



THE URBAN AUDUBON

**Molly Adams: NYC Audubon's
Newest Avian Advocate**

**The New 'Green' Statue of
Liberty Museum**

**Rain Garden on Justice Avenue:
Managing Wastewater
Pilot Project**



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



Press time for the summer *Urban Audubon*—and it happens to be Earth Day 2019. It's no coincidence that the 39th annual day of global environmental observance falls just months ahead of the 40th anniversary of New York City Audubon's very first meeting. New York City Audubon and Earth Day were both born of an era of emerging conservation activism. Four decades on, environmentalism permeates the public discourse. New Yorkers speak familiarly of climate change, green infrastructure, carbon neutrality, and even a Green New Deal. We recycle and compost, we consider our carbon footprint, and now we're banning plastic bags, plastic straws, and Styrofoam. It's high time we demand bird-friendly buildings.

Conservation activism is a collective effort to promote environmental reforms to cause change. New York City Audubon formed around this mandate. Our founders fought to save trees in Central Park's Ramble from a misguided landscaping ax. They earlier had battled to protect Floyd Bennett Field and Jamaica Bay. This concern to protect habitat, air, and water in our city continues. Today we are joined by many more partners in conservation—some established and some emerging—but we must advocate together to leverage the power of this incredible citywide network. We must ignite our civic engagement with a broader palette, one that embraces environmental equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice. Birds need everyone.

Thanks to seed funding from National Audubon's "Audubon in Action" grant program matched by enthusiastic and generous supporters at last year's Fall Roost, we've welcomed Molly Adams to our team as NYC Audubon's advocacy and outreach manager. Read about Molly on page 6, meet her at public events this summer, and rouse your inner activist by joining Molly's growing cohort of NYC Audubon volunteer avian advocates. From the Bird Conservation Alliance meetings on Capitol Hill, to Park Advocacy Days in Albany, to Play Fair for Parks rallies at City Hall, we need you to help us make our city truly bird safe, pollinator friendly, powered by renewable energy, and abounding in green infrastructure. Now is the summer of our intent. Make your presence known and your voice heard for birds!

OAKES AMES: 1931-2019

Oakes Ames, age 87, died of Parkinson's Disease on February 12, 2019, at his home in Stowe, Vermont. Oakes first became involved with New York City Audubon in 1996, when his wife Louise joined our advisory council as one of its first members. Louise retired from the council in 2000, and Oakes joined our board the next year, serving for 10 years, the last two as president. Oakes, a nuclear physicist, Connecticut College president, and birder, was a gentle, thoughtful person, deeply dedicated to environmental concerns. He led NYC Audubon with an emphasis on education, scientific research, and expanding our reach into all five boroughs. In his last President's Perch (*The Urban Audubon* March-April 2011) he commends New York City Audubon for "encouraging scientific habits of mind as well as factual knowledge and instilling a passion for conservation." His parting message continues to reverberate throughout our entire organization, as we carry forward into our 40th year with expanding our innovative research programs and spreading a love of birds and environmental conservation to all New Yorkers.

NYC AUDUBON

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FEATURES

- 2 **Oakes Ames: 1931-2019**
- 6 **Molly Adams: NYC Audubon's Newest Avian Advocate**
by Mary Jane Kaplan
- 7 **The Latest on Bird-safe Building Legislation**
- 7 **The State of Green Roofs in NYC: The Second Annual NYC Green Roof Researchers Alliance Conference**
- 8 **The New 'Green' Statue of Liberty Museum**
by Suzanne Charlé
- 9 **Summer of Fun on Governors Island**
- 14 **Boat-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus major*)**
by Don Riepe
- 16 **14th Annual Jamaica Bay Shorebird Festival**
- 17 **Rain Garden on Justice Avenue: Managing Wastewater Pilot Project**
by Dustin Partridge

DEPARTMENTS

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|-------------------------------|
| 4 | Conservation Notes | 15 | Book Reviews |
| 5 | Volunteer! | 16 | Remember the Birds |
| 10 | Events and Adventures | 18 | Acknowledgments: Partnerships |
| 12 | Kingsland Wildflowers | 19 | News & Notes |
| 14 | Conservation Program Update and Annual Member Meeting | 19 | Support NYC Audubon's Mission |
| | | 20 | Fall Roost Save the Date |

CONSERVATION NOTES

In recent years, we at New York City Audubon have strengthened and formalized our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in all areas of our organization to better reflect the diversity of the communities we serve. As part of this effort, beginning with the 2019 field season, we are changing the language we use to describe our volunteer science programs. We have adopted the term “community science” to describe what have traditionally been known as our “citizen science” programs. We are proud to join other organizations that have made this change, including the National Audubon Society, Greener JC, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, and Natural History Museum LA.

The terminology we use to describe our programs matters. While the term “citizen science” was not originally meant to signify only those with citizenship, it has now come to seem restrictive and divisive. The implied exclusivity is not conducive to growing a welcoming community around bird conservation. We feel that the term “community science” better reflects our intent to create an inclusive approach to involving and empowering everyone who cares about and enjoys birds in New York City.

As members of a grassroots organization with a small science team, our community science volunteers make an invaluable contribution to NYC Audubon’s work. Of course, we can put a monetary value on it—our 2018 volunteers donated nearly 2,500 hours of their time, which is an estimated equivalent contribution of more than \$60,000—but our community scientists also give us much more than their time. They contribute helpful insights, local knowledge, and valuable diverse perspectives. They are also often the voice of NYC Audubon in the field, teaching and connecting others to the work we do. Our community scientists are indispensable, and we appreciate everything they do. In that spirit, we are taking



Community Scientists Monitoring Horseshoe Crabs at Plumb Beach West, May 19, 2016

this opportunity to highlight some of the work our community scientists are assisting with as this newsletter goes to press.

