 5

The President's Corner

Special Places & Special Memories

Byron Young

The United States/Canadian Gulf of Maine maritime boundary has an unresolved gap in the boundary at Machias Seal Island. Machias Seal Island is disputed soil with a Canadian Lighthouse perched on its rock crest and claims from both countries as to ownership. This dispute has been ongoing for decades but that is another story. During my Junior year of college we had a summer field trip to the island to observe the oceanic bird life. This is one of those special places and events that stand out in my birding records. This one involves Atlantic Puffin on Machias Seal Island off eastern Maine.

As part of a summer for credit Field Trip my Wildlife Management class of 15 to 20 students and instructors loaded onto a local commercial lobstermen's boat out of Cutler, Maine for the ten-mile trip out to the Island. After being ferried ashore by the lighthouse keeper's assistant we were given instructions about where to walk and not step on any of the nesting terns. No one told the terns that as they bomb dived us all day.

The Island has nesting Puffins, Common and Arctic Terns, and Black Guillemots. The Puffins and Guillemots nested in cavities in the rocks. I cannot forget the gulls (Herring and Great Black-back) causing a fuss as we walked around the Island. Armed with my original pair of 7x50 binoculars and a Brownie Instamatic camera, remember film? I went forth in search of my quarry the Atlantic Puffin. Taking up a position in one of the blinds adjacent to where the Puffins were nesting I was ready to meet my quarry. Little did I know that my quarry was not very shy and would land on the ledge a few feet from the blind! I think I have a fuzzy slide or photo or two in my collection of photos but the memory of that first Puffin landing only feet from where I sat is still fresh in my memory. Even more surprising was when another Puffin joined the first bird each with a supply of food for their young.

I do not remember all of the details of the trip however, the lighthouse keeper, his wife and their assistant made sure we observed all of the rules for observing the nesting bird colony on the Island and provided us with a

breakdown of the birds they had seen over the years working there. Our professor, the spitting image of Elmer Fund of Bugs Bunny fame provided some humor as he stumbled around the Island violating most of the rules by stepping off the walkways to observe things close up. He managed not to destroy anything in his enthusiasm. One of the other memories is the lunch that the lighthouse keepers' wife served us. For \$1.00, we got a bowl of fish chowder, a fresh baked roll and a slice of pie. The fish chowder was a permanent fixture on the stove always kept at the ready with the addition of new stock added to the broth. For hungry college students this was a treat. It has been a long time since I was a college student but I still get a thrill out of meeting some bird or animal up close for the first time or for any other time for that matter.

The spring migration is beginning in the southern latitudes; it is time to go forth in search of your next encounter with that special bird or event.

Bird House Contest

ELIAS volunteers will be at the Long Island Aquarium and Exhibition Center in Riverhead on April 16 from 10 am to 2 pm when The Aquarium announces the start of their Bird House Competition. It is during Spring Break and there are lots of exhibitors and fun for kids.

EARTH DAY
CELEBRATION

**Saturday, April 26
11:00 am – 3:00 pm**

Come and celebrate nature and our lovely planet at the Refuge during this all-day affair! The day will include guided nature walks, live animal presentations, crafts for children, environmental exhibitors, and self-guided kayaking and canoeing on Old Ice Pond.

This free celebration is offered by Quogue Wildlife Refuge and Eastern Long Island Audubon Society.

A great day for all ages!

Check website for schedule of events.
No reservations necessary. Rain or shine.

Come to an ELIAS Meeting

Meetings are held at Quogue Wildlife Refuge, 3 Old Country Road in Quogue, NY. All are welcome, there is no charge.

Monday, March 3, beginning at 7:15 pm

ECUADOR

Land of Toucans, Hummingbirds, Parrots, Mot-Mots, Tanagers and other exotic birds!

Matt & Cathy McCluskey

Matt and Cathy will present a digital slide show and tell of their journey to beautiful Ecuador in November 2011.

They will show photos of all the amazing birds, butterflies and other wildlife found in this South American birding hot-spot as they trekked from the highest peaks of the Andes Mountains to the lowlands of the Amazon Basin



Monday, April 7, beginning at 7:15 pm

Long Island Aquarium Comes to Quogue Wildlife

The Long Island Aquarium and Exhibition Center will be visiting with ELIAS and bringing along a few friends. An educator from the aquarium will speak about sea shore animals, marine habitats and sea faring birds, however they will also have sea shore animals on hand for members to actually touch. Spend some time learning about the creatures who frequent our local waters and of course talk about birds found on exhibit at the aquarium.

