



The OSPREY

MARCH/APRIL 2011 — Vol. XXXVI No. 2

Preserve Plum Island Coalition

Eastern Long Island Audubon has joined a coalition of environmental groups opposed to selling Plum Island which might put it into private hands. An act of Congress is needed to achieve that. Here are some notes on the process from Stella Miller, who is heading the coalition.

Dear NYS Birders,

This is an issue of importance regarding bird conservation, and common sense. We are hoping to rally the birding community to lend support to our efforts to preserve Plum Island's important habitat and protect it from development. We hope you will take time to write your state senators, talk to your neighbors and sign an on-line petition.

The 840 acre pork chop shaped Plum Island is located off the tip of Orient Point, Long Island. It is perhaps most famously known as the home of the Plum Island Animal Disease Control Center. Here research takes place to better understand transmittable livestock diseases. If you read Nelson DeMille's book *Plum Island* you will surely remember his descriptions of the island and references to the Plum Gut.

What many do not know is that the Island is also a natural gem, with about 85-90% of the island containing important undeveloped wildlife habitat. It has been designated as an Important Bird Area (IBA). Over 120 species of birds have been documented as either breeding or utilizing the island. Breeding birds include the Piping Plover, Osprey, American Oystercatcher, Common Terns, Bank Swallow, and many others. Common Eider may also breed there. The island hosts a multitude

Continued on page 2

NATURE PROGRAMS

Bob Adamo, Interim program chair



Monday, March 7, 2011 beginning at 7:15 pm

Legends of How Wildflowers Received Their Names

MaryLaura Lamont

The wildflowers of Long Island have some strange and odd names. Who named them, what do their common and Latin names mean, and where can these delicate little beauties be found will all be discussed in this one hour presentation. MaryLaura Lamont is a botanist, chairperson of the Long Island Botanical Society and ELIAS board member.

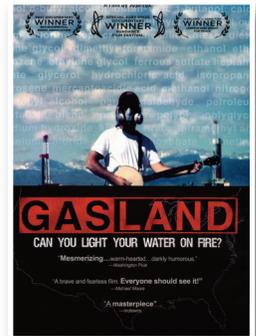
Monday, April 4, 2011 beginning at 7:15 pm

GASLAND

If you have not seen this yet, join ELIAS to see this documentary. It presents information on the issue of *fracking* short-hand for hydraulic fractured drilling for natural gas. New York State shares the Marcellus Shale rock formation with Pennsylvania and large stretches of the Northeast. *Fracing* could change the landscape of our state, the health of many of our residents and the surrounding flora and fauna. Right now New York State has a moritorium on the use of *fracing*, but there is no guarantee the moritorium will continue.

GASLAND documents Josh Fox, the director's cross-country odyssey to find out if the controversial process is safe. He interviews families, EPA whistleblowers, congressmen and scientists, learning that things have gone horribly wrong, from illness to hair loss to flammable water. His inquiries lead him ever deeper into a web os secrets, lies, conspiracy and contamination—a web that potentially stretches to threaten the New York Watershed. Unearthing a shocking story about a practice that is understudied and inadequately regulated. GASLAND races to find answers about fracking before its far too late.

Meetings/Nature Programs are held at Quogue Wildlife Refuge. Nature chat begins at 7:15 pm, the meeting at 7:30 and the speaker at 8:00 pm. The programs are free, and open to all.



Letter continued from page 1

of wintering waterfowl off its shoreline and is a major stop-over point for migratory songbirds as they fuel up for their long journeys ahead. The island also plays host to the largest seal haul out site for grey and harbor seals in southern New England. Key habitats include maritime dune, a 90-acre wetland complex including tupelo-maple swamp, a cattail swamp, grassland, open water and numerous wetland shrubs; and extensive coastal forests.

Unfortunately for conservationists and birders alike, a 2008 act of Congress requires the sale of this publicly-owned island to the highest bidder. The proceeds of the sale are to be used to construct a new animal disease research lab in Kansas. As a first step in this process, the U.S. General Services Administration is preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement to assess the environmental impact of several development scenarios.

A number of groups have joined to form the **Preserve Plum Island Coalition**, from international and national organizations to smaller, local entities. The mission of the Coalition is to have Congress reverse course on Plum Island by passing legislation which protects the Island by designating it as a National Wildlife Refuge administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We have the support of over 40 organizations, what we need now is YOUR voice to make us a stronger and truly formidable force.

