



THE URBAN AUDUBON

*Feathers at the
New-York Historical Society*

**Legacy Profile:
Lisa Holzkenner**

**Win-win for Robotics
Team and Birds: NY
Youth Invent Device to
Deter Birds from Glass**



NYC AUDUBON

MISSION & STATEMENT

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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BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Kathryn Heintz



July 3, 2018 marks the centennial of the signing of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). This extraordinary law saved countless North American species. The Roseate Spoonbill, Wood Duck, and Snowy Egret had been hunted nearly to extinction. A century later, all three enjoy conservation status of low or least concern. Conservation works.

But now, 100 years later, the MBTA is under siege. A shocking Department of Interior opinion issued to federal wildlife police on April 11 clipped the wings of this seminal conservation legislation. Bad actors who incidentally or accidentally “take” (kill) protected migratory birds will no longer be held accountable for their conduct, even when the resulting bird death is anticipated and could be prevented. This misguided opinion is incredibly harmful to birds. Let your member of Congress know you disapprove! (See News and Notes on page 19 for more information.)

I am, however, even more concerned that the broader bird conservation community fails to acknowledge the destruction in our midst. The horrific incidental and accidental slaughter that will go unpunished by the Department of Interior’s administrative change—from oil pits and spills, wind turbines, fishing by-catch, high-tension or high-voltage power lines, pesticides, and contaminants—collectively is dwarfed by the annual massacre of birds due to collisions with glass and predation by our domestic house cats. Habitat loss and climate change too will take their toll over time. But year after year, billions of birds die from encounters with our homes, offices, cars, and pets. What are we prepared to do?

Here are some ideas. Continue to support your local Audubon chapter and environmental organizations that are working hard to conserve birds through science, education, engagement, and advocacy. Encourage the children we know to lead environmentally friendly lives, and teach them to appreciate the inimitability of wild birds. Set a good example for our neighbors by addressing our own windows and keeping our cats indoors. In November, vote with an environmental agenda in mind.

This summer, I hope to see you at one of New York City Audubon’s events, at Governors Island, at Kingsland Wildflowers, at Jamaica Bay, or in the parks. Let’s get outside and enjoy the birds we are bound and determined to protect, as we have for the past 100 years.

ANNUAL MEETING & CONSERVATION UPDATE

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

ANNUAL MEETING & CONSERVATION UPDATE

By Susan Elbin, PhD, and Conservation Staff

Thursday, June 14, 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 **Waterbirds of New York Harbor** project. Join us as Director of Conservation and Science Dr. Susan Elbin 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.

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Cover Photograph:

Prothonotary Warbler © Carla Rhodes

Small Banner Photographs:

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CONSERVATION NOTES

Although the vernal equinox on March 20 ushered in spring, snow and chilly weather continued well into April. Nonetheless, this time of year when spring migration and summer breeding season overlap is always invigorating for those who study the birds of New York City. Here is a glimpse of what NYC Audubon's Conservation and Science team is working on.

PROJECT SAFE FLIGHT

Conservation Biologist Kaitlyn Parkins led two training sessions for Project Safe Flight citizen science volunteers to get them ready for the program's April 1 start date. This is our second year monitoring midtown and lower Manhattan to collect collision data for our artificial light study with Dr. Greg Dobler of NYU Center for Urban Science and Progress (CUSP), and Dr. Andrew Farnsworth of Cornell University. This summer a team of four CUSP students will be completing a capstone project, working with NYC Audubon, NYU, and Cornell to analyze and chart artificial light, bird migration radar, and collision data into a multi-layered map.

We continue to inform building owners and architects on how to make buildings bird-friendly. NYC Audubon's *Bird-friendly Building Design* guidelines will be featured during the American Institute of Architects annual meeting as part of the presentation "Javits Center - A Case Study in Urban & Environmental Revitalization."

GREEN ROOFS

Our study of the Jacob K. Javits Center green (sedum) roof continues for the fifth consecutive year. Last year we found ants on the roof for the first time. Ant activity could significantly change the community dynamics on the roof in the coming years. On the two-year-old Kingsland Wildflowers green (sedum and native wildflowers) roof in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, an American Robin was spotted, the first-ever robin spotted on that roof.

The increasing interest in the city's green roofs, whether it is studying them to analyze their effects on urban wildlife or utilizing them for nature education programming, has led to the creation of the New York City

© Andrew Maas



Bumblebee Foraging from Blanket Flowers at Kingsland Wildflowers, September 23, 2017

Green Roof Researchers Alliance (GRRA)—an initiative made possible by a grant from the New York Community Trust. Green Roof Ecologist Dustin Partridge coordinates the group, which is composed of over 50 researchers, educators, and policy makers from 17 different institutions. The GRRA is holding its first annual conference on June 7 (see below for more information), sponsored by NYC Audubon, the Department of Environmental Conservation, and the New School, with a keynote address by NYC Audubon Board Member and CEO and President of the Jacob K. Javits Center Alan Steele.

NEW YORK CITY GREEN ROOF RESEARCHERS ALLIANCE CONFERENCE Thursday, June 7, 9am-5pm

Rooftops in New York City are an underutilized space and represent critical opportunities for improving social life and ecological habitat in our dense city. Please join us at The New School for the first annual conference of the NYC Green Roof Researchers Alliance to hear, respond, and interact with the latest research on the science, education, and policy of green roofs in NYC. This conference is free and open to the public. Seating is limited. Pre-registration is required. For more information and to register, visit www.nycaudubon.org.

WATERBIRDS OF NEW YORK HARBOR

He's back! Edward the Great Egret, tagged with a solar-powered SMS transmitter on Staten Island in 2015 in a partnership project with Dr. Nellie Tsipoura of New Jersey Audubon and Dr. John Brzorad of 1,000 Herons, has come back to nest on Hoffman Island after spending his winter in South Carolina. Another Great Egret, yellow wing tag C19, has been seen foraging in the shallows of the New Jersey Meadowlands. This bird was tagged on July 10, 2014, on Elders Marsh in Jamaica Bay.

Research Associate Tod Winston led the Harbor Herons team in mid-May to conduct

© Bob Reith



Great Egret Tagged "C19" Photographed Foraging at Dekorte Park, New Jersey on March 31, 2018

© NYC Audubon



Semipalmated Sandpiper Tagged "4MX," One of 24 Sandpipers Nano-Tagged by NYC Audubon at Jamaica Bay in May 2017

the 34th annual nesting survey. This comprehensive dataset is being analyzed by our team led by Field Biologist Emilio Tobón for long-term population trends in the harbor. Preliminary results indicate the population is maintaining its size even as birds shift their nesting sites among the 17 different islands in the harbor.

Horseshoe Crabs are spawning on City beaches. Their eggs are a valuable food source for migrating shorebirds that arrive in our area en route to their northern breeding grounds. In addition to our regular Horseshoe Crab and shorebird monitoring, we are participating in a multi-chapter Audubon project to assess levels of human disturbance on shorebirds as they forage or roost on mudflats along the Atlantic Flyway. We are continuing our own project tracking Semipalmated Sandpipers with NanoTags that transmit to a network of receivers along the Atlantic Coast. Sandpipers that we NanoTagged in 2017 were detected by receivers last summer as

far north as James Bay in Canada.

