

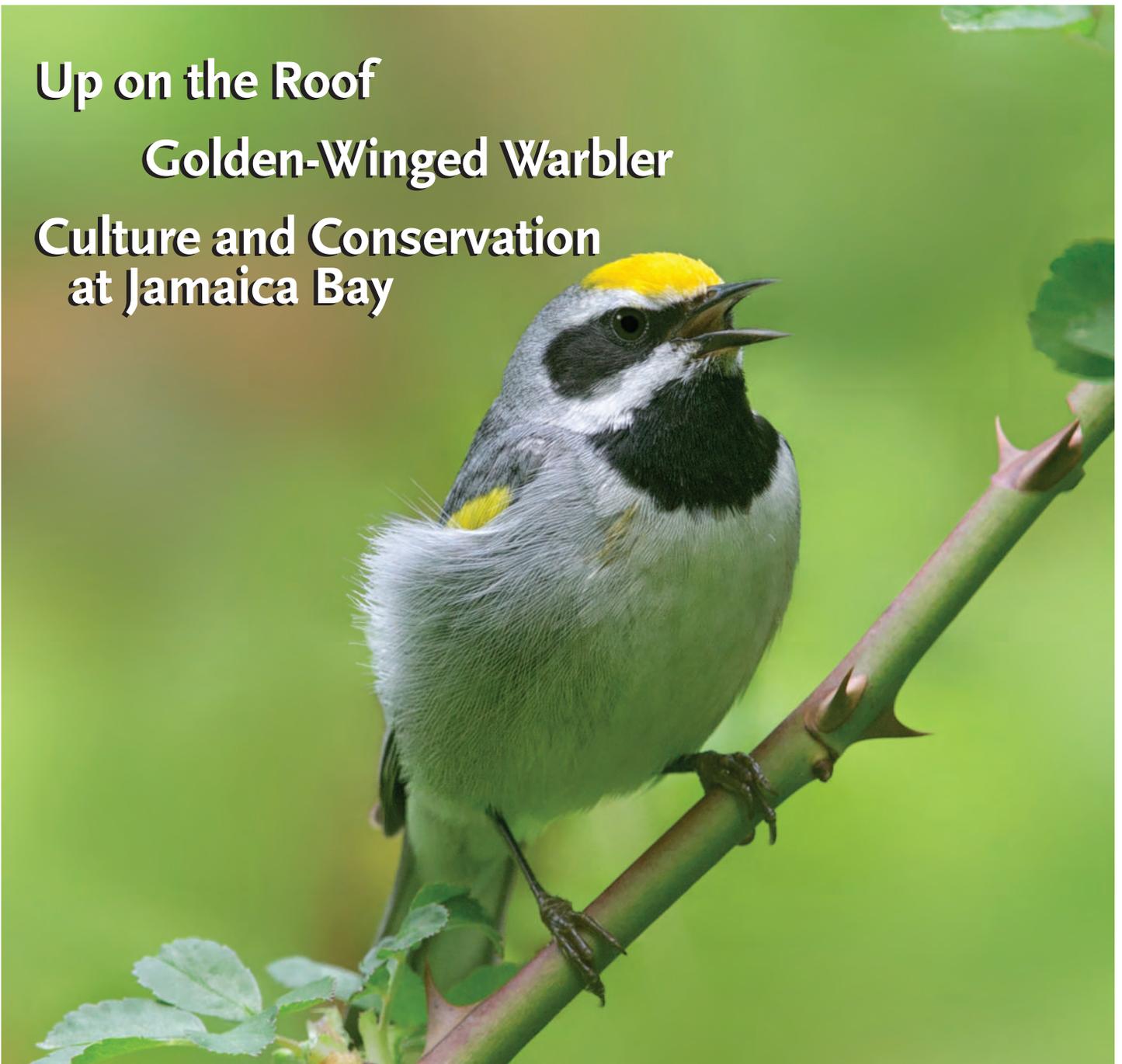


THE URBAN AUDUBON

Up on the Roof

Golden-Winged Warbler

**Culture and Conservation
at Jamaica Bay**



**NYC AUDUBON
MISSION & VISION**

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

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

THE URBAN AUDUBON

Editors Lauren Klingsberg & Marcia T. Fowle

Managing Editor Tod Winston

Newsletter Committee Lucienne Bloch, Ned Boyajian, Suzanne Charlé, Diane Darrow, Lee Frankel, Ellen Gerber, Catherine Heller, Lynne Hertzog, Mary Jane Kaplan, Abby McBride, Sarah McGullam, Jennifer Rauch, Don Riepe, Carol Peace Robins

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As we move into the new fiscal year beginning April 1, I would like to review some of the highlights of the past year, a year in which NYC Audubon made great strides in improving the quality of life in New York City by protecting wild birds and their environment in all five boroughs.

Official discussions with the National Park Service on restoration of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge's West Pond continued throughout the year. NYC Audubon helped form a union of interested groups and individuals, including the Birders Coalition for Gateway, and led that group in an effort to restore this freshwater pond and wetlands—an important habitat that existed before a variety of forces slowly turned the water salty. Hurricane Sandy finished this transformation by tearing a breach in the embankment, filling the West Pond with salt water from the Bay and subjecting it to tidal action. At this time no decision on the restoration has been reached, although National Park Service staff at Gateway National Recreation Area have been meeting with us, listening to our concerns, and using our research findings—a very hopeful sign. Indeed, one of several alternatives being considered for the West Pond is a wetlands habitat and freshwater pond (smaller, but similar to the original) with new trails and blinds.

As discussed in this issue, NYC Audubon influenced the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center renovation, which included installation of bird-friendly glass. We then monitored birds and insects that have been making use of the center's newly installed green roof. In urban areas, green roofs play an important role in energy conservation by absorbing storm water and heat. These roofs are also an important component of the “greening” of our cities, providing birds and other wildlife with needed additional habitat.

In Brooklyn, we transformed a quarter-acre patch of Greenpoint's McGolrick Park. NYC Audubon and volunteers replaced grass and invasive species with native plants, creating an urban oasis for wildlife—and for neighboring residents.

Starting last September, anyone in the City's five boroughs can report dead or injured birds using our crowdsourced database, D-Bird (located at <http://nycaudubon.neocities.org/D-Bird.htm>). This new tool will complement data collected through NYC Audubon's more scientifically rigorous Project Safe Flight protocols.

We were involved in many other programs and advocacy efforts during the year, many of which are discussed in our 2014 Annual Report; I hope each of you will take a moment to read it (at www.nycaudubon.org/annual-report). It tells you, our members and our supporters, everything we are doing to make this great city a better place.

We could not have achieved any of these milestones without your loyalty, support, and efforts. On behalf of our board of directors, I would like to express my thanks and appreciation for all you do for us. And special thanks are due to our dedicated, creative, and talented staff.

The next year will be even better than the past one. With such committed members, directors, advisory council members, and staff, I have no doubt of that whatsoever.

SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NYC Audubon is seeking nominations to its board of directors for three-year terms beginning in June 2015. Please submit your suggestions to David Speiser, chair of the nominating committee, at nominations@nycaudubon.org. Elections will be held online in 2015. For a final list of nominees, nominee biographies, and details about the election, visit www.nycaudubon.org/election2015 after May 1.

