



EASTERN LONG ISLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY – *From the Barrens to the Bays*
Formerly Moriches Bay Audubon, established 1967

THE *OSPREY*

September/October 2017 — Vol. XLII, No. 6



**Please join us as we
celebrate birding on
Long Island with a**

New Orleans Style Buffet at

COWFISH Restaurant in Hampton Bays.

Christopher Paparo will be taking us on a journey as we go

Birding with the Fish Guy

Chris will take a look at the sea's feathered friends in this multi-media presentation. Find out what Long Island birds can be observed close to the shore. Learn details about wading birds, waterfowl, and raptors, as well as where to go to observe each of them.

Chris, who was born and raised on Long Island, has been exploring the wilds of the island for over 30 years. As a wildlife photographer, writer and lecturer, he enjoys bringing public awareness to the diverse wildlife that calls the island home. His passion for coastal ecology, fishing and the outdoors led him to obtain a BS in Marine Science from LIU/Southampton where he currently manages the new Marine Sciences Center at the Southampton campus of Stony Brook University.

An award winning member of the Outdoor Writers Association of America and the New York State Outdoor Writers Association, Chris writes monthly columns for *On The Water Magazine* and *The Northforker*. Additionally, he is a freelance writer for several other fishing and wildlife related publications. Although his work tends to focus on marine life, everything in the natural world is fair game.

He shares his adventures on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Vimeo and YouTube at @fishguyphotos or by visiting his website at www.fishguyphotos.com.



COWFISH sits on the west side of the Shinnecock Canal just before it feeds into Shinnecock Bay. We will enjoy New Orleans Style Buffet and waterfront views at this very popular restaurant.

To get to COWFISH coming east on Montauk Highway from Hampton Bays, look for the sign for Canoe Place Road. Turn right, look for the sign for COWFISH, it comes up quickly, and then make a quick left. Follow the signs down the winding road.

See page 6 to make your reservations for the Annual Dinner Celebrating Birding!

The President's Corner

Bird Communication!

Byron Young

On June 26th I took the hike toward the breach at Old Inlet looking for Piping Plover and Least Tern chicks. Much of the upper barrier beach west of the Ranger Station to the breach is covered with symbolic fencing indicating that there are nesting Piping plovers and Least Tern using the area. At last reporting there were 10 pairs of Piping Plover nesting in the area and over 70 pairs of Least Terns. In addition, there was one very noisy family of Oystercatchers in the area close to the breach. A very busy place!

My first encounter was with a Piping Plover mom and her chick about a mile down the beach. I spotted mom right away but the baby was not so easy to spot as it blended in with the beach almost perfectly. I was intrigued by the communication between mom and the chick. It seemed she kept up a constant chatter with her young one, who like all kids wanted to explore. The Research Team from Virginia Tech had tagged both the mom and baby, so that their travels from Smith Point can be recorded.

I encountered at least one other Piping Plover family before I approached the Least Tern colony. Here was a completely different level of communication. First off, they were unhappy with me being on their beach buzzing over my head and

yelling who knows what. It took me some time, but I began to see the young who again blended in with their surroundings until they could not sit still any longer.

As I stood there watching the interactions, it dawned on me that there were differences in communication and interactions between the Least Terns and the Piping plovers and their babies. In all of the confusion of the Least Tern colony I wondered how a mother or father would find their respective young. This thought occupied my mind on the walk back.

Upon returning home I conducted a Google search on the subject of colony bird communications. This broad question quickly took me to Antarctica and the penguin colonies. While interesting, this did not address my question. Refining my search I began to find more information on Tern colonies and finally found an article entitled "Individual Auditory Recognition in the Least Tern (*Sterna albifrons*)" by Lynn J. Moseley, Dept of Zoology, University of North Carolina, published in "The Auk 96:31-29, January 1979. The author concluded based upon sonogram analysis of recorded calls that the first sounds made varied significantly among individuals enough to presume that the first note is used to convey an individual identity.

OK, that works for me when an individual

is looking for its mate or its young. However, while observing the Least Tern flock on June 26th a curious event happened. Birds were coming and going with food for their young at random intervals. Many birds were sitting on the beach apparently loafing when suddenly the bulk of the flock lifted off and headed out over the ocean. Very quickly thereafter they began returning with small fish for their young. How did they know that there was a school of fish nearby, did one of the previously returning birds communicate the presence of an abundance of food nearby? I could not find any information regarding this level of communication. However, it is my belief that our feathered friends have a level of communication that we have yet to understand. Why else is a Tern colony so noisy when hanging out on the beach or the scoter flocks so noisy while feeding in the surf off Montauk? What are the Catbirds talking about as they flit about in the underbrush. Blue Jays sure can make a number of alarm calls as they patrol through the forest canopy or at least that is what it seems like.