Please help us to preserve Plum Island. To learn more visit our website at: www.preserveplumisland.org. Here, you can learn more, download a letter of support to send to Senators Schumer and Gillibrand and Congressman Bishop and sign an online petition to be sent to Congress.

Thank you,
Stella Miller

President, Huntington-Oyster Bay
Audubon Society and Spokesperson,
Preserve Plum Island Coalition



Earth Day Celebration

Saturday, April 23rd 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Come and celebrate nature and our lovely planet at the Quogue Wildlife Refuge during this all day affair!

The day will include guided nature walks, live animal presentations, crafts for children, environmental exhibitors, and self-guided kayaking and canoeing on Old Ice Pond.

This celebration is offered by Quogue Wildlife Refuge & Eastern Long Island Audubon Society.

A great day for all ages!

No reservations necessary. Rain or shine.

Would you like an ELIAS T-shirt, Golf Shirt, Sweatshirt or Cap?

Marlo Graphics is located at 391 Riverleigh Ave # B in Riverhead. The phone is 631-727-0330. They have a master of the ELIAS logo with osprey (it was used on our caps) and they will embroider it onto an item you choice. Stop by and have a look at their selection and ask for the Eastern Long Island Audubon logo.

FROM THE FIELD...

Lakes around
Patchogue

John McNeil, Field Trip Leader

Saturday, January 8th, six members of Eastern Long Island Audubon Society took part in the "Lakes around Patchogue" field trip. At Swan Lake in East Patchogue along Lake Road there were approximately 1,000 Canada Goose, 400 Gadwall, 175 American Widgeon, 75 Ruddy Duck, 5 Shovelers, 15 Ring-neck Duck, 63 Lesser Scaup, 2 Pied-billed Grebe, 65 American Coot, 45 Mallards, 23 Black Duck, 6 Mute Swans, 13 Ring-billed Gulls and 8 Herring Gulls.

Looking at Patchogue Lake from Roe Boulevard North we observed 12 Pintail Duck, 4 Mute Swan, 6 Gadwall, 2 American Widgeon, and 4 Mallard. Looking South into the main part of the lake which was half frozen, we saw 125 Ruddy Duck, a low count. In previous years there have been over 1000 Rudy Duck. Also seen were 43 American Coot, 5 Shoveler, 2 Pied-billed Grebe, 100 Gadwall, 6 Mute Swan, 16 Canada Goose, 85 Ring-bill Gull, 23 Herring, and 6 Greater Black-back Gulls.

Pine Lake which is behind the Waverly Apartment complex yielded 36 Ring-neck Duck, and 8 Widgeon. In years past this lake has been host to a Tufted Duck so it always worth checking out.

East Lake was mostly frozen but in the open areas we noted 12 Ring-neck Duck, 2 Red-headed Duck, 6 Canada Goose, several Mallards, American Coot and Ruddy Duck.

In the open fields of Shirley and Mastic there was a flock of about 2000 Canada Goose that had flown in from the open fields of the school complex and the closed golf course. The flock was resting and eating in the William Floyd High Schools lawn. After carefully looking over the birds, we noted, in the middle was a lone Snow Goose.



Field Trips John McNeil

Saturday, March 5, 2011 @8:00 am

Belmont & Argyle Lakes,
Ocean Parkway, the West End
of Jones Beach and Robert
Moses State Park

Leader: John McNeil

By this time, the earliest of the north-bound spring migrants will have arrived. We can expect to find some of these: Red-winged Blackbirds, Grackles, Cowbirds and Killdeer. Mostly, however, we will see birds that have wintered on the Island. Among these, we are especially hoping to find such species as Red-necked Grebe, Eurasian Wigeon, Red-head and Harlequin Duck and Purple Sandpiper. Meet in the east end of the park & ride parking lot along Sunrise Highway at Route 112 in Patchogue. We will leave the parking lot at 8:00 am. Bring lunch as we may not return until 5 pm if the birding is good. For more details, contact trip leader John McNeil at 631.281.2623 at home before the trip. On the day of the trip the cell number is 631.219.8947 or send email to birdwchr@gmail.com.