We will start this program before the meeting in case you want to bring the kids. (Over 10, please).

Robert T. Carasiti, is the Director of Education, Long Island Aquarium & Exhibition Center

Future Programs to watch for

Plans are in the works for a joint program with Quogue Wildlife Refuge on June 2 about the Restoration of Shinnecock Bay. On June 7th we have scheduled a walk in conjunction with the South Fork Natural History Museum (SoFo). We will explore their field looking for the Birds of the Meadow and Woods with Eric Salzman.

John McNeil is working on walks for May. And you know who should be coming in May, **WARBLERS!**

Let's Go Birding!

Saturday, March 1, 2014 @ 9am

Smith Point County Park

Leader: MaryLaura Lamont

Park your car at the western end of the *Worlds Largest Parking Lot* and meet the group at the Ranger Station/Smith Point Visitor Center to do some ocean viewing from the decks. Then we will hike out into the Wilderness Area watching for wintering waterbirds in the ocean, birds of prey that might fly by or if we are lucky spot a Snowy Owl sitting in the dunes. This is an exciting time of year to be out on the barrier beach so come on out!

Watch the weather and wear appropriate outerwear and don't forget your binoculars and scopes. For more details, contact MaryLaura at: 631-399-2030.

Saturday, March 8th, 2014 @ 9:00am

Wintering Waterfowl Around the Patchogue Lakes

Leader: John McNeil

We are going to try this bird walk again, maybe mother nature will be kind to us.

This half-day trip will explore the lakes around Patchogue, We hope to see Ring-neck Duck, American Widgeon, Lesser Scaup, Pintail and Ruddy Duck just to name a few. We will be looking for an Eurasian Widgeon who has made an appearance every year to delight us all. Also, if we are lucky; maybe a Tufted Duck will make a reappearance. If time permits will also scope out a few other ponds along the south shore ending up in Sayville.

Meet at 9 am in front of the Swan Lake Clubhouse. It is on the east side of Swan Lake on Lake Drive in East Patchogue, a short distance north of Montauk Highway. Contact John for trip details at 631.281.2623 or on the day of the trip, on his cell phone: 631.219.8947, birdwchr@gmail.com.

Saturday April 12th @ 8:30am

North Fork Preserve Walk

Leader: MaryLaura Lamont

The North Fork Preserve is a newly acquired Suffolk County parcel on Sound Ave. in the Town of Riverhead. It is one of the largest intact swamp forests left on Long Island. It's extensive wetlands run throughout the woods and fields making it an excellent natural area. Come prepared for 3 miles of walking on the trails. Park on north-side of Sound Ave. at the Preserve's old Christmas Tree farm. Go east from the small sign and look for a small building with a parking lot in front.

For more details, contact MaryLaura at 631-722-5542.

CONSERVATION COLUMN

Help Your Pet Go Green!

“Nobody can do everything but everyone can do something”

Beth Gustin

No, I don't mean dye her fur for the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Many of us try to reduce our impact on the environment and we can help our pets achieve earth-friendly status too!

Feed your pet natural or organic food and treats. Committing to organic food can be expensive, so at least try to stick to organic treats. Some dogs love veggies so give baby carrots, broccoli florets, and squash to your pooch as treats.

Use only natural or organic pet shampoo. It's better not to have unnecessary chemicals on your pooch and eventually down the drain.

Purchase eco-friendly pet supplies like hemp collars and leashes or pet beds made of organic cotton and recycled plastic bottles.

Keep cats inside and dogs on leashes! Songbirds and other wildlife have a hard enough time surviving hawks, foxes and other predators. They shouldn't have to evade our domesticated predators too.

Adopt your pets from a shelter. Each dog and cat on the planet has a carbon paw print. Why add to the demand for resources by purchasing a pet when there are lots of great pets in shelters that need homes? And be sure to spay or neuter your pet!

