



THE URBAN AUDUBON

Saltmarsh Loss and Restoration

Feathered Friends: A New Afterschool Program

Birding by Subway: Are You Kidding?

Horseshoe Crab Festival



NYC AUDUBON

MISSION & VISION

Mission: NYC Audubon is a grassroots community that works for the protection of wild birds and habitat in the five boroughs, improving the quality of life for all New Yorkers.

Vision: NYC Audubon envisions a day when birds and people in the five boroughs enjoy a healthy, livable habitat.

THE URBAN AUDUBON

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March marks the very beginning of spring migration. Traditionally, this is a time of great excitement and anticipation for us nature lovers: Snow melts, flowers bloom, and of course, skies fill with migrating birds. This spring, however, ushers in an ominous mood as we adjust to a new administration in Washington that does not seem to understand the value, either intrinsic or economic, of a healthy environment.

We face the imminent threat that new federal policies will roll back many of the gains that those of us at NYC Audubon have made over the years to preserve the environment and make New York City habitats more wildlife-friendly. Through changes in political appointments, regulatory policies, and federal funding, many of the programs that have been a mainstay for preserving and protecting wildlife around New York City—and throughout the country—could be severely undermined.

NYC Audubon is not a lobbying body. But we do have a voice, and as citizens we can help move the dial. For example, by contacting the offices of our elected representatives, we can make our passions known. Phoning is thought to be more effective than letter writing in this age of robo-letters. Better yet is to show up in person at any sort of town hall or public meeting. It might seem old-fashioned, but in fact, this is a highly effective method.

But it's not always about legislation. As our Executive Director Kathryn Heintz says, there's never going to be legislation passed that prohibits the use of glass windows in buildings. But by educating and influencing architects and developers, we can promote environmentally friendly alternatives, like the use of bird-safe glass. And by encouraging building managers to turn off their lights from midnight to dawn during peak bird migration times (following our Lights Out New York Program) we can save tens of thousands of birds every year.

Perhaps most important, we must promote the message that taking care of the environment and working to mitigate climate change are economically prudent moves. As a businessman, our president would be well advised to run the numbers and realize the cost/benefits of preserving the environment sooner rather than later. Rapid warming of the earth will surely lead to massive refugee influx, agricultural disasters, and economic turmoil around the world.

The good news is that change is built into our political system. This time it may hurt us, but it has worked in our favor in the past—and it will again in the future. As we delight in spring migration, we must do everything in our power to fight for the health of the planet. Indeed, the only way to continue America's greatness is to work to make our environment a livable and sustainable habitat for all of its living creatures.

TAKE ACTION!

RECEIVE NYC AUDUBON

ACTION ALERT EMAILS

Stay current on pressing

environmental issues that require immediate action. Enroll to receive

environmental action alerts from

NYC Audubon by sending your

email to [communications@](mailto:communications@nycaudubon.org)

[nycaudubon.org](mailto:communications@nycaudubon.org).

ANNUAL REPORT 2016 AVAILABLE ONLINE ON MARCH 3

NYC Audubon's Annual Report 2016 will be available March 3 on our website at www.nycaudubon.org/annual-report. To request a print copy, contact the office at 212-691-7483.

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©Don Riepe



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BE BOLD

Kathryn Heintz

It is late February as we go to press on our spring issue. We find the governance of our nation in flux. We are adapting and forming an action-based response. Environmental causes—including bird conservation and habitat protection—are among the targets of the new administration, along with the arts, education, liberty, and many hallmarks of humanity. Science is under siege, as is truth itself.

New York City Audubon will continue its work, which is now at great risk. So much has been accomplished, and we have momentum. We run a thrifty operation and will persevere. It will take courage and fortitude. Now is not the moment to be silent. We ask that our members stay informed on policy issues, be vigilant, and speak up.

We are a small but nimble organization and can share environmental action alerts quickly. Be sure your email is enrolled to receive our *eGret* email newsletter. Email is the most rapid and cost-effective way for us to reach you with Audubon action alerts. Please also consider following like-minded environmental advocacy organizations such as Natural Resources Defense Council, The Sierra Club, The Nature Conservancy, League of Conservation Voters, American Bird Conservancy, and Environmental Defense Fund. We are all in this together.

Financial support is always welcome; your time and engagement in the environmental cause are needed most.

REMEMBERING MARY TYLER MOORE



Mary Tyler Moore with
Former Executive Director
E.J. McAdams

New York City Audubon mourns the loss of American icon Mary Tyler Moore, who passed away in January. The legendary television actress and producer was also renowned for her love and advocacy for animals. Through humor, she transformed our society's perspectives on women, especially professional women. With passion, she changed our city's approach to raptors, especially a certain red-tailed hawk. Mary Tyler Moore involved herself personally and publicly in the cause of her upstairs neighbor Pale Male and supported New York City Audubon when he and we needed her influential voice most. She made a difference.

In the photo above, Mary Tyler Moore, honored at the 2005 Fall Roost for her efforts on behalf of Pale Male and his mate Lola, is pictured with then-Executive Director E.J. McAdams. She remained a member of New York City Audubon's Advisory Council for the next 10 years.

VOLUNTEER!

Work in NYC Audubon's friendly office or in the field and make a difference for the City's wildlife. There are many ways to help. If interested in any of the projects listed below, please contact us at volunteer@nycaudubon.org. For information on spring volunteer events such as beach clean-ups and tree plantings, visit us at www.nycaudubon.org/volunteer-events.

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

Help with mailings, filing, and general office work. Computer skills and birding knowledge are not required. If you do have computer and/or Excel skills, however, we can always use help with conservation and education projects.

THE URBAN AUDUBON

Join the newsletter committee and contribute your writing skills to four seasonal issues. Meetings are bi-monthly in the early evening.

INJURED BIRD TRIAGE

During spring and fall migration, our office is deluged with reports of injured and/or baby birds. Help us by answering the phone, assessing what help is needed, and, if appropriate, arranging transport to a rehabilitator.

CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Become a citizen scientist and help conduct conservation research; read below about the various ways to get involved. All orientations are held at our office unless otherwise noted and require registration in advance.

Bird Transporters: We often receive calls from individuals who have found injured birds but are unable to transport them to a rehabilitator. We need caring volunteers to transport these birds to licensed wildlife rehabilitators in the area.

Project Safe Flight: Spring is here, and migrants confront many hazards as they migrate through New

York City. Volunteers are needed to monitor designated buildings for bird collisions, rescue injured birds, and record any casualties. Orientations will be held Monday, March 20, and Thursday, March 23, 6-7pm.

Horseshoe Crab Monitoring: Count horseshoe crabs, an important food source for migratory shorebirds in Jamaica Bay. Orientations will be held Thursdays, April 13 and 20, 6-7pm.

Harbor Herons Foraging Study: Observe herons and egrets as they forage in New York City waterways. An orientation will be held Monday, May 1, 6-7pm.



As we go to press, final results from the 117th Audubon Christmas Bird Count are still trickling in. NYC Audubon is responsible for compiling count numbers in the New Jersey Lower Hudson (NJLH) region, a 15-mile-diameter count circle that includes Manhattan, the Meadowlands in New Jersey, and parts of Queens such as Astoria and Long Island City. The counts for this region took place on December 18, and, as always, we had some exciting birds pop up: an American wigeon and an Iceland gull in Central Park's Reservoir, a Lincoln's sparrow in Bryant Park, an ovenbird and an orange-crowned warbler in Inwood Hill Park, and a glaucous gull and a seaside sparrow in New Jersey.

Of the 109 species counted in NJLH that day, 34 were found exclusively in New Jersey, including wild turkey, American woodcock, merlin, and common goldeneye. Count-week birds (species missed on the count day but seen in the three days before and after the count) included short-eared owl, red-throated loon, black-throated blue warbler, and greater white-fronted goose. Overall, we had a great count this year, with 31,556 birds found in NJLH. You can find results from other counts, including those that took place in Queens, Brooklyn, Staten Island, and the Bronx, by visiting netapp.audubon.org/CBCObservation.

Our work with Waterbirds of New York Harbor continues to bear fruit. During the 2016 field season our conservation team banded young-of-the-year shorebirds, seabirds, and wading birds. We received fall and winter re-sighting information on semipalmated sandpipers, black skimmers, American oystercatchers, and double-crested cormorants, learning that many of our birds spend the winter in Florida. In August we deployed very small radio transmitters (nanotags) on five semipalmated sandpipers; after retrieving the data in December, we now know that one of our sandpipers left Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge's East Pond after the August 18 Shorebird Festival, flew down the coast to the Wetlands Institute in Stone Harbor, NJ, then reversed course on August



Black-throated Blue Warbler

23 to fly up to Long Island's Fire Island for the end of the month before migrating south. Edward, the great egret we had tagged with an SMS transmitter in 2015, came back to Hoffman Island to breed in 2016. As of this writing, he is in Ridgeland, SC, just north of Hilton Head Island. We look forward to learning more details about local and long distance movement of birds from NYC through these new banding technologies.