Saturday, April 2, 2011 @8:00am

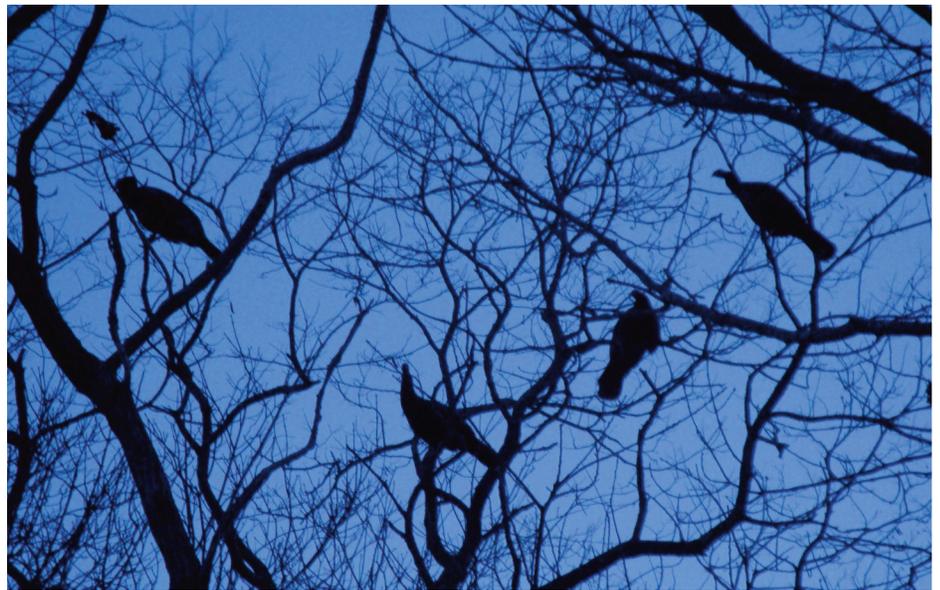
THE FAR EAST—Orient Point

Leader: MaryLaura Lamont

Join us as we travel to various birding spots along the North Fork of Long Island out to Orient Pt., the far east of Long Island. We will stop at Marratooka Lake, areas along Peconic Bay Blvd., the East Marion Causeway, Orient Beach State Park. The day will end at Orient Pt. County Park.

Some species sighted on the trip the last few years have been Common Eider, Goldeneye, Shoveler, Green-wing Teal, Wood Duck, Greater Yellowlegs, Sanderling, Ruddy Turnstone, Harrier, and Horned Lark.

We will meet in the parking lot of the County Center Buildings in Riverhead, on Co. Rd. 51 at 8:00 am. Call trip leader MaryLaura Lamont at 631.722.5542 for more information.



These wild turkeys were roosting in the trees of Beth Gustin's East Moriches backyard just before daybreak in early February. Quite a surprise as Beth filled her bird feeders.

Membership Corner

John McNeil,
Membership & Field Trip Chairman

The Spring Migration is almost upon us and the birding has just begun. So...if I might make a good suggestion, before you head out check Dianne Taggart's web page, "libirding.com." This site is devoted to various birding activities & bird watching on Long Island. The "sighting and reports" is updated almost daily. Reports are submitted by local birders making the rounds to local hot spots. You never know, one of those hot spots might be in your area and being armed with this information, you may find that great bird to add to your viewing pleasure.

Bird watching is a great hobby that will be with you for the rest of your life, even if you do not get out as much as you would like. You always spot something of interest wherever you go.

The Spring Migrations will be here soon so dust off the binoculars, get out the bird book, call some friends and head out and get some exercise and join one of our field trips. I would be very glad that you did.

Also, I would like to remind each member to check his or her mailing label for your membership expiration date. Please renew when you notice that your membership has lapsed. I will not be sending out renewal notices because of the expense that is incurred and what we receive in return does not cover the mailing cost. I rely on your honesty to renew when you see that your membership has expired...And to those members who renewed these past few months, thank you for your continued membership support. In addition, when you renew please include your e-mail address so that I can send you an acknowledgement thank you, send out reminders and/or programming changes. The list is never sold. So sadly, it will not be financing my trip to Belize. But seriously we are trying to build our email list and even if you are already a member in good stead, send in your email to birdwchr@gmail.com. Thanks. Good birding and be sure to join us on our May trips to enjoy the warblers this May. We are planning them now.