In addition to our work with waterbirds on islands and beaches, we are also studying birds that nest on built structures: Herring Gulls nesting on roofs and Common Tern colonies nesting on decommissioned piers. These studies will help answer larger questions about how urban-nesting waterbirds use the city landscape for resources they need throughout their life cycle. Partners include the Trust for Governors Island, the College of Staten Island, Stony Brook University, the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, and the Port Authority of NY & NJ.

Sharing the results of our work leads to a broader understanding of how to protect birds and their habitat for the long term. We invite all New Yorkers to join us in the many festivals and outreach opportunities that NYC Audubon is holding this summer. And be sure to visit us at Nolan Park House 17 on Governors Island. (See page 7 for details.)

VOLUNTEER!

Make a difference for the City's wildlife. There are many ways to help. Unless otherwise noted, contact citizenscience@nycaudubon.org if interested in any of the projects listed below. All orientations require registration in advance. For information on fall volunteer events such as beach clean-ups, visit us at www.nycaudubon.org/volunteer-events.

OFFICE PROJECTS

Help with mailings, filing, and general office work. Computer skills and birding knowledge are helpful, but not required.

THE URBAN AUDUBON

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

PROJECT SAFE FLIGHT Begins Saturday, September 1

Light and glass pose major threats to migratory birds as they move through the City. Help NYC Audubon biologists collect data on bird-building collisions during migration by monitoring designated buildings for collisions. This opportunity requires a time commitment of about one hour one morning a week from September through early November. Orientations will be held on Tuesday, August 14, and Thursday, August 16, 6-7pm.

FALL NYC SHOREBIRD BLITZ Sunday, August 26

Contribute to NYC Audubon's conservation efforts by helping us take a one-day snapshot of fall shorebird activity throughout New York City.

The NYC Shorebird Blitz is a citizen-science initiative that aims to find the total number of shorebirds using our city during a 24-hour period, helping us answer important conservation questions such as how many shorebirds are coming through our area during peak fall migration, how they are distributed throughout the City, and what disturbances they face.

TRIBUTE IN LIGHT MONITORING

Tuesday, September 11, begins at 8pm
With National September 11 Memorial & Museum

Each year a tireless group of volunteers monitors the Tribute in Light to ensure that migrating birds do not become entrapped in the light beams. An orienta-

tion will be held on Tuesday, September 4, 6-7pm.

INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEAN-UP Saturday, September 15, 10am-1pm

With American Littoral Society, National Park Service, Sadhana

Join us at North Channel Bridge to take part in a multi-state effort to improve coastline habitat. The North Channel Bridge area, used by species like the American Oystercatcher, is also a stone's throw away from the Harbor Heron Islands and the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. Help us clear the beach and raise awareness of the importance of coastal areas to birdlife. Please check www.nycaudubon.org/volunteer-events in the coming months for more details and registration.



WIN-WIN FOR ROBOTICS TEAM AND BIRDS: NY YOUTH INVENT DEVICE TO DETER BIRDS FROM GLASS

Catherine Schragis Heller

As Neha Gaol concentrated on a test at school in June 2016, she was startled by a loud thump. A bird had smashed into her classroom window. There was no time to do anything about the alarming situation that day, but it got the 14-year-old Ardsley, NY student thinking.

Neha, her younger sister Khushi, and their Chappaqua friends Anika Puri and Anvi Datta had already entered the Animal Allies Challenge of the FIRST® LEGO® League Global Innovation Award. The contest asked students to identify a problem that arises when people and animals interact, and to design a robotic solution. Because of that crash, Neha and her “Team Gryffindor” found their problem.

The students soon learned that up to a billion birds are killed in the U.S. each year by glass collisions. Solutions initially concentrated on pasting sparsely-spaced decals on windows, which was not very effective. Current solutions include using window film, opaque shades, patterned glass, and specialized window design features. These middle school girls, however, appear to be the first to devise a robotic solution.

For their solution, they equipped a small plastic box, approximately six by four by two inches, with a motion sensor, digital camera, Raspberry Pi computer loaded with IBM Watson visual recognition software, and speaker. The students wrote a computer program that allows the visual recognition software to identify bird species when they are

© Catherine Schragis Heller



Team Gryffindor Demonstrating Vfly at Their Chappaqua Home (from Left to Right): Anvi Datta, Khushi Gaol, Anika Puri, and Neha Gaol

about 15 feet away from the camera. When a bird is identified, the box blares out a predator’s call tailored to the species so that the bird veers off and avoids the window. They named their invention Vfly.

It’s a modern and clever solution to a major problem in the interaction between people and animals. The box can be attached to windows on office buildings or suburban homes, and could also be useful in deterring birds at cell towers and wind farms.

A year after that fateful bird crash, Team Gryffindor presented Vfly at the LEGO® Global Innovation contest, where their entry was awarded second place. This year the team entered Vfly in the Conrad Spirit of Innovation Challenge, which was held in April at the Kennedy Space Center. NYC Audubon encouraged this project from the time we learned about it. We take great pride in hearing that the team took first place in the “Energy and Environment” category and were selected as Pete Conrad scholars. This is an important win for migrating birds as well as Team Gryffindor.

Neha, Khushi, Anika, and Anvi range in age from 11 to 15. Their creativity, intelligence, and enthusiasm are admirable. Perhaps their very youth and inexperience as birders are what allowed them to adopt a fresh approach to a vexing problem. Their future is bright, and we hope that Vfly may point the way for other technologically savvy young people to find further innovative ways to help prevent bird and building collisions.



© NYC Audubon

Inside Team Gryffindor’s Vfly Box: A Digital Camera, Motion Sensor, Raspberry Pi Computer, and Speaker

SUMMER OF FUN ON GOVERNORS ISLAND



Gabriel Willow (Right) Leading One of Over 50 Birdwalks on Governors Island Last Season

FIFTH ANNUAL “IT’S YOUR TERN” FESTIVAL

**Saturday, July 14, Noon-4pm
South Battery, Governors Island**

With Trust for Governors Island, Friends of Governors Island, National Park Service, New York Harbor School, Earth Matter NY

Come celebrate Governors Island’s treasures: Common Terns and oysters! Common Terns, listed as a threatened species in New York State, have nested for several years on decommissioned piers on Governors Island’s waterfront. The colony has expanded over time and benefited recently from the introduction of oyster shells as a nesting material. Free activities at this year’s festival will include birdwalks and talks, Common Tern colony viewing through a telescope, and hands-on activities for the whole family. Get to the festival by taking a ferry to Governors Island. For more information and directions to the Tern Festival, visit www.nycaudubon.org/tern-festival. No limit. Free

In case of rain, festival will move indoors to Nolan Park House 17

POP-UP NATURE CENTER AT NOLAN PARK HOUSE 17

**June-August: Open Wednesday-Sunday, 11am-5pm
(and Memorial Day)**

Join NYC Audubon once again at our seasonal residence on Governors Island. This year’s nature center will feature displays on conservation, a children’s room with books and activities, bird-inspired artwork, and studio space showcasing artists creating work inspired by Governors Island and its wide variety of avian species. This year we’re welcoming back Artist-in-Residence Autumn Kioti, who will be creating work all summer in her open studio space. Guests can borrow binoculars and participate in one of our free guided birdwalks, or strike out on their own to discover the bright and bustling bird life all over the island. Last year we spotted 109 bird species, so grab your field guides and help us build this year’s list. Visit us and learn all about the feathery friends who share our urban environment and what we can do to help them out. Please continue to check www.nycaudubon.org/gov-island for updates on house hours, birdwalks, and special events.