Think twice before you buy toys and other unnecessary "stuff" for your pet. Consider all of the resources that go into manufacturing and shipping these things, most of which will just eventually end up in a landfill. Cats love "toys" like paper bags and tin foil balls on string just as much as fake \$10 furry mice. Give your dog a tennis ball or other used balls that the kids don't play with anymore instead of a new ball or squeaky toy.

Grow organic catnip for your cat.

Clean up after your dog using biodegradable bags.

Don't use clumping clay cat litter. The clay used for litter is strip-mined, which is extremely harmful to the environment.

Donate unwanted towels and blankets to a local animal shelter.

Properly dispose of unused pet medications. Don't flush them – ask your pet's veterinarian if they accept unused meds for proper disposal.

You can find lots of resources for environmentally friendly pet products online – just Google *eco-friendly pet products*. Remember that these things that benefit the environment are also better for the pets that we love so much!

Winter Waterfowl Count Smith Point to Shinnecock

Jay Kuhlman

I just finished tabulating the results of the Winter Waterfowl Count done January 18. There were 31 kinds of waterfowl seen. The area covered was from Smith Point to the Shinnecock Canal south of Montauk Highway. Seven people went out on a cold but decent day. John McNeil, Andy Murphy, Christine Tylee, Steve Biasetti, Kevin Nolan, Dick Belanger and myself. Among the unusual birds were a King Eider, Red-necked Grebe, Redheads, and Common Merganser. Large numbers of Brant, 1298, Ruddy Ducks, 568, and Gadwalls 104 were seen. A special view of an adult Merlin with a Sanderling was seen on the dune at Cupsogue.

I want to thank all who came out and did the count. Jay




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An Experience to Remember

Hannah Miranda

I was lucky enough to participate in my first Christmas Bird Count in Montauk, NY on December 14, 2013. I am thirteen years old, and the youngest person ever to be included in the Montauk Count. This past year, my dad suggested that I look into it since I am very interested in birds. Excited by this idea, I found this year's Montauk count compilers in "The Osprey," and emailed them. They acquainted us with Vicki Bustamante, our birding partner for the day. When the day of the Bird Count came, we bundled up and drove to Vicki's house to start birding. It was chilly outside and the snow and wind ceased to stop throughout our walk. We started the count by walking trails along the Oyster Pond Area. All morning, we traversed the woods, counting as we went. Our best bird so far was an American Woodcock. Then we went back to Vicki's house to take a break for lunch. I got to meet all the North Fork birders with whom we exchanged results, while we ate home made lasagna and warmed up. In the afternoon, we went to Big Reed Pond and scored the only Virginia Rail in the Count before we checked for Snowy Owls at Gin Beach to end the day. All in all, it was a successful day, despite the weather.

I would say that participating in this year's Christmas Bird Count helped me grow in new ways as a birder. Throughout the day, I was able to see many new birds, and learned new things about the ones that I had seen before. Since birds were scarce, we never took any for granted. In addition, I gained some more experience and am now confident about joining in on other bird walks or counts. I look forward to participating in more programs such as these. I also made new connections with people who like the same things that I do. All of the people I met were very supportive and taught me much of their knowledge. I was even invited to join them in some of the programs that they were aware of. I learned so many things, such as how to use a spotting scope, distinguish similar looking birds from each other, identify birds based on specific characteristics, and how to bird by ear. In one

short day, I learned and saw so much.

I am so thankful that I was able to be a part of this year's bird count. If you are a young birder, I can wholeheartedly recommend participating in bird walks or counts near you. It gives you the opportunity to do what you love, while contributing to science too! The connections are valuable and the people are so supportive. It is an experience like no other. Thank you to all the people who made my day so special!



Mute Swans, *continued from page 1*

has charged kayaks, foxes, and other interlopers that get too close to the young. As in so many human families, when the grayish babies finally get as big as mom and pop and molt into their adult white feathered plumages, the parents kick them out, the way some human parents have to do when their kids have dropped out of college and come back to live at home in their post-teens. In other words, a Swan family is not so different than a modern human family and that is one of the reasons we tend to like them, even identify with them.