Conservation Column

Beth Gustin

"Nobody can do everything but everyone can do something"

Every Wednesday, which is curbside recycling day in my town, I notice that many of my neighbors do not put out a can of recyclables or any paper products. Yet these same neighbors regularly have two or three trash cans on the curb on garbage pickup days twice a week. It seems that everyone knows that recycling is a good thing to do, so it is difficult to understand why some folks still do not recycle, especially when most local governments (Town of Southampton excluded) makes it so easy to do so. It costs the Town of Brookhaven more to dispose of garbage than to recycle. If residents increase the amount of recyclables the town collects by just 5%, the Town can save \$1 million dollars and generate \$500,000 from the sale of recycled materials. Perhaps if we know more facts about recycling we will be more likely to make the effort to recycle everything that we can.

Paper:

■ Recycling one ton of paper saves 17 mature trees, 7,000 gallons of water, 3 cubic yards of landfill space, 2 barrels of oil and 7,100 kilowatt-hours of electricity!

■ Producing recycled paper requires 60% less energy than making paper from virgin wood pulp.

■ Products that can be made from recycled paper include paper towels, notebook paper, envelopes, copy paper, flooring, sound-absorbing materials and kitty litter!

■ Over 73% of all newspapers are recovered for recycling and almost a third of this goes back into making more newsprint.

Metal:

■ It takes one aluminum can 500 years to decompose, but recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a 100-watt light bulb for 20 hours, a computer for 3 hours or a television for 2 hours.

■ Americans throw out enough iron and steel to supply our nation's automakers on a continuous basis.

■ Recycling aluminum saves 95% of the energy used to make it from scratch and recycling steel and tin saves 74% of the energy used to make them.

Glass:

■ Most bottles and jars contain at least 25% recycled glass.

■ Recycling one glass bottle saves enough energy to power a computer for 30 minutes.

Plastic:

■ Americans go through 25 billion plastic bottles every year. If we recycled just one out of ten of these bottles, we would keep 200 million pounds of plastic out of landfills each year.

I often feel that when I write the Conservation Column, I am "preaching to the choir". Most folks who read this already recycle and do the many other things I have suggested in previous columns. My hope is that readers will improve on their already good habits and pass some of this information on to someone who may not be as environmentally inclined.



Kaler's Pond Update

Jay Kuhlman

Sunday, Jan. 31 we held the owl program at the library and to our surprise 47 children and adults came to the program and dissected owl pellets after the talk.

The program in March will be a program on Warblers, as a tune-up for spring. It will focus the breeding warblers of Long island as well as the most common migrants. This will be March 20 at the Center Moriches Library from 1:30 until 3:00 pm.

In April we will do a clean-up and Celebration of Earth Day on April 16th. Plans are being made now so please watch for details on our website and facebook page.



What will this winter mean to conditions this summer?

Larry Penny

It almost goes without saying that, in terms of storms, icing and erosion this is one of the worst winters in a long time. Most of the inlets and bays tributary to the Peconic Estuary in East Hampton are either completely iced over or at least half frozen. The Montauk ocean bluffs have cut back five to ten feet in places, the dunes of Napeague, and Wainscott, twenty to fifty feet. What will March be like when the ice and snow melt away?

In terms of habitat loss, it is hard to say. Salt marshes that are already trying their best to keep abreast of rising sea level will lose at their seaward edges as a result of ice shear. Floating ice sheets go up and down with the tide, back and forth with the winds. Peaty substrate that took thousands of years to build up is sheared off and flattened in a matter of a few lunar tidal cycles. There will be a loss of spartina grasses, focus seaweeds, ribbed mussels and fiddler crabs, although most of these last will have been hidden away, safely hibernating in sealed holes well landward of the marsh sloughing marsh edges. In broader ecological terms, the marshes will shrink further in overall area, they almost never grow seaward in this day and age.

The one species most likely to take advantage of salt marsh loss and salt marsh damage is the Eurasian genotype of *Phragmites australis*. It does better on disturbed sites than on intact ones. While the East Hampton marshes support populations of Sharp-tailed Sparrows and Willets year after year, monoclonal *Phragmites* stands are not to their liking and so their numbers come late spring and summer will likely suffer. The typical saltmarsh zonation—from tidal water—to cordgrass-fucus—to saltmarsh hay—to groundsel-marsh elder—to upland forest—will suffer as well. *Phragmites* makes a hodgepodge of it and so the marshes that it overtakes eventually lose most of their diversity.

The loss of Montauk bluff faces may well impact the breeding population of Bank Swallows that use them annually in which to fashion their nest holes. On the other hand, in some respect, freshly dug holes

might be better than past ones, and the Bank Swallows might even do better. The bluff face tops with overhangs provide a modicum of shelter for those Swallows that nest directly under them; but breeding can be dicey when the overhangs drop off in spring and summer storms taking some of the holes with them as they slide down the slippery slopes.