I would be interested to hear what others think about this topic; maybe this could be a Nature Chat at one of our upcoming meetings.

Good Birding! 

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Speakers coming to ELIAS Meetings



Can you tell what kind of sparrows these are? All are found on Long Island. One hint, one of these is not a sparrow. Can you tell which one? Come learn more about these quick moving, hard to identify birds when Joe Giunta comes to our meeting on September 11 where the answers will be revealed.

Monday, September 11, 2017, at 7:15 pm

The Mysteries of Sparrow ID

Joe Giunta

JOE GIUNTA will give a slide-aided presentation about the 15 sparrow species that can be regularly seen in the NYC area. He will discuss their life habits, best locations, and best times to see and appreciate these birds. He promises many ID aids and tricks. He will also discuss 10 other species that look and act like sparrows that are also found in the NYC area.

Joe is the owner of Happy Warblers LLC a travel and education company that specializes in birding trips. He has traveled extensively and has led birding groups to Texas, California, Costa Rica, Belize and Panama among other places. He promises an interesting and educational evening.

Monday, October 2, 2017, at 7:15 pm

Understanding National Policy to Address Climate Change

E.C. Brolin

CITIZENS CLIMATE LOBBY is a nonprofit, nonpartisan national organization focused on national policies to address climate change. They propose a "carbon fee and dividend" policy as a means of minimizing the burning of carbon-based fuels. This policy would make goods that use fossil fuels more

expensive and return the funds collected to all households on an equal basis. Mr. Brolin is a volunteer for Citizens Climate Lobby and a retired executive who was responsible for nuclear energy research and development in government and industry. He is also a past chairman of the sustainable Southampton Green Advisory Committee.

His professional responsibilities have included development of nuclear propulsion plants for submarines, including the world's only nuclear powered deep submergence research submarine; design of nuclear and fossil-fired power plants (Vice President at Burns and Roe, Inc., a national architect-engineering firm); design and operation of nuclear fusion test devices (Deputy Director of the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory); and research and development for civilian nuclear reactors (Deputy Assistant Secretary and Acting Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy at DOE). Mr. Brolin has a B.S., Summa Cum Laude, from Tufts University and an M.S. from George Washington University.

Since retiring Mr. Brolin has been active in our local community, including responsibility for construction of the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House in Bridgehampton and chairing the Sustainable Southampton Advisory Committee to the Town Board for three years. The Committee helped pass several progressive pieces of legislation leading to improved sustainability for Southampton. 🐦

Meetings are held at Quogue Wildlife Refuge, 3 Old Country Road, Quogue, NY. Directions are on the website. easternlongislandaudubonsociety.org. Meetings are open to the public, there is no charge.

Nature Walks

Saturday, September 9, 2017, meet at 8:30 am

Smith Point County Park

Leader: Eileen Schwinn

The Fall raptor, songbird and shorebird migration should be well under way, as we meet at the far western end of the main parking lot at Smith Point County Park. We will walk to the Ranger Station for a view from the upper deck. We will then hike westward, toward the New Old Inlet area, then back to the Ranger Station. If there are any birds of note reported in the area of the boat ramp, we shall visit the marina area - just before the bridge - as well. Please dress for the weather and conditions. Binoculars are a must, and scopes are very helpful. This is an exciting time to be along the barrier beach, and hopefully, we will be there on favorable winds and mild weather! For more details, contact Eileen Schwinn at beachmed@optonline.net or call 516-662-7751 the day of the trip.

Saturday, October 14, 2017, meet at 8:30 am

Fire Island Hawk Watch and Hike to the Lighthouse

Leader: Eileen Schwinn

A repeat of a well-liked field trip, we will be meeting at the eastern end of Parking Lot 5, at Robert Moses State Park. We will stop at the Hawk Watch, where, with favorable winds, we will be joining other Long Island birders for a while, and hopefully see a number of east to west flying raptors. We will then walk the 3/4 mile boardwalk to the Fire Island Lighthouse, looking for migrating song birds along the way. Dress for the weather, and perhaps, bring a light snack and water. Binoculars a must. For more details, please contact Eileen Schwinn at beachmed@optonline.net or call 516-662-7751 the day of the trip.

Save the Dates for Two Pre-Thanksgiving November walks

Saturday, November 18, 2017, meet at 9 am

Hallock State Park

Leader: MaryLaura Lamont

Sponsored by the Hallock Museum Farm and led by ELIAS board member MaryLaura Lamont this walk, of about 2-miles, goes through fields and into the woods of Hallock State Park where we will reach dunes with spectacular views of Long Island Sound. We are looking for a variety of migrants, and wintering birds. Bring binoculars. Dress for the weather. There is a \$7 charge for this walk, \$5 for members of Hallock Museum Farm. The fee benefits the Museum's education fund. Please call the Museum for reservations, 631-298-5292.