This past September, NYC Audubon organized its second NYC Shorebird Blitz. Throughout the day, we asked citizen scientists in all five boroughs to go out and count anywhere there might be shorebirds. While regular surveys of shorebird hotspots can give us an idea of the maximum numbers of each species coming through our area, a one-day survey blitz allows us to assess the total number of shorebirds using our City at any one time. With the help of 23 volunteers, we covered 35 locations throughout the 5 boroughs, finding 3,161 shorebirds of 17 different species during this 24-hour period. Semipalmated sandpiper was the most abundant shorebird by far, with 1,330 individuals city-wide. Most of these shorebirds were at the East Pond of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, which not surprisingly was the site with the highest concentration of shorebirds. Some exciting sightings were pectoral sandpipers, also at the East Pond, and a long-billed dowitcher at Richmond Creek in Staten Island. American oystercatchers were out in force, with 439 birds counted throughout the City—121 of them roosting in Breezy Point. We will be conducting a third

NYC Shorebird Blitz on May 21. See page 20 for information on how you can participate.

In December we held our 12th annual meeting of the Harbor Herons and Waterbirds of the Greater NY/NJ Harbor Working Group, bringing together professional scientists and managers from governmental agencies, nonprofits, and academia working in the region to conserve and protect waterbirds and their habitats. The cornerstone of the meeting was the Harbor Herons Nesting Survey results presented by NYC Audubon Research Assistant Tod Winston. (You can find the Survey results in the Summer 2016 issue of *The Urban Audubon*). By sharing data with other organizations and agencies represented at the meeting, we were able to combine our beach-nesting waterbird numbers for all NYC beaches, excluding marsh islands: 72 pairs of American oystercatchers, 46 pairs of piping plover, 120 pairs of black skimmers, and more than 1,600 pairs of common and least terns nested on our City beaches this year.

Much of our work for Project Safe Flight is up in the air—on rooftops. Perched on the Durst Organization's One Bryant Park, our high-tech cameras are ready to collect data this spring on the effect of artificial light quality on migratory birds as they move through the night skies of Manhattan. This partnership project with New York University's Center for Urban Science and Progress is funded by the Leon Levy Foundation. Our work on the Jacob K. Javits Center green roof and the new Kingsland Wildflowers Roof in Greenpoint will continue as soon as spring approaches.

Our advocacy hats are always on. We are anxiously awaiting completion of the National Park Service's restoration efforts at Jamaica Bay's West Pond to return it to a much-needed freshwater source for the region. Wind energy is better than "clean coal," but we will remain vigilant on how offshore windfarm proposals could negatively affect wildlife. We staunchly support the Endangered Species Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Please be ready to join us as we scrutinize any proposed legislation that could harm wild birds and their habitat in New York City.

SALTMARSH LOSS AND RESTORATION IN JAMAICA BAY

©Don Riepe



Aerial Photo of Yellow Bar Hassock, Jamaica Bay

Saltmarshes are one of the most productive ecosystems on the planet, providing food and nutrients to the estuary, ocean, and many species of birds, fish, and marine life. Saltmarshes also protect the mainland as a buffer against coastal storms and flooding. Unfortunately, the vast saltmarshes of the northeastern United States have been eroding at a fairly rapid rate. There are many theories as to why: sea level rise and climate change; nutrient load (nitrogen from wastewater treatment plants); coastal development (channelization, dredging, and filling); herbivory (snow, brant, and Canada geese eating marsh grass); and sediment starvation (sediment getting trapped in dredged channels instead of being deposited in the marshes). In Jamaica Bay, the marshes have been eroding at an astonishing 40 acres per year. In response to this loss, the National Park Service convened a Blue Ribbon Panel in 2001 to assess the situation, with the hope of reaching a better understanding of the causes and finding ways to restore the marshes.

In 2002, a pilot project was undertaken whereby bottom sediment from Jamaica Bay was sprayed in a thin layer over the surface of Big Egg Marsh. Afterward, over 20,000 seedling plugs of *Spartina alterniflora* (saltmarsh cordgrass) were planted on the site with assistance from American Littoral Society volunteers. The next year the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) deposited thousands of cubic yards of clean sand on Elders Point East and hand-planted plugs of native marsh grass. Since then the USACE, along with the National Park Service, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, have completed work at Elders Point West and Yellow Bar Hassock. These projects cost taxpayers many millions of federal dollars.

In order to lessen the costs and involve the local community, the Jamaica Bay EcoWatchers and the American Littoral Society undertook a plan in 2012 to restore two additional marshes, Black Wall and Rulers Bar (30 acres combined), using volunteer support, thus reducing the taxpayer cost by over 65 percent. Volunteers came from many groups, including NYC Audubon, the Church of God, Mitsui & Co., Bloomberg, Tanaka Corporation, and the neighboring Broad Channel community. In the fall the volunteer groups harvested *Spartina* seeds, which were transported to a specialized nursery in southern

Don Riepe

New Jersey to be thrashed and cold-stored in peat plugs for winter. In the spring the plants were trucked back to Broad Channel on Jamaica Bay for planting. A flotilla of boats was organized to bring the plants and hundreds of volunteers out to the two marsh sites for systematic planting. To date, over 250,000 individual plugs of saltmarsh cordgrass have been hand-planted at these sites.

Currently, the sites are being monitored by the National Park Service to assess the rate of native species restoration. The American Littoral Society is planning to undertake another two years of planting to fill in the gaps and ensure the establishment of the native grasses. It is hoped that the USACE and its team of city, state, and federal agencies can continue this restoration initiative to stabilize the rate of marsh erosion, and ultimately find solutions to the problem.

NYC Audubon's role in this effort is being supported by a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Service's Five Star and Urban Waters program and contributing funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, FedEx, and Bank of America. NYC Audubon's conservation and outreach efforts in Jamaica Bay are also generously supported by Investors Bank Foundation, Williams, Patagonia, and ConEd.



Aerial Photo of Elders Point West Marsh



American Littoral Society Volunteers Planting Saltmarsh Cordgrass at Black Wall Marsh

KINGSLAND WILDFLOWERS

EARTH DAY LECTURE AND ROOF TOUR SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 1PM

520 KINGSLAND AVENUE, BROOKLYN, NY 11222



**MY YARD IS "FOR THE BIRDS":
THE THINGS BIRDS LOOK FOR IN URBAN AND
SUBURBAN YARDS, AND WHY THEY NEED TO BE THERE**
by Joyann Cirigliano

Please join us at the Kingsland Wildflowers Roof and Community Space in Greenpoint for a presentation by Joyann Cirigliano, president and Atlantic Flyway projects coordinator at Four Harbors Audubon Society. Learn about the importance of backyard gardens for birds, and the ways in which utilizing native plants in landscape design will attract these feathered friends. The lecture will be followed by a tour of the Kingsland Wildflowers roof. This event is free and open to the public.

UPCOMING KINGSLAND WILDFLOWERS SPRING AND SUMMER PROGRAMS

We are currently finalizing additional spring and summer programming at Kingsland Wildflowers. All upcoming events will be publicized in our *eGret* email newsletter and at www.kingslandwildflowers.com.



Funding provided by the Office of the New York State Attorney General and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation through the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund

BIRDING CEMETERIES IN THE FIVE BOROUGHS: STATEN ISLAND'S MORAVIAN CEMETERY

Mary Jane Kaplan

© François Portmann



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Despite a dark, rain-threatening sky that made spotting somewhat difficult, we saw or heard 25 species in a couple of hours, including rose-breasted grosbeak, red-breasted nuthatch, brown thrasher, downy and hairy woodpeckers, and yellow-bellied sapsucker. (Postings on ebird.org total 143 species for the cemetery.) At the same time, we enjoyed the fall foliage of the cemetery's splendid collection of stately trees.

The cemetery, which dates from 1740, comprises 113 acres of rolling land, with two lakes—which helps explain the Christmas Bird Count of 1922, which included loon, goldeneye, horned grebe, and red-breasted merganser among the 22 species seen, according to a document found by Richard Simpson, cemetery historian and tour leader. From the imposing Hillview Mausoleum, a panoramic

A major advantage of birding in cemeteries is the quiet they offer. In most cases, cemeteries are not found next to major highways, and the birds' voices are not drowned out by the noise from ball games, children at play, or musical performances, as one often finds in city parks.

Quiet did indeed prevail in late September last year when I scouted the Moravian Cemetery on Staten Island with NYC Audubon guide Tod Winston in search of birds.

view extends toward the Atlantic Ocean, framed by Brooklyn and the New Jersey Highlands. The cemetery's position at the eastern edge of the 2,800-acre Staten Island Greenbelt makes it a strong stopover target for migrating birds. Immediately adjacent is High Rock Park, identified on NYC Audubon's website as 190 acres of older second-growth forest, and "a fine place to bird in spring, fall, and winter."