The rocks and stones that are washed from the bluff faces collect at the bluff toes and fashion a new backshore that is more cobbly than sandy. Thus the backshore habitat is changed somewhat with each large erosion episode. There are changes in the arthropod population that frequent the backshore, as well in the generally sparse vegetation found there. *Phragmites* and Japanese knotweed often get toe-holes as a consequence, while American beach grass and sandy beach forbs lose out. The rocks that subsequently build up in the intertidal zone create perfect habitats for the alien Japanese shore crab.

The tops of the bluffs or bluff crests often have interesting and rare plants which are prone to lose out during bluff cutback. The dragon's-mouth orchid grows here, as well as a dwarf variety of sundrops, salt-marsh plantain, the prostrate form of the heath aster, some sedges, rushes and a few others. There are several ponds and bogs having interesting flora, amphibians and spotted turtles in close proximity to the bluff line. When their seaward edges are overtaken by the receding bluff edge, they spill over onto the bluff face and become dryish; they are no longer suitable for breeding amphibians, their characteristic wetland vegetation is overrun with dry-land species that invade from the pond's perimeter.

The dunes and beaches to the west of Montauk give up land to the sea. These are the habitats where federally threatened Piping Plovers and state endangered Least Terns breed. A federally endangered plant, seabeach amaranth is spotty on the ocean beaches, the state rare prostrate seabeach knotweed, grows here and there on both ocean beaches and bay beaches. Depending upon whether or not the loss

of winter beach and dunes is compensated for by beach and dune return in the late spring and summer, these birds and plants may increase or decrease in numbers. As opposed to Montauk's annual rate of bluff and beach loss of five or more feet a year, the Napeague ocean beaches have been relatively stable, not losing more than a few inches each year overall.

Unlike Napeague's beaches, Wainscott's beaches have been following the retreat seen to the west along Sagaponack's shores. Some of this sand loss is mitigated by dumping sand on the beaches and dunes in front of the residences there, but such yearly sand nourishing isn't able to quite keep up with the yearly losses.

Bayside beaches and bluffs are losing a lot of sediments, especially in Promised Land and Montauk where the shore meets Block Island Sound. Breeding Piping Plovers and Least Terns almost never breed on such thin beaches where lunar flood tides reach up the dune and bluff toes because of this chronic retreat. The bayside beaches, especially those Promised Land, Springs and Northwest are used for breeding by both horseshoe crabs and diamond back terrapins. The wider the beach the better as very thin beaches are easily overwashed by normal flood tides which can wash out the eggs of both species before they hatch. 

The 9th Annual Northeast Hawk Migration Conference

Will be held
Saturday April 2, 2011
in Holyoke, MA

Anyone with an interest in hawks is encouraged to attend.

Visit
www.battaly.com/nehw/conference
for more information.

The 111th Christmas Bird Counts

The 111th Christmas Bird Count was held Nation-wide, between Dec 14, 2010 and January 5, 2011. Our local counts were as interesting and fun-filled as ever — with one common theme — snow on the ground, lots of snow on the ground, and even MORE snow on the ground! Here are three short summaries of local counts:

From Steve Biasseti:

The Quogue-Water Mill CBC has run for sixty-two consecutive years, beginning in 1949. This year we had 30 participants (high: 36 in 1979), who found 118 species (high: 123 in '07) & 22,967 individual birds (high: 51,400 in '04). Among the highlights were Trumpeter Swan (1st time), Red-necked Grebe (1st time), Great Egret, Bald Eagle, Willet, American Pipit, Orange-Crowned Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Pine Siskin. A particularly tough miss was American Kestrel, which had been recorded in the first 60 years of the count but has not been seen in the last 2 years.

From Eileen Schwinn:

The Central Suffolk CBC stumbled at first — that major, Christmas Weekend Blizzard caused a postponement of the count for birder safety issues. And no one could get out of their driveways and get to their assigned areas! But, on Dec. 30th, 30 intrepid counters — including one couple from Atlanta, GA and frequent volunteer from Yale, Michigan — hit the beaches, fields, bays and woods to total up 126 species (plus three additional species in Count Week) and 19,402 individual birds! Some of the best birds reported were during Count Week (three days before and after the Official Count Day). Those included a Lapland Longspur, and the Famous EPCAL Lark Sparrow and Common Raven! A few pre-dawn, early-bird birders heard 5 Great Horned Owls and 14 Eastern Screech Owls. Cold? Yes. Snowy? Yes. A fine day birding? Absolutely YES!