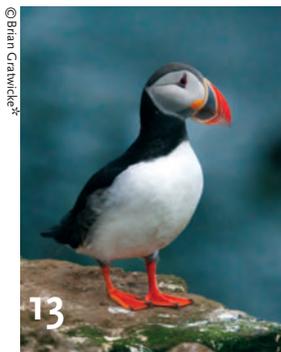
NYC AUDUBON
 71 West 23rd Street
 Suite 1523
 New York, NY 10010
 Tel: 212-691-7483
 Fax: 646-606-3301
www.nycaudubon.org

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CONSERVATION NOTES

As New York City Audubon's conservation and science staff gears up for the spring/summer field season, we want to share with you some highlights and results from our 2014 waterbird and shorebird programs.

The field season started with American oystercatchers. Adult birds arrived in late March, just ahead of endangered piping plovers. We have been banding oystercatchers since 2012, using decoys and vocalizations to draw birds to the edge of their nesting territories, where we catch them with bungee-propelled nets called whoosh nets. Although the birds nest on some of the smaller islands in Jamaica Bay, our monitoring this year focused on birds nesting on beaches at Jacob Riis Park, West Beach, and the Breezy Point Tip. This year we banded eight adults and four chicks at Breezy Point Tip. Eight adults were banded in Arverne, approximately nine miles east of Breezy Point. Our team comprised National Park Service (NPS) staff led by Hanem Abouelezz; Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences biologist Shiloh Schulte; New York City Department of Parks & Recreation field technicians led by biologist Susan Stanley and Urban Park Ranger Richard Simon; and NYC Audubon biologists Emilio Tobon, Susan Elbin, and Kaitlyn Parkins.

Now that we have banded several oystercatchers in the area, it is possible to document nest-site and mate fidelity of returning birds, "re-nesting" attempts (when a pair fails in its first nesting attempt and tries again) within a given season, and productivity of the birds over the years. Emilio has been doing just that. In 2013, the four birds (two pairs) that we banded fledged two chicks each. This year the same birds paired again, nested in the same locations, and again fledged two chicks each. In 2014, three oystercatcher pairs re-nested.

In terms of oystercatcher productivity in our monitoring areas, both sites have exceeded the target productivity of 0.5 (or 0.5 fledged chicks per pair) set by the American Oystercatcher Working Group in 2013. We counted 33 pairs and a total of 41 fledged chicks (productivity = 1.24). Our partners



Tagged Great Egret 10D, Spotted in Hanover Township, NJ

at Parks & Recreation monitored nests at Arverne Beach on the Rockaways, counting 24 pairs, 33 fledged chicks, and a productivity of 1.38. Overall, our birds are doing well.

May is a very busy month for birds in the City—but also for other kinds of animals important to our birds. We worked with partners from Fordham University and the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation to once again monitor horseshoe crabs spawning on beaches in the harbor. The west end of Plumb Beach (in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn) witnessed a resurgence of horseshoe crabs. The beach had been renourished pre-Hurricane Sandy and protected by breakwaters and a groin. Each female horseshoe crab can lay up to 100,000 eggs per spawning season, providing highly nutritious food for migratory shorebirds like the red knot, newly listed on the USFWS Endangered Species List. Please contact Debra Kriensky (dkriensky@nycaudubon.org) if you would like to help her monitor crabs or count shorebirds in 2015.

During the last two weeks of May, Communications Manager Tod Winston took the reins from Research Associate Liz Craig, to lead the 29th Annual Harbor Herons Nest Survey. The population of long-legged

wading birds nesting in the Harbor is stable (to see our interim survey report, visit www.nycaudubon.org). The cautionary tale we learned from the Goose Island colony in the western Long Island Sound: A colony may be thriving, but can quickly collapse if disturbed by humans and/or predators. Goose Island remained unoccupied in 2014 after nests were destroyed, eggs were cracked, and birds were killed in 2013.

Elsewhere in the harbor, we continued our banding effort, tagging nestlings just as they were about to fledge. For the past two years we have been attaching yellow wing tags to great egrets and in that time have tagged 43 birds. We have received many re-sightings of our wing-tagged egrets, which have been seen near Philadelphia, PA, the Meadowlands, NJ, Saratoga County, NY, and Charleston, RI. The first breeding-age bird returned this past summer, returning to forage at Liberty State Park, NJ.

From 2006 through 2014, we have banded approximately 2,000 double-crested cormorants. The results? "Our" birds have been seen along the Atlantic coast, from South Carolina into the Gulf of Mexico. Many of the cormorants we banded on Swinburne Island



in the outer harbor have returned as breeding adults to nest on Swinburne, but we have not seen any one-year-olds return.

Common terns, a threatened species in New York State, continue to nest on the decommissioned piers of Governors Island. In 2014 we were not able to conduct a complete survey, but nesting activity was seen on all three piers. (In 2013, we counted 150 nesting pairs.) Working with the Trust for Governors Island, the Harbor School, NPS, and Earth Matter, Liz Craig and Susan Elbin shoveled crushed oyster shells onto the concrete surface of Lima Pier in order to enhance the terns' nesting habitat. The number of nests at that location tripled, from 10 nests in 2013 to 32 in 2014. We have banded nearly 150 adults and chicks. And we found that three (possibly four) of the adults we banded last year on Lima returned again to Lima to nest. One adult tern we caught had already been banded—on its wintering grounds in Argentina. Elsewhere in the Harbor, our partners reported 870 nesting

pairs of common terns and 460 pairs of least terns. (These counts exclude Joco Marsh in Jamaica Bay.) We celebrated the successful Governors Island tern colony with the first "It's Your Tern Festival," which will take place again in June 2015.

Data from band returns and sightings have answered many questions about where our birds go in post-breeding dispersal and for the winter. We know that some of our birds return to the harbor to breed. But there are so many more questions yet to be answered: What are our birds' local movements as they forage? Where do they roost? Where else do they go to breed? What routes do they take to reach their wintering grounds? In the coming year, we hope to make progress toward answering these questions. We will be working with the U.S. Forest Service, New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, and Lenoir-Rhyne University to trap an adult great egret or great blue heron and tag it with a GPS transmitter, which will

allow us to track the bird's movements.

On December 11 and 12, 2014, NYC Audubon organized and led the 10th Annual Harbor Herons and Other Waterbirds of the Greater NY/NJ Harbor Working Group meeting. It was hosted at Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, by NPS and sponsored by NPS and the Harbor Estuary Program. Lively and informative discussions occurred among those of us working in the Harbor: biologists at federal, state, and city agencies, as well as biologists at non-governmental organizations and universities. The meeting's presentations are posted on the Harbor Estuary website, www.harborestuary.org/harborherons.htm. New partnerships were formed and old partnerships were reinforced.

Of course, in addition to our scientific research, our advocacy for habitat protection is essential in maintaining healthy waterbird populations in New York City's waters. Many thanks to all the volunteers and members who help NYC Audubon do this important work.

VOLUNTEER!



Work in NYC Audubon's friendly office or in the field and make a difference for the City's wildlife. There are many ways to help. **An orientation session for new volunteers will be held on Wednesday, March 12, 6:30-7:30pm, at 71 West 23rd Street.** If interested in either our general orientation session or the specific projects listed below, please contact us at volunteer@nycaudubon.org or 212-691-7483 x304. For information on spring volunteer events such as beach clean-ups and tree plantings, visit us at www.nycaudubon.org/volunteer-events.

OFFICE HELP

Answer inquiries about wildlife and our field trips, classes, events, and conservation work. Help with

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

PRESS AND PROMOTION

If you have a background in event promotion or publicity, we need your help in spreading the word about our trips, classes, and events.

CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Become a citizen scientist and help conduct conservation research; you can read below about the various ways to be involved.