The Moravian Cemetery is a short walk from the Staten Island Railroad's Grant City station, after a 23-minute ride from the St. George Ferry Terminal. Come spring, when migrant birds return and cherry trees, azalea, rhododendron, and mountain laurel are in bloom, the cemetery will be well worth an exploratory visit.



Moravian Cemetery on Staten Island

ASSURE YOUR OWN LEGACY OF PROTECTING BIRDS

There are many ways to play a significant and lasting role in supporting NYC Audubon's mission to protect wild birds and their habitat in the five boroughs of New York City:

- Include New York City Audubon in your Will or Irrevocable Trust. Specify "New York City Audubon Society, 71 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10010" as a beneficiary. You can change your bequest or designation at any time.
- Name "New York City Audubon" as a residual beneficiary, or co-beneficiary, in your Retirement Account, Bank Account, or Insurance Policy. It's very easy! Often it can be done online. Retirement plans include IRAs, 401(k) plans, profit-sharing plans, Keogh plans, and 403(b) plans.
- Have payments from your Retirement Account made directly to New York City Audubon. You must be 70 ½ or older. Payments made this way are not included in your gross income.

The tax benefits of these options can be very attractive, too. Be sure to speak with your financial advisor about any arrangements you make on behalf of New York City Audubon.

To learn more about ways to plan a gift to New York City Audubon, contact Director of Development Kellye Rosenheim at krosenheim@nycaudubon.org or 646-502-9611.

FEATHERED FRIENDS: A NEW AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

Chris Cooper

“Miss Sybil, I think it’s a mourning dove.”

Ethel Mae, all of eight years old, may speak with a soft voice, but when she speaks she tends to get things right. On this brief walk through Van Cortlandt Park, it takes her only a quick study through her binoculars to note the bird’s field marks and describe them to guide Sybil Costello.

“I SEE IT!” another third grader, Jayden, shouts and charges forward—and guide Anders Peltomaa reminds him that this will only make the bird fly away. Jayden expresses frustration with binoculars, but Anders promises him he’ll get the hang of it.

So it goes on a typical afternoon with the first-ever NYC Audubon “Feathered Friends” Student Birding Club. Sybil, Anders, and I recently completed the fall term of this new pilot afterschool program, designed to take interested “alumni” of Audubon New York’s “For The Birds!” school-day education initiative on weekly guided birdwalks in local parks. It’s hoped that in the long run, the program will foster an appreciation of the natural environment and stewardship of wild places. The lessons and birdwalks of For The Birds! are a one-term experience for participants: When they finish that program, the “bird nerds” that it creates have nowhere else to go. Feathered Friends seeks to meet that need with a club that students can return to year after year. For The Birds! hatches the nestlings; Feathered Friends nurtures them until the young naturalists are ready to fledge.

So what have we learned from piloting Feathered Friends with third graders at P.S. 344 AmPark Neighborhood School in the Bronx?

The need is real. These kids had retained a tremendous amount of knowledge and enthusiasm, which might have been wasted without Feathered Friends. Of 20 club members, 18 had been in For The Birds! The difference in approach between Jayden, one of the two newcomers, and Ethel Mae, a For The Birds! alumna, stands as testament to what great potential we’re working with. The wonderful thing is, newcomers like Jayden seem to come up to speed fast because they’re picking up skills and enthusiasm from their peers.

Afterschool is hard! We adult guides have had to learn whole new skills in how to manage students whose attention spans and discipline in the club environment are markedly different from those in a classroom setting.

It’s worth the effort. In this age when endless TV and video game options are creating a generation of couch potatoes, just getting the kids out of doors to appreciate the natural world is a triumph. We’ve started by introducing them to binoculars, the birder’s essential tool, and giving them tons of practice. Next semester will be focused around a specific science project—likely building and monitoring nest boxes for chickadees. Whatever we do, it will be aimed at investing the students in the natural treasures (in this case, Van Cortlandt Park) right in their own neighborhood.

Finally, there are always surprises. For example, there was a day when young Jonathan, without any field guide or reference in hand, spontaneously told me that the scientific name for the red-tailed hawk is *Buteo jamaicensis*. That Feathered Friend could have knocked me over with a feather!



*Students from the AmPark Neighborhood School
Birding in Van Cortlandt Park, the Bronx*

THE MARBLED GODWIT

Carol Peace Robins

The marbled godwit, known scientifically as *Limosa fedoa*, and more informally by our own Don Riepe (member of NYC Audubon's Advisory Council) as the "garbled modwit," is a member of the sandpiper family. At 18 inches tall, it's a big sandpiper and the largest of the godwits. This cinnamon-colored shorebird has long legs and a slightly upturned long pinkish bill. If you bird the beaches frequently, you wouldn't be blamed for thinking that certain sandpipers tend to look alike. Bills are a bit longer or shorter, they turn up or down; legs are really long or a little less so. It takes practice to tell the various species apart.

Don photographed the above godwits at Jamaica Bay in November. He said they've been sighted at various shorelines along the bay at high tide, often with their American oystercatcher pals. "The godwits arrive in late summer and fall," he said, "and stick around until mid-November."

Marbled godwits actually begin their lives in the northern Great Plains, from Canada down to the Dakotas, Idaho, and Montana. This is where they breed in summer, in prairie grasses



Marbled Godwits with American Oystercatchers and Black-bellied Plover

near freshwater marshes or ponds. They line their ground nests with grass and usually lay four greenish-olive eggs. Parents take turns incubating the eggs for about 22 days. The young leave the nest soon after hatching and immediately start pursuing their own food: For them and their parents, this means roots, seeds, and insects, including grasshoppers.

By fall, godwits are off to the east or west coasts, where they form large flocks and roost together in the saltmarsh meadows. They

forage in shallow salt water, probing deeply in the mud or wet sand for mollusks, marine worms, and crustaceans. It's common to see them with their heads completely submerged in search of food.

Don's Jamaica Bay godwits probably headed south to coastal Virginia or beyond, where they would join others for the winter. And come late spring, it's time to move back to their summer homes to start the cycle again. Join us at the Shorebird Festival at Jamaica Bay this summer (festival details will be published in the summer edition of *The Urban Audubon*) and learn the tricks to identifying shorebirds. Perhaps you'll spot Don's marbled godwits.

WINTER/SPRING 2017 LECTURE SERIES AND ANNUAL MEETING

All lectures are free and open to the public. This series has been made possible by the support of Claude and Lucienne Bloch.

COASTAL CHANGE, OCEAN CONSERVATION AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

By Marcha Johnson, Amanda Bayley, and Don Watson
Thursday, March 16, 7pm
Reidy Hall at the Unitarian Church of All Souls,
Lexington Avenue between 79th and 80th Streets

With the publication of *Coastal Change, Ocean Conservation and Resilient Communities*, editors Marcha Johnson and Amanda Bayley have brought together essays by leading practitioners in the fields of coastal science, community resilience, habitat restoration, sustainable landscape architecture, and floodplain management. They will share what they learned compiling the book and introduce us to exciting projects underway. Joining them will be Don Watson and other contributors to address coastal adaptation in the era of climate change.

CONSERVATION PROGRAM UPDATE AND ANNUAL MEETING

By Susan Elbin, PhD, and Conservation Staff
Tuesday, June 6, 6pm
The Arsenal, Central Park, Fifth Avenue at 64th Street,
Third-Floor Gallery

NYC Audubon conducts scientific monitoring in all five boroughs to understand how birds are using our urban environment and how this environment affects them, via Project Safe Flight, our Jamaica Bay program, and our Harbor Herons project. Join us as Dr. Susan Elbin, Conservation Biologist Debra Kriensky, and our conservation team provide updates on what this research has taught us in the past year. Our board election and annual meeting will precede the lecture. Snacks and refreshments will be provided.

BIRDING BY SUBWAY: ARE YOU KIDDING? Marcia T. Fowle and Kellye Rosenheim

Where else but in the metropolis of New York City can you go birding by subway—or bus? New York City Audubon's latest *Birding by Subway* brochure tells you how, where, and when. If you wonder why birdlife is so rich in our City, or what you can do to help protect it, this guide explains that too.

Start by taking a look at the brochure's subway map and its list of "birding stops" in all five boroughs. Although the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) equipment and infrastructure is antiquated in places, you'll see that it takes you far and wide. At each stop, the best season to visit—winter, spring, summer, and fall—is noted. Hungry for colorful spring warblers? Just peruse the list and look for the Sp symbol directing you to a spring songbird haven.

You may be inspired to go far afield to a birding spot; encourage a friend to join you and set out together on a field trip.

Birding in Central Park or Prospect Park is truly remarkable, but have you explored all the hot spots that bird-rich Staten Island has to offer? Take a free ride on the Staten Island Ferry and follow the brochure's bus instructions to Clove Lakes Park.