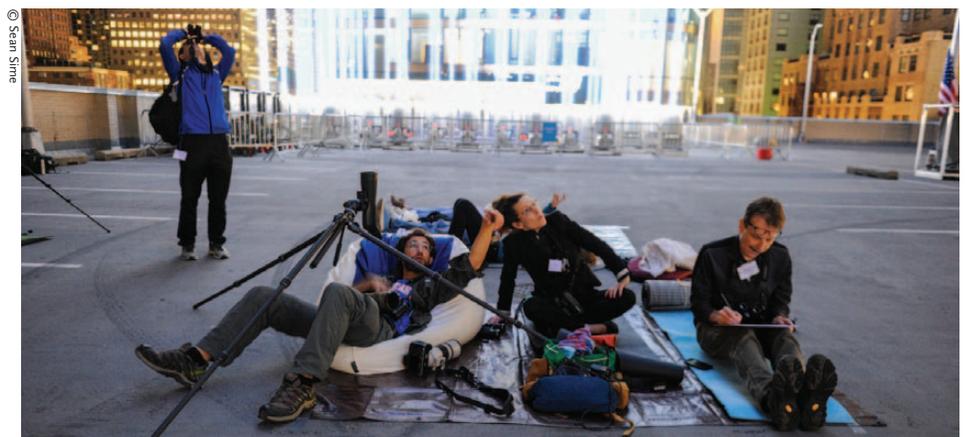
HORSESHOE CRABS AND SHOREBIRDS

Now in its 11th year, our horseshoe crab surveys are our largest and most popular community science program. Annually, more than 200 volunteers participate in this effort to quantify the number of horseshoe crabs that spawn on four beaches in Jamaica Bay. Our four sites are part of a larger community science program managed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Cornell Cooperative Extension, for which volunteers survey crabs on beaches throughout Long Island and the New York Harbor.

Horseshoe crab eggs are an important part of the diet of certain shorebirds that stop over in New York City during migration. The hundreds of thousand eggs produced by female horseshoe crabs sustain these migrating shorebirds. This summer we will be piloting a study of other components of the shorebird diet, including biofilm—a mat of microorganisms and organic materials that forms on mudflats and may be an important shorebird food source. We will also be piloting a study looking at blood metabolites, which can be an indicator of refueling rates. As part of our shorebird migration studies, we host a biannual NYC Shorebird Blitz, in which volunteers fan out across the five boroughs to count shorebirds on a single day during spring and fall migrations. Established in 2016, the NYC Shorebird Blitz is our newest community science program and draws about 35 participants each year. We look forward to sharing data from this year’s horseshoe crab monitoring and NYC Shorebird Blitzes in future editions of “Conservation Notes.” (See “Volunteer!” on page 5 for information on how to participate in the Fall NYC Shorebird Blitz.)

PROJECT SAFE FLIGHT COLLISION MONITORING

New York City Audubon’s longest-running community science program, bird-



Community Scientists Counting Number of Birds in Light Beams at Annual Tribute in Light Memorial, September 11, 2017

building collision monitoring, began in 1997 during spring and fall migrations with a few determined volunteers. Our volunteers tackle new routes each year, depending on our evolving research goals. In 2018, Project Safe Flight volunteers monitored 16 buildings and recorded 257 dead and injured birds. We designed these routes to help us examine the behavior of migratory birds with respect to artificial light at night, augmenting our annual research on the effects on birds of the September 11 Memorial & Museum's Tribute in Light. The data collected by our

volunteers will be integrated with datasets on light and bird density to answer important scientific questions about how artificial light at night affects the behavior of nocturnal migrants. For the 2019 season, we have resumed collision monitoring at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and have begun monitoring at the newly constructed Hudson Yards development.

The data collected by our volunteer collision monitors have been published in scientific journals and help to inform our advocacy for bird-friendly building legisla-

tion. Thanks to the collective efforts of many people, bird-friendly building legislation has now been introduced at the City, State, and Federal levels. New York City Audubon looks forward to working with legislators on these bills, and we will be asking not only our community science volunteers, but all our members, to support these initiatives. What's good for birds is good for all New Yorkers. (See "The Latest on Bird-safe Building Legislation" on page 7 to learn about these bills and what you can do to support them.)

VOLUNTEER!

Make a difference for the City's wildlife.

There are many ways to help. Unless otherwise noted, contact communityscience@nycaudubon.org if interested in any of the projects listed below. All orientations listed require registration in advance. For information on fall volunteer events such as beach clean-ups and tree plantings, 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. Contact volunteer@nycaudubon.org if interested.

THE URBAN AUDUBON

See your name in print by joining the newsletter committee and contributing your writing skills to four seasonal issues. Meetings are bi-monthly in the

early evening. Contact comm@nycaudubon.org if interested.

FALL NYC SHOREBIRD BLITZ Sunday, August 18

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 community-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.

PROJECT SAFE FLIGHT Begins Saturday, September 1

Light and glass pose major threats to migratory birds as they move through New York City. Help NYC Audubon biologists

collect data on 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 Thursday, August 15, and Tuesday, August 20, 6-7pm.

TRIBUTE IN LIGHT MONITORING Wednesday, 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 orientation will be held on Tuesday, September 3, 6-7pm. Please note that space for this orientation is very limited. Participants must be available to monitor in the very late night

and early morning hours on September 11-12.

INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEAN-UP Saturday, September 21, 10am-1pm With American Littoral Society, National Park Service, and 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.



MOLLY ADAMS: NYC AUDUBON'S NEWEST AVIAN ADVOCATE

The job description for a new staff position at New York City Audubon stated that “advocacy efforts on behalf of urban and migrating birds and wildlife are more critical than ever, due to climate change effects and the devastating, steady loss of the natural environment in the city over the last 450 years.” The recent proliferation of glass-clad, bird-killing buildings in New York City has also impelled NYC Audubon to advocate with determination for bird-safe building legislation and to educate the public on ways to mitigate bird collisions, which kill up to 230,000 birds in New York City each year.

Into this challenging and essential position, Advocacy and Outreach Manager, stepped Molly Adams on February 25. Molly felt the job description, while somewhat daunting, called for a perfect combination of skills she already had and those she wanted to acquire. NYC Audubon is delighted to have her join our team.

Molly's previous position, at the New York Aquarium, involved teaching and outreach to all ages at schools, libraries, and hospitals. Earlier, while studying for an MA in marine conservation and policy at Stony Brook University, she worked as an environmental educator at the South Fork Natural History Museum & Nature Center in Bridgehampton, NY. And along the way, she found time to spend a summer in Ecuador monitoring a breeding program for Andean Condors.

Molly is no stranger to the local birding community. After moving to New York City in 2016, she formed the Feminist Bird Club to encourage birding among people that traditional birding clubs don't always reach, including novices. In addition to offering walks, the club raises money for a variety of causes by selling bird patches and stickers. The club's success in New York City has led to other cities creating their own Feminist Bird Clubs, with chapters formed in 6 www.nycaudubon.org



Molly Adams with Eurasian Eagle-owl at Annual Earth Day Celebration at the Prospect Park Audubon Center, April 28, 2019

Boston, Chicago, and Seattle. And, by the way, the club is not limited to women. (See www.molly-adams.com/feminist-bird-club for more information about the chapters and how you can join.)