Project Safe Flight: Spring is here, and migrants confront many hazards as they migrate through New York City. Volunteers are needed to monitor designated buildings for bird collisions, rescue injured birds, and record any casualties. Orientations will be held on Monday, March 23, and Friday, March 27, 6-7pm

Jamaica Bay: Count shorebirds and horseshoe crabs in Jamaica Bay, an important stopover for migratory shorebirds. Orientations will be held Thursday, April 16, and Friday, April 24, 6-8pm

Harbor Herons Foraging Study: Observe herons and egrets as they forage in NYC waterways. An

orientation will be held Monday, May 4, 6-8pm

Bird Transporters: We often receive calls from individuals who have found injured birds but are unable to transport them to a rehabilitator. We need caring volunteers to transport these birds to licensed wildlife rehabilitators in the area. A training session will be held at the Wild Bird Fund Center on Monday, March 16, 6-7pm

McGolrick Park: We'll need help planting, weeding, and watering throughout the spring and summer at our "urban oasis" in McGolrick Park, Brooklyn. Come garden with us.

UP ON THE ROOF

©NYC Audubon



Dustin Partridge Sets a “Bowl” Arthropod Trap

High above the Westside Highway, in Chelsea—one of Manhattan’s most relentlessly urban neighborhoods—birds, bats, and insects are finding habitat in a 6.75-acre expanse of sedum.

The green roof atop the two million square foot Jacob K. Javits Convention Center is the nation’s second largest, according to Alan Steel, the center’s president and chief executive. (Ford’s plant in Dearborn, MI, is home to the largest). Part of a \$465 million renovation designed by FX Fowle/Epstein and just completed in late 2014, the green roof helps reduce the Center’s energy consumption (a total decrease of 26%), collects 6.8 million gallons of water, and extends the life of the roof. “The roof leaked ever since it opened in 1986,” Steel laughed, on a recent tour. “No longer.”

NYC Audubon and Fordham University recently prepared an ecological assessment of the Javits Center’s green roof. “We’re finding a rich biodiversity, much larger than we expected,” says NYC Audubon’s Director of Conservation and Science Susan Elbin, head of the project. Two Fordham doctoral candidates, Dustin Partridge and Kaitlyn Parkins, started surveying the convention center’s green roof last spring and summer.

The analysis offers a snapshot of what green roofs can mean to wildlife in an urban environment. Elbin explains that when the roof was planted with sedum, two different purveyors were used. The unintended but welcome result is that there are different communities of arthropods (insects and their relatives), communities that are increasing at an astounding rate. Ninety traps of three types (“bowl,” “sticky,” and “pitfall”), monitored by Partridge and others during a nine-week period, revealed 88,361 arthropods. In the painstaking, one-by-one count, 59,992 springtails (minute wingless insects) were found!

The abundance and variety of arthropods present, of course, will influence the numbers and types of birds that forage here. Visual surveys (about 45 hours in all), buttressed by audio surveys, revealed that a dozen species hung out at the roof, at least for a time, many enjoying the buffet. Herring gulls, European starlings and barn swallows were most prevalent, according to Elbin, one of the observers. Herring gulls took up residence—a first for any green roof in NYC—and 13 chicks, from 8 nests, were banded. American



©NYC Audubon

Eight Herring Gull Nests Were Counted in 2014

kestrels—never before seen foraging on green roofs in New York City—had a feast, most likely on the insect community. Great black-backed gulls dropped in, probably for a rest from their Hudson River patrols; peregrine falcons, nesting in a nearby building, also flew by.

Bats, which are frequently found in urban environments, were recorded for 264 nights using ultrasonic acoustic recording detectors, with an omnidirectional microphone on a pole. Parkins turned the recordings into spectrograms, which in turn helped her identify the types of bats present (see the fall 2014 issue of *The Urban Audubon* on our website for more details). Results: Big brown, eastern red, hoary, silver-haired, and tri-colored bats made a total of 754 passes (calling bouts). At least some were foraging.

All this could mean a brighter future for birds and the environment—not to mention building owners. This is particularly true in Manhattan, where buildings (most of which have flat roofs) account for approximately a third of all the landscape. In an editorial this past January, *The New York Times* lauded the new design, “notably rich in eco-friendly innovations that deserve emulation as the city builds and rebuilds itself.” Other cities are already moving ahead: According to Partridge, in Stuttgart one-third of the buildings have green roofs.



©NYC Audubon

American Kestrel Foraging for Food

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (*VERMIVORA CHRYSOPTERA*) *Tod Winston*

© David Speiser



*Top: Golden-Winged Warbler,
Below Left: Brewster's Warbler
Below Right: Lawrence's Warbler
Background: Shade-Grown
Coffee Plant*

Every spring, birders and bird photographers skulk about a rather unremarkable, cleared line of hillside, overhung with power lines, an hour and half north of the City. Known as “the power cut,” this rocky, scrubby corridor lies within Sterling Forest State Park, near Tuxedo, NY—and serves as breeding territory for a small, exquisite bird that is a rare visitor to New York City, one that sets birders’ mobile phones abuzz with eBird updates when it graces us with its presence: the golden-winged warbler. This sharply dressed neotropical migrant is one of the most coveted sightings for City birders, fascinating from an ecological standpoint, and the subject of great conservation concern.

With its golden cap and wing bars and striking black-and-white head pattern, the male golden-winged warbler is an unmistakable sight (see photo at left; the female is similar in coloration, a more muted gray where the male is black). For birders and ecologists, this aficionado of scrubby sparsely forested habitat is particularly interesting because of frequent interbreeding with the closely related blue-winged warbler. Ornithologists have studied both species extensively and have recognized several hybrids, including Brewster’s and Lawrence’s warblers, pictured below. Both species and their hybrids sing similar, distinctly buzzy songs.

The golden-winged warbler’s tendency to interbreed, however, coupled with the even greater problem of habitat loss, has led it to suffer one of the sharpest population declines of any songbird over the past century, according to data from the Breeding Bird Survey. The species is in trouble in its breeding range of the northeastern and mid-western states, as well as on its wintering grounds in Central America and the Caribbean. (Golden-winged warblers often winter in shade-grown coffee plantations; see page opposite to learn more about supporting “Bird Friendly” coffee brands.) The recent denial of a proposal for a casino resort adjacent to Sterling Forest was a local victory in the battle to protect habitat for this beautiful and threatened warbler, but much remains to be done.

To better understand and stem the golden-winged warbler’s precipitous decline, the Golden-Winged Warbler Working Group was established in 2003. Visit www.gwwa.org to learn more and find out how you can help. For a chance to see this spectacular warbler in the field, see our Sterling Forest Warblers trip on page 12.



THIS COFFEE IS FOR THE BIRDS

Carol Peace Robins



Looking for the most environmentally friendly coffee out there? The choices can be confusing. Organic? Fair trade? Shade-grown? Rain forest? We'd like to offer one more alternative: "Bird Friendly." This coffee comes from the most environmentally friendly farms of all. And no, we're not trying to make life more difficult for you, just to make life easier for the neotropical migrants we look forward to each spring, as well as many birds indigenous to areas where coffee is grown.

Scientists at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center have traveled the world's coffee growing regions in search of coffee that is more than just organic and shade-grown. It's organic, of course, but it meets stricter requirements for both the amount of shade and type of forest: one that provides vital habitat for migratory and resident birds in landscapes often threatened by deforestation. Only coffee grown on small, forested farms following old-style sustainable practices—most of them in Central and South America—meet the criteria to earn the Smithsonian Bird Friendly seal.

Coffee drinkers, by paying a bit more, can help these farmers hold out against large industrial growers on treeless, sun-baked land, and continue to farm in traditional ways that maintain healthy habitat for wintering and resident birds.