With the new Second Avenue subway extension, you can take the Q train to the 96th Street stop, walk to 102nd Street, and take the foot bridge over the East River to Randall's Island. Keep your eyes peeled for peregrine falcons.

Or join one of NYC Audubon's spring field trips to the birding spots highlighted in the brochure by taking the MTA to the scheduled meeting place. Below are some suggestions; see page 12 for our full list of trips and classes.

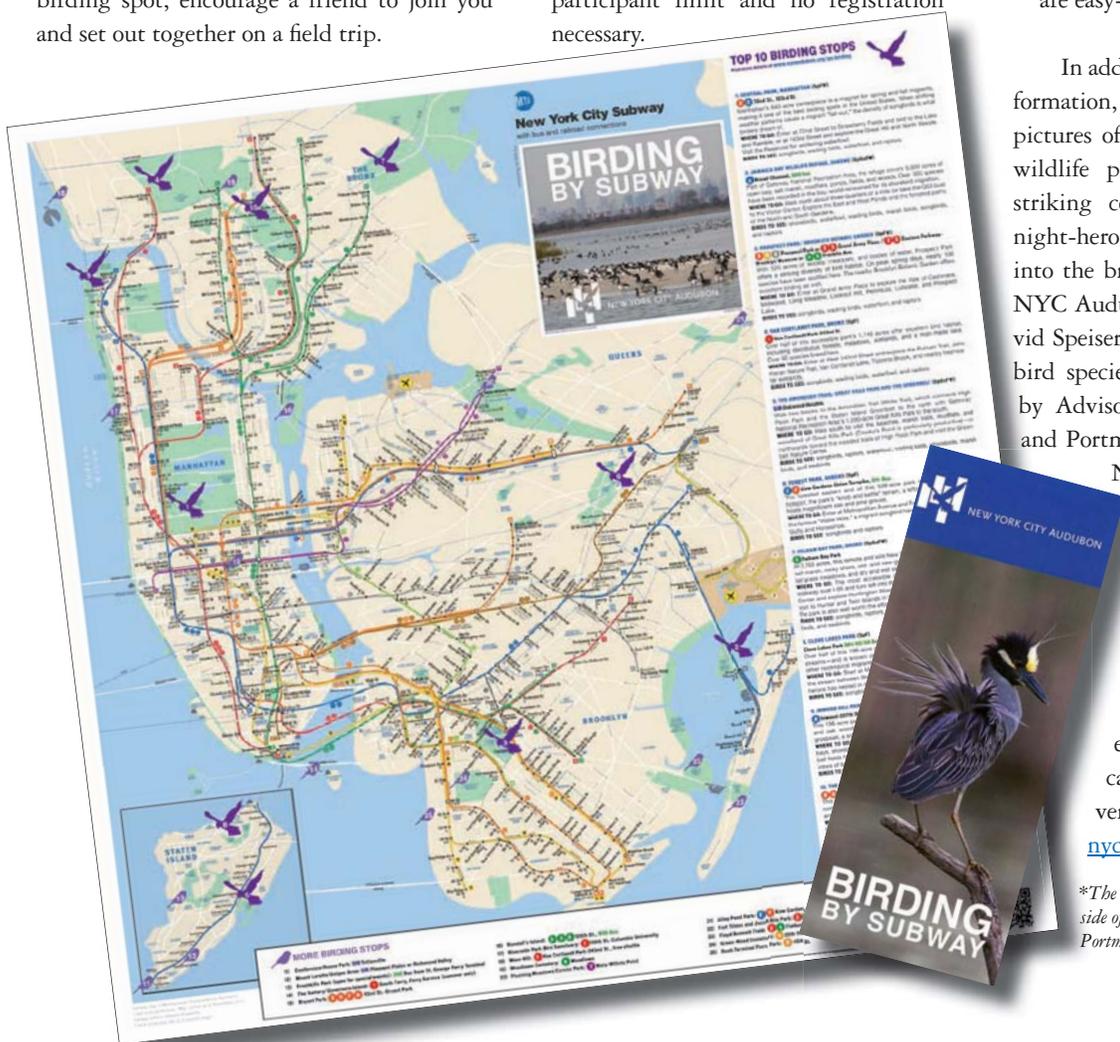
- Take a ride on the 1 train for Saturday walks in Van Cortlandt Park. No participant limit and no registration necessary.

- Take the 1 or A train to Inwood Hill Park for a scheduled walk. The number of participants is usually limited to 15, so sign up early.
- Various field trips are scheduled for the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, with no participant limit and no registration needed. The walk from the A train's Broad Channel stop is about ¾ of a mile, so add that distance to your walk in the Refuge. Your fitness tracker will applaud your workout statistic.
- Woodlawn Cemetery and Green-Wood Cemetery offer quiet, leafy areas for birding. *The Urban Audubon* is covering a few of the borough cemeteries; Woodlawn was featured in the Spring 2016 issue and Green-Wood is due in Summer 2017. Join a scheduled field trip or take the MTA with a friend; both are easy-to-reach birding spots.

In addition to providing this practical information, *Birding by Subway* includes dazzling pictures of the City's diverse birdlife. Noted wildlife photographer François Portmann's striking cover photo of a yellow-crowned night-heron in breeding plumage lures you into the brochure, while stunning photos by NYC Audubon Executive Vice President David Speiser depict a dozen of the City's many bird species. Photos of our urban landscape by Advisory Council Member Don Riepe* and Portmann complete the picture.

Former NYC Audubon Communications Manager Tod Winston, former Development Manager Anne Schwartz, and designer Christina Rubin crafted this informative and handsome brochure. Follow its directions to unexplored birding spots and celebrate New York City's birds. You can also view an interactive, online version of *Birding by Subway* at www.nycaudubon.org/birding-by-subway.

*The beach and brant cityscape photo on the map side of the brochure, incorrectly attributed to François Portmann, is by Don Riepe.



EVENTS AND ADVENTURES

● NYC Audubon Events ● Partnership Events

● WINTER BIRDS OF BARNEGAT, NJ Saturday, March 4, 9am-4pm Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Explore Barnegat Inlet's expansive beach to view the winter birds that gather where land, bay, and sea meet. Search for harlequin ducks, horned larks, Lapland longspurs, snow buntings, and snowy and short-eared owls. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$115 (80)

● WINTER BIRDS OF SANDY HOOK, NJ Saturday, March 11, 10am-5pm Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Sandy Hook, a spectacular barrier island at the northernmost point of the NJ coast, hosts a variety of species including Arctic-bound migrants and harbor seals that lie on the beach to warm up in the sun. Other possible sightings include loons, sea ducks, snow buntings, and horned larks. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$103 (72)

● INTRO TO BIRDING: BIRD WALK IN CENTRAL PARK Sunday, March 12, 8-10:30am Guide: Tod Winston

Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street. Are you curious about "birding" but don't have much (or any) experience? Come on a relaxed walk to some of Central Park's hotspots to go over birding basics and see sparrows, finches, warblers, ducks, and more. Binoculars available. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

● SPRING BIRDING AT WAVE HILL, THE BRONX Sundays, March 12, April 9, May 14, and June 11, 9:30-11:30am Guide: Gabriel Willow With Wave Hill

Meet at the Perkins Visitor Center. Naturalist Gabriel Willow contributes his extensive knowledge of bird species and their behaviors on these

captivating walks. Wave Hill's garden setting overlooking the Hudson River flyway provides the perfect habitat for resident and migrating birds. Ages 10 and up welcome with an adult. NYC Audubon members enjoy two-for-one admission (see www.wavehill.org for more information)

● THE SKY-DANCE OF THE WOODCOCK, BROOKLYN Saturdays, March 25 and April 1, 5-9:30pm Guide: Gabriel Willow

The American woodcock is a remarkable bird. It is in the sandpiper family but lives in woodlands, often far from beaches. The male performs an incredible crepuscular aerial display and song early in the spring, soon after the snow melts in the northern United States. Let's go look for it (and bats and owls and other critters, too) at Floyd Bennett Field. Bring comfortable shoes, a headlamp or flashlight, and a snack for a post-woodcock picnic. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$90 (63) per trip

● BEGINNING BIRDING Classes: Wednesdays, March 29; April 5 and 12, 6:30-8:30pm Trips: Saturdays, April 8, 8am-2pm (Jamaica Bay) and April 15, 8-10:30am (Central Park) Guide: Tod Winston

Learn the keys to identifying the spectacular variety of birds that migrate northwards through New

York City every spring. Even if you've never picked up a pair of binoculars, you'll soon be identifying warblers, thrushes, waterbirds, and more—both by sight and by ear. Three fun and educational in-class sessions, coordinated with field trips to Jamaica Bay and Central Park (transport to Jamaica Bay included). Limited to 12. \$180 (126)