The two American swans, the Trumpeter and the Tundra Swan have straight necks. It is the Mute Swan's graceful sigmoid neck and elegant form that inspired Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* ballet. The Greek myth of Leda and the Swan inspired Leonardo da Vinci's painting and a Yeats' poem of the same name. Who can forget the childhood favorite, *The Ugly Duckling* in which the so-called duckling baby grows up to become a beautiful swan.

To this naturalist, Mute Swans are beautiful and loveable, but the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has a different opinion. It characterizes them as non-native and a menace. Several other state fish and game departments do too, and they want to remove them from our side of the planet. Apparently, they intimidate other species of waterfowl and remove too much aquatic vegetation. But, I would think that if they are a menace there would be lots and lots

Riverhead Farmers Market

Beth Gustin

Have you been wondering where you can find local products like honey, eggs, wine, beer, cheese, pork, jelly, and alpaca yarn this winter? Well, check out the indoor Riverhead Farmers' Market! It is open on Saturdays from 11 am until 3 pm at 117 East Main Street in Riverhead, in the old Swezey's building now until May 17. But get there early – it has been so popular in its first weeks that many of the vendors sell out early!

of them. Yet a recent state census says there are little over 2,000 of them.

Last month's South Fork waterfowl census counted more than a hundred between Shinnecock Inlet and Montauk Point. Part of that count centered around the East Hampton, Sagaponack and Bridgehampton Ponds in which 23 Mute Swans, 8,689 Canada Geese, 159 Black Ducks and 253 Mallards were recorded. The Montauk Christmas Bird Count tallied 51, while tallying 796 Canada Geese, 141 Mallards and 587 Black Duck. The Orient Christmas Bird Count counted 23 Mute Swans, 1,438 Canada Geese, 895 Black Ducks and 348 Mallards. The Black Duck have been portrayed as one of the species pushed out by the Mute Swan. This winter's count figures soundly belie that notion.

So, there you have it. Yes, Mute Swans aren't native in the true sense of the word. They are said to be naturalized. The state wants to off them, even the New York State Association of Audubon chapters wants to off them. Come to think of it, most American humans came from Europe originally. We also are "naturalized". Fortunately, the Amerindians, the true American natives, have not moved to deport us. *What do the readers think? Thumbs-up or thumbs-down?*

larrypenny9@gmail.com

The opinion expressed here does not represent the position that may be taken by this chapter, or National or NYS Audubon, but is the opinion of Mr. Penny.



Psst! Wanna see a Great Gray Owl?

Eileen Schwinn

A long winter weekend trip to Sax-Zim Bog, north of Duluth, MN, was my most recent vacation destination. I traveled with some wonderful folks from the Saw Mill River Audubon, and two local guides. While we probably have had more snow here on Long Island this winter, the negative 20 degree temperature

took a bit of getting used to. But that low number – and a couple inches of fresh snow – didn't stop the birds. We were treated to multiple viewings of each of these species. Hard to say my favorite bird, but that Great Gray Owl – seen in a snow storm – was breathtaking!

It's definitely worth the trip – but be sure to pack your woolies!"



A few highlights: clockwise, a Hawk Owl, a Great Gray Owl, a Gray Jay, an Evening Grosbeak, a Pine Grosbeak, and a Snowy Owl.



PHOTOS BY EILEEN SCHWINN

First Snow

Paul Stoutenbergh

A winter storm was rumored long, the first month of the year.
The earth had turned to solid rock.
The stage was set for Storm King's play.
The backdrop of gray is set for winter sky
The might of winter's grip was felt.
Would storm unfold by day or night?
Would the world be ready for it to play?

The creatures of the wood could tell.
The squirrel had done its very best to hide.
The mouse's chamber would hold him there.
The rabbit to the thorny briar took and then there was a flake did break.
One lone messenger of things to come announcing the start of a day long bout.

By breakfast time it was all white, the pasture lot was cast in new, the fence the end of all our world.
No wind, no sun, the snow just fell, a world of white no man could make and on my roof a snow limb falls.
Inside the wood stove sent its heat. I watched the play of white unfold the rough, the shabby in marble white.

Nothing is the same out there. only my room remains.
In here it's still and cluttered up, no smooth rounded white to snow.
Noontime passed and still it snowed, the soup is taken from the blackened pot to warm the innards and the heart.
The vented door, the red coals glow.
Outside the white cold covers all.
The world I know is gone, but born anew
"Have faith" the inner voice does say—
"no storm has lasted untold time,"
and yet it snows and whiter gets.