Sunday, November 19, 2017, meet at 9 am

William Floyd Estate

Leader: MaryLaura Lamont

The old William Floyd Estate has a variety of habitats featuring fields, creeks, woods and marsh so it brings in a rich variety of birds as they migrate through the 613 acres. Situated on beautiful Moriches Bay we can observe shorebirds, ducks, hawks and possibly bald eagles as well as sparrows, woodpeckers and some warblers. Join us for this late autumn bird walk of 3 miles. Please use the main Entrance Gate at 245 Park Drive, Mastic Beach Call 631-399-2030 for more info or directions.

Keep Your Birds Happy this Winter Come to the Annual Seed Sale Fundraiser



**Saturday, November 4th
from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm**

Start the winter off with plenty of seed! The birds will thank you all winter long. Please have your order form in by October 23rd. This is a fundraiser for Eastern Long Island Audubon Society and for the Quogue Wildlife Refuge. Bay Gardens will be in the Nature Center selling bird related gift items! Please pre-order your seed, order forms will be available in October at the Quogue Wildlife Refuge, as well as on the following websites: www.QuogueWildlifeRefuge.org and www.EasternLongIslandAudubonSociety.org.

Study Shows the Greatest Threat to Eastern Forest Birds is Habitat Loss on Wintering Grounds

Findings may help set conservation priorities

Ithaca, NY—Within the next few decades, human-caused habitat loss looms as the greatest threat to some North American breeding birds. The problem will be most severe on their wintering grounds, according to a new study published today in the journal *Global Change Biology*. By the end of this century, the study's authors say predicted changes in rainfall and temperature will compound the problem for birds that breed in eastern North America and winter in Central America.

"This is really the first study to measure the combined impact of climate change and land-use change over a bird's full annual cycle," says lead author Frank La Sorte at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. "Typically, studies tend to focus on the breeding season. If you do that, you're missing the real story which is inherently dynamic and complex."

Migrant wintering grounds are vitally important because the birds spend a greater proportion of the year in these places.

"We found the species we studied spend up to 60 percent of the year on their wintering grounds in Central America, where they occur in higher numbers and densities," says La Sorte. "That means more individuals of more species are likely to be exposed over a longer period of time to habitat loss as people continue to convert forests to cropland or grassland."

The scientists ran dozens of scenarios to predict what the future might look like for 21 species, most of them flycatchers, vireos, and warblers. They used observations that volunteers entered into the eBird database from 2004 through 2014 to establish where and in what density the species are found throughout the year. Then, they layered in modeled climate change projections (temperature and rainfall) and habitat data (land-use changes and the location of protected areas).

The study finds loss of wintering habitat in the near future will likely be magnified



Rose-breasted Grosbeak, one of the birds likely to be affected by changes to its wintering grounds. Photo by David Brezinski, USFWS

by the long-term effects of climate change. By the end of this century the study species are expected to encounter several significant changes:

- **Greater warming on the northern breeding grounds** and during autumn migrations—a surface temperature increase of about 9°F (5°C) with uncertain consequences for breeding and migration success; a smaller increase of about 5.4°F (3°C) is projected for their wintering grounds.
- **Less rain on the nonbreeding grounds:** a projected decline of 20 percent or more during the summer would reduce available habitat and food for birds arriving after fall migration.
- **More rain on the breeding grounds,** nearing 25 percent more during the winter on their breeding grounds. This could enhance vegetation growth and increase insect densities for returning spring migrants—a positive trend if the birds arrive at the right time.

By examining the birds' full life cycle, La Sorte points out, we learn that birds face a host of challenges all year long—and the intensity of those challenges shifts, depending on whether the birds are

breeding, wintering, or migrating. Short-term conservation action will be most effective if it's targeted to the times and places birds face their biggest threats. Knowing what may lie ahead in the long term underscores the need for action right now to offset the impact of climate change.

"Human activities are placing pressure on bird populations from many different angles at varying intensities," says La Sorte. "Birds are responding with tools designed to function under gradual environmental change—but how effective this will be under rapid change occurring from many different sources is not well understood."

Reference:

La Sorte, F.A., D. Fink, P.J. Blancher, A.D. Rodewald, V.R. Gutierrez, K.V. Rosenberg, W.M. Hochachka, P.H. Verburg, and S. Kelling. 2017. Global change and the distributional dynamics of migratory bird populations wintering in Central America. *Global Change Biology*. July 2017.