Common Tern with Chick

13TH ANNUAL JAMAICA BAY SHOREBIRD FESTIVAL

© Blake Matheson



AT JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE, SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 7:30AM-4:30PM

During the past 40 years, over 40 species of shorebirds (including rare and accidental vagrants) have been recorded at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge's East and West Ponds from mid-July through October, with the greatest diversity and abundance usually occurring in August. We invite you to attend our 13th annual celebration at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge on Saturday, August 25. Activities include guided shorebird walks, family programming, and talks from experts on shorebird conservation, shorebird identification, and Jamaica Bay.

Free bus transportation from Manhattan to Jamaica Bay is available for NYC Audubon members at the Student/Senior level and up. Meet at 71 West 23rd Street at 6:30am. Contact NYC Audubon at 212-691-7483 to reserve a seat. For more information, contact NYC Audubon at 212-691-7483, American Littoral Society at 718-474-0896, or Don Riepe at donriepe@gmail.com. The program is free, but suggested donations of \$20 for adults (children are free) to NYC Audubon are most welcome to offset the festival cost.

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

- 7:30am** Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center for registration and continental breakfast (coffee, donuts, juice, etc.)
- 8am** Hike to the East Pond with experts (Kevin Karlson, Lloyd Spitalnik, et al.) to view and identify shorebirds
- 10:30am** Welcome from the National Park Service (Gateway Superintendent Jennifer Nersesian)
- 10:45am** Overview of Jamaica Bay resource management projects and conservation issues (Jamaica Bay Guardian Don Riepe)
- 11:15am** Shorebird Photography (Lloyd Spitalnik)
- Noon** Lunch (bring lunch or drive to deli located in nearby Broad Channel)
- 1pm** Hike with experts to West Pond for shorebirds and other fall migrants
- 3pm** Kevin Karlson presentation
- 4pm** Discussion and wrap-up

THE ART OF MENTORSHIP: NURTURING A YOUNG BIRDER, PART 2

Hillarie O'Toole

In the spring 2018 *Urban Audubon*, we interviewed teenager Ryan Zucker and his mother Karen Benfield about the importance of supporting a young person's natural curiosity about birds through community. For this issue we hear from Noah Strycker, a young man whose early interests in birds and nature have rewarded him immensely. Now in his early 30s, he recently completed his "world Big Year" of birding, visiting 41 countries and setting records by observing more than half the world's bird species. Noah shares how he got started on his path and where his passions might lead him next.



Noah Strycker spent a field season on the Farallon Islands off the coast of San Francisco in 2010, where he banded this Magnolia Warbler.

When did you first know you were fascinated with birds?

When I was in fifth grade, my teacher suction-cupped a bird feeder to the outside of our classroom window. She'd stop class every time a new bird showed up: Evening Grosbeaks, Lazuli Buntings, Black-capped Chickadees, and Purple Finches. That's all it took—I was hooked.

Who were some of your earliest mentors?

My mom and dad were very supportive—

figuring that there are worse things a teenager could be addicted to than birds—they weren't birders. I started attending monthly meetings of my hometown bird club in Eugene, Oregon, and found that its members were delighted to have a young, enthusiastic birder in their midst. Some of them invited me to tag along on field trips, and that's when I started getting really serious. I realized that other people liked watching birds, too.

It is not just your knowledge of ornithology, but your thirst for adventure that made your Big Year journey possible.



After graduating college, 22-year-old Strycker was dropped by helicopter in a remote Antarctic field camp in 2008 with two other bird scientists, a tent, and a three-month supply of frozen food. His research subjects: more than a quarter million Adélie Penguins, including this fluffy chick.

What early experiences set the stage for that?

When I was 14, my dad and I took a trip to Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, in the remote high desert of southeast Oregon. We stayed at a rustic field station on the refuge and explored the wild country on our own, meandering down long gravel roads with nobody else in sight. Malheur has become a special place for me. I've visited the area almost a hundred times in the past 15 years, and each time it inspired a love of the wilderness. The more remote, the better!

How did you gather the skills necessary to become an outdoor enthusiast/adventurer?

I was obsessed by birds long before college or any formal internships, and still consider birding to be a self-driven passion. I took every bird course available at my university—all two of them—and aggressively pursued opportunities for field work, but unless you want to become a professor, there isn't a clear academic career path in birding. I've followed my interests from project to project, combining research, guiding, and writing about birds to become a full-time bird nerd.

You have already seen more than half the bird species on earth. What is the next big challenge that drives you?

My goal is not to see every bird on Earth. That's probably impossible. I'm driven less by life-listing than by individual projects. The world Big Year took three years. A year to plan the logistics, a year to travel, and a year to write the book (*Birding Without Borders*, reviewed in the spring 2018 *Urban Audubon*). Now I'm looking ahead to the next adventures: a photo-essay book for *National Geographic*, a TEDx talk, and a field season in Antarctica. If all of my work shares a theme, it's to convey the fascination of birds in entertaining ways.

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES

- NYC Audubon Events
 - Partnership Events
- Overnight Trips

- **VAN CORTLANDT BIRDWALKS, THE BRONX**
Saturdays, May 19-July 21, 9-10:30am
Guides: NYC Audubon, Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy With 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, please call 212-691-7483. No registration required. No limit. Free

- **BREEDING BIRDS OF JAMAICA BAY**
Saturday, June 2, 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. \$93 (65)

- **DISCOVERY DAY AT FRESHKILLS, STATEN ISLAND**
Sunday, June 3, 11am-4pm
Guide: NYC Audubon With NYC Parks

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 Fresh Kills 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 birdwalks, hiking, running, bike-riding, 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 registration required. No Limit. Free

- **BIRDING GEMS OF STATEN ISLAND: CLOVE LAKES PARK**
Saturday, June 9, 8am-12pm
Sunday, September 16, 9am-1pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Journey to the "forgotten borough" to discover some of the beautiful forests and incredible birding spots of Clove 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) per walk

- **EXPLORE THE MEADOWLANDS BY PONTOON BOAT, SECAUCUS, NJ**
Saturday, June 9, 7:30am-12:30pm
Guides: Tod Winston, NJ Meadowlands Docent
With NJ Meadowlands Commission

Explore the Meadowlands on a relaxing pontoon boat ride in

search of egrets, night-herons, and kingfishers—along with nesting Osprey, Peregrine Falcons, and Marsh Wrens. 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. \$108 (75)

- **SUMMER BIRDING AT WAVE HILL, THE BRONX**
Sundays, June 10, July 8, August 12, and September 9, 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. Walks run rain or shine. Ages 10 and up welcome with an adult. NYC Audubon members enjoy two-for-one admission (see www.wavehill.org for more information)

- **FIFTH ANNUAL "IT'S YOUR TERN" FESTIVAL**
Saturday, July 14, Noon-4pm
See page 7 for details

- **THE SUMMERING BIRDS OF INWOOD HILL PARK, MANHATTAN**
Saturday, June 16, 9-11:30am
Guide: Annie Barry

Join Annie Barry for a hike through a

mature forest in search of Baltimore and Orchard Orioles, Eastern Towhees, Wood Thrushes, Warbling Vireos, and other summer residents. We will then move to the shores of the park's saltmarshes to search for herons and ducks. Some hilly walking required. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

- **AUDUBON MURAL PROJECT TOURS IN NORTHERN MANHATTAN**
Sundays, June 17, July 22, August 19, and September 16, 10am-12pm
Guide: Leigh Hallingby