Molly has been quite busy in her new role with NYC Audubon. In her first weeks on the job, she had already done the following:

- Along with the Linnaean Society of New York and the Wild Bird Fund, she gave testimony in Harlem about a proposed rule change by New York City Department of Parks & Recreation banning feeding of wildlife in parks. (NYC Audubon was in favor, provided an exemption was made for already-established bird feeders that are properly maintained.)
- At City Hall, she argued along with the nonprofit New Yorkers for Parks for more money to be allocated to parks in the upcoming City Council budget. (Only 0.59 percent of the previous budget went to parks.)

- On Park Advocacy Day, March 4, she visited the offices of state senators in Albany to support the Open Space Institute and Parks & Trails New York in advocating for state parks, especially the new one being developed in Jamaica Bay, Shirley Chisholm State Park.
- She prepared testimony on a controversial up-zoning plan that would allow a developer to erect two 39-story buildings with glass facades near Brooklyn Botanic Garden. The buildings would be tall enough to cast shadows over the Garden, threatening the survival of its plants, and glassy enough to cause bird collisions. (Check the March 2019 *eGret* email newsletter to learn how you can voice your opposition to this plan.)

The fact that most of these efforts were made in coordination with other organizations demonstrates an important aspect of Molly's job: working toward common goals with NYC Audubon's many partners. One of these goals of utmost importance is passing

bird-friendly legislation to make our city safer for birds. Molly is working with American Bird Conservancy, the Bird-safe Glass Alliance, National Audubon, and Audubon New York in support of recently introduced bird-safe building legislation at the Local, State, and Federal levels. (See the right sidebar for the latest on these bird-safe buildings bills.)

A key to accomplishing these goals, Molly feels, is increasing volunteer and advocacy participation among NYC Audubon's membership. Members will have an opportunity to get to know her on bird walks, at tabling events, and on social media, which she plans to use extensively to promote the organization's work and volunteer opportunities. (Be sure to follow @nycaudubon on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.) In addition, she will be communicating current conservation issues and bird-friendly legislation that needs your support through NYC Audubon's monthly "Avian Advocates" emails. Visit www.nycaudubon.org to sign up to receive Avian Advocates email alerts.

THE LATEST ON BIRD-SAFE BUILDING LEGISLATION

As of writing on May 20, 2019, bird-friendly building legislation has been introduced at the Federal, State, and City levels. At the Federal level, Representative Mike Quigley (D-IL) introduced H.R.919, the Bird-Safe Buildings Act of 2019. This bill would require that all new federal buildings that are constructed, acquired, or significantly altered use bird-safe building materials and design features. There are currently 32 cosponsors of this bill.

Next, we have even better news at the State level. The Bird-Friendly Building Council Act (Senate Bill S25A), which would create a council dedicated to promoting the use of bird-friendly building materials and design features in buildings, passed in the New York State Senate on April 30. The companion bill in the New York State Assembly is currently in committee and needs our support.

Bird-safe building legislation is gaining momentum at the Local level as well. NYC Council Speaker Corey Johnson and Council Member Rafael Espinal introduced the Bird Friendly Glass Bill (Int 1482-2019), which would amend the New York City building code to require newly constructed or altered buildings to use materials designed to reduce bird strike fatalities. This bill, introduced on April 28, is in the early stages, and we are working with stakeholders and legislators to make sure that its guidelines are scientifically sound and are good for both birds and people.

These bills are evolving. There will be actions needed to be taken to help the legislation become law. The best way to stay up to date on how you can help these bird-friendly bills and other local conservation initiatives that need your support is to sign up for our monthly "Avian Advocates" emails at www.nycaudubon.org.

THE STATE OF GREEN ROOFS IN NYC: THE SECOND ANNUAL NYC GREEN ROOF RESEARCHERS ALLIANCE CONFERENCE



Director of Conservation and Science Dr. Susan Elbin and Research Associate Debra Kriensky Monitoring the Javits Center Green Roof

Friday, September 27, 10am-5pm

At the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center

Green roofs in New York City offer a way to reduce environmental injustice, increase wildlife habitat, and educate our youth. Attend the second annual NYC Green Roof Researchers Alliance Conference at the Jacob K. Javits Center to learn, respond, and interact with cutting-edge research, curriculum, and policy. The conference will include panel discussions, guest lectures, networking, workshops, and even a visit to the Javits Center's 6.75-acre green roof. Please contact managing director Dustin R. Partridge at dpartridge@nycaudubon.org for more information. Register for the conference at www.nycaudubon.org. No limit. \$30

The NYC Green Roof Researchers Alliances is supported by The New York Community Trust



THE NEW 'GREEN' STATUE OF LIBERTY MUSEUM

Suzanne Charlé

Nearly three years after breaking ground on Liberty Island, the new Statue of Liberty Museum opened to the public on May 16. At 26,000 square feet, it can welcome more people than the previous museum, which could accommodate only 20 percent of Liberty Island visitors on peak days. Equally important, the new museum is friendly to birds and the environment, employing the latest in bird-safe design and sustainability guidelines.

Despite its increased size, the building is designed to be an extension of the landscape, rather than an intrusion: "Think of it as a garden pavilion with a museum tucked underneath," says Nicholas Garrison, partner and project designer for FXCollaborative architects.

The project, funded by the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation and managed by the National Park Service, incorporates materials native to the island and the statue itself, such as "Stony Creek" granite, copper, and bronze. The surrounding garden, planted with native plants typical of local wetland and marsh habitats, extends up from the island's circular plaza to the museum's green roof, which covers about half of the building.

With its impressive ability to retain storm water, the green roof should help the building attain its LEED Gold designation target, according to FXCollaborative's Director of Sustainability Daniel Piselli. A rain garden behind the museum, designed by Quennell Rothschild & Partners, will control and filter the storm water runoff. The entire project is "a story of sustainability," Piselli says, with the museum set above 500-year flood levels and built to withstand hurricane-force winds.

Although views from inside the museum are expansive, only a quarter of the building is clad in glass, one strategy to limit the building's potential for bird-window strikes. This was a key goal for the project, as the

8 www.nycaudubon.org

© FXCollaborative



FXCollaborative Rendering of the New Statue of Liberty Museum

island has historically not been so friendly to birds: In 1890, the Linnaean Society of New York's Journal recorded hundreds of "migrating birds attracted to rays of light from the Statue of Liberty." In 1904, naturalist William Beebe found 271 dead birds at the statue's base; others suggested deaths in the thousands, and protests ultimately led to the dimming of the lights, and fewer avian casualties.