This isn't a new concept. Just as cows were born to eat grass and not grains, coffee plants first appeared in the understory of forests, not in sunny fields. Sun-grown coffee does provide higher yields, but forest-grown coffee produces deeper flavor because of its slower ripening

process. It needs shade to prosper. The result is a big bonus for coffee drinkers: a richer, better-tasting brew.

Learn where to find Bird Friendly coffee below. Then next time you wake up and smell the coffee, you'll wake up and help the birds.

There is not a lot of Bird Friendly coffee in stores—yet. But it's available from these purveyors and in these locations. If you can't find it, ask for it. Help spread the word.

Whole Foods' Allegro Early Bird Blend displays the Smithsonian Bird Friendly seal and the story of the certification program. It's carried in many branches, including Columbus Circle, Union Square, Chelsea, and East 57th Street in Manhattan. Employees don't necessarily know what it is, so it's a good idea to clue them in.

Jim's Organic Coffee shows up in at least two places in Brooklyn's Williamsburg section, with a Bird Friendly variety called Mexico Altura El Chorro. The label sports the seal and a description of the birds that frequent the El Chorro farm. You'll find it at Khim's Millennium Market, 460 Driggs Avenue, and at Sunac Natural Foods, 440 Union Avenue.

Birds & Beans® sources and roasts only Smithsonian-certified coffee beans. You can buy it online at www.birdsandbeans.com/shop. And while they don't serve retailers in the five boroughs yet (they're working on it), you can find Birds & Beans® in nearby Hoboken, NJ, at the Aspen Marketplace, 226 Washington Street; in Paramus, NJ, at Wild Birds Unlimited, 189 Route 17 South; and in Scarsdale, NY, at Balducci's, 15 Palmer Avenue.

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES

● NYC Audubon Events ● Partnership Events

● SPRING BIRDING AT WAVE HILL, THE BRONX

Sundays March 8, April 12, May 10, and June 14, 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. Advance registration is recommended, either online at www.wavehill.org, at the Perkins Visitor Center, or by calling 718-549-3200 x251. (Walks run rain or shine; in case of severe weather call the number above for updates.) Ages 10 and up welcome with an adult. NYC Audubon members enjoy two-for-one admission (see www.wavehill.org for more information)

● THE SKY-DANCE OF THE WOODCOCK, BROOKLYN

Saturday, March 21, 5-9:30pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

The American woodcock is a remarkable bird: It is in the sandpiper family but lives in woodlands, often far from beaches. The male performs an incredible crepuscular aerial display and song early in the spring, soon after the snow melts in the northern U.S. There are a few places around New York City where they perform this display. Let's go look for it (and bats and owls and other critters, too) at Floyd Bennett Field. Bring binoculars, comfortable shoes, a headlamp or flashlight, and a snack for a post-woodcock picnic. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$90 (63)

● EARLY SPRING MIGRANTS AT JAMAICA BAY

Saturday, March 28, 10am-1pm
Guide: Don Riepe
With Gateway National Recreation Area

Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. Hike around

the East and West Ponds and gardens to look for returning ibis, egrets, oystercatchers, phoebes, and other migrants. There will be a digital slide program before the hike. To register, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriepe@gmail.com. Limited to 25. Free

● CAMERA CLUB Wednesday, April 1, and Wednesday, June 3, 6:30-8:30pm Instructors: David Speiser, Lloyd Spitalnik

Meet at the National Audubon office, 225 Varick Street. Whether you're a beginner or more advanced photographer, our friendly photography club is the place to discuss diverse photography-related topics, hone your skills, and learn about the great photography opportunities available in the New York City area. Professional bird and nature photographers David Speiser and Lloyd Spitalnik will share their expertise and help you improve your work. Registration required. No limit. \$14.50 (\$10) per meeting

● VAN CORTLANDT BIRD WALKS, THE BRONX

Saturdays, April 4-May 30, 8-9:30am
Guides: NYC Audubon, Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy
With the Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy

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

● BEGINNING BIRDING Classes: Wednesdays, April 8, 15, and 22, 6:30-8:30pm Trips: Saturdays, April 18, 8-11am, and April 25, 8am-2pm Instructor: Tod Winston

Learn the keys to identifying the spectacular variety of birds that



Conserving Our City of Nature: The Artwork of Alan Messer

PRESENTED BY NYC AUDUBON

Thursday, March 5 through Thursday, April 23

The Arsenal, Central Park, Fifth Avenue at 64th Street, Third-Floor Gallery

Join us for an exhibition of the beautiful artwork of Alan Messer. Alan's paintings and drawings of wild birds powerfully depict NYC Audubon's conservation mission in New York City. Gallery hours Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm. Free

SPECIAL EXHIBITION EVENTS:

Opening Reception: Wednesday, March 4, 6-8pm

Lecture with NYC Audubon: Wednesday, March 18, 6pm

Artist Talk with Alan Messer: Wednesday, April 8, 6pm

Admission to all special exhibition events is free, but space is limited. RSVP for the opening reception by emailing Debra Kriensky at dkriensky@nycaudubon.org. RSVP for the lecture or artist talk by emailing artandantiquities@parks.nyc.gov. For more information, call (212) 360-8163 or visit www.nyc.gov/parks/art.

migrate northwards through New York City every spring. Even if you've never picked up a pair of binoculars, you'll soon be identifying warblers, thrushes, waterbirds, and more—both by sight and by ear. Two fun and educational in-class sessions, paired with field trips to Jamaica Bay and Central Park (transport to Jamaica Bay included). Limited to 12. \$179 (125)

MEMBERS-ONLY

Woodcock Courtship at Jamaica Bay

Thursday, April 9, 3-8pm

Join Don Riepe to witness the spectacular flight of the woodcock, as well as enjoy a few “woodcock-tails” on us! After a leisurely check of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge's West Pond and gardens, we will adjourn to the woodcock courting grounds to look for male woodcocks executing their dramatic flight displays. Please call Darren Klein at 212-691-7483 x304 to register. Bring dinner; transport by passenger van, snacks, and drinks provided. Limited to 11. Free for Contributing NYC Audubon members at the Family and Supporter levels

THE BIRDS OF WOODLAWN CEMETERY, THE BRONX

Saturday, April 11, 8-10:30am

Guides: **Tod Winston, Joseph McManus, Friends of Woodlawn Docent**

With **The Friends of Woodlawn**

Meet at the Jerome Avenue entrance of Woodlawn Cemetery. Join us for a morning bird walk and tour of this beautiful cemetery: Tod Winston and Joseph McManus will look for spring migrants and year-round residents on the expansive, wooded cemetery grounds, while a Friends of Woodlawn docent will share fascinating stories about Woodlawn's history and the

©Laura Meyers



White-eyed Vireo

interesting mixture of individuals interred there. Limited to 15. \$35 (24)

BIRDING TOURS OF BRYANT PARK

Mondays, April 13-May 18, 8-9am

Thursdays, April 16-May 21, 5-6pm

Guide: **Gabriel Willow**

With **Bryant Park Corporation**

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

SPRING MIGRATION IN PELHAM BAY PARK, THE BRONX

Saturday, April 18, 9am-4pm

Guide: **Gabriel Willow**

Explore the lovely coves and rocky outcroppings of NYC's largest park, Pelham Bay Park, seeking out migrating songbirds, late-wintering birds, ducks, and a breeding pair of great horned owls. The rich and diverse habitat makes this park an urban gem and a great home for wildlife. Past rarities include a northern goshawk and a purple sandpiper. Bring lunch, water, and binoculars. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$93 (65)