The Audubon Mural Project is an exciting effort to create murals of over 300 birds in the northern Manhattan neighborhoods of Hamilton Heights and Washington Heights. As all the birds painted are threatened by climate change, the project is designed not only to help us appreciate the beauty of the birds, but also make us aware of the challenges they face. In addition to seeing about 30 murals, we will visit John James Audubon's impressive gravesite in the Trinity Church cemetery. Binoculars will be an asset on this walk. Limited to 20. \$30 (20) per tour

- **BREEDING BIRDS OF THE HUDSON HIGHLANDS, NY**
Saturdays, June 23 and July 7, 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 Ducks, Bald Eagles, Least Bitterns, Marsh Wrens, and more. After a picnic lunch, we will drive to Indian Brook Farm in search of breeding Field and Savannah Sparrows, Bobolinks, and Indigo



© David Speiser
Eastern Towhee (Male)



Buntings. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$129 (90) per trip

● **THE PARAKEETS OF GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY, BROOKLYN**
Sunday, June 24, 10am-1pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow
With Green-Wood Cemetery

Explore Green-Wood Cemetery, rich in both history and wildlife, in search of late migrants and its 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)

● **BIRDING BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK**
Saturdays, June 30 and August 4, 9-10:30am
Guide: Heather Wolf

Meet at Pier 1 park entrance where Old Fulton Street ends/intersects with Furman Street. Join Heather Wolf, author of *Birding at the Bridge*, for a picturesque birdwalk along the Brooklyn waterfront. Target species include Barn Swallow and Gray Catbird (both of which nest in the park and will be raising young at this time), Laughing Gull, Common Tern, and more. No registration required. No limit. Free

● **NYC PLOVER DAY FESTIVAL AT THE ROCKAWAYS, QUEENS**
Saturday, July 7, 12-3pm
With NYC Parks, American Littoral Society, Gateway National Recreation Area

Join us at Beach 86th and Rockaway Beach Boardwalk, Queens, to celebrate nesting shorebirds. Discover one of New York City's endangered species, the Piping Plover, and ways you can help protect it by sharing the beach. Enjoy educational activities and

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

● **MONTAUK SPRING WEEKEND, LI**
Friday, June 1-Sunday, June 3
Guides: Mike Bottini, Mickey Cohen, Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society
 Join us 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. For more information and reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriep@gmail.com. \$395 (\$140 single supplement)

● **BASHAKILL, SHAWANGUNK NWR, AND DOODLETOWN, NY**
Saturday, June 9, 8am-Sunday, June 10, 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. \$325 (\$75 single supplement)

● **BASHAKILL, NEVERSINK, AND STERLING FOREST, NY**
Saturday, June 16, 8am-Sunday, June 17, 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. \$325 (\$75 single supplement)

● **BOREAL BIRDING IN THE ADIRONDACKS, NY**
Friday, June 29, 8am-Monday, July 2, 8pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

NYC Audubon returns to the Adirondacks, NY State's wildest region. The diversity of habitat within Adirondack Park's six million acres leads to an astounding variety of plant and bird species, including several boreal specialties of the mountain spruce and fir forests such as Gray Jays and Boreal Chickadees. Join Gabriel Willow on a four-day tour of this wild region, featuring a day with local Adirondack resident, guide, and President of the NYS Ornithological Association Joan Collins. We'll stay in the town of Saranac Lake, spending our days exploring the mountains and valleys in the region, and dining at restaurants in Saranac Lake and nearby Lake Placid, NY. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 10. \$720 (\$220 single supplement)

● **CAPE ANN WHALE WATCH, MA**
Thursday, July 26-Sunday, July 29
Guide: Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society
 Visit scenic Gloucester, Massachusetts and enjoy a whale-watching boat tour, an evening cruise on the Essex River, easy canoeing on the quiet Ipswich River, a guided hike along a scenic shoreline, and a lobster dinner. For more information and reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriep@gmail.com. \$425 (\$150 single supplement)

● **CAPE MAY FALL MIGRATION, NJ**
Saturday, September 22, 9am-Sunday, September 23, 7pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Cape May, NJ, is one of the best birding venues in the United States, especially during fall migration. Visit

the Cape May hawk watch on two days, once late in the day and then early to get a good variety of hawks. Also visit birding hotspots such as Higbee Beach, Jake's Landing, Cape May Meadows, and Nummy Island. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 10. \$350 (\$50 single supplement)

● **CAPE MAY FALL MIGRATION, NJ**
Friday, September 28, 9am-Sunday, September 30, 7pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Cape May, NJ, is the East's capital of birding, and is particularly bird-rich in the fall. On good fall migration days, the area's forests and marshes are swarming with warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other songbirds, and of course the hawk watch is legendary as well. We'll visit Cape May Point, Higbee Beach, Cape May Meadows, and more in search of songbirds, raptors, wading birds, ducks, and terns. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 10. \$450 (\$100 single supplement)

● **CHINCOTEAGUE REFUGE/ ASSATEAGUE ISLAND, VA**
Thursday, November 8, 9am-Sunday, November 11, 6pm
Guide: Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society
 A great natural history weekend on the Virginia coast. See wild ponies, Snow Geese, Bald Eagles, migrating hawks, waterfowl, shorebirds, and lots more. Includes three nights lodging at the luxurious Refuge Inn (heated pool, Jacuzzi, sauna, exercise room, and observation deck), breakfast, Safari bus tour of back dunes area, five guided hikes, evening programs, plus an "all-you-can eat" oyster & seafood dinner. For more information and reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or don@littoralsociety.org. \$395 (\$150 single room supplement)

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES (CONTINUED)

crafts at this family-friendly event that raises awareness of this amazing shorebird. No Registration required. No Limit. Free

• RIVERSIDE PARK SUMMER ON THE HUDSON BIRDWALKS, MANHATTAN

Fridays, July 13 and September 14, 6-7:30pm

Guide: NYC Audubon With Riverside Park Summer on the Hudson

Meet at the park entrance at 120th

Street and Riverside Drive and explore Riverside Park on this family-friendly birdwalk. Who knows what birds we'll discover while taking in views of the Hudson River? No registration required. No limit. Free

• BREEDING BIRDS OF NICKERSON BEACH AND MARINE NATURE STUDY AREA, LI

Saturday, July 14, 6:30am-1pm

Guide: Tod Winston
Explore two popular birding spots

with Tod Winston that are a little hard to get to for car-less New Yorkers. Departing early to beat the heat, we'll first seek out breeding Common and Least Terns, American Oystercatchers, Piping Plovers, and Black Skimmers at Nickerson Beach. Then we'll walk the boardwalks of the nearby Marine Nature Study Area in search of nesting Saltmarsh and Seaside Sparrows, as well as Osprey, herons, egrets, and shorebirds. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$98 (69)

• CITY OF WATER DAY

Saturday, July 14

Guide: Gabriel Willow

With the Waterfront Alliance

Boat launches TBA. As part of City of Water Day, a celebration of the waterways and harbors of New York City, NYC Audubon is offering a special ecocruise past Hoffman and Swinburne Islands exploring the natural history of the area. The tour leaves from Governors Island. Find more info about City of Water Day and ferries to Governors Island at www.nycaudubon.org. Registration required. Limited to 150. Free