Piselli has been exploring the best ways to limit bird collisions against glass since 2005. For the Statue of Liberty Museum, after many tests, FXCollaborative created an original frit pattern on low-reflective insulating glass. The bird-friendly pattern of gray 1/8" dots closely spaced in vertical lines that are 1 3/4" apart is safer than the standard 2"x 4" rule recommended by ornithologists, according to Piselli. "By making the pattern even tighter," says Piselli, "we reduced the 'threat factor' (rating defined by the American Bird Conservancy) of the glass to prevent bird collisions." The innovative frit pattern helped the project achieve the LEED Bird Collision Deterrence credit and allows clear views from both inside and outside the museum.

To limit artificial light, exterior lighting

© FXCollaborative



The New Statue of Liberty Museum uses low-reflective insulated glass with an original frit pattern to deter bird collisions.

is minimal for safety and only shines down to illuminate necessary surfaces. Exterior lighting will only be used for special occasions. At night, the museum will go dark inside and out—with the possible exception of the original torch, now lit by LED lighting.

Piselli hopes that the Statue of Liberty Museum "will serve as an inspiration to everyone," including future builders who could opt for bird-friendly glass. The museum should, like the Statue of Liberty itself, symbolize freedom, hope, possibility, and resilience.

SUMMER OF FUN ON GOVERNORS ISLAND



© IBEX Puppetry
IBEX Puppetry Leading an Avian-inspired Workshop on the Front Lawn of Our Nolan Park House, August 25, 2018

POP-UP NATURE CENTER AT NOLAN PARK HOUSE 17 OPENS SATURDAY, JUNE 1

June: Open Saturday-Sunday, 11am-5pm
July and August: Open Wednesday-Sunday, 11am-5pm
September: Hours to Be Announced in Fall 2019 *Urban Audubon*

NYC Audubon returns to Governors Island for a third season of programming at our pop-up nature center at Nolan Park House 17. Visit our house all summer long for 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 variety of avian residents. 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 bird walks, or strike out on their own to discover the bright and bustling bird life all over the island. Last year we counted over 60 species in one day, so grab your guidebooks and help us build this year's list. Visit our house and learn all about the feathery friends who share our urban environment and what we can do to help them. Continue to check www.nycaudubon.org/gov-island for updates on house hours, free bird walks, and special events at our house all summer long.

SIXTH ANNUAL "IT'S YOUR TERN" FESTIVAL

Saturday, July 13, 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 bird walks and talks, as well as hands-on activities for the whole family. Get to the festival by taking the ferry to Governors Island. The festival will take place at the southeast corner of the Parade Ground right across from St. Cornelius Chapel. For more information and directions to the Tern Festival, visit www.nycaudubon.org/festivals. No limit. Free

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



© NYC Audubon
"It's Your Tern Festival" on Governors Island, July 14, 2018

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES

- NYC Audubon Events
 - Partnership Events
- Overnight Trips

- **VAN CORTLANDT BIRD WALKS, THE BRONX**
Saturdays, May 25-July 20, 9-10:30am

Guide: NYC Audubon
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 by these great ornithologists. Participants will look for various species of residents and migrants and discuss a wide range of avian topics. No registration necessary. No limit. Free

- **PELHAM BAY PARK BIRD WALKS, THE BRONX**
Sundays, May 26-June 30, 9-10:30am

Guide: NYC Audubon
With Pelham Bay Park

Meet at Rodman's Neck Parking Lot. Join us to explore some of the best birding New York City has to offer. Come discover Pelham Bay Park's diverse habitat that attracts a variety of spring migrants. No registration necessary. No limit. Free

- **THE PARAKEETS OF GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY, BROOKLYN**
Saturday, June 8, 10am-1pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow
With Green-Wood Cemetery

Explore Green-Wood Cemetery, rich in both history and wildlife, in search of late spring migrants and the cemetery's 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)

- **SUMMER BIRDING AT WAVE HILL, THE BRONX**
Sundays, June 9, July 14, August 11, and September 8, 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. No registration required. No limit. NYC Audubon members enjoy two-for-one admission (see www.wavehill.org for more information)

- **BIRDING BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK**
Saturdays, June 15 and July 13, Sunday, August 18, 9-10:30am
Guide: Heather Wolf

Meet at Pier 1 park entrance at the intersection of Old Fulton Street and Furman Street. Join Heather Wolf, author of *Birding at the Bridge*, for a picturesque bird walk along the Brooklyn waterfront. We'll look for breeding and nesting birds like the Gray Catbird, American Robin, Song Sparrow, and more. Visit www.nycaudubon.org/birding-bk-bridge to register. Limited to 19 per walk. Free

- **THE SUMMERING BIRDS OF INWOOD HILL PARK, MANHATTAN**
Saturday, June 15, 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 Inwood Hill Park saltmarshes to

search for herons and ducks. Some hilly walking required. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

- **"LET'S GO BIRDING TOGETHER" CENTRAL PARK WALK**
Saturday, June 15, 9:30am-noon
With National Audubon Society, Feminist Bird Club

Help us celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots with a riot of birds! Let's Go Birding Together walks are a way for folks who love birds and the outdoors to come together during Pride Month. This walk is for members of the LGBTQIA+ community, their families, and allies. This Central Park bird walk is co-presented by NYC Audubon, National Audubon Society, and the Feminist Bird Club. Advance registration required. Visit www.nycaudubon.org to register. Limited to 50. Free

- **AUDUBON MURAL PROJECT TOURS, NORTHERN MANHATTAN**
Sundays, June 16, July 14, August 11, and September 15, 10am-noon
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 per tour. \$30 (20) per tour

- **EXPLORE THE NJ MEADOWLANDS BY PONTOON BOAT**
Saturday, June 22, 7:30am-12:30pm
Guide: Tod Winston
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 on the Hackensack River to 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)

- **BREEDING BIRDS OF THE HUDSON HIGHLANDS, NY**
Saturday, June 22, 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 Buntings. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$129 (90)

- **BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS OF JAMAICA BAY**
Saturday, June 29, 10am-1pm
Guide: Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society
Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center and join naturalist Don Riepe for a slide program and walk around the refuge to look for butterflies, moths, and other pollinators. Learn about their ecology and behavior, as well as the plants they depend on. For more information and reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriepen@gmail.com. Kids welcome. No limit. Free