BIRDS AND PLANTS: NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN IN SPRINGTIME, THE BRONX

Sunday, April 19, 10am-1pm

Guides: **Gabriel Willow, NYBG**

Docent

With **New York Botanical Garden**

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

EVENING SPRING MIGRATION WALKS IN CENTRAL PARK

Monday Series: April 20–May 18,

5:30-7pm

Tuesday Series: April 21–May 19,

5:30-7pm

Wednesday Series: April 22-May 20,

5:30-7pm

Guide: **Gabriel Willow**

Meet at 72nd Street and Central Park West for this five-week series of walks. Witness the spectacle of spring migration as songbirds follow the Atlantic flyway northwards. Look for orioles, tanagers, warblers, vireos, and other migrants in the wilds of Central Park, and learn about the finer points of their identification and ecology. Choose from our Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday evening series. Limited to 15. \$122 (85)

BIRDING BY EAR IN CENTRAL PARK

Tuesdays, April 21–May 12;

7:30-10:30am

Guide: **Tod Winston**

Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street. Join Tod Winston for this four-week exploration of all the chips, tweets, trills, and warbles we hear as we wander Strawberry Fields and the Ramble. Though we certainly won't pass up any non-singing birds we come across,

this series is intended specifically for those who'd like to identify the birds around them by sound alone. Take as a warm-up to our May Introduction to Bird Song class, or by itself. Limited to 12.

\$115 (80)

MEMBERS-ONLY

April Member Walk in Central Park

Friday, April 24, 7:30-9am

Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street to seek out early spring migrants with Tom Stephenson, author of *The Warbler Guide*. Please call Darren Klein at 212-691-7483 x304 to register. Limited to 20. Free for Contributing NYC Audubon members at the Student/Senior level and up

MORNING SPRING MIGRATION WALKS IN CENTRAL PARK

Wednesdays, April 29–May 27,

7:30-10:30am

Guide: **Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC**

Meet at 72nd Street and Central Park West. This five-week series of walks will observe the waves of birds passing through Central Park during spring migration. Limited to 15. \$145 (100)

SPRING WARBLERS

Class: Thursday, April 30,

6:30-8:30pm

Trip: Sunday, May 3, 8-11am

Instructor: **Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC**

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

continued on page 12

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES (CONTINUED)

©Ellen Michaels



Black-Crowned Night-Heron

● **SPRING MIGRATION WORKSHOP AT JAMAICA BAY**
Saturday, May 2, 10am-1pm
Guide: Don Riepe
With Gateway National Recreation Area
 Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center for a slide presentation on spring migration followed by a hike around the ponds and uplands to look for spring migrants. To register, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriep@gmail.com. Limited to 25. Free

● **BIRDING FOR FAMILIES, CENTRAL PARK**
Sundays, May 3–May 31, 10-11am
Guides: NYC Audubon, Conservancy Discovery Guides Offered by the Central Park Conservancy
 Meet at the Belvedere Castle (inside the Park, mid-Park just north of the 79th Street transverse). Experience Central Park's precious bird habitat and migration hot spot with Conservancy Discovery Guides and NYC Audubon. Witness firsthand how the Conservancy's work has made the Park a sanctuary for birds. Binoculars can be borrowed from the Visitor Center. For weather cancellation information, call 212-772-0288. Limited to 20. Age 5 and up. Free

MEMBERS-ONLY
May Member Walk in Central Park
Thursday, May 7, 7-8:30am
 Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street for a members-only walk. Join Harry Maas, president of NYC Audubon, at a time when migration is in full swing! Please call Darren Klein at 212-691-7483 x304 to register. Limited to 20. Free for Contributing NYC Audubon members at the Student/Senior level and up

● **INTRODUCTION TO BIRD SONG**
Class: Thursday, May 7, 6:30-8:30pm
Trip: Sunday, May 10, 8am-noon
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC
 Do you ever wonder who is singing? Learn to identify the large variety of migrant and resident birds in New York City. Joe Giunta will first introduce you to the subtleties of bird-song identification in the classroom followed by a field trip in Central Park to bird by eye and ear. Limited to 12. \$72 (50)

● **STERLING FOREST WARBLERS, ORANGE COUNTY, NY**
Saturday, May 9, 7am-3pm
Guides: Don Riepe, Tod Winston
 Explore the woodland and pond habitat of the 20,000-acre Sterling Forest preserve during peak spring migration. Look for nesting warblers (including golden-winged, cerulean, hooded, prairie, and blue-winged), as well as spring wildflowers, reptiles, and amphibians. Visit the rustic visitor center. Trip involves 4-mile hike and some rocky terrain. Bring lunch, water, and binoculars. Transport by passenger van. Limited to 12. \$115 (80)

● **PEAK MIGRATION DAY AT ALLEY POND PARK AND JAMAICA BAY**
Monday, May 11, 8am-4pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC
 Join Joe Giunta for this tour of the crown jewels of Queens: Alley Pond Park and Jamaica Bay. First visit Alley Pond's wooded grounds and kettle ponds to search for warblers and vireos, and then hike the trails of Jamaica Bay to see migrant shorebirds, waterfowl, and more. Bring lunch, water, and binoculars. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$115 (80)

● **NESTING PEREGRINES AND RED-TAILS OF THE UPPER WEST SIDE**
Sunday, May 17, 10am-1pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow
 Meet in front of Riverside Church. Many New Yorkers are astonished to discover that their city of steel and glass is home to a large population of large birds of prey: The City boasts the world's highest densities of the peregrine falcon, the world's fastest flyer, and a growing population of red-tailed hawks (several pairs of which have reached celebrity status). We'll visit the nesting site of a pair of each of these fascinating species, and may glimpse parents feeding their chicks. Limited to 15. \$39 (27)

● **THE BIRDS OF INWOOD HILL PARK, MANHATTAN**
Saturday, May 23, 2-5pm
Guide: Nadir Souirgi
 Meet at the Muscota Marsh viewing area, immediately inside the park entrance at West 218 Street and Indian Road. Nestled on the northern tip of Manhattan, the largely undeveloped oak and tulip forest of Inwood Hill Park transports you to another time and place. Glacial "pot holes," towering trees, and stunning river views create an



Cerulean Warbler

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL TRIPS

unrivaled backdrop from which to observe the many migratory and breeding birds that are drawn to this hotspot. This park also features one of Manhattan's last remaining tidal salt marshes. Join us as we look for residents and migrants, as well as the rose-breasted grosbeaks, wood thrushes, and yellow warblers known to breed here. \$35 (24)

● BIRDING GEMS OF STATEN ISLAND: CLAY PIT PONDS STATE PARK PRESERVE

Sunday, May 24, 9am-3pm

Guide: Cliff Hagen

Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve is an ecologically and historically rich 260-acre natural area near the southwest shore of Staten Island. The ponds, wetlands, and woods of this preserve attract a wide variety of migrating and breeding birds and also support populations of fence lizards, eastern box turtles, Fowler's toads, black racer snakes, and prickly pear cactus. Join Cliff Hagen of the Protectors of Pine Oak Woods as we look for spring migrants and other surprises. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$103 (72)

● RED KNOTS AND HORSESHOE CRABS AT JAMAICA BAY

Sunday, May 24, 12-2pm

Guide: Don Riepe

With Gateway National Recreation Area

Meet at the Jamaica Bay NWR Visitor Center to see the annual mating ritual of the prehistoric horseshoe crab, along with red knots, sanderlings, and ruddy turnstones. Hike along the beach and marshland edges to see fiddler crabs, egrets, and other wildlife. Bring lunch and binoculars. To register, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriep@gmail.com. Limited to 25. Free

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CAPE MAY SPRING MIGRATION WEEKEND, NJ