● EARLY SPRING BIRD WALK AT JAMAICA BAY Saturday, April 1, 10am-1pm Guide: Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society and Gateway National Recreation Area
Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge for a slide program and walk to look for eastern phoebes, American oystercatchers, osprey, and other early migrants. For more information and to register, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriepe@gmail.com. No limit. Free

● BIRDING TOURS OF BRYANT PARK Mondays, April 10-May 15, 8-9am Thursdays, April 13-May 18, 5-6pm Guide: Gabriel Willow

With Bryant Park Corporation
Meet at the Birding Tour sign at the 42nd Street and 6th Avenue entrance to the Park. Discover the surprising variety of birds that stop in Bryant Park during migration. No registration necessary. No limit. Free

● BIRDING BY EAR IN CENTRAL PARK

Tuesdays, April 11-May 9, 7-9:30am
Guide: Tod Winston

Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street. Join Tod Winston for a five-week exploration of all of the chips, tweets, trills, and warbles we hear as we wander Strawberry Fields and the Ramble. Though we certainly won't pass up any non-singing birds we come across, this series is intended specifically for those who'd like to identify birds by sound alone. We'll discuss the meanings of different songs and calls as we get to know them. All experience levels welcome. Limited to 12. \$127 (89)

● SPRING MIGRATION IN PELHAM BAY PARK, THE BRONX

Saturday, April 15, 9am-4pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Explore the lovely coves and rocky outcroppings of the City's largest park, Pelham Bay Park, seeking out migrating songbirds, late wintering birds, ducks, and a breeding pair of great horned owls. The rich and diverse habitat makes this park an urban gem and a great home for wildlife. Past rarities include a northern goshawk and a purple sandpiper. Bring lunch and water. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$90 (63)

● PROSPECT PARK BIRD WALK Sundays, April 16 and June 18, 8-11am Guide: Gabriel Willow

Meet under the arch in Grand Army Plaza. Join Gabriel Willow for a leisurely walk to see spring migrants and breeding bird residents of "Brooklyn's Backyard." Beautiful Prospect Park's wide variety of habitats attracts a large number of migrants and breeding bird species—significantly more than Central Park, in fact. We will explore the Park's meadows, forests, and waterways in search of waterfowl, warblers, tanagers, and more. Limited to 15. \$36 (25) per walk



American Woodcock



● **EVENING SPRING MIGRATION WALKS IN CENTRAL PARK**
Mondays, April 17-May 22, 5:30-7pm
Tuesdays, April 18-May 23, 5:30-7pm
Wednesdays, April 19-May 24, 5:30-7pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Meet at 72nd Street and Central Park West for this six-week series of walks. Witness the spectacle of spring migration as songbirds follow the Atlantic flyway northwards. Look for orioles, tanagers, warblers, vireos, and other migrants in the wilds of Central Park, and learn about the finer points of their identification and ecology. Limited to 15. \$145 (102) per series

● **BIRDS AND PLANTS: NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN IN SPRINGTIME, THE BRONX**
Saturdays, April 22 and May 20, 10am-1pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Meet by the ticket booth just inside the Garden's Mosholu Gate on Southern Boulevard. The New York Botanical Garden is home to a large tract of East Coast old-growth forest. During the peak of spring migration, the beautiful gardens come alive with migrating songbirds. Limited to 15. Entrance fee to NYBG not included. \$39 (27) per walk

● **THE BIRDS OF WOODLAWN CEMETERY, THE BRONX**
Sunday, April 23, 8-10:30am
Guides: Tod Winston, Joseph McManus, Friends of Woodlawn Docent

With The Friends of Woodlawn
 Meet at the Jerome Avenue Entrance of Woodlawn Cemetery. Join us for a morning bird walk and tour of beautiful Woodlawn Cemetery: Tod Winston and Joseph McManus will look for spring migrants and year-round residents on the expansive, wooded cemetery grounds, while a Friends of Woodlawn docent will share fascinating stories about the cemetery's history and the interesting mixture of individuals interred there. Limited to 15. \$35 (24)

● **BIRDING GEMS OF QUEENS: EVERGREENS CEMETERY AND THE RIDGEWOOD RESERVOIR**
Sunday, April 23, 7:30am-1:30pm
Guide: Kellye Rosenheim

Explore the delights of historic Evergreens Cemetery and its spring migrants. The trip continues with a long stop at Ridgewood Reservoir, where we will search the treetops and basin for more birds. Moderately strenuous with a great deal of hills and stairs. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$96 (67)

● **BIRDING GEMS OF STATEN ISLAND: SPRING HIKE IN THE GREENBELT**
Sunday, April 23, 9:30am-3pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow
With NYC Parks and the Greenbelt Conservancy

Meet at the Manhattan terminal of the Staten Island Ferry and begin your tour on water as we cross the Upper Bay. Explore trails within the 3,000-acre Staten Island Greenbelt and visit High Rock Park, Walker Pond, and the Pouch Camp property: 143 acres of unspoiled woods and wetlands. Look for spring migrants and learn about the Greenbelt's ecology. Trip involves approximately 3.5 miles of hiking. Transportation on Staten Island included. Limited to 19. \$43 (30)

● **MORNING SPRING MIGRATION WALKS IN CENTRAL PARK**
Wednesdays, April 26-May 24, 7:30-10:30am
Thursdays, April 27-May 25, 7:30-10:30am
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Meet at 72nd Street and Central Park West. This five-week series of walks will observe the waves of birds passing through Central Park during spring migration. Limited to 15. \$143 (100) per series

● **SPRING MIGRATION MORNING WALK IN CENTRAL PARK**
Fridays, April 28, May 5, and May 12, 8-10am
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Meet at 72nd Street and Central Park West and join Gabriel Willow for a spring morning walk in Central Park to welcome the arrival of warblers, vireos, tanagers, cuckoos, and other species stopping off in the Park for a rest and a snack on their way north. We will explore the Ramble and surrounding areas, as well as stop for a rest and a enjoy a snack ourselves at the Boathouse. Limited to 15. \$36 (25) per walk

● **AFTERNOON SPRING WALK AT INWOOD HILL PARK**
Saturdays, April 29 and May 13, 2-5pm
Guide: Nadir Souirgi

Meet at Muscota Marsh, just inside the Park entrance at Indian Road and 218th Street. Inwood Hill Park, simply put, is a jewel. Nestled between the Hudson River, Dyckman Street, and Seaman Avenue, this last tract of largely undeveloped oak and tulip forest transports you to another world and another time. Glacial "pot-holes," towering trees, and stunning river views create an unrivaled backdrop by which to observe the many migratory and breeding avian species that are drawn to this hotspot. Limited to 15. \$36 (25) per walk

● **QUEENS BOTANICAL GARDEN BIRD WALKS**
Saturdays, April 29, May 13, and June 3, and Sundays, May 7 and May 21, 9:30-10:30am
Guide: Corey Finger
With Queens Botanical Garden

Join us on a new series of walks in partnership with Queens Botanical Garden. We'll explore the Garden in search of migrant songbirds and learn about the valuable resources the Garden offers birds and other wildlife. Binoculars available. Register for one date or the whole series of five free walks (walk-ins welcome).

Each walk limited to 25. To register, email info@queensbotanical.org or visit www.queensbotanical.org/calendar. Free with Garden admission

● **BIRD WALK IN THE NORTH WOODS**
Thursday, May 4, 7:30-10:30am
Guide: Tod Winston

Meet at 103rd Street and Central Park West, parkside. Explore the peaceful North Woods and Loch at the height of spring songbird migration. We'll look (and listen) for warblers, vireos, tanagers, grosbeaks, and more. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

● **BIRDS, TECHNOLOGY, AND CITIZEN SCIENCE: eBIRD WORKSHOP**
Thursday, May 4, 7-8:30pm (class)
Saturday, May 6, 3-5pm (walk)
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Birders increasingly use technological tools to locate birds, share their sightings, and keep track of their observations. The most widely-used of these tools is eBird, a website and app that allows users to upload and track their sightings, see what other users have found, and much more. Best of all, it's also a citizen science tool that pools together all of the data, allowing scientists to study trends in bird population trends, migration timing, and more. Learn how to use eBird, as well as other modern technological tools such as field guide apps, automated bird ID apps, and more. Limited to 12. \$65 (45)

● **INTRODUCTION TO BIRD SONG**
Class: Friday, May 5, 6:30-8:30pm
Trip: Sunday, May 7, 8am-noon
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Do you ever wonder who is singing? Learn to identify the large variety of migrant and resident birds in New York City. Joe Giunta will first introduce you to the subtleties of bird-song identification in the classroom followed by a field trip in Central Park to bird by eye and ear. Limited to 12. \$72 (50)

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES (CONTINUED)

● VAN CORTLANDT BIRD WALKS, THE BRONX

Saturdays, May 6-July 29, 8-9:30am
Guides: NYC Audubon, Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy
With the Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy

Meet at Van Cortlandt Nature Center. The history of birding and Van Cortlandt Park are inseparable. Influential birders such as Roger Tory Peterson and Allan D. Cruickshank got their starts on Van Cortlandt's ecologically diverse grounds. These walks celebrate the tradition set forth by these great ornithologists. Participants will look for various species of residents and migrants and discuss a wide range of avian topics. For more information, call 212-691-7483. No registration necessary. No limit. Free

● STERLING FOREST WARBLERS, ORANGE COUNTY, NY

Saturday, May 6, 7am-3pm
Guides: Don Riepe, Tod Winston
Explore the woodland and pond habitat of the 20,000-acre Sterling Forest preserve during peak spring migration. Look for nesting warblers (including golden-winged, cerulean, hooded, prairie, and blue-winged), as well as spring wildflowers, reptiles, and amphibians. Trip involves 4-mile hike and some rocky terrain. Bring lunch and water. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$115 (80)

● SPRING MIGRATION ON RANDALL'S ISLAND

Sunday, May 7, 9am-2pm
Guides: Gabriel Willow, Randall's Island Park Alliance Staff
With Randall's Island Park Alliance, Inc.