• JAMAICA BAY FESTIVAL

Saturday, July 14, 10am-4pm

With Jamaica Bay-Rockaway Parks Conservancy, American Littoral Society

As part of City of Water Day, join us at Beach 108th Street in Rockaway Park, NY, for a fun family day celebrating Jamaica Bay with activities for all ages including nature walks, an art show, a fishing clinic, arts and crafts, games, and more. Explore the wild side of New York City with walking tours of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge and Dead Horse Bay. Transportation from Beach 108th Street to activities will be provided. For more information, contact Elizabeth Stoehr at 347-690-0931 or elizabeth@jbrpc.org. No registration required. No Limit. Free

• PROSPECT PARK BIRDWALK

Sundays, July 15, July 29, and August 26, 8-11am

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Join Gabriel Willow for a leisurely walk to see late arriving migrants and breeding bird residents of "Brooklyn's backyard." Beautiful Prospect Park has a wide variety of habitats that attract a large number of migrants and breeding bird species—significantly more than Central Park, in fact. We'll explore the park's meadows,

KINGSLAND WILDFLOWERS

The Kingsland Wildflowers green roof and community engagement center is gearing up for another season of fun and educational activities. Check out the beautiful wildflower meadow in Greenpoint at these upcoming events. Unless otherwise noted, all programming takes place at 520 Kingsland Avenue, Brooklyn, and requires advance registration. Visit www.kingslandwildflowers.com or email njackson@nycaudubon.org to learn more about the project, register for events, and see a full listing of programming.

PLANTS, POLLINATORS, AND PEOPLE

Wednesday, June 20, 6:30pm-8:30pm

National Pollinator Week is a time to celebrate pollinators and spread the word about what you can do to protect them. Come out for a walking tour and cocktail hour on the green roof during NYC Pollinator Week. Join green thumbs from Growing Chefs in a seed packet-making activity using saved seeds from Eagle Street Rooftop Farm's wildflower collection, look at Annie Novak's photos from her studies of Monarch migration in Mexico, and talk with pollinator experts and enthusiasts: Rebecca Reitz, The Honeybee Conservancy, and others. No limit. Free

BIRDWALKS IN NORTH BROOKLYN

Guide: Heather Wolf

McGulrick Park: Saturday, August 18, 8-9:30am

Greenpoint Bridge to Calvary Cemetery: Sunday, September 23, 8-9:30am

Join Heather Wolf, author of *Birding at the Bridge* and web developer for

Cornell Lab of Ornithology's eBird.org, for a leisurely walk to see spring migrants and breeding bird residents in North Brooklyn. Each walk requires separate registration. No limit. Free

BATWATCHING BY CANOE ON NEWTOWN CREEK

Sunday, August 26, 6-9pm
(Rain Date: Tuesday, August 28, 6-9pm)

Guide: Kaitlyn Parkins

With Newtown Creek Alliance

Join NYC Audubon Conservation Biologist and bat expert Kaitlyn Parkins as we canoe through Newtown Creek in search of bats and other nocturnal wildlife. We'll seek out these fascinating mammals as they hunt and dive for insects and learn about their great importance to our environment. Space is limited. \$15

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.



THIRD ANNUAL KINGSLAND WILDFLOWERS FESTIVAL

Saturday, September 22, 12-4pm

Join us for a fun day celebrating our third season of programming, education, and research at Kingsland Wildflowers. Visitors can explore the half-acre, green roof habitat and native plant garden. North Brooklyn community organizations will be tabling and featuring activities to engage families and children. The festival offers an opportunity to learn about local environmental initiatives while exploring green infrastructure dedicated to native plants and birds. No registration required. No limit. Free



forests, and waterways in search of waterfowl, warblers, tanagers, and other species. Limited to 15. \$36 (25) per walk

● **CROTON POINT PARK, NY**
Sunday, July 22, 8:45am-4pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Meet at Grand Central Station and travel in comfort aboard Metro-North to visit Croton Point Park, overlooking the Hudson River about one hour north of the city. This beautiful 500-acre park is a wonderful mix of forest, wetlands, and grasslands that are home to hard-to-find breeding bird species such as Indigo Bunting, Grasshopper Sparrow, Bobolink, and Eastern Meadowlark. Great Horned Owls, Willow Flycatchers, and Orchard Orioles breed in nearby woodlands. Bring lunch for a picnic in one of the riverside pavilions. Limited to 20. Round-trip Metro-North fare (\$20.50) not included in trip price. \$50 (35)

● **SHOREBIRD IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP**

Thursday, August 2, 6:30-8:30pm
(class)
Saturday, August 4, 11am-2pm (trip)
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Shorebirds are one of the most challenging groups of birds to identify, yet beautiful and fascinating once they can be distinguished. Learn to identify plovers and sandpipers (including "peeps") by learning behavior, field marks, and calls—then take a field trip to Jamaica Bay to practice your new skills. Limited to 12. \$65 (45)

● **SHOREBIRD WALK IN JAMAICA BAY**
Saturday, August 11, 9am-1:30pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

We'll search Jamaica Bay's mudflats and ponds for breeding herons and egrets, Forster's and Common Terns, Clapper Rails, and American Oystercatchers, as well as migratory plovers and sandpipers that will

already be headed south. Limited to 15. \$40 (28)

● **BIRDING GEMS OF STATEN ISLAND: FRESHKILLS PARK**
Sunday, August 12, 8am-3pm
Guide: Cliff Hagen
With NYC Department of Parks and Recreation

Take a ride on the Staten Island Ferry for a special opportunity to see Freshkills Park, currently in transition from what was once the world's largest landfill into an expansive park. Currently closed to the general public, the park is home to rolling grasslands, tidal marshes, successional woodlands, and a freshwater pond system, which host an array of breeding birds, butterflies, mammals, frogs, and turtles. Grasshopper Sparrows, Osprey, Yellow Warblers, and Blue Grosbeaks nest alongside wrens, blackbirds, orioles, and shorebirds. Wading birds feed on the mudflats at low tide while hawks and vultures soar above. Transport by passenger van from the Staten Island St. George Terminal included. Limited to 12. \$64 (45)

● **13TH ANNUAL JAMAICA BAY SHOREBIRD FESTIVAL**
Saturday, August 25,
7:30am-4:30pm
See page 8 for details

● **MORNING FALL MIGRATION WALKS IN CENTRAL PARK**
Wednesdays, September 5-
October 24, 7:30-10:30am
Thursdays, September 6-
October 25, 7:30-10:30am
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Birders of all levels can enjoy this fun and educational series of eight walks, observing the diverse and ever-changing waves of migrants that stop over Central Park during fall migration. Limited to 15. \$180 (126) per series

● **FALL WARBLERS**
Friday, September 7, 6:30-8:30pm
(class)
Sunday, September 9, 8-11am (trip)
Instructor: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Identifying "confusing fall warblers" can be tricky, even for the experts. Come study some of the most puzzling species that stop through our area during fall migration with expert Joe Giunta, and then enjoy a second session in the "classroom" of Central Park. Limited to 12. \$65 (45)

● **EVENING FALL MIGRATION WALKS IN CENTRAL PARK**
Mondays, September 10-October 15,
Tuesdays, September 11-October 16,
Wednesdays, September 12-October 17, 5-6:30pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Witness the spectacle of autumn migration as songbirds follow the Atlantic Flyway to their tropical wintering grounds. Look for tanagers, warblers, and other neotropical migrants in the wilds of Central Park. Limited to 15. \$146 (102) per series