From Carl Starace

During the Orient Count Rob McGinness and John Brush Sr. had a Townsend's Solitaire in a field off of Albertson Lane in Greenport. The bird was feeding on bitter-

sweet along with a Catbird and a flock of eleven Rusty Blackbirds. Some other birds seen on the Orient Count were nine Great Cormorants, a Great Egret, a Red-necked Grebe, a Glaucous Gull, one Barrows Goldeneye, one Tree Sparrow on Plum Island, a Yellow-breasted Chat on Shelter Island, a Razorbill and three Purple Sandpipers.



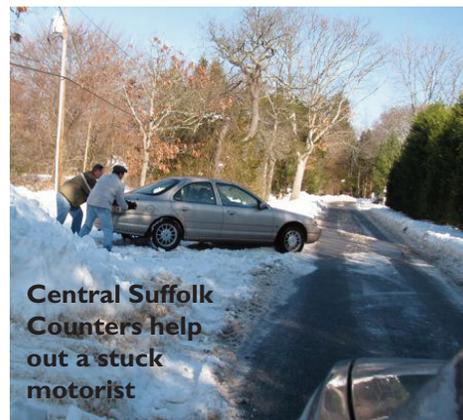
SALLY NEWBERT

Orient Count



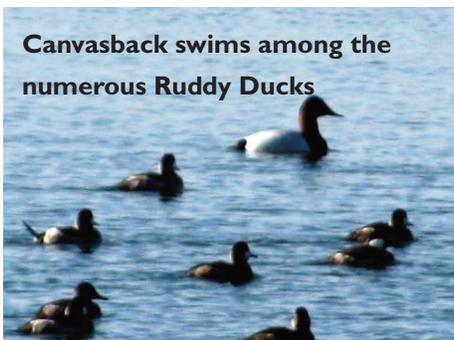
EILEEN SCHWINN

Mockingbird on the Orient Count



EILEEN SCHWINN

Central Suffolk Counters help out a stuck motorist



EILEEN SCHWINN

Canvasback swims among the numerous Ruddy Ducks



EILEEN SCHWINN

Common Merganser



EILEEN SCHWINN

Making an early morning exit as the count begins



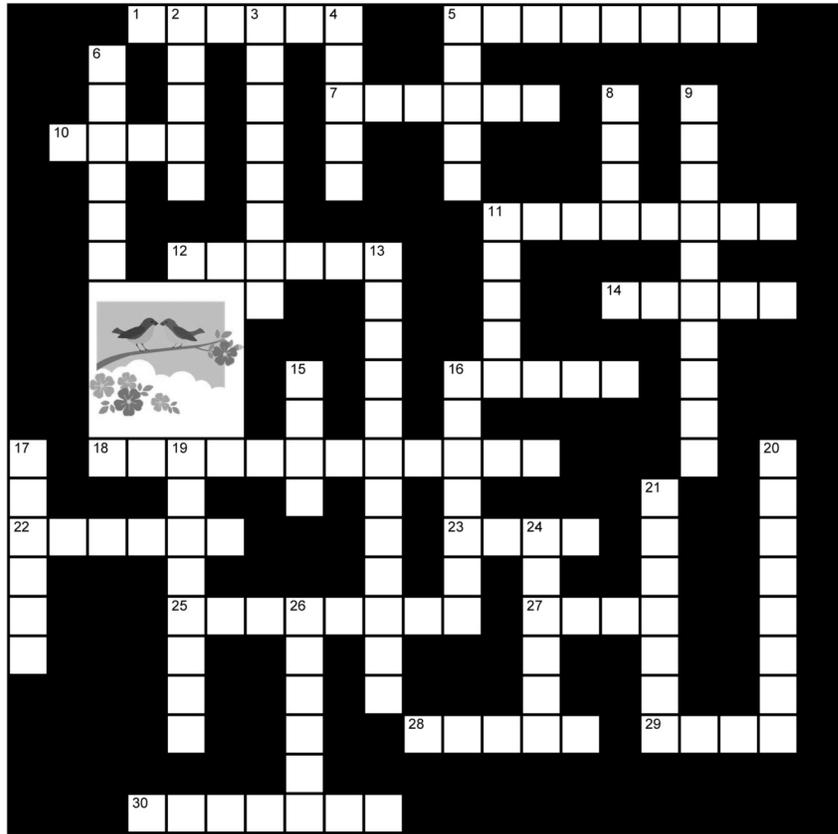
EILEEN SCHWINN



Oops, not that kind of crane.