Meet on the northwest corner of 102nd Street and the FDR Drive. We'll walk across the foot bridge to Randall's Island, an under-explored location in the East River that hosts restored freshwater wetlands and saltmarsh. We'll look for spring migrants (both waterbirds and land birds) as we explore the results of recent restoration efforts. Limited to 20. \$40 (28)

● BIRDING GEMS OF STATEN ISLAND: SPRING MIGRATION AT FRESHKILLS PARK

Sunday, May 7, 8am-3pm
Guide: Cliff Hagen,
With NYC Department of Parks & Recreation

Meet at the Manhattan terminal of the Staten Island Ferry and start your trip with a journey across the Upper Bay. From wetlands to woodlands to rich, rolling grasslands, Freshkills Park offers a diverse collection of habitats and wildlife. On any given spring day, over 100 species of birds and a variety of butterflies can be seen here. Join local naturalist Cliff Hagen and the NYC Parks Department on this special opportunity to explore the deep, secret places of the City's latest, greatest park. Transport by passenger van on S.I. included. Limited to 12. \$50 (35)

● THE BATTERY CONSERVANCY BIRD WALK AT THE SOUTHERN TIP OF MANHATTAN

Tuesday, May 9, 8-9am
Guide: Gabriel Willow
With The Battery Conservancy
Meet at the Netherland Memorial Flagpole located at the entrance to the Battery Conservancy at the corner of Battery Place and State Street. Join Gabriel Willow and a Battery Conservancy docent to explore this redesigned, replanted, and revitalized 25-acre park overlooking New York Harbor. We'll seek out migrating birds and visit the lovely Garden of Remembrance and Bosque designed by Piet Oudolf, renowned Dutch landscape architect. Free; RSVP preferred; visit tbcevents.eventbrite.com for more info

● PEAK MIGRATION DAY AT ALLEY POND PARK AND JAMAICA BAY, QUEENS

Tuesday, May 9, 8am-4pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Join Joe Giunta for this tour of the crown jewels of Queens: Alley Pond Park and Jamaica Bay. First visit Alley Pond's wooded grounds and kettle ponds to search for warblers and vireos, then hike the trails of Jamaica Bay to see migrant shorebirds,



Yellow Warbler

waterfowl, and more. Bring lunch and water. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$115 (80)

● EVENING BIRD WALK IN THE NORTH WOODS

Thursday, May 11, 5-6:30am
Guide: Kellye Rosenheim
Meet at 100th Street and Central Park West, parkside. Explore the peaceful North Woods and Loch at the height of spring songbird migration. We'll look (and listen) for warblers, vireos, tanagers, grosbeaks, and more. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

● SPRING WARBLERS

Class: Friday, May 12, 6:30-8:30pm
Trip: Sunday, May 14, 8-11am
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

First learn to identify the 30-plus species of warblers that migrate through our area each spring, using field marks and other techniques. Then go out in the field and reinforce what you've learned on our field trip to Central Park. Limited to 15. \$72 (50)

● SPRING MIGRATION AT JAMAICA BAY

Sunday, May 14, 10am-1pm
Guide: Don Riepe
With American Littoral Society and Gateway National Recreation Area
Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge during peak spring migration for a slide program and hike around the reserve to look for many species of migratory birds. For reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriep@gmail.com. Free

● SPRING MIGRANTS AT INWOOD HILL PARK, MANHATTAN

Saturday, May 20, 8:30-11am
Guide: Annie Barry
Meet at the entrance to Inwood Hill Park at the corner of Isham Street and Seaman Avenue. Join Annie Barry for a hike through a mature forest in search of kinglets, warblers, flycatchers, sparrows, Baltimore orioles, and other migrants and residents. We'll then head to the shores of recently restored Muscota Marsh, the last natural saltmarsh in Manhattan, to search for herons and ducks. Some hilly walking required. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

● NESTING PEREGRINES AND RED-TAILS OF THE UPPER WEST SIDE

Sunday, May 21, 1-4pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow
Meet in front of Riverside Church. Many New Yorkers are astonished to discover that their city of steel and glass is home to a diverse population of large birds of prey: The City boasts the world's highest densities of the peregrine falcon, the world's fastest flyer, and a growing population of red-tailed hawks (several pairs of which have reached celebrity status). We'll visit the nesting site of a pair of each of these fascinating species, and may glimpse parents feeding their chicks. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

● HORSESHOE CRAB FESTIVAL AT JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE

Saturday, May 27, 9am-3pm
With American Littoral Society and Gateway National Recreation Area
See page 18 for details.

● BREEDING BIRDS OF JAMAICA BAY

Sunday, May 28, 7am-1pm
Guide: Tod Winston
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge is home to nesting cedar waxwings, brown thrashers, white-eyed vireos, tree swallows, yellow warblers, American redstarts, osprey, willet, and seven species of wading birds. We'll walk the refuge trails and observe these species and many more on their breeding grounds. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$90 (63)

● **JAMAICA BAY SUNSET CRUISE**
Sunday, May 28, 5-8pm

With American Littoral Society and Gateway National Recreation Area

Meet at pier 4 in Sheepshead Bay to board the "Golden Sunshine." Learn about the Bay and its history, management, and ecology. See egrets, herons, ibis, terns, laughing gulls, osprey, peregrine falcons, and shorebirds. Includes wine and cheese, fruit, drinks, and snacks. For information and reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriepe@gmail.com. \$55

● **THE BREEDING BIRDS OF DOODLETOWN ROAD, ROCKLAND COUNTY, NY**

Thursday, June 1, 8am-4pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

A great variety of warblers and other songbirds, including species at risk, breed at Doodletown Road in Bear Mountain State Park. Hooded, cerulean, and golden-winged warblers may be seen, as well as indigo buntings, wild turkeys, and much more. Bring lunch and water. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$122 (\$85)

● **FRESHKILLS DISCOVERY DAY, STATEN ISLAND**

Sunday, June 4, 11am-4pm
Guides: NYC Audubon, With NYC Department of Parks & Recreation

At 2,200 acres, Freshkills Park is almost three times the size of Central Park and the largest park to be developed in New York City in over 100 years. It also has a significant history as the site of the former Freshkills Landfill. The landfill has been covered with layers of soil and infrastructure, and the site has become a place for wildlife, recreation, science, education, and art. Trails and paths normally

off-limits to the public will be open on this day and offer views of the Park's hills, creeks, and wildlife. Activities include guided bird walks, hiking, running, bike-riding, and kayaking, free shuttle buses into the Park and to the top of a hill offering panoramic views of New York, and educational tours and displays. Visit www.freshkillspark.org for more information. No limit. Free

● **SUNSET ECOCRUISES TO THE HARBOR HERON ISLANDS**
Wednesdays, June 7-August 16

7-9pm (Brother Islands; Hoffman and Swinburne Islands)

6:30-9:30pm (Jamaica Bay)
Guide: Gabriel Willow

With New York Water Taxi

Meet at South Street Seaport Pier 16 and set sail in search of glossy ibis, little blue and tricolored herons, great and snowy egrets, black- and yellow-crowned night-herons: All of these spectacular wading birds nest here in New York Harbor. Visit the fascinating Brother Islands, the large egret and cormorant colonies on Hoffman and Swinburne Islands, or the great expanses of Jamaica Bay. Whichever your destination, you'll experience the wonders of New York Harbor at sunset and see some of the 3,000 herons, egrets, and ibis nesting here. Gabriel Willow will once again offer an entertaining tour of the harbor's wildlife, along with its ecological and social history—against the stunning backdrop of the City skyline at sunset. To choose a cruise and register, contact New York Water Taxi at 212-742-1969 or visit our sunset ecocruises webpage at www.nycaudubon.org/sunset-ecocruises. Limited to 90. Price varies by destination