Paul Stoutenbergh is a Southold resident, he was one of the first environmentalists on the North Fork and founded the North Fork Environmental Council. He taught Industrial Arts for many years at Greenport High School and wrote regular newspaper columns for *Suffolk Life* and *Southampton News* focusing on nature and environmental topics.

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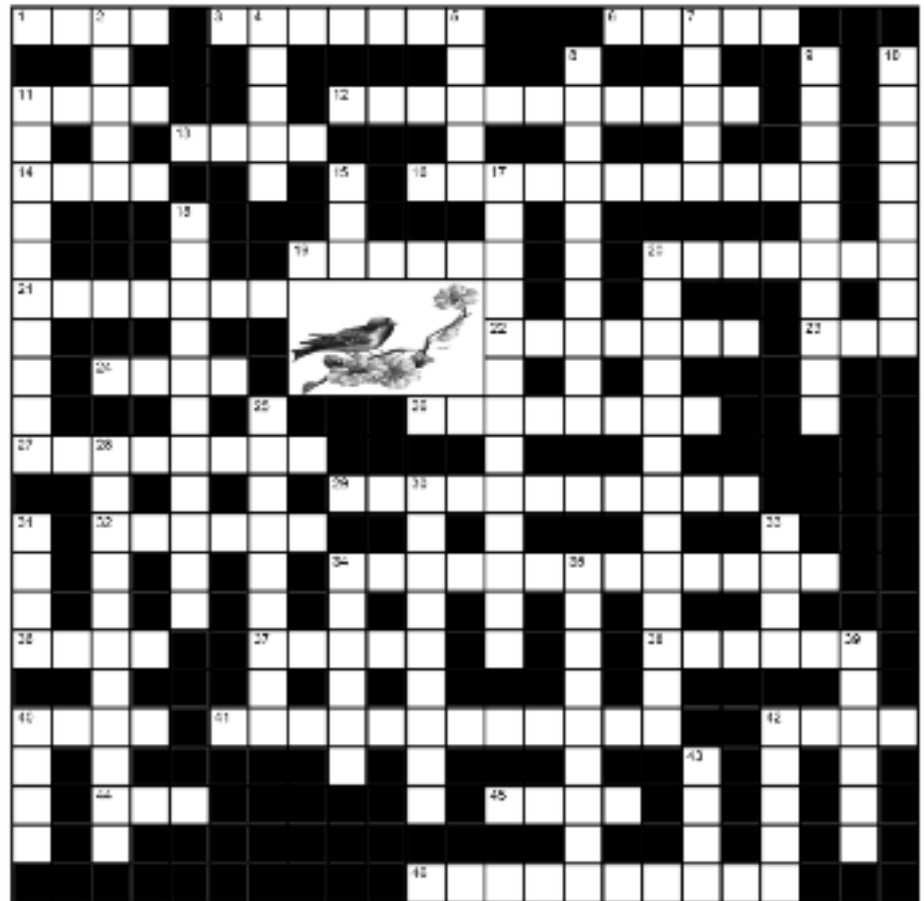


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Answers to last issue's Jan/Feb 2014 puzzle
Stay Warm ... by Tom Moran



Spring Sightings and Places Tom Moran



Across

- 1 Mourning _____
- 3 Snow _____
- 6 _____ Preserve in Wading River
- 11 New _____, sounds so nice, they named it twice
- 12 Northern _____
- 13 _____ Swallow
- 14 Crazy as a _____
- 16 _____ Merganser
- 19 Ruffed _____
- 20 Cedar _____
- 21 _____ Snipe, maybe at the North Fork Preserve
- 22 _____ Hawk, aka Marsh Hawk
- 23 _____ (abbr.) careful if you bird at 60 mph!
- 24 _____ Warbler
- 26 Get close to this ground nesting birds nest and you may be treated to a broken wing feint
- 27 Northern _____, circle feeding is entertaining to watch
- 29 Blue-gray _____
- 32 A vibrant shade of blue, from the plant of the same name, also a bunting
- 34 _____ Kinglet
- 36 _____ Swan, DEC plans to cull this decorative bird
- 37 _____ Owl, an irruption this year led to sightings as far south as Florida
- 38 _____ Titmouse
- 40 _____ Duck
- 41 Body of water that is easier to check now that DEC built a path from Grumman Blvd. - 2 words
- 42 _____ Tower, abbr, good place to check the ocean at Smith Point
- 44 _____ York, home to Central Park
- 45 _____ Catbird
- 46 _____ Duck appropriately named for its tail