● **INTRO TO BIRDING: BIRDWALK IN CENTRAL PARK**
Saturday, September 15, 8-10:30am
Guide: Tod Winston

Are you curious about "birding" but don't have much (or any) experience? Come on a relaxed walk through Strawberry Fields and the Ramble to go over birding basics and see warblers, tanagers, sparrows, waterbirds, and more. Binoculars available. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

● **HOOK MOUNTAIN HAWK WATCH, NY**
Sunday, September 16, 9am-4pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Part of the Palisades Interstate Park system, Hook Mountain has commanding views of all nearby mountains ridges and the Hudson River. From this inland hawk-watch spot we expect to see many species of migrating raptors, including Broad-winged and Red-shouldered Hawks, Bald Eagles, accipiters, and

falcons. Note: this trip requires a 35-minute hike up and down the mountainside. Bring binoculars, water, and a bag lunch to enjoy atop the mountain watching the hawks fly overhead. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$99 (69)

EARLY MEMBER REGISTRATION FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

More fall and early winter events will be posted at www.nycaudubon.org and available for registration for contributing NYC Audubon members starting on Monday, August 6, at 9am. (Registration will open to all on Monday, August 20.)

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

- **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.**
- **Classes meet at 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1523.**
- **For paid trips requiring advance registration, the meeting location will be disclosed in your trip registration confirmation email.**
- **For coach and van trips, the meeting location is in front of 71 West 23rd Street 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.**

SNOWY EGRET: SOPHISTICATED DANCER

Suzanne Charlé

In 1831, John James Audubon brilliantly depicted one of the aviary world's stars: the Snowy Egret. In *Snowy Heron, or White Egret* (*Ardea candidissima*), a male Snowy Egret stands in a marsh near a rice plantation, its dazzling white feathers set off by a long black beak, bright yellow lores, long dark legs, and radiant yellow feet. The extravagant spring plumage, the long, airy feathers of mating season, curve elegantly. With keen eyes, the wader warily watches us—and a nearby hunter.

The Snowy Egret's beauty was dangerous. Their colonies were being devastated at the end of the 19th century, feeding the desires of women of the "private carriage crowd" for fashions bedecked with aigrettes; egret mating feathers were fetching two times the price of gold. (One stunning example is a diamond-studded aigrette gold headband on view at New-York Historical Society's *Feathers* exhibit. See page 16 for more details.)

Though perhaps not as numerous as they were when Audubon reported thousands of "snowies" in Charleston, SC, the Snowy Egret is once again a common sight in coastal wetlands, thanks to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. Islands in New York/New Jersey Harbor are host to colonies of Snowy Egrets from April to mid-November. According to *NYC Audubon's Harbor Herons Project: 2017 Nesting Survey Report*, 290 pairs were counted last season, a 23 percent increase over the previous year.

Snowy Egrets frequently move their centers of nesting activity. Several formerly productive colonies in the harbor—Huckleberry, Goose, and Mill Rock Islands—are abandoned. In 2017 Hoffman Island was by far the most popular, with 130 pairs, a 63 percent increase from the previous year. The population on Subway Island also increased in size. You might catch a view of the colony if you ride the A train: sit on the left heading out to the Rockaways.

This graceful egret is one of the avian world's finest dancers. In its search for food it will attract small fish by stirring the mud with its bright yellow feet ("golden slippers" NYC Audubon Advisory Council member Don Riepe calls them). Nimbly running back and forth, flicking its wings, swaying its head, the Snowy Egret startles prey.

The Snowy Egret's greatest moves, however, come as breeding season approaches. Audubon wrote of the birds, uttering a "rough guttural sort of sigh, raising at the same moment their beautiful crest and loose recurved plumes, curving the neck, and rising on their legs to their full height, as if about to strut on the branches." He continued: "Then the male, with great ardour, and with the most graceful motions, passes and repasses for several minutes at a time before and around the female."



Snowy Heron, or White Egret (*Ardea candidissima*) Plate 242, from *Birds of America*



Snowy Egret Foraging at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

A VALUABLE ADDITION TO THE TRIP LEADER TEAM

Mary Jane Kaplan

Readers may have noticed that the “Events and Adventures” section of *The Urban Audubon* has expanded over the past few seasons. The expansion represents an effort to introduce birders, both beginning and experienced, to productive but lesser-known birding locations throughout the city. Veteran NYC Audubon trip leaders have led some of these new offerings, but new leaders such as Corey Finger have been added to the roster.

Corey, who has been leading NYC Audubon walks for a year, began birding in 2005 when his first sighting of a Green Heron got him hooked. He learned quickly, and today his impressive familiarity with the birds and birding hotspots of New York State is displayed in his authorship of the 2016 *American Birding Association Field Guide to the Birds of New York* (reviewed in the fall 2017 *Urban Audubon*).

Corey has also birded in exotic locales like Kazakhstan and Hungary, and is well known to birding community as the co-owner



© Corey Finger

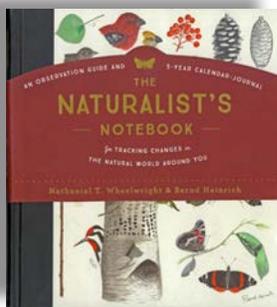
and managing editor of the “10,000 Birds” blog (www.10000birds.com), a popular source of bird photos and birding information of all kinds.

But his home territory is Queens, a borough that had not hosted many NYC Audubon birding adventures apart from Jamaica Bay and Alley Pond Park. Corey has added a new series of walks at the Queens Botanical Garden, recommended especially for beginning birders and those whose interests extend to plants and other living creatures—like Italian Wall Lizards, the only lizard species remaining in Queens. His other walks in Queens include Baisley Pond, Forest Park, and Kissena Park.

Though busy with a family and a full-time job as a union organizer with the New York State Nurses’ Association, Corey hopes to keep adding to NYC Audubon’s walks in Queens and elsewhere.

BOOK REVIEW

Hillarie O’Toole



*THE NATURALIST’S NOTEBOOK:
AN OBSERVATION GUIDE AND
5-YEAR CALENDAR-JOURNAL
FOR TRACKING CHANGES IN THE
NATURAL WORLD AROUND YOU*
By Nathaniel T.
Wheelwright & Bernd
Heinrich
Storey Publishing, 2017

What are you curious about? If it’s something about the natural world, of course you can quickly find information online or in books, but why not let nature itself provide it? In *The Naturalist’s Notebook*, authors Nathaniel T. Wheelwright and Bernd Heinrich encourage you to slow down, get outside, and seek the answers on your own. They show that it is well worth deepening your connection to nature on your own time. And, believe it or not, there are still mysteries and unanswered questions when it comes to the natural world.

Wheelwright and Heinrich offer a systematic approach to observing and documenting your experiences. They prompt you to unplug and observe, to move through your surroundings slowly, and to take note of small changes day by day. Instead of typing notes on your phone, they suggest you engage in hand-written journaling, and drawing instead of photographing.

They urge you to both trust your instincts, become a self-taught expert about your own backyard (providing several exercises for doing so), and connect with others in your community who share your interests.

The book includes the authors’ nostalgic meditations as they recount their methods and examples of what you might observe throughout the seasons, in both rural and urban settings. Additionally, this beautifully designed book includes a calendar section to track and compare observations across a five-year span, with room in the margins to insert your own sketches and musings side by side with the book’s charming illustrations. Whether you choose to share your findings as a citizen scientist or to keep the journal for your own enjoyment, the book promises a journey that will allow you to be more present in the moment and more connected to the subtle and intriguing changes in your environment.