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**ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2017
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Please reserve _____ tickets at \$ _____ each. _____

I wish to join or renew my membership in ELIAS at \$20 year _____

Membership is for Jan. 2018 to Dec. 2019 _____

I wish to make an additional donation of _____

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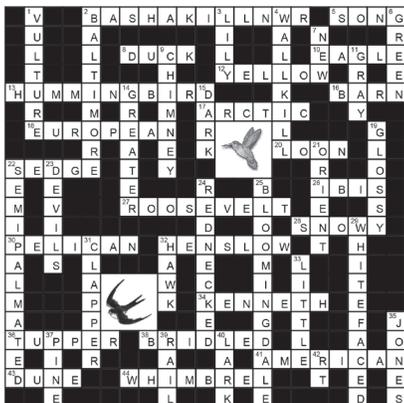
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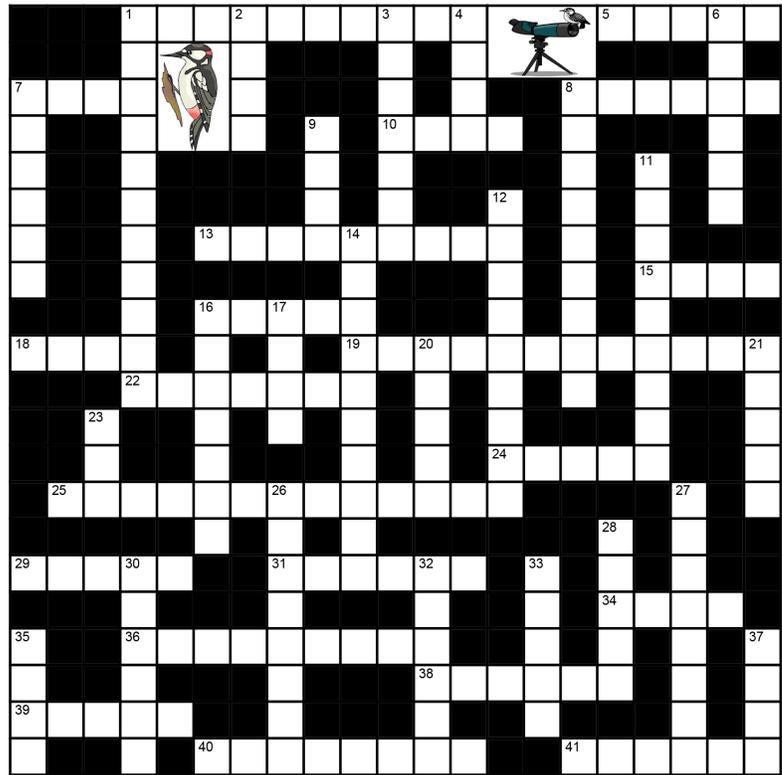
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Answers to July/August puzzle Summertime Places & Birds by Tom Moran



Happy Fall! Tom Moran



Across

- 1 Strong toes, stiff tails, frequently seen at drugstores for aspirin, singular
- 5 More powerful than bins
- 7 Jungle juice, Florida perfume
- 8 Birders must be...
- 10 Generally larger than Terns
- 13 Ruddy _____
- 15 American, _____ runs on water to take flight
- 16 _____ Pelican, or Ibis, Florida birds
- 18 Business part of optics
- 19 _____ Preserve, a good place for Virginia Rail
- 22 Northern _____, aka Marsh Hawk
- 24 Bald _____, some are now nesting on LI
- 25 American _____, look for the flamboyant red bill
- 29 Pied-billed, Horned or even Eared _____
- 31 Northern _____, a warbler
- 34 American or Fish _____
- 36 Double-crested found on the coast, look inland or in the winter for the Great
- 38 Something to put a scope on
- 39 Wedge shaped tail, shaggy neck, seen at Rocky Point shopping center this summer
- 40 Buff _____ Sandpiper, seen at Cupsogue this summer
- 41 American _____ Plover, maybe at the Riverhead sod farms this fall

Down

- 1 Northern or Louisiana _____, lurks by stream banks
- 2 Dabbling, Diving or Whistling ...
- 3 Ruby or Golden-crowned
- 4 Virginia _____
- 6 Eastern _____, a tail bobber that says its name
- 7 Not a Black-bellied Plover
- 8 Where EPCAL is located
- 9 Crazy as a _____
- 11 Not Carolina here
- 12 Common, Red-breasted or Hooded
- 14 Pelagic bird can be seen on whale watching trips, sad event this summer on LI
- 16 _____ neck
- 17 White _____, a Florida bird
- 20 _____ Point, start of Burma Road to Moriches Inlet
- 21 Reddish _____, another Florida bird
- 23 Florida Scrub _____
- 26 _____ CP, end of Dune Rd
- 27 Black or Green _____ Warbler
- 28 White _____ Ibis, seen at Cap Tree last year
- 30 Great or Lesser Black _____ Gull
- 32 _____ Blue Heron, Smith Point Marina or Cupsogue this year
- 33 _____ Preserve, Wading River
- 35 e- _____, a good place to report sightings
- 37 Great Gull Island off North Fork has the greatest concentration of nesting Common _____ (singular)

The **OSPREY**

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