Down

- 2 Blue-headed _____
- 4 _____ Yaphank Lake, DEC attempted to clean up the invasive weed Cabomba here
- 4 Pied-billed _____
- 8 _____ Owl
- 9 _____ Grebe, in other words a two colored beak
- 10 _____ Beach, maybe sight an American Oyster-catcher
- 11 Tough to tell: greater or lesser
- 15 Wertheim _____, (abbr.) bisected by the Carmans River
- 17 _____ in Mattituck, 3 words
- 18 _____ Cowbird
- 20 _____ Sparrow, *Oh Canada, Canada, Canada*
- 25 The Common can still be seen on salt water off both Points
- 28 One where you can still see 25 down, 2 words
- 30 _____ Park, a birding hotspot in Queens, 2 words
- 31 Hallockville Museum _____, good birding in the field and woods beyond
- 33 _____ End, Jones Beach, a Northern Shrike visited this winter
- 34 _____ Ibis
- 35 Great _____, look for the white flank patch in breeding season
- 39 Medium sized shorebird with the tip of its bill downcurved
- 40 Carolina, House, Marsh, Sedge, Winter
- 42 _____ Sparrow, maybe at Rocky Pt DEC
- 43 Blue-winged _____, maybe at Hempstead Lake SP

A Week of Adventure in Panama

Beth Gustin

I recently spent a week in mid- January exploring Panama with my sister and mom. We started in Panama City where we spent a day hiking in Soberania National Park (and the famous Pipeline Road). We also took a boat ride on the Panama Canal, zipping past massive container ships and exploring quiet coves where we saw snail kites and Capuchin monkeys.

The next three days were spent at Finca Lerida, a coffee plantation, boutique hotel and birder's paradise in the western town of Boquete. Although we searched unsuccessfully for the Resplendent Quetzal, we were rewarded with the Three-wattled Bellbird- a strange and gorgeous bird! A day trip through the beautiful Panama countryside brought us to the western entrance of La Amistad International Park for a day of hiking and birding. Our time in Boquete ended with a huge adrenaline rush- a zip-line tour through the rainforest canopy- which, by the way, was my mom's idea!

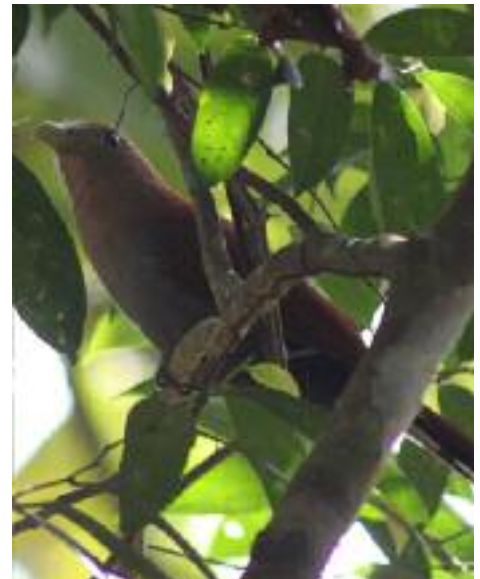
After Boquete we headed across the Continental divide to Bocas del Toro on Isla Colon. Here we spent a day snorkeling, exploring beautiful Red Frog Beach, and swimming in the Caribbean Sea.

Returning to Panama City, we did a half-day tour at the Miraflores Locks at the Panama Canal. On our last morning in Panama, I spent two hours in a wonderful urban park- Parque Nacional Metropolitano. In the small amount of time I spent here I had some great sightings including the Blue-crowned Motmot and a Common Potoo taking a siesta.

Although we had a wonderful time and saw lot of great birds, we left feeling there is so much we didn't see – a trip back to Panama, with its natural beauty and friendly people, could be in order!