• **BREEDING BIRDS OF CONNECTICUT**

Saturday, July 6, 7am-4pm

Guide: Tod Winston

Discover the nearby birding wonders of "the Constitution State": We'll explore the woods and fields of Trout Brook Valley Preserve in search of breeding Acadian Flycatchers, Eastern Bluebirds, and Red-shouldered Hawks—and then visit the beach and marsh of Sherwood Island State Park to seek out Purple Martins, Marsh Wrens, and waterbirds. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$103 (72)

• **OCEANSIDE MARINE NATURE STUDY AREA, NY**

Wednesday, July 10, 7am-1pm

Guide: Tod Winston

We'll start out early and arrive an hour before low tide in hopes of observing Saltmarsh Sparrows, Seaside Sparrows, and Clapper Rails—along with southward-migrating shorebirds, waders, and terns on the mudflats. This easy-to-visit preserve features a nature center and hosts nesting Osprey, Tree Swallows, and Willets. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$100 (70)

• **RIVERSIDE PARK SUMMER ON THE HUDSON BIRD WALKS, MANHATTAN**

Fridays, July 12 and September 13, 5:30-7pm

Guide: NYC Audubon

Meet at the park entrance at 120th Street and Riverside Drive and explore Riverside Park on this family-friendly bird walk. Who knows what birds we'll discover while taking in views of the Hudson River? No limit. No registration necessary. Free

• **SIXTH ANNUAL "IT'S YOUR TERN" FESTIVAL**

Saturday, July 13, noon-4pm

See page 9 for details

• **BEACH-NESTING BIRDS OF NICKERSON BEACH, NY**

Saturday, July 13, 6:30am-12:30pm

Guide: Tod Winston

Come bird at the beach. Departing early to beat the heat, we'll have plenty of time to observe breeding waterbirds feeding their young: Common and Least Terns, American Oystercatchers, and Piping Plovers. We're also sure to see nesting Black Skimmers—and will be on the lookout for possible Gull-billed and Roseate Terns, as well as summering sea ducks. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$100 (70)

• **BIRDING GEMS OF STATEN ISLAND: FRESHKILLS PARK**

Sunday, July 21, 8am-3pm

Guide: Cliff Hagen

With NYC Department of Parks & Recreation

Start your trip with a journey across the Upper Bay for this special opportunity to see Freshkills Park, 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 that 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. On calm, sunny days, one can expect to find nearly two dozen species of butterflies as they nectar among the grasses and woodlands. Transport by passenger van from the Staten Island St. George Terminal included. Limited to 12. \$64 (45)

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

• **BASHAKILL, SHAWANGUNK NWR, AND DOODLETOWN, NY**

Saturday, June 8, 8am-Sunday, June 9, 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 15, 8am-Sunday, June 16, 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**

Friday, July 5, 8am-Monday, July 8, 8pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Adirondack Park's six million acres constitute one-third of the land area in New York state. The Park is the largest publicly protected area in the contiguous United States, greater in size than Yellowstone, Everglades, Glacier, and Grand Canyon National Park combined. Within its boundaries are vast forests (ranging from deciduous to boreal) and rolling farmlands, towns and villages, mountains and

valleys, as well as lakes, ponds, and rivers. This diversity of habitat leads to an incredible array of plant and bird species, including several boreal specialties of the mountain spruce and fir forests that cannot be found in New York City, such as Gray Jays and Boreal Chickadees. Join NYC Audubon Guide Gabriel Willow on a four-day tour of this wild region, featuring a day with local Adirondack resident, guide, and President of the New York State Ornithological Association, Joan Collins. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 10. \$730 (\$220 single supplement)

• **CAPE ANN WHALE WATCH, MA Thursday, August 8-Sunday, August 11**

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 donriepe@gmail.com. \$425 (\$180 single supplement)

• **CAPE MAY FALL MIGRATION, NJ**

Saturday, September 21, 9am-Sunday, September 22, 7pm

Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Cape May 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)

... CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES (CONTINUED)

● SHOREBIRD IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP

Friday, August 2, 6:30-8:30pm (class)

Sunday, August 4, 10am-1pm (trip)

Instructor: 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)

● CENTRAL PARK RAMBLE: BREEDING BIRDS AND EARLY MIGRANTS

Friday, August 9, 7:30-10:30am

Guide: Tod Winston

Birders often don't venture back into Central Park until September—but many migrants, along with breeding birds, are already there in August. Explore the Ramble in search of locally breeding species such as Great-crested Flycatchers, Eastern Kingbirds, Warbling Vireos, and Black-crowned Night-Herons—and observe the recently fledged Gray Catbirds, Northern Cardinals, and American Robins that abound at this

time of year. We'll also look for early fall migrants such as Black-and-White Warblers, American Redstarts, both waterthrush species, and flycatchers. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

● 14TH ANNUAL JAMAICA BAY SHOREBIRD FESTIVAL

Saturday, August 17, 8:30am-5pm

See page 16 for details

● CROTON POINT PARK, NY

Sunday, August 18, 8:20am-3pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Travel aboard Metro-North to visit Croton Point Park, a beautiful 500-

acre park overlooking the Hudson River about one hour north of the city. The park is a wonderful mix of forest, wetlands, and grassland that are home to hard-to-find breeding bird species such as Indigo Bunting, Grasshopper Sparrow, Bobolink, and Eastern Meadowlark. The woodlands nearby are home to breeding Great Horned Owl, Willow Flycatcher, and Orchard Oriole, as well as the more expected common breeders. 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)

KINGSLAND WILDFLOWERS AT BROADWAY STAGES EVENTS

Unless otherwise noted, all programming takes place at Kingsland Wildflowers at Broadway Stages, 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.