EILEEN SCHWINN

Spring at Last
Tom Moran



Across

- 1. Hard to tell from Greater, has a shorter straighter bill
- 5. A happy gull?
- 7. A larger sandpiper found on grassy fields
- 10. A swallow that is always dark above and white below, occasionally may be seen in enormous flocks
- 11. A Rose-breasted _____.
- 12. Common warbler, male has reddish streaks on chest
- 14. Swallow with a buff rump and dark throat, lives on ledges and man made structures like bridges
- 16. An egret named for the color; not preference for this weather item.
- 18. A warbler that stays low in wooded areas, large bill
- 22. Semipalmated _____, not the sandpiper
- 23. Common warbler with reddish streaks on chest with a rufous cap
- 25. A quail that prefers bushes in farm area
- 27. Blue-winged _____.
- 28. White-eyed _____, has bright yellow "spectacles"
- 29. This House version has a familiar song
- 30. Great _____ Flycatcher, relatively colorful, with a yellow breast

Down

- 2. This Cattle species is native to Africa
- 3. A crane similar to a Great-blue Heron but flies with neck outstretched and has a red cap
- 4. Northern _____-winged Swallow
- 5. Last but not _____, a sandpiper
- 6. A Northern _____, type of warbler
- 8. Forages for aquatic prey in pools and marshes, has a long curved bill
- 9. Warbler with a black eye-stripe and a buzzy call
- 11. A solitary and secretive heron, appropriately dressed for St. Patrick's Day
- 13. Similar to a Chuck-will's-widow, with a distinctive call
- 15. A thrush in open but shaded areas, relatively large, spotted breast, reddish upper side
- 16. An accipiter, smaller than a Cooper's, nickname
- 17. Plover that often has its nesting areas fenced off
- 19. Often seen on the ground, its call is *teacher, teacher, teacher...*
- 20. Patriotic Woodcock
- 21. Barn species has a forked tail & reddish breast
- 24. Be careful not to confuse an immature type of this _____ Blue Heron for a Snowy Egret
- 26. Larger drab sandpiper with a striking black and white wing pattern when flying



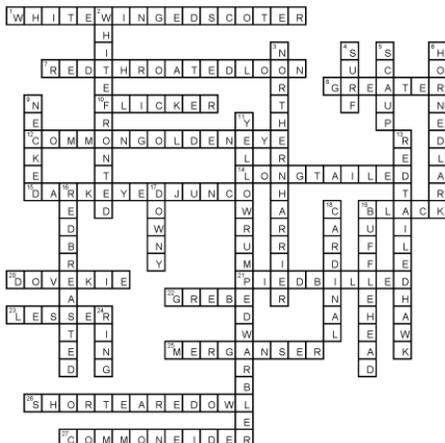
Answers to last issue's puzzle

Winter Birds

Tom Moran

If you missed it, or want another look at the puzzle

The Osprey is archived on the web site. www.easternlongislandaudubonsociety.org



Red-breasted Nuthatch

(*Sitta Canadensis*)

Carl Starace

The word, “nut”, comes from the Anglo Saxon, “Hnutu”. The word, “hatch”, is taken from this bird occasionally wedging a nut too large for it to swallow whole into a tree cavity, where it then proceeds to, “hack”, it into smaller morsels. This Nuthatch has a quite extensive breeding and wintering range in the U.S. In the far north it breeds from Newfoundland west as far as Central Alaska. In the lower 48 it breeds in the forested parts of all the western states. Further east it is found in northern parts of Wisconsin, Michigan and breeds in New England south along the Appalachians as far as Tennessee. In winter it would normally not be found in southern most Texas or in Florida.

Description: The Red-breasted Nuthatch is smaller by about an inch than the White-breasted. Its most distinguishing feature is the white eye line within its black cap. The bill is long and pointed. Below its white throat and cheek is a rust, (sometimes quite red), colored underpart. The back is a blue-grey and may be slightly darker than the White-breasted’s.