Saturday, April 25, 9am–

Sunday, April 26, 7pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

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

We'll visit Cape May Point, Higbee Beach, Cape May Meadows, and more in search of returning songbirds, shorebirds, wading birds, and terns—as well as lingering winter visitors such as sea ducks and gannets. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 10. \$330 (\$50 single supplement)

PUFFINS, WARBLERS, AND LOBSTER BOATS: THE ENCHANTING COAST OF MAINE

Saturday, May 23–Saturday, May 30

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Join Maine native Gabriel Willow in exploring the Maine coast, home to Atlantic puffins, moose, shorebirds, warblers, and other migratory songbirds. Stay in charming Camden and on the lovely and remote Monhegan Island, a birder's paradise where seeing 25-30 warbler species in a day is not uncommon. Includes double occupancy lodging, some meals, museum entrance and local transportation fees, a lobster dinner, and van transportation in Maine (airfare not included). Limited to 10. \$1,950 (\$500 single supplement)

©U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Headquarters



Atlantic Puffins

MONTAUK SPRING WEEKEND, LI

Friday, June 5–Sunday, June 7

Guides: Don Riepe, Mickey

Cohen, Mike Bottini

With American Littoral Society

The wildlife weekend starts on Friday with a beach and dune hike at 3pm, and ends on Sunday after lunch. Includes two nights' lodging at Manor House, five meals, five guided hikes, and two evening programs, plus free pickup at LIRR station in Montauk. For more information and to register, contact Don Riepe at donriep@gmail.com or 718-474-0896. \$395

BASHAKILL, SHAWANGUNK NWR, AND DOODLETOWN, NY

Saturday, June 13, 9am–Sunday,

June 14, 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. \$280 (\$56 single supplement)

BASHAKILL, NEVERSINK, AND STERLING FOREST, NY

Saturday, June 20, 9am–Sunday,

June 21, 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. \$280 (\$56 single supplement)

©owp/pmk



Pileated Woodpecker

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES (CONTINUED)

©Steve Nanz



American Oystercatchers

● SPRING MIGRATION ON RANDALL'S ISLAND

Sunday, May 31, 9am-2pm

Guides: Gabriel Willow, Randall's Island Park Alliance Staff

With Randall's Island Park Alliance, Inc.

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

● JEAN BOURQUE MEMORIAL WALK, QUEENS

Early June Date TBA

With the National Park Service

A walk will be held this June in memory of our friend Jean Bourque, who passed away last year. A lifelong advocate for wildlife conservation in New York City and wife of past NYC Audubon President Ron Bourque, Jean was particularly instrumental in the protection of grasslands at Floyd Bennett Field. A walk will be held there in her memory in early June. Visit www.nycaudubon.org/JeanBourque for more information.

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

Thursday, June 4, 8am-4pm

Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

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

● BIKING AND BIRDING: JAMAICA BAY

Saturday, June 6, 9am-3pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Meet at Grand Army Plaza.

Bike your way through Brooklyn neighborhoods and along scenic greenways to Jamaica Bay, to look for migrant shorebirds as well as breeding egrets, oystercatchers, and more. This is a 16-mile trip; return by subway from Broad Channel. Bring binoculars, water, lunch, and your bicycle. Limited to 15. \$40 (28)

● SPRING HIKE IN THE GREENBELT, STATEN ISLAND

Sunday, June 7, 9:30am-3pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

With NYC Parks and the Greenbelt Conservancy

Meet at the Manhattan terminal of the S.I. Ferry and begin your tour

on water. Explore the 3,000-acre Staten Island Greenbelt and visit High Rock Park, Walker Pond, and the Pouch Camp property: 143 acres of unspoiled woods and wetlands. Look for spring migrants and learn about the Greenbelt's ecology. Trip involves 3.5 miles of hiking. Includes refreshments at the Greenbelt Nature Center and transportation on Staten Island. Limited to 20. \$43 (30)

● SUNSET ECOCRUISES TO THE HARBOR HERON ISLANDS

Sundays, June 7-August 16,

7-9pm (Brother Islands;

Hoffman and Swinburne Islands)

6-9pm (Jamaica Bay)

Guides: Gabriel Willow, NYC Audubon

With New York Water Taxi

Meet at South Street Seaport Pier 16 to visit the fascinating Brother Islands, the large egret and cormorant colonies on Hoffman and Swinburne islands, or the great expanses of Jamaica Bay. Whichever your destination, you'll experience the wonders of New York Harbor at sunset and see some of the 3,000 herons, egrets, and ibis nesting here. To choose a cruise and register, contact New York Water Taxi at 212-742-1969 or www.nywatertaxi.com/tours/audubon. Limited to 90. Price varies by destination.

● THE PARAKEETS OF GREENWOOD CEMETERY, BROOKLYN

Saturday, June 13, 10am-1pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

With Green-Wood Cemetery

Meet at the cemetery entrance at 5th Avenue and 25th Street, Park Slope, Brooklyn. Explore Green-Wood Cemetery in search of spring migrants and its most surprising 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)

● JAMAICA BAY SUNSET CRUISE

Saturday, June 13, 5-8pm

Guides: Don Riepe, Mickey Cohen With American Littoral Society

Meet at Pier 4 in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn. Enjoy a narrated cruise aboard the "Golden Sunshine." Visit the 13,000-acre Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge to see peregrine falcons, ospreys, egrets, shorebirds, and waterfowl. Includes refreshments. To register, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriepe@gmail.com. Limited to 140. \$55

EARLY MEMBER REGISTRATION FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

Mid-summer to early fall events will be posted at

www.nycaudubon.org and

available for registration for contributing NYC Audubon

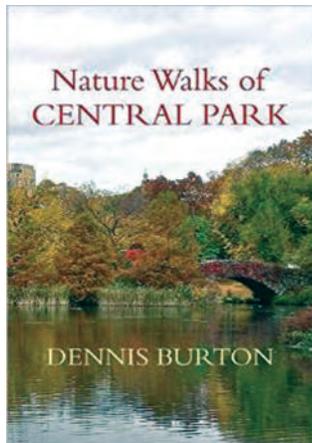
members starting on May 11.

(Registration will open to all on May 25.)

● TO REGISTER FOR ALL NYC AUDUBON EVENTS visit www.nycaudubon.org or call Darren Klein at 212-691-7483 x304 unless otherwise noted.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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



*Nature Walks of
Central Park*
by Dennis Burton
With Illustrations by
Alan Messer
Regina Ryan Publishing
Enterprises, 2014

I was excited to receive a review copy of *Nature Walks of Central Park*, an updated and revised edition of a work first published in 1997. As some of you may know, this reviewer regularly leads tours and walks in Central Park, and yet there's always so much more to learn—and this book is a perfect place to start. (Full disclosure: The illustrator, Alan Messer, is a personal acquaintance, and occasionally leads art workshops for NYC Audubon.) Dennis Burton, author of this delightful book, knows the woods and meadows of Central Park as well as anyone: He helped restore the natural areas of the park in his role as Natural Areas ecologist for the Central Park Conservancy. He has a background in literature, history, and ecology, the perfect trifecta to synthesize the fascinating history of the urban nature and design of Central Park.

Nine walking routes are covered here. The author includes specific details about trees, geological formations, and monuments to be found along each route. Many historical

anecdotes and quotes from the park's architects (Calvert Vaux and Frederick Law Olmsted) are included, creating a fascinating dialog between the park's creators and its modern context.

I can easily imagine heading to the park, this book in hand, settling into a park bench near one of its scenic bodies of water or sunny meadows, and reading about the details of the history and botany of that very spot. I wish there were an audio-book version of this guide as well: How delightful it would be to listen to fascinating location-based facts as one walks through the park.