Beth with her mother and sister on the famous Pipeline Road



The Collard Redstart, left and the Squirrel Cuckoo, right. Below, platform feeder, Panama style.





An immature Snail Kite looks for dinner. Top right, Beth outside the Parque Natural. Right, a Common Potoo, disguised as a branch tries to avoid detection. Below, a Magnificent Hummingbird and a Capuchin Monkey.



The 66th New York State Ornithological Association Annual Meeting

Part 2

Bob Adamo

This is the second half of the report about the NYASOA meeting. The first half of the report appeared in the Jan./Feb issue.

After lunch on Saturday, dual itineraries were offered, consisting of four "Presentations", and six "Paper Sessions", with both slates causing you, once again, to choose between concurrent talks.

The "Presentations" were:

- 1) The Hempstead Plains: Past, Present, and Future; Betsy Gulotta, Friends of Hempstead plains at Nassau County Community College.
- 2) An introduction to the Long Island Pine Barrens; John Turner, author of *Exploring the Other Island: A Seasonal Guide to Nature on Long Island*.
- 3) Waterbirds of the New York Harbor 1982 – 2013: Breeding Ecology and Population Trends; Susan Elbin, Director of Conservation and Science, NY Audubon.
- 4) Enjoying Birds Through Poetry; Maxwell Wheat Jr., First Poet Laureate, Nassau County, New York, 2007–09.

The "Paper Sessions" were:

- 1) Shorebirds and Horseshoe Crabs: Five Years of Monitoring in Jamaica Bay; Debra Kriensky, Columbia University, Susan Elbin & John Rowden, New York City Audubon.
- 2) Loon Conservation and the BP Oil Spill; Michael Ivkov, Trinity School, NY City.
- 3) Duration of Stop-Over in Relation to Date of Arrival in Vagrant Western Kingbirds: Is Vagrancy Misoriented Migration, Long-distance Dispersal, or Sometimes One and Sometimes the Other?, Lucinda Zawadski, College of Staten Island.
- 4) Migration Plasticity as an Adaptation to Climate Change: Winter Range Expansions in Half-hardy Neotropical Migrant Landbirds in the Northeastern United States; Juliette Goulet, College of Staten Island/ CUNY Graduate Center.
- 5) The Chemistry of Navigation in Birds; Alexander M. Gottdiener, The Browning School.

- 6) Interspecific Information Use in Army - ant Following Birds: Hope Batcheller, Cornell University

I chose the "sessions", and while learning from all of the above, I especially appreciated Hope Batcheller's talk, primarily for its content, but also for knowing of Hope's background with the NYSYBC.

The "sessions" were followed by a report on the New York State Young Birders Club, given by its NYSOA liaison, Carena Pooth. The club celebrated its Fifth official anniversary this past fall, while growing to 40 youth members, 34 supporting adults, and 20 partner clubs – these figures are increases from 36/22/18 a year ago.

The banquet dinner was excellent. The food was first-rate, with the many raffle prizes making for many happy members, and guests.

The Lillian C. Stoner Award was given to three students this year. Ms. Stoner, a founding member of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, donated money to establish a fund to enable a deserving student(s) to attend the NYSOA meeting each year. Those selected were:

- 1) Nathaniel Hernandez – Cornell University undergrad, nominated by the NYSYBC.
- 2) Courtney Moore – High School Sophomore, Vestal N.Y., nominated by the Naturalist's Club of Broome County.
- 3) Zachariah Smart – High School Senior, Stamford, Ct., nominated by the NYSYBC.

The John J. Elliot Award for the best *Kingbird* article in 2013, was given to Joseph Cherek for "Changes in habitat and breeding birds in a Pitch Pine Oak Heath Rocky Summit Community at the Mohunk Preserve, Ulster County, N.Y."

Certificates of Appreciation were given to three individuals for their hospitality and efforts to help the birding community, since our last annual meeting:

- 1) Nancy & Albert Loomis in appreciation of their graciousness in hosting a Gray-crowned Rosy Finch, and allowing birders to visit their yard in Boonville, N.Y.

- 2) Ralph Tabor, "Mayor" of the Shawangunk Grasslands, and caretaker for Short-eared Owls and Northern Harriers.

- 3) Andrew Baksh, in appreciation of his untiring efforts to protect and promote informed management of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge.