© NOOSPHERE ARTS



Left to Right: Ernesto Villalobos; Kingsland Wildflowers Open House Saturday; Kingsland Wildflowers in Bloom

© NYC Audubon



© NYC Audubon



GREENPOINT OPEN HOUSE STUDIOS WEEKEND

Saturday, June 8-Sunday, June 9, noon-4pm

Join us during Greenpoint Open House Studios Weekend, where art meets nature on the green roof. We invite you to bring your paints, pens, pencils, and sketchbooks to sit with us on the green roof and sketch plant life, the city skyline, or our unique industrial surroundings. Local Greenpoint artists will have works on display in our community engagement space. No registration required. No limit. Free

ROOFTOP PERFORMANCES PRESENTED BY NOOSPHERE ARTS

Violin Concerts: Ernesto Villalobos and Katy Gunn

Saturday, June 8, Starts at 6:30pm
Folk Dance & Music: The Semillas Collective

Saturday, June 22, Starts at 6:30pm

Experience live art focusing on the environment jointly presented by Kingsland Wildflowers at Broadway Stages and NOoSPHERE Arts, a nonprofit housed at Last Frontier NYC, the artist studio located just below the roof gardens. NOoSPHERE Arts produces multidisciplinary public arts programming from acclaimed

artists all across the world. These co-hosted summer events will raise awareness for environmental justice issues and community efforts to revitalize Newtown Creek and the surrounding Greenpoint neighborhood. Registration is preferred. Limited to 200 per event. Free

OPEN HOUSE SATURDAY

Saturday, June 15, 12-3pm

Tour the native plant garden and our community engagement space as we open Kingsland Wildflowers to the general public. Registration not required. No limit. Free

FIELD DAY FRIDAY: ROOFTOP EXPLORATIONS WITH LESLIE

ADATTO AND MARNI MAJORELLE Friday, June 21, 4-7pm

Take a tour of the green roof with landscape designer Marni Majorelle, followed by a talk with author Leslie Adatto as she discusses her new book, *111 Rooftops in New York That You Must Not Miss*, which features our very own Kingsland Wildflowers! Leslie is also the co-founder of the The New York Roof Deck and Roof Gardening Meetup Group, who will be joining us for the evening's event. Registration required. Limited to 40. Free

Funding for Kingsland Wildflowers at Broadway Stages 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.



● **JAMAICA BAY SHOREBIRD WALK**
Saturday, August 24, 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)

● **PROSPECT PARK BIRD WALK**
Sunday, August 25,
Saturdays, August 31 and
September 7, 8-11am
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Join Gabriel Willow for a leisurely walk to see early-fall migrants and breeding bird residents of "Brooklyn's Backyard." Prospect Park's wide variety of habitats attract 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 other species that call the park home. Limited to 15 per walk. \$36 (25) per walk

● **FALL MIGRATION BIRD WALKS AT THE BATTERY, SOUTHERN TIP OF MANHATTAN**

Tuesdays, September 3-October 8, 8-9am

Guide: Gabriel Willow

With The Battery Conservancy

Meet at the Netherlands Memorial

Flag Pole located at the entrance to the park on the corner of Broadway, Battery Place, and State Street. Join Gabriel Willow to explore the migrating birds that find food and habitat on lower Manhattan's waterfront. RSVP preferred, visit tbcevents.eventbrite.com for more information. No limit. Free

● **MORNING FALL MIGRATION WALKS IN CENTRAL PARK**

Wednesdays, September 4-October 23,

Thursdays, September 5-October 24, 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 per series. \$180 (126) per series

● **FALL WARBLERS**

Friday, September 6,

6:30-8:30pm (class)

Sunday, September 8, 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 9-October 14,

Tuesdays, September 10-October 15,

Wednesdays, September 11-October 16, 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 Central Park. Limited to 15 per series. \$146 (102) per series

● **HOOK MOUNTAIN**

HAWK WATCH, NY

Sunday, September 15, 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. \$100 (70)

● **DISCOVERY DAY AT FRESHKILLS PARK, STATEN ISLAND**
Sunday, September 15, 11am-4pm

Guide: NYC Audubon
With Freshkills Park Alliance, NYC Parks, NYC Department of Sanitation

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 bird walks, 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 Limit. Free

EARLY MEMBER REGISTRATION FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall and early winter events will be posted at www.nycaudubon.org and available for registration to contributing NYC Audubon members starting on Monday, August 19, at 9am. (Registration will open to all on Monday, September 2.)

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.**

© Linda Steele/Audubon Photography Awards



Scarlet Tanager

BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*QUISCALUS MAJOR*)

Don Riepe

Named for its long keel-shaped tail that it often holds pointing toward the sky when flying or perching, the Boat-tailed Grackle is a fairly new summer resident in the coastal areas of the Northeast. My first encounter with Boat-tailed Grackles was in the early 1980s along the Georgia coast, where their harsh calls were the dominant song of southern saltmarshes. Like the American Oystercatcher and Laughing Gull, the Boat-tailed Grackle has gradually expanded its range into New York City and as far north as the Massachusetts coast. A few records are noted for Jamaica Bay in the mid-late 1970s. In 1985, a small flock regularly visited my Broad Channel dock. Imagine my surprise when I first heard them one summer morning calling outside my house!

Similar to the resident Common Grackle, they are sexually dimorphic in shape, size, and color. While the males are dark purple-black with an iridescent sheen when seen in sunlight and with yellow eyes, the much smaller females are a warm tawny-brown color with pale yellow eyes. (Florida Boat-tailed Grackles have darker eyes.)

Although taxonomically placed with Icterids, in my view grackles' intelligent and opportunistic behavior makes them similar to crows and other corvids. For instance, on beaches they are known to look under rocks to find food, while in parks they have been seen taking dried, hard food and making it edible by dipping it in water. They are omnivorous and eat insects, fish, frogs, berries, and seeds as well as scavenge for food in dumpsters, parking lots, and on the ground around human environments. Unlike crows, grackles don't use tools like sticks, but are very inquisitive and entertaining to watch.

I see Boat-tailed Grackles most often in winter, when they forage in flocks and gravitate to the nearby Queens communities of Broad Channel and Howard Beach during the day before flying off to roost communally at dusk. In the summer, they nest in shrubs and small trees at the edge of Jamaica Bay's marshes and can also be found in nearby Liberty State Park, New Jersey. On early spring and summer days, I always enjoy hearing them calling and displaying with beaks pointing skyward.



Male Boat-tailed Grackles



Female Boat-tailed Grackle in Front of Male

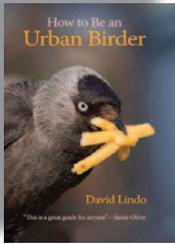
CONSERVATION PROGRAM UPDATE AND ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING

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

CONSERVATION PROGRAM UPDATE AND ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING

By Susan Elbin, PhD, and Conservation Staff
Tuesday, June 4, 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 Susan Elbin, PhD, Conservation Biologist Kaitlyn Parkins, 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.



HOW TO BE AN URBAN BIRDER

By David Lindo

Princeton University Press, 2018

As the title suggests, *How to Be an Urban Birder* is aimed primarily at newcomers to birding in an urban setting. A regular on BBC TV and radio, as well as author of multiple books and the popular website theurbanbirder.com, Lindo is dedicated to helping people of all ages and experiences to “get out there” and “look up.”