The text is complemented by Alan Messer's lovely black-and-white botanical illustrations and color portraits of representative bird species to be found along the routes, as well as numerous detailed color maps. (For an opportunity to see an entire exhibition of Alan's beautiful work, see page 10.)

This is a truly beautiful and fascinating book, and a terrific addition to any New Yorker's library (or that of any fan of urban ecology, history, and landscape design). —GW



Welcome to Subirdia
by John M. Marzluff
Yale University Press,
2014

There is accepted wisdom that expanding urban and suburban grids are bad for bird and wildlife diversity. But as John M. Marzluff points out in his optimistic book, *Welcome to Subirdia: Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers, and Other Wildlife*, the change is not all detrimental. The book, with textured, photo-like illustrations by Jack Delap, is upbeat, accessible, and scientific.

Marzluff has good birders and birding stories to back up his research. In 1941, U.S. Fish and Wildlife ornithologist John Aldrich moved to Alexandria, Virginia, an area that then included a 95-acre forest fronting a lake. He counted 23 bird species; red-eyed vireos, ovenbirds, wood thrushes, scarlet tanagers, hooded warblers, Acadian flycatchers, and eastern wood-pewees were the most common. Beginning in 1950, the area was developed and forest transformed to suburb. Aldrich retired in 1979 and undertook another survey of the same

area. The above species were gone or rare. But cardinals, mockingbirds, song sparrows, blue jays, starlings, gray catbirds, American robins, and house sparrows had arrived. The number of species rose from 23 to 29, and the density increased. Eleven species were lost but 17 were gained. The development was not the wildlife disaster that might have been expected.

As landscapes change, birds may be placed into three categories: avoiders, adapters, and exploiters. Avoiders are those who suffer the most from the change in the environment. It's why wood thrushes are increasingly rare today. Adapters are birds such as finches, cardinals, goldfinches, and robins—songbirds that survive in habitats that have been changed. Exploiters are black-crested titmice, mourning doves, crows, blackbirds, and red-tailed and Cooper's hawks, among others. They thrive and their numbers increase in small oases of

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RECONCILING CULTURE AND CONSERVATION AT

THE BAY AND ITS PEOPLE WILL STAR IN AN UPCOMING DOCUMENTARY

The film *Jamaica Bay Lives* began as the vision of writer and filmmaker Dan Hendrick, an active champion of Jamaica Bay. Transplanted from the Midwest, Dan was working and living in Queens when he discovered the Bay and its local residents in 2000. He has since devoted himself to the preservation of the Bay as an original fragment of saltmarsh ecosystem, persisting alongside the pressures of modern, urban life.

Long ago, Jamaica Bay was home to the Canarsie and Rockaway Native American tribes, who hunted, gathered, fished, and farmed in its bountiful environment. In the centuries after the first Dutch settlers arrived in 1636, human activity increasingly took a toll on the Bay. Urbanization and, more recently, climate change have taxed its seaside mosaic of wetlands, tidal creeks, beaches, and islands. These varied habitats support a huge diversity of water- and land-based plant and animal life (including humans), and are a nesting site for long-legged wading birds like the snowy egret, and a crucial stopover point for migrating birds—especially shorebirds like the threatened



© Don Rippe

The Jamaica Bay Lives Film Crew on Location: David Sigal (Director), Dan Gold (Cameraman), and Dan Hendrick (Producer and Writer)



© Rohan Narino

A Panel Discussion about Jamaica Bay at Shri Trimurti Bhavan, a Hindu Mandir in Ozone Park, Queens. From left: Pandit Chunelall Narine, Matt McDermott, Kamini Doobay, Filmmaker Dan Hendrick, and Charles Markis of the National Park Service

JAMAICA BAY

Lee Frankel

BOOK REVIEWS *(continued from page 15)*

red knot. Looking forward, the Bay's allies face the ongoing challenge of enabling the Bay to flourish while also fulfilling the competing demands made upon it by its human residents.

Dan has taken up the challenge. First came his book, *Jamaica Bay: Images of America*, a history in pictures, published in 2006. Now, as producer and writer, Dan and director David Sigal are completing the film *Jamaica Bay Lives*, focusing on the relationship between local residents and the Bay. NYC Audubon, which published two conservation plans for the Bay in the 1990s, "Buffer the Bay" and "Buffer the Bay Revisited," is the fiscal sponsor for the film, which will be completed this spring.

Today, Jamaica Bay is in the process of recovering from a period of pollution and neglect and from the damages of Hurricane Sandy. No one-time fix will permanently balance Jamaica Bay's environmental needs with those of its human denizens, but Dan Hendrick, NYC Audubon, and many scientists, environmentalists, and activists are hard at work crafting solutions.

NYC AUDUBON EXPANDS "TIDAL CONNECTIONS" IN JAMAICA BAY COMMUNITY

In the 1970s, immigrants of Indo-Caribbean origin began settling near the Bay, enriching the City's cultural tapestry with their vibrant history and heritage. The Bay beckons to many in this community as a fitting place for the practice of ancient Hindu traditions joined to nature. They honor such entities as the Ganges, as well as Shiva and other deities, and leave ritual offerings at the refuge. Some—of cloth, plastic, and aluminum foil—are non-biodegradable and potentially harmful to wildlife.

"Tidal Connections," a project high on the agenda of NYC Audubon's board and Executive Director Kathryn Heintz, is part of the organization's commitment to Jamaica Bay and its human population. With "Tidal Connections," NYC Audubon seeks to establish a respectful partnership with members of the surrounding area, including the Indo-Caribbean community, through conversation, education, and activities. The project aims to discover ways to preserve and honor Hindu religious practices and also prevent damage to Jamaica Bay's habitat. A short film drawn from Dan Hendrick's *Jamaica Bay Lives*, documenting this community's rituals, is one component of the project.



Red Knot

©Ulviyl Spatnik

urban environments. The fates of these birds are living, contemporary examples of Darwin's Theory of Evolution.

Marzluff lives in Seattle, and many of his surveys were done there. But he's also worked in Australia, the Netherlands, and several other places, which give his findings worldwide significance. As New Yorkers, we can be particularly proud of Central Park. The author was enchanted by the bird feeders he came across in the Ramble, and believes that maintaining them in the heart of the City allows us to appreciate the City's biodiversity and enhances life for everyone. He counted 31 species in two mornings one March, as compared to 26 in four full days in Yellowstone. Statistics like these emphasize the importance of urban green areas, and the book is hopeful about ways in which birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and insects may be sustained.

A recent (December 24, 2014) article in *The New York Times* documents programs to reforest sections of Costa Rica, Brazil, and Indonesia. *Subindia* examines the work in Costa Rica, and its success further supports Marzluff's confidence that our wildlife diversity can be largely preserved. —CH

FOREVER BIRDS



©David Speiser

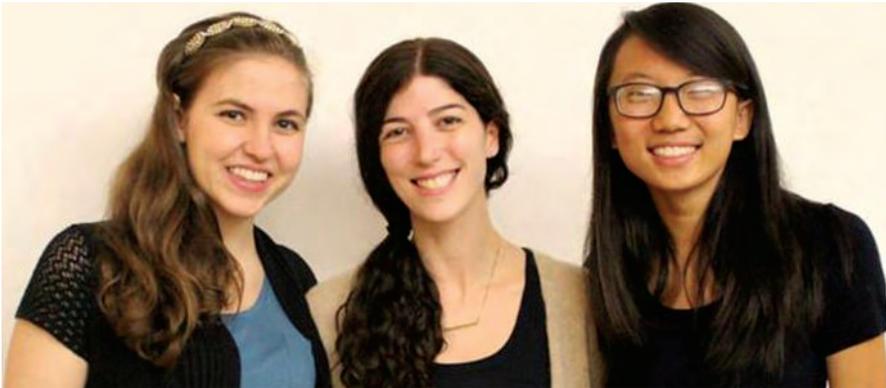


A new stamp from the U.S. Postal Service® features a painting of a white-throated sparrow, based on a photograph by NYC Audubon Executive Vice President and Camera Club Instructor David Speiser. The new "Songbirds" stamps celebrate ten melodic voices, including the Baltimore oriole, scarlet tanager, and rose-breasted grosbeak. Songbirds has been issued as Forever® stamps in booklets of 20.