FEATHERS AT THE NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By Suzanne Charlé

In celebration of the centennial of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918, the New-York Historical Society offers *Feathers: Fashion and the Fight for Wildlife*, a compelling and timely exhibition tracing the people and events behind the animal rights movement that led to the Act.

“The MBTA is seminal,” said Dr. Roberta J. M. Olson, curator of drawings, who created the show with Dr. Debra Schmidt Bach, curator of decorative arts. Aimed at the commercial feather and bird trade, the MBTA protected some 800 species by prohibiting the hunting, killing, trading, and shipping of migratory birds, and regulated the commercial plume trade.

Olson explained that the battle against the commercial trade in bird feathers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was one of the first popular movements in defense of the environment. New York City was its epicenter: stores in “Ladies’ Mile”—the shopping district around Broadway and 23rd Street—sold quite literally a ton of feathers of Great and Snowy Egrets, White Ibises, Great Blue Herons, and other birds.

In an exhibition section called “A Fancy for Feathers,” clothes and accessories are festooned with feathers and avian body parts. Heads of Red-legged Honeycreepers peer out of earrings. The neck and train of

© New-York Historical Society



Accessory set, American, including muff and tippet, 1880–99. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection, 2009.

an elegant winter ball gown are showered with the down of swans. Fans made of plumes of warblers, eagles, and grebes were de rigueur for a night at the opera.

By 1886 over five million birds were killed annually for the millinery trade. Women from local Audubon clubs in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Florida began to rally in the late 1890s to protect America’s birds. Audubon members in New York City pushed milliners to abandon feathers. In 1904 millinery merchants agreed to find alternative materials—including feathers from domestic birds. Ads in local papers promoted “Audubonnets,” hats with simulated feathers made of synthetic fabric.

The exhibition introduces us to the city’s female avian activists. When she wasn’t performing at the Metropolitan Opera, Lilli Lehmann made public appearances, appealing to her fans not to wear feathered hats, which she called a “gruesome folly.” Through writing and lectures, Florence Augusta Merriam Bailey, Mary S. Sage, Olive Thorne Miller, Mabel Osgood Wright, and

other female activists educated the public through writings and lectures about importance of birds.

In the final section, the curators exhibit part of the museum’s renowned collection of John James Audubon’s *Birds of America* watercolors. On view are Audubon’s magnificent portraits of Roseate Spoonbill, Snowy and Great Egret, Golden Eagle, Tundra Swan, Herring Gull, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, and Common Eider—the birds, says Olsen, “that were exploited to the point of extinction, then saved.”

The exhibition, which runs through July 15, is particularly prescient. According to *The Washington Post*, the Interior Department recently issued new guidance to federal wildlife police specifying that the “take [killing] of birds resulting from an activity is not banned by the MBTA when the underlying purpose of that activity is not to take birds.” In other words, incidentally killing birds—for instance, from oil spills, poorly sited wind turbines, or reflective glass—no longer breaks the law. The National Audubon Society is fighting back, and you can help: call on Congress to uphold the MBTA at www.audubon.org/takeaction.

© New-York Historical Society



Woman wearing an Audubonnet, From Bird-Lore, volume 15 (1913), page 400. Courtesy American Museum of Natural History, Special Collections

© New-York Historical Society



Audubonnet, 2018, Reproduction, by J. Leia Lima Baum

LEGACY PROFILE: LISA HOLZKENNER

Carol Peace Robins

Not many Manhattanites can say they have photographed a Cattle Egret mere steps from their apartments. Or written poems about the Common Ravens they've seen outside their windows. Lisa Holzkenner can.

It has been a long, circuitous, and bird-filled route to Lisa's present perch on West 24th Street. Born in Casablanca, she moved as a child to France and later to Israel, where her grandfather awakened her love for birds.

Lisa met her husband in Israel and moved with him to Manhattan. She enjoyed a career as a psychoanalyst, concentrating on family therapy, early childhood development, post-traumatic stress, and couples therapy. But her avocation as a devoted birder, bird photographer, and poet has defined her life story. It's a happy coincidence that she lives within shouting distance of New York City Audubon's office.

"I share their vision to instill a renewed sense of understanding of our relationship and connection with the natural world and the importance of appreciating and protecting birds and wildlife," Lisa says.

Lisa's involvement with New York City Audubon began in 2007 when she became a



member and enthusiastic regular on its bird-walks. She frequently and cheerfully brings luscious cakes, cookies, and pies over to the office staff. Trip leader Tod Winston is partial to her plum cake.

Lisa has traveled to many countries in search of birds, but since Manhattan has been her home for 54 years, she especially loves the birds of our city and the people

who first introduced her to them. So Lisa has decided to leave a legacy gift to NYC Audubon.

"I've received much more enjoyment from bird watching through organized field trips and conservation activities than I could ever give back to nature and to New York City Audubon."

REMEMBER THE BIRDS

There are many ways to play a significant and lasting role in supporting New York City 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! Many times 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 70½ 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.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

PARTNERSHIPS

Conservation and outreach are not possible without working partnerships. NYC Audubon collaborates with government agencies and other nonprofit and community organizations to reach broader audiences and achieve common conservation goals. Recent partnerships have included the following organizations:

Alive Structures
American Bird Conservancy
American Birding Association
American Institute of Architects
American Littoral Society
American Museum of Natural History
AmPark Neighborhood School - X344
Arader Galleries
ArchWild
Atlanta Audubon
Atlas Obscura
Audubon Connecticut
Audubon New York
Audubon Pennsylvania
The Battery Conservancy
Birds & Beans
Broadway Stages
Bronx River Alliance
Brooklyn Bird Club
Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce
Bryant Park Corporation
Canadian Wildlife Service
Central New Mexico Audubon
Central Park Arsenal
Central Park Conservancy
Chicago Bird Collision Monitors
Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve
Christodora
Columbia University
Conserve Wildlife
Constitution Marsh - Audubon Center and Sanctuary
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Cornell University
Drexel University
DSNY
Duke's Liquor Box
Eagle Street Rooftop Farm
Earth Matter NY
Eco-Schools USA - National Wildlife Federation
Ennead Architects
The Evergreens Cemetery
Evergreen Exchange
Fordham University
The Fortune Society
Freshkills Park Alliance
Friends of Bushwick Inlet Park
Friends University
FXCollaborative
GoGreen! Brooklyn
Golden Gate Audubon
Governors Island Alliance
Great South Bay Audubon Society
Greenbelt Conservancy
Greenbelt Native Plant Center
Greening Greenpoint
Greenpointers.com
Green-Wood Cemetery
Grounded Truth Productions
Growing Chefs
Harbor Estuary Program
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary
The Horticultural Society of New York
Hunter College
Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society
International Dark Skies Association