● **BIRDING GEMS OF STATEN ISLAND: CLOVE LAKES PARK**
Saturday, June 10, 8am-noon
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Meet at the Manhattan terminal of the Staten Island Ferry and journey to the "forgotten borough" to discover some of the beautiful forests and incredible birding spots of Clove

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OVERNIGHT TRIPS

● **ASSATEAGUE/CHINCOTEAGUE WEEKEND**

Thursday, April 27-Sunday, April 30
Guide: Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society

A great natural-history weekend on the Virginia coast. See wild ponies, migrating warblers, nesting osprey and bald eagles, shorebirds, waders, and more. Includes three nights' lodging at Refuge Inn, a boat tour of marshes, a safari bus tour of backwater dunes, guided hikes along beaches, woods, and marshes, breakfasts, a seafood dinner, plus two evening programs. Contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriepe@gmail.com for reservations and details. \$395 (\$150 single supplement, appx. \$95 for van transport)

● **CAPE MAY SPRING MIGRATION WEEKEND, NJ**
Saturday, April 29, 9am-Sunday, April 30, 7pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Welcome the spring in lovely Cape May, NJ, the East's capital of birding. On good spring migration days, the area's forests and marshes are swarming with warblers in breeding plumage. We'll visit Cape May Point, Higbee

Beach, Cape May Meadows, and more in search of returning songbirds, shorebirds, wading birds, and terns—as well as lingering winter visitors such as sea ducks and gannets. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 10. \$340 (\$50 single supplement)

● **DOWN EAST MAINE & ACADIA: A BIRDER'S PARADISE**

Friday, May 26-Saturday, June 3
Guide: Gabriel Willow

THIS TRIP IS SOLD OUT

● **MONTAUK SPRING WEEKEND**
Friday, June 2-Sunday, June 4

Guides: Mike Bottini, Mickey Cohen, Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society

Join us for our 20th year at the luxurious Montauk Manor and enjoy indoor/outdoor heated pools, jacuzzi, and spacious suites. Registration price includes five meals, five guided field trips, two evening slide programs, an evening star watch, and free pickup at the LIRR station in Montauk. Contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriepe@gmail.com for reservations and details. \$395 (\$140 single supplement)

● **BASHAKILL, SHAWANGUNK NWR, AND DOODLETOWN, NY**
Saturday, June 10, 8am-Sunday, June 11, 6pm

Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Look for breeding eastern meadowlarks, American bitterns, cerulean warblers, and more at these three great birding areas. An overnight stay will facilitate being in the right spot at the right time. Bring lunch for the first day, binoculars, and a spotting scope (if you have one). Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 10. \$320 (\$75 single supplement)

● **BASHAKILL, NEVERSINK, AND STERLING FOREST, NY**
Saturday, June 17, 8am-Sunday, June 18, 6pm

Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Look for breeding American bitterns; cerulean, hooded, and golden-winged warblers; and more at these three great birding areas. An overnight stay will facilitate being in the right spot at the right time. Bring lunch for the first day, binoculars, and a spotting scope (if you have one). Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 10. \$320 (\$75 single supplement)

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES (CONTINUED)

Lakes Park. Look for ducks and seabirds in New York Harbor on our way across on the ferry ride and then catch a bus to the Park. Numerous warblers, vireos, tanagers, and other migratory songbirds can be seen here, as well as nesting eastern screech-owls and great blue herons. We'll even see one of the largest and oldest trees in New York City. Limited to 15. Bus fare (\$2.75 each way; please bring your MetroCard or exact change) not included in registration price. \$43 (30)

● **EXPLORE THE MEADOWLANDS BY PONTOON BOAT, SECAUCUS, NJ**
Saturday, June 17, 7:30am-12:30pm
Guides: Tod Winston and NJ Meadowlands Docent
With NJ Meadowlands Commission
Explore the Meadowlands on a relaxing pontoon boat ride in search

of egrets, night-herons, belted kingfishers, and marsh wrens—along with nesting osprey and peregrine falcons. We'll travel along the Hackensack River to both man-made and restored wetland sites and learn about the area's environmental history. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 11. \$113 (79)

● **BREEDING BIRDS OF THE HUDSON HIGHLANDS**
Saturdays, June 17 and July 8,
8am-5pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow
Join Gabriel Willow on a day-long trip to some of the most exciting and beautiful birding locations in the Hudson Valley: Doodletown Road, Constitution Marsh, and Indian Brook Farm. We'll look for uncommon breeding warbler

specialties at Doodletown, such as cerulean, hooded, blue-winged, golden-winged, and worm-eating warblers. We will then head to the Constitution Marsh Audubon Sanctuary, home to breeding wood duck, bald eagle, least bittern, marsh wren, and more. After a picnic lunch, we will drive to Indian Brook Farm in search of breeding field and savannah sparrows, bobolinks, and indigo buntings. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$129 (90) per trip

● **THE PARAKEETS OF GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY, BROOKLYN**
Sunday, June 25, 10am-1pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow
With Green-Wood Cemetery
Meet at the cemetery entrance at 5th Avenue and 25th Street, Park Slope, Brooklyn. Explore Green-

Wood Cemetery, rich in both history and wildlife, in search of spring migrants and its most unique avian residents: the huge flocks of brilliant green monk parakeets that nest there. Native to South America, these charming immigrants flourish even in our harsh winters. Limited to 15. \$46 (32)

● **EARLY MEMBER REGISTRATION FOR UPCOMING EVENTS**
Mid-summer to early fall events will be posted at www.nycaudubon.org and available for registration for contributing NYC Audubon members starting on Monday, May 8. (Registration will open to all on Monday, May 22.)

NYC AUDUBON MEMBERS-ONLY EVENTS

Join us for a free NYC Audubon member event this spring. Please note: Member events are free for Contributing NYC Audubon members at the Student/Senior level and up. Except for the KIDS walk, all member walks are limited to 20 people. As these events are popular and fill quickly, please limit your registration to one free member event per month. Contact Kellye Rosenheim at krosenheim@nycaudubon.org or call 212-691-7483 x306 to register.

SONGS OF CENTRAL PARK
Tuesday, April 25, 7:30-9:30am
Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street to seek out early spring migrants with NYC Audubon Board Member Tom Stephenson, author of *The Warbler Guide* and creator of the soon-to-be-released BirdGenie smartphone app.

KIDS SPRING MIGRATION MEMBER WALK

Saturday, April 29, 3-4:30pm
Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street and explore Central Park's best birding hotspots with Nancy Ward and Kellye Rosenheim. Walk is only for pre-registered KIDS Members ages 8-12. All KIDS Members must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Please let us know if you need a pair of binoculars. To register, parents should email KIDS@nycaudubon.org. Visit www.nycaudubon.org/kids-membership for more information about our KIDS Membership program.

SPRING WALK IN THE CENTRAL PARK RAMBLE

Monday, May 1, 7:30-9:30am
Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street. Explore the Ramble with NYC Audubon Immediate Past President Harry Maas and marvel at spring migration.

SPRING MIGRATION WITH JEFF KIMBALL

Wednesday, May 3, 7:30-9:30am
See the "Central Park Effect" for yourself! Join Jeff Kimball, filmmaker and president of NYC Audubon, when migration is in full swing. Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street.

SPRING MIGRATION IN ASTORIA PARK, QUEENS

Saturday, May 6, 9-10:30am
Meet NYC Audubon Board Member Kellie Quiñones at Hoyt Avenue North and 21st Street to seek out migrating birds and resident monk parakeets.

CENTRAL PARK'S NORTH WOODS

Monday, May 8, 7:30-9:30am
Meet Kellye Rosenheim at Central Park West and 100th Street to see what the North Woods have to offer at the peak of migration.

● **TO REGISTER FOR ALL NYC AUDUBON EVENTS** and for more information, visit www.nycaudubon.org or call Danielle Sherman at 212-691-7483 x304 unless otherwise specified.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **Classes meet at 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1523.**
- **Contributing Members (Student/Senior level and up) receive a 30% discount on most local trips and classes (on discounted events, the discounted price appears in parentheses after the nonmember price). See membership form on page 19.**
- **For all coach and van trips, the meeting location is in front of 71 West 23rd Street in Manhattan unless otherwise specified.**
- **We depart promptly at the stated start time.**
- **For all overnight trips, membership in NYC Audubon at the Student/ Senior level and up is required. See membership form on page 19.**

The Moth Snowstorm: Nature and Joy

By Michael McCarthy
New York Review Books, 2016



I never paid much attention to the flock of house sparrows that flitted about the entrance to Central Park until reading Michael McCarthy's *The Moth Snowstorm*. In his passionate plea for nature, McCarthy records with dismay the disappearance from London's parks of the *Passer domesticus*, once one of the world's most successful creatures. England, he writes, "has annihilated half of its biodiversity." Since the breakup of The Beatles, bird populations—already in decline—have been cut in half. Insect populations have faded as well, hence the disappearance of "moth snowstorms" that once swooped through England's summer nights, colliding with headlights of oncoming cars.