With the premise that “birds are cool and you are too,” the life-long Londoner presents birding basics with humor and nearly 350 photos and illustrations. He details where to find birds in his city, a gift to those planning a visit to Britain’s capital. (Look for the Great Crested Grebes “doing their penguin dance thing” in St. James’s Park lake, within sight of Buckingham Palace.) With little translating, New Yorkers will recognize similar habitats here: parks, reservoirs, rivers, woodlands, cemeteries, even “brown-fields” (think Newtown Creek in Brooklyn) and rooftops—the urbanites’ advantage over other birders. Lindo spent many seasons atop London Tower 42 during spring migration, watching raptors ride the thermals. Throughout, there are tidbits that even experienced birders may find interesting: London plane trees, despite the name, are not native to London—and they do not attract birds, because they don’t support insect life.

While some birds in the “Birds to Look For” sections are definitely London denizens (Pied Wagtails and Wheatears), and while others, like the European Robin, differ from their New York cousins, most of the species

mentioned can be seen in the Big Apple. Other sections include a helpful listing of tools of the trade, including information on binoculars and tips on fieldcraft.

Of prime importance, Lindo urges, is to find a patch: a local and familiar site you bird on a frequent basis. In his own patch at Wormwood Scrubs, a collection of soccer fields with a narrow strip of woodland in west London, Lindo has seen 150 species in 25 years. Here in New York, a friend of mine was surprised when, gazing out her window, she saw a hawk perched atop the Cathedral of St. John the Divine’s Gothic spire. She found her “patch”—and is heading out to buy her first pair of binoculars to start birding in the neighborhood.—SC



DARWIN COMES TO TOWN: HOW THE URBAN JUNGLE DRIVES EVOLUTION

By Menno Schilthuizen

Picador, 2018

Menno Schilthuizen is an optimist. Throughout *Darwin Comes to Town*, he lists the many disasters facing our planet, including the risk of extinction challenging many plant and animal species, but his focus is on a happier theme: the proven ability of wildlife to adapt to conditions created by humans in cities.

The book’s title refers to how many newly urbanized species, both plants and animals, have quickly evolved to thrive in their adopted habitats. As a result, cities have become important laboratories for scientists, who had previously focused their research in rural or wilderness areas.

Schilthuizen’s descriptions of these

urban research projects involve species such as lizards in Puerto Rico, Cliff Swallows in Nebraska, mosquitos in the London Underground, damselflies in Belgium, and bullfinches in Barbados. Perhaps the most heavily researched species is the Eurasian Blackbird (*Turdus merula*). Like Darwin’s finches in the Galapagos, city blackbirds have differentiated from their ancestors in the countryside. Many begin singing three hours before sunrise to avoid traffic noise. Because they find ample food in cities even in winter, these blackbirds no longer need to migrate and thus, can begin breeding earlier. It is thought that these differences will eventually lead to new species.

A few of the research projects are local, specific to New York City. A Fordham University researcher, Jason Munshi-South, has determined that the DNA of New York City’s White-footed Mice—a single population until urban development isolated them in separate green spaces—has changed enough that researchers can use DNA to identify which park a mouse came from. NYC Audubon’s annual effort to study the effects of artificial light on migrating birds and prevent bird collisions during the 9/11 Tribute in Light memorial is mentioned in connection with the problems that lights cause for birds and moths everywhere. (Regrettably, the author refers to the organization simply as “Audubon.”)

Despite the evidence provided that certain species can adapt to built environments, *Darwin Comes to Town* offers no justification for allowing developers “to continue their rampage over the natural world.” The author emphasizes that conservation of wild habitats is required for the survival of most species. He argues for a more enlightened attitude toward conservation, based on acknowledging that “evolutionary forces are shaping novel ecosystems right here, right now.”

While introducing a new way of looking at the wildlife around us, Schilthuizen writes in engaging, often witty, prose that makes this book a delight to read.—MJK

14TH ANNUAL JAMAICA BAY SHOREBIRD FESTIVAL

© Debra Kiersky



AT JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE, SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 8:30AM-5PM

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 14th annual celebration at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge on Saturday, August 17. Activities at this day-long festival include hikes to the East and West Ponds, lectures by prominent shorebird experts, kids programs, and more. Learn about shorebird behavior and biology, as well as how to identify these birds in the field. Walk leaders include Kevin Karlson, Don Riepe, and Lloyd Spitalnik. The festival meets at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. A full schedule of activities will be posted on www.nycaudubon.org closer to the time of the festival.

Limited free van transportation from Manhattan to the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center is available for NYC Audubon members at the Student/Senior level and up. Meet at 71 West 23rd Street at 7:30am. Contact NYC Audubon at 212-691-7483 to reserve a seat. Limited van shuttle service will be available from the Broad Channel A Train subway station to the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center until 10:30am. 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.

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.

RAIN GARDEN ON JUSTICE AVENUE: MANAGING WASTEWATER PILOT PROJECT

Dustin Partridge

What happens when you turn a strip of asphalt in a Queens roadway into a species-rich rain garden dense with native plants? Our conservation team at NYC Audubon, in coordination with New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), is working on this exact question. This stormwater Best Management Practice project involves the conversion of a portion of Justice Avenue in Elmhurst, Queens, into a small patch of habitat that captures excess stormwater within the Flushing Bay Watershed and increases local biodiversity.

This new rain garden—a transformed 2,500-square-foot traffic island bordered by Justice Avenue, 56th Avenue, and 90th Street in Queens—is part of a larger effort by DEP to reduce combined sewer overflows and create green infrastructure that attracts wildlife. During heavy storms, overflows of stormwater and wastewater would discharge into nearby waterbodies in what is known as combined sewage overflow events (CSOs). CSOs negatively impact water quality in the Hudson and East Rivers, as well as other wildlife-rich bodies of water. The Justice Avenue pilot project, managed by DEP and designed by engineering firm HDR Inc, was created to catch overflow and detain the water until it is absorbed into the soil. To do this, a rain garden was installed at a previously unused section of asphalt adjacent to the Justice Avenue traffic island. NYC Audubon is studying the density of invertebrates both before and after the project to learn whether native rain gardens like these can attract a rich arthropod community and become quality avian stopover habitat.