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
Jamaica Bay Birders' Coalition
Jamaica Bay Ecowatchers
Jamaica Bay-Rockaway Parks Conservancy
Kings County Brewers Collective
Kingsborough Community College
Linnean Society
Macaulay Honors College
Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences
Massachusetts Audubon Society
McGolrick Park Neighborhood Alliance
Metropolitan Society of Natural Historians
Michael Ahern Production Services
Mohonk Preserve
Moynihan Station Development Corporation
National Audubon Society
National Park Service
Gateway National Recreation Area
National September 11 Memorial & Museum
The Nature Conservancy
Natural Areas Conservancy
Natural Resources Group
Neighbors Allied for Good Growth
New Jersey Audubon Society
New Jersey Meadowlands Commission
The New School
The New York Botanical Garden
New York City Department of Education
New York City Department of Environmental Protection
New York City Department of Parks & Recreation
New York City Economic Development Corporation
New York City Soil & Water Conservation District
New York Harbor School
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
New York State Ornithological Association
New York University Center for Urban Science and Progress (CUSP)
New York University Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education
New-York Historical Society
Newtown Creek Alliance
North American Marine Environment Protection Association
The North Shore Waterfront Conservancy of Staten Island
NYC H2O
NYC Urban Soils Institute
Ocean Conservancy
Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn
The Ornithological Council
Pace University
Parsons School of Design
Patagonia
Plant Group
Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
Prendergast Laurel Architects
Prospect Park Audubon Center
Protectors of Pine Oak Woods
Queens Botanical Garden
Queens County Bird Club
Randall's Island Park Alliance
The Raptor Trust
Riverkeeper
Rockaway Waterfront Alliance
Rocking the Boat
Rooflite
Sadhana
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
SCAPE Studio
Science and Resilience Institute at Jamaica Bay
Shoals Marine Laboratory

South Shore Audubon Society
St. Bernard's School
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
Swarovski
Trout Unlimited
The Trust for Governors Island
The Unitarian Church of All Souls
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Geological Service
U.S. Green Building Council of New York
U.S.D.A. APHIS/Wildlife Services
Untapped Cities
Urban Parks Rangers
Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy
The Waterbird Society
Waterfront Alliance
Wave Hill
Wild Bird Fund
Wildlife Conservation Society
Woodlawn Conservancy

NEW YORK CITY AUDUBON THANKS THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS, CORPORATIONS, AND GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES FOR THEIR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

AmazonSmile Foundation
Atlas Obscura
Bank of America
Bay and Paul Foundations
Broadway Stages
William C. Bullitt Foundation
Central Park Conservancy
The Chervenak-Nunnalle Foundation
Con Edison
The Dobson Foundation
The Durst Organization
The Eppley Foundation for Research
FedEx
First Cornerstone Foundation
FXCollaborative
Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund
Hudson River Foundation
Investors Bank Foundation
Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
Jamaica Bay-Rockaway Parks Conservancy
Kekst
Kimball Foundation
Kings County Brewers Collective
Leaves of Grass Fund
Leon Levy Foundation
Lily Auchincloss Foundation
Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences
The Marta Heflin Foundation
Materials for the Arts
Moore Charitable Foundation
National Audubon Society
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
National Park Service
The Nature Conservancy
New York Community Trust
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Patagonia
Peak View Foundation
Robert and Joyce Menschel Family Foundation
The Strachan and Vivian Donnelly Foundation
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Walt Disney Company Foundation
Weinshel Goldfarb Foundation
William C. Bullitt Foundation
The Williams Companies
The Wood Thrush Foundation

NEWS & NOTES

TAKE ACTION TO DEFEND THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY AND ENDANGERED SPECIES ACTS

This year, as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), our most important bird protection law is under attack. Legislation in Congress (HR 4239) and a new interpretation of the law by the Trump administration would end the government's ability to hold industries accountable for bird deaths. These proposals would prevent enforcement of "incidental" bird deaths, removing incentives for companies to adopt practices that protect birds from threats such as oil spills, poorly-sited wind turbines, or reflective glass, and eliminating penalties for companies that kill substantial numbers of birds.

The Endangered Species Act is also under attack. According to reporting in *The Hill*, an April 26 guidance from the Interior Department stated that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) can no longer advise builders that they need to obtain a permit, mandated by law, to maintain endangered species habitat. "This new memorandum essentially muzzles USFWS biologists from telling private landowners that they need to apply for an incidental take permit when they will harm threatened or endangered species, even though it is USFWS's job to ensure listed species are not harmed," said Noah Greenwald, endangered species director at the Center for Biological Diversity.

Remind your members of Congress that you, as a voter, care about the original intent of these laws and the environment. An easy way to send that message can be found at www.audubon.org/takeaction.

SPREAD THE WORD, NOT FISHING LINE

NYC Audubon was saddened to learn that a Great Horned Owl recently died in Prospect Park after getting tangled in fishing line left in the park's meadow. We are concerned with the lack of enforcement of NYC Parks & Recreation's rules that regulate fishing in permitted areas and urge the department to act. You can help prevent further tragedies like this one: be sure to properly dispose of all hooks and lines after you fish, and make certain other fishermen are aware of the harm that tossed aside fishing supplies can cause birds.

SUPPORT NYC AUDUBON'S MISSION

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO PROTECT NEW YORK CITY'S WILD BIRDS

In addition to becoming a member or making a one-time donation, there are several ways to play a larger role in supporting NYC Audubon's mission to protect wild birds and their habitat in the five boroughs of New York City:

GIVE MONTHLY

Provide ongoing monthly support to ensure our birds are protected throughout the year. You can make a huge difference for as little as \$5 per month. See the membership form below or donate online at www.nycaudubon.org/donate.

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN KESTREL CIRCLE

Soar above the rest by making a donation of \$2,500 or more. American Kestrel Circle patrons enjoy special access and exclusive tours. See the membership form below or donate online at www.nycaudubon.org/donate. Contact us to learn more.

GIVE A MATCHING GIFT

Supporters can double or triple the value of donations through their employers' matching gift programs. Contact your company's personnel office to learn how. Be sure to specify New York City Audubon as the designee.

LEAVE A LEGACY

When you designate New York City Audubon as a beneficiary in your will, IRA, life insurance policy, or investment/bank account, your gift will support the conservation of the birds you love for many years to come. Visit www.nycaudubon.org/leave-a-legacy, or contact us to learn more.

To learn more about any of the above, contact Director of Development Kellye Rosenheim at krosenheim@nycaudubon.org or 646-502-9611. Save paper, time, and money by making your contribution online 24/7 at www.nycaudubon.org/support-us.

BECOME A MEMBER Contributing members are essential to our conservation and outreach work. As a member of NYC Audubon, you will receive *The Urban Audubon* newsletter and *The eGret* email newsletter; enjoy discounts on field trips and classes; and make a difference in helping to protect the City's wildlife and natural areas.

I would like to become a member by making a **recurring** donation in the amount of \$ _____ **each month**.

I would like to become a member by making a one-time donation:

American Kestrel Circle \$2,500 Conservationist \$250 Supporter \$100

Family \$75 Dual \$50 Friend \$25 Student/Senior(65+)\$15

Dual Senior (65+) \$30 New Renewal

Additionally, I would like to make a donation to NYC Audubon in the amount of \$ _____.

I'm already a member but would like to make a **gift** in the amount of \$ _____.

Please direct my gift to D-Bird research

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: H: _____ C: _____ Email: _____

Enclosed is my check payable to NYC Audubon

Charge my credit card: VISA MC AMEX DSC

CARD #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Security Code: _____

Mail this form with your payment to:

NYC Audubon • 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1523 • New York, NY 10010

Membership in NYC Audubon does not include National Audubon membership or *Audubon Magazine*. Donations to NYC Audubon are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. NYC Audubon is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



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ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 02743
New York, NY

DATED MATERIAL: Summer 2018 Newsletter