In the brilliant and heartbreaking chapter "The Great Thinning," the prize-winning environmental journalist travels through history and the world, tracking the decline of nature's exuberance and naming the culprit: humans—earth's "problem child."

The Moth Snowstorm is a deeply moving memoir; McCarthy's lifelong fascination with birds and nature dates back to his child-

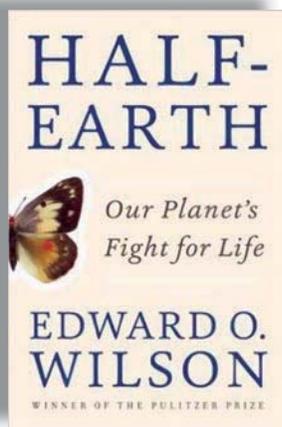
hood when, during a period of intense family strife, he first started birdwatching in the River Dee estuary, an unexpected wilderness that gave him joy.

Subtitled *Nature and Joy*, this book is finally a manifesto, urging us to forestall environmental devastation, not through the noble but flawed undertakings of sustainable development and "ecosystem services," which, McCarthy argues, "engage the intellect but not the imagination." Rather, he champions a belief that "fires people's hearts"—that is, the recognition by each of us of our capacity to love the natural world, "the modern understanding . . . that there is an ancient bond with the natural world deep within us, which makes it not a luxury . . . but part of our essence—the natural home for our psyches."

Now, most mornings I revel in that bond, listening to the house sparrows' "sociable chirpings," as translated by McCarthy: "Hey! What? You? Eh? Who? Him. Nah. Her." Yeah, here, in the heart of New York City. *SC*

Half-Earth: Our Planet's Fight for Life

By Edward O. Wilson
Liveright Publishing, 2016



Edward O. Wilson is known to many for his probing curiosity and commitment to conservation. I began *Half-Earth*—a term coined by Tony Hiss in a 2014 *Smithsonian Magazine* article—excited to explore Wilson's premise that "only by committing half of the planet's surface to nature can we hope to save the immensity of life-forms that compose it." This remedy is intended to reverse the human-induced climate change responsible for the deeply concerning decline in biodiversity that threatens our future.

By the time Wilson finishes detailing the abuses we've bestowed on Earth's creatures and (not undeservedly) chewing out the human race, fewer than 25 pages remain for solutions. Through most of the book, he takes issue with "Anthropocene ideologists"—those who say that pristine nature survives only as a figment of the

imagination, and it is now up to humans to manage the planet to suit our needs. While I agree with his concerns, Wilson's tone might leave one feeling defeated.

In addition, his surprising solution—that technology will help reduce our ecological footprint by improving the quality (as opposed to quantity) of our use of resources, propelling a shift from "extensive" to "intensive" economic growth, and therefore leaving more land for the rest of Earth's species—does little to reassure me.

Wilson's chapter on the best places in the biosphere makes a more personal and positive case for preserving biodiversity. Had there also been examples of humans successfully coexisting with other species in a thriving ecosystem, I might have come away more inspired. Better that than fretting over how to wring more productivity out of an already-taxed planet. *MG*

HORSESHOE CRAB FESTIVAL

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Saturday, May 27, 9am-3pm



Join us for a day of celebrating the annual arrival of the ancient horseshoe crabs to our local shores. During the full and new moons of May and June, these prehistoric animals, which date back approximately 400 million years, come ashore to mate. The females lay billions of eggs at the high tide line each season. At the same time, thousands of migrating shorebirds arrive in the northeast bays to feed on the eggs, regaining the body weight they lost during their long journey north. At the festival you'll see and hold live horseshoe crabs and learn about their important ecological and medicinal values.

For more information and reservations, contact the American Littoral Society at 718-474-0896 or email Don Riepe at donriepe@gmail.com. The program is free, but suggested donations of \$20 for adults and \$10 for children to NYC Audubon are most welcome to offset the festival cost.

The Horseshoe Crab Festival is a NYC Audubon partnership program with the American Littoral Society and Gateway National Recreation Area.

SCHEDULE

- 8:30am** Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center for coffee and doughnuts
- 9am** Carpool to the horseshoe crab viewing site
- 11:30am** Return to the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center
- Noon** Lunch (bring lunch or drive to deli located in nearby Broad Channel)
- 1pm-3pm** Talks by horseshoe crab experts and ranger-guided walks for children and general public

NEWS & NOTES



JAMAICA BAY'S WEST POND BREACH CLOSED

We are excited to report that repairs to Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge's West Pond are underway. The breach has been filled with soil to prevent backflow of seawater. Now that the breach has been closed, the National Park Service is working to fortify the closure and fill a substantial amount of the Pond with freshwater to jumpstart its return to its original state as a freshwater source for birds before it was breached during Hurricane Sandy.

NYC AUDUBON STAFF NEWS

Many thanks to Darren Klein for his exceptional contributions to NYC Audubon. Darren started with our organization in 2013 as a conservation policy intern before coming aboard full-time as our program and advocacy manager. In addition to his outstanding work organizing and overseeing the more than 200 trips, walks, and outreach events we put on each year, Darren developed NYC Audubon's D-Bird, our online crowd-sourcing data collection tool for reporting dead or injured birds. He will be missed around the office. We wish him the best as he takes his web development talents to Circles, a tech startup firm.

NYC Audubon is excited to welcome Danielle Sherman as our new program and advocacy manager. Danielle comes to us from a career in business and government and is excited to be working toward bird protection and conservation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NYC Audubon's conservation work and public programs are made possible by philanthropic contributions from members, friends, corporations, foundations, and government agencies. We are grateful to all those who have sustained our work this past season, including the 1,203 members and donors whose individual gifts in amounts up to \$2,499 collectively provided \$153,903 in support of our mission from June 1 to December 31, 2016.

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BEQUESTS

Estate of Helen Ann Mattin
Estate of Evelyn Nethercott

MAKE A DIFFERENCE Contributing members are essential to our education and conservation work. Help protect birds and habitat in the five boroughs by joining our flock. As a member of NYC Audubon you will receive *The Urban Audubon* newsletter and *The eGret* newsletter; enjoy discounts on field trips and classes; and make a difference in the City's wildlife and natural areas.

[] American Kestrel Circle \$2,500 [] Conservationist \$250 [] Supporter \$100
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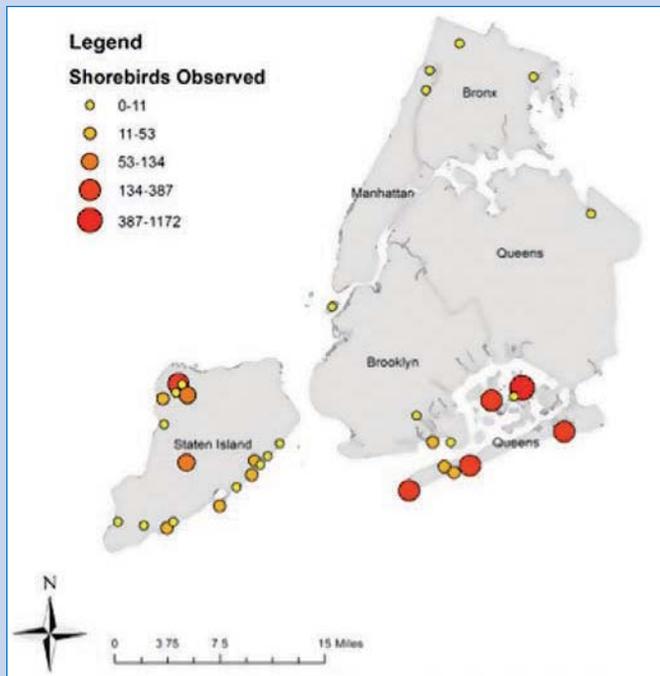
SPRING NYC SHOREBIRD BLITZ—SUNDAY, MAY 21

Contribute to NYC Audubon’s conservation efforts by helping us take a one-day snapshot of spring shorebird activity throughout New York City. Scheduled for May 21, the third NYC Shorebird Blitz is a citizen science initiative that aims to find the total number of shorebirds using our City

©Lloyd Spurr/Arctic



Ruddy Turnstones, Red Knots, and Semipalmated Sandpiper



Shorebird Sightings September 3, 2016

during a 24-hour period, helping us answer important conservation questions such as how many shorebirds are coming through our area during peak spring migration, how they are distributed throughout the City, what they are doing while here, and what disturbances they face.

At last September’s NYC Fall Shorebird Blitz, 23 citizen scientists covered 35 locations throughout the 5 boroughs (see Conservation Notes on page 5 to learn what was found that day). This time we will cover more territory.

Whether you have been shorebirding for years or are a beginner, there are plenty of areas that need to be covered, so mark your calendars and start practicing your shorebird identification. For more information or to get involved, email dkriensky@nycaudubon.org.