The evenings festivities ended with the dynamic James Currie, and his talk/slide show entitled "Not your Grandmother's Audubon". This global travelogue of wildlife filming for his production company (Birding Adventure TV) was most enjoyable. The highly descriptive telling of his close encounter with a few lions in Africa was, for many, the highlight of the program.

On Sunday morning there were six field trips offered – two new locations, plus four repeated from Saturday. Three new leaders were also utilized. The additions were:

- 1) East End: Winging it, a rarity search, starting in Hampton Bays, led by Seth Ausubel.
- 2) Photography Workshop in Point Lookout, led by Lloyd Spitalnick.
- 3) Kissena Park field trip, Sunday's new leader, Jeff Ritter

By any standard, the 66th NYSOA Annual Dinner was a success!

The following are additions that should have been included in part one as part of the business meeting. The current status of NYSOA's two categories of memberships: "Annual" now stands 519, with a reduction of nine from 2013, last year's "Lifetime" number was reduced by 1 to 48, when Bob Long, a very active, long-time member from the Syracuse area passed away.

Bob Adamo is the ELIAS representative at the NYSOA meeting.

Feeder Survey for March and April

John McNeil

The Survey will be conducted the first full week of the month starting on Sunday and ending the following Sunday. This survey takes place from October to June.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FEEDER SURVEY

- Define an area containing feeders that you can see all at once from a window. The area should be one you glance at frequently during your daily routine.
- Don't include birds seen off premises.
- Predators perching in or swooping through the count area (not just flying over) may be counted if you feel that they were attracted by the birds at the feeder.
- Record the largest number of each species that you see in your count area during the eight-day count period.
- Do not add counts from previous days together. Be specific with the species name, e.g. we can't use just the name Sparrow, Blackbird or Gull.
- At the end of the count period, record your final tallies and send in the form immediately.

Personal observations and comments are welcome as are suggestions to improve the surveys and reports.

Please send your report to:

John McNeil
168 Lexington Rd
Shirley NY 11967-3212

Survey Dates:

Sun., March 2 to Sun., March 8

Name _____
Address _____

Town _____
Phone _____

- _____ Mourning Dove
- _____ Northern Cardinal
- _____ Blue Jay
- _____ House Finch
- _____ Black-capped Chickadee
- _____ Tufted Titmouse
- _____ Downy Woodpecker
- _____ White-throated Sparrow
- _____ Dark-eyed Junco
- _____ House Sparrow
- _____ White-breasted Nuthatch
- _____ Song Sparrow
- _____ Red-bellied Woodpecker
- _____ American Crow
- _____ European Starling
- _____ Common Grackle
- _____ Carolina Wren
- _____ Northern Mockingbird
- _____ American Goldfinch
- _____ Red-winged Blackbird
- _____ Hairy Woodpecker
- _____ Common Flicker
- _____ Rufous-sided Towhee
- _____ American Robin
- _____ Brown-headed Cowbird
- _____ Sharp-shinned Hawk
- _____ Rock Dove (pigeon)
- _____ Gray Catbird
- _____ Yellow-rumped Warbler
- _____ Red-breasted Nuthatch
- _____ Other _____

Survey Dates:

Sun., April 2 to Sun., April 8

Name _____
Address _____

Town _____
Phone _____

- _____ Mourning Dove
- _____ Northern Cardinal
- _____ Blue Jay
- _____ House Finch
- _____ Black-capped Chickadee
- _____ Tufted Titmouse
- _____ Downy Woodpecker
- _____ White-throated Sparrow
- _____ Dark-eyed Junco
- _____ House Sparrow
- _____ White-breasted Nuthatch
- _____ Song Sparrow
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- _____ Red-winged Blackbird
- _____ Hairy Woodpecker
- _____ Common Flicker
- _____ Rufous-sided Towhee
- _____ American Robin
- _____ Brown-headed Cowbird
- _____ Sharp-shinned Hawk
- _____ Rock Dove (pigeon)
- _____ Gray Catbird
- _____ Yellow-rumped Warbler
- _____ Red-breasted Nuthatch
- _____ Other _____



Blue Jays love peanuts.

SALLY NEWBERT



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Fax: (631) 727-2199

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The **OSPREY**

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