Installed in summer 2018, the Justice Avenue native rain garden sits adjacent to Horsebrook Island, a small (~1,200 sq ft) traffic-triangle park planted with trees, a few shrubs, and covered with mulch just a block from the Queens Center mall. NYC Audubon ecologists surveyed Horsebrook Island



Justice Avenue Rain Garden Photographed after Installation, October 18, 2018

in 2017 and found 17 invertebrate taxa and one bird species (House Sparrow). Results from this pre-construction survey indicated that the small amount of green space and soil of Horsebrook Island was habitat for a few wild species, but it was lacking attributes to provide a more robust invertebrate and bird population. This project was undertaken by DEP in connection with the settlement of an enforcement action taken by New York State and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) for violations of New York State law and DEC regulations. The goal of the pilot is to expand the green space with an area of dense native plantings which may be enough to turn this depauperate patch into a more robust wildlife community.



Recently Planted Sweet Pepperbush Growing at the Justice Avenue Rain Garden

NYC Audubon ecologists recently finished their first post-installation survey of both the rain garden and Horsebrook Island. While samples are currently being identified, early analysis indicates that the rain garden has been colonized by a rich arthropod community and there has been an increase in both invertebrate abundance and richness on Horsebrook Island.

The habitat created by the rain garden is still “new,” yet it already has attracted a diversity of pollinators and ground dwelling species such as *Bombus bimaculatus* (Two-spotted Bumble Bee) and leafcutter bee species. SCAPE Studio designed the rain garden with a mixed native palette of shrubs, perennials, and grasses, such as *Cornus sericea* (redosier dogwood), varieties of *Asclepias tuberosa* (butterfly weed), and *Panicum virgatum* (switchgrass). As the vegetation develops, and more invertebrate species colonize, we expect the rain garden to become more biodiverse and increase the number of species using Horsebrook Island. Our ecologists will continue their monitoring efforts for two years.

This rain garden is an example of how the properly planned addition of even a small amount of green space can start changing the ecology of a neighborhood. Small conservation projects, such as this and our Kingsland Wildflowers project, are a great way to help “green” New York in a way that is beneficial for humans, invertebrates, and of course, birds.

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:

Alliance for Flushing Meadows Corona Park
American Bird Conservancy
American Birding Association
American Institute of Architects New York
American Littoral Society
American Museum of Natural History
Arader Galleries
Atlanta Audubon
Audubon Connecticut
Audubon Mural Project
Audubon New York
The Battery Conservancy
BIRDLINK NYC
Birds & Beans Coffee
Nicolas Holiber: Birds on Broadway
Bird-safe Glass Alliance
Broadway Mall Association
Bronx River Alliance
Brooklyn Botanic Garden
Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy
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City University of New York
College of Staten Island
Columbia University
Conserve Wildlife
Constitution Marsh Audubon Sanctuary
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Drexel University
Earth Matter NY
Ennead Architects
The Evergreens Cemetery
Fairhope Graphics
Feminist Bird Club
Fordham University
Freshkills Park Alliance
The Friends of Governors Island
Friends of Pelham Bay Park
Friends of Van Cortlandt Park
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Gateway National Recreation Area
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THE GRAY MARE
Green Horizons
Greenbelt Native Plant Center
Green-Wood Cemetery
Harbor Estuary Program
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary
Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society
IBEX Puppetry
International Dark Skies Association
The Intrepid Museum
Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
Jamaica Bay Ecowatchers
Jamaica Bay-Rockaways Parks Conservancy
Kings County Brewers Collective
Kingsborough Community College
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Linnaean Society of New York
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Michael Ahern Production Services
Morgan Stanley
National Audubon Society
National Park Service
National September 11 Memorial & Museum

Natural Areas Conservancy
Natural Resources Defense Council
The Nature Conservancy
New Jersey Audubon Society
New Jersey Meadowlands Commission
The New School
New York City Department of Environmental Protection
New York City Department of Parks & Recreation
New York City Department of Parks & Recreation - Natural Resources Group
New York City Department of Parks & Recreation - Wildlife Unit
New York City Department of Youth and Community Development
New York City Economic Development Corporation
New York City Green Roof Researchers Alliance
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 & Historic Preservation
New York State Ornithological Association
New York University Center for Urban Science and Progress
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NOoSPHERE Arts
The North Shore Waterfront Conservancy of Staten Island, Inc.
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The Ornithological Council
Pace University
Palisades Interstate Park Commission
Patagonia
Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
Prendergast Laurel Architects
Prospect Park Alliance
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Queens Botanical Garden
Randall's Island Park Alliance
The Raptor Trust
Riverkeeper
Riverside Park Summer on the Hudson
Rockaway Waterfront Alliance
Rocking the Boat
Rockaway Waterfront Alliance
Sadhana: Coalition of Progressive Hindus
SCAPE Studio
Science and Resilience Institute at Jamaica Bay
Shoals Marine Laboratory
Student Conservation Association
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
Swarovski Optik
The Trust for Governors Island
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
Urban Park Rangers
The Waterbird Society
Waterfront Alliance
Wave Hill
Wild Bird Fund
Wildlife Conservation Society
The Woodlawn Cemetery and Conservancy

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

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Van Leeuwen Artisan Ice Cream

NEWS & NOTES

SPREADING AWARENESS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE TO NEW YORKERS



On the morning of May 17, *Nicolas Holiber: Birds on Broadway, the Audubon Sculpture Project* was unveiled to the public. Ten sculptures of New York City birds imperiled by climate change, chosen from National Audubon's *Birds and Climate Change Report*, now line the Broadway malls from 64th Street to 157th Street. The birds will be on view through January 2020. This public art project, presented by Broadway Mall Association in partnership with Gitler & _____ Gallery, NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, and NYC Audubon, highlights climate challenged birds, raising awareness of the effects of climate change on our environment, wildlife, and people. That night we presented a free screening of the National Geographic film *Paris to Pittsburgh* at Kingsland Wildflowers at Broadway Stages. Over 150 attendees came to the screening and panel discussion, learning about the national and worldwide effects of climate change and discussing how we as citizens can demand and develop real solutions to reduce our carbon footprint.

WELCOME BACK TOD WINSTON

We are thrilled to welcome back Tod Winston to our communications team as a Communications Content Manager for Special Projects. Tod previously served as Communications Manager for New York City Audubon before taking on the role of Program Associate for National Audubon's Plants for Birds program. Even while Tod was at National Audubon, he continued working for New York City Audubon as a Conservation Research Associate coordinating our annual Harbor Herons surveys. In his new communications role, Tod will be helping us produce additional content for our organization, including our soon-to-be-unveiled Strategic Plan, new brochures, and updated webpages.

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: _____

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Charge my credit card: VISA MC AMEX DSC

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SAVE THE DATE!
Tuesday, October 15, 2019
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Our 40th Anniversary Kick-off Celebration