PROJECT SAFE FLIGHT GOES TO COLLEGE

Mary Jane Kaplan

©Alexandra DeCandia



NYC Audubon's Conservation Biologist Debra Kriensky (center) with Columbia University Students Alexandra DeCandia (left) and Christa Shen

Over the past several years, Toyota TogetherGreen Innovation grants have helped fund NYC Audubon's habitat improvement and monitoring work at Jamaica Bay. With Toyota's new Volunteer Award, NYC Audubon was able to expand Project Safe Flight (PSF) to Columbia University's campus, where, in fall 2014, it monitored bird kills at Lerner Hall, a large, modern building on Broadway. As long ago as 2000, the north side of the building—all glass, reflecting the trees of the University's main campus—was reported to be a hazard for migrating birds, causing injuries and fatalities when they crashed into it; more recently, two ruby-throated hummingbirds were found there this past September. Another campus structure, the Northwest Corner Building, was also included in the monitoring project because its glass facade presented a potential threat to birds, despite being LEED Gold certified.

NYC Audubon welcomed the opportunity to involve more young people, in this case college students, in its conservation work. Debra Kriensky, NYC Audubon's new conservation biologist, kicked off the pilot project in early October by inviting members of the Columbia University Environmental Biology Society to a pizza-and-presentation gathering. The 14 members who attended showed great interest in PSF's goals, and enthusiasm for the new project.

Several volunteers signed up to monitor the two buildings for dead or injured birds weekly through November 7, the end of the busiest part of the migration season. The other participants were urged to use NYC Audubon's new website data tool, D-Bird (nycaudubon.neocities.org/D-Bird.htm), to report on birds found elsewhere. Over the four-week period, students found dead birds at both monitored locations; species included golden-crowned kinglet, song sparrow, black-capped chickadee, and house sparrow. In addition, a Columbia staff member found an injured American woodcock elsewhere on campus.

Debra hopes that the fall monitoring project, limited as it was, will lead to more ambitious programs in the spring as more contacts are made with faculty and students through the pilot program and through Director of Conservation and Science Susan Elbin's ornithology class at Columbia. The goal will be to identify any major hazards for birds on campus and work with the University to mitigate them.

One of the fall participants, Caroline Stern, commented: "I never thought of looking for dead birds. Now that I know where and when to look I've been floored by how many I have found. It has been a very hard lesson."

News & Notes

FUTURE OF THE WEST POND

This past January, the National Park Service held an open house to review the status of possible restoration plans for the West Pond (breached by Hurricane Sandy in 2012). Several options are under consideration, including NYC Audubon's submitted recommendation to restore fresh-water habitat and create new trails and blinds. Gateway's current calendar calls for a final set of alternatives, including a preferred alternative, to be released in late spring or early summer 2015, followed by a 30-day comment period. Please check our website for updates.

NYC AUDUBON COUNTS

NYC Audubon contributed to several bird surveys over the past months, in addition to the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. In mid-November, we participated in a census of bird species and numbers at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, in partnership with the National Park Service. The census served as a pilot study for future censuses, associated with planned invasive species removal at the refuge. This January, we helped with two counts: the NY State Ornithological Association's annual Waterfowl Count and a bird census of a cacao plantation in the Dominican Republic, in an effort to support preservation of the property's habitats.

STATUS OF THE RED KNOT

This past December, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service announced that the rufa subspecies of the red knot, which depends upon stopover spots along the Atlantic Coast during migration, will now receive protection as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

BOARD, ADVISORS, AND STAFF

We are happy to welcome our new director of development, Kellye Rosenheim, who joined us in January. Kellye worked for over 20 years at the Mrs. Giles Whiting Foundation, most recently as director of operations. An avid birder who has led bird walks in Central Park for The Nature Conservancy, she is co-author, with Deborah Rivel, of the forthcoming *Birdwatching in New York City and on Long Island* (University Press of New England).

Many thanks to Angela Januzzi for her outstanding contributions to the organization as our development manager. We will miss Angela and wish her well in her future endeavors.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NYC Audubon's conservation work and education programs are made possible by generous contributions from members, friends, corporations, foundations, and agencies. We'd like to express our gratitude to all those who have sustained us in our work this past season.

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TRIBUTE GIFTS

In honor of all the birds
In honor of Madeleine Brainerd
In honor of John Couturier
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In honor of Douglas Durst
In honor of Greg and Susan Elbin
In honor of Marcia and Bruce Fowle
In honor of Phillip Fried
In honor of Frances Geller
In honor of the David Hand family
In honor of Kathryn Heintz
In honor of Cathy Heller

In honor of Pamela Manice
In honor of David Speiser
In honor of Alan Steel and the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
In honor of Max Weintraub
In honor of Tod Winston

MEMORIAL GIFTS

In memory of Shahin Alirkan
In memory of David
In memory of Hannah the Cat
In memory of Helen Mazzitelli
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In memory of the passenger pigeon
In memory of Starr Saphir

BEQUESTS

The Estate of Frank Maira

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REMEMBER NYC AUDUBON

New York City is forever changing, and with time the need to protect our urban wildlife and habitat becomes more and more critical. A bequest is a generous and straightforward way to safeguard birds and their habitat in the City's five boroughs. It can be expressed "I bequeath [a sum of money or a percentage of my estate] to New York City Audubon Society, Inc. a not-for-profit organization with offices at 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1523, New York, NY 10010, for its general purposes." To learn more, please give Director of Development Kellye Rosenheim a call at 646-502-9611.

SPRING 2015 LECTURE SERIES

All lectures are free and open to the public and are held at The Arsenal, Central Park, 5th Avenue at 64th Street, 3rd Floor. This series has been made possible by the support of Claude and Lucienne Bloch.

ORIGINS: READING THE EARLIEST DESCRIPTIONS OF AMERICA'S BIRDS

By Rick Wright

Tuesday, March 31, 6pm

One of the marvels of the Internet is that every one of us now has access to the first descriptions of nearly all of the world's birds, material that lay hidden for years or for centuries in libraries scattered around the world. Join Rick Wright—author, lecturer, and guide of "Birds and Art" tours across the globe—for an exploration of the surprising and amusing stories of discovery that those resources preserve.

IMAGINING NEW YORK CITY FOR BIRDS AND OTHER BEASTS: THE WELIKIA PROJECT

By Eric Sanderson

Tuesday, April 21, 6pm

The Welikia Project, formally known as The Mannahatta Project, is an interactive map that includes a 400-year-old visual overlay of the former landscape ecology of New York City. Join the Wildlife Conservation Society's Senior Conservation Ecologist Eric Sanderson for a discussion of the project, which uses georeferenced historical data and field samples collected over several years to create a multi-layered map of the "Muir Web," or ecological community, of New York City's five boroughs and seascape over time.

CONSERVATION PROGRAM UPDATE AND ANNUAL MEETING

By Susan Elbin and Conservation Staff

Wednesday, June 10, 6pm