Behavior: The Red Breasted is a forager, moving briskly up and down trunks of trees, mainly conifers. It frequently hangs upside down from branches in search of insects in the nooks and crannies. Like the White-breasted it will come to your feeding stations to partake of sunflower seeds and suet. It responds to pishing and owl calls and is actually a fairly tame bird. I was not aware just how tame until yesterday when my cousin Debbie called to say she’d just had one feeding from her open palm, (photo right). The bird even made repeated trips to her hand as Black-capped Chickadees will sometimes do. These birds never cease to amaze. The Red-breasted will often rove about in winter with the Chickadees, Titmice, and sometimes both Kinglets.

Flight: Red-breasted’s have short, wide, rounded wings. Flight is undulating with rapid beats and brief glides. The song is a nasally, (more so than White-breasted’s), a soft, “yank,yank,yank”.

Where To Look: Red-breasted’s are migratory birds and are irruptive. Some winters they are scarce and in others, (this one), they can be found at many feeders around the island. Winter walks in woodland and even beach if there are pines, will usually bring encounters with this tiny, colorful bird.



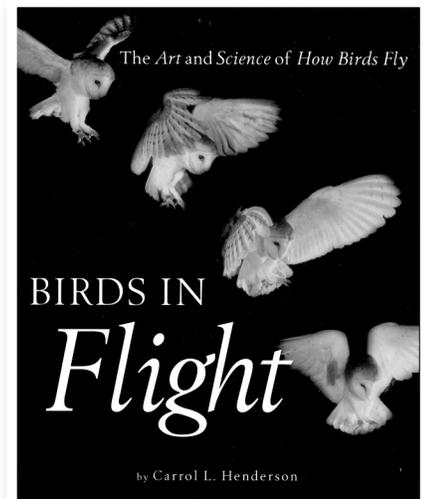
Explain that again — how do birds fly?

A book review by Eileen Schwinn

Birds in Flight — The Art and Science of How Birds Fly by Carrol L. Henderson

Flying - It’s the “Thing” which makes a bird a bird to most of us. It might be the very thing that attracted us to birding in the first place. Sure, they’re colorful, make unusual sounds, and entertain us, but it’s the sudden ability to simply turn and “take wing” which really makes them so special and unique.

Carrol Henderson has put together a volume which combines beautiful photography, illustrations and clear text to explore and explain how birds are able to do the things they do in the air. He compares the bird to modern aircraft – in simple understandable language – and helps us understand how lift, stalling and angle of attack – all aviation terms – allow a plane, and of course, a bird, – to actually fly. Chapters focus on the various components of a bird – feathers, bones, wings, and tail. The “secret of the alula” is shared (hint – it’s on every wing). Take-offs and landings – again, aviation terms – are broken down, step by step. Mr. Henderson’s personal observations and experiences are sprinkled throughout the book. The majority of photography is his. *Birds in Flight* is, perhaps, not geared specifically for birders. It appeals to a much wider reading audience. It certainly is a book which helps us understand flight, and provides us with parallels to aviation. It still may not help me believe that a 747 can actually leave the ground (especially with all that luggage and those passengers aboard!) but it helped me understand the principles involved in both human “flight” and the model which all aviation is based upon – the eons and innate ability of birds!



MAY PROGRAMS

May is the time most people's thoughts turn to the spring flowers, but a birder's heart will be thinking about the warblers that will be passing through our area.

ELIAS is planning a trip each weekend to catch this wave of avian activity. Watch for it in our next issue. Pull out the bird guides. Turn on the bird songs on the ipods, iPhones etc. and join one of our walks.

Welcome Spring

with

TURTLELAND!

A hard-covered book in color for early listeners and readers; for all who appreciate the artistry of nature and the ecological interaction of the Eastern Box turtle with its habitat among us.

Observed for 40 years on our mutual L.I. home site by BMWYBENGA@optonline.net

A trip along Dune Road with Matt and Cathy McClusky



Common Redpoll



Merlin



Great-blue Heron

PHOTOS BY MATT MCCLUSKY



American Pipit



Wilson's Snipe



American Bittern

Feeder Survey

John McNeil

The Survey will be conducted the first full week of the month starting on Sunday and ending the following Sunday.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FEEDER SURVEY

- Define an area containing feeders that you can see all at once from a window. The area should be one you glance at frequently during your daily routine.
- Don't include birds seen off premises.
- Predators perching in or swooping through the count area (not just flying over) may be counted if you feel that they were attracted by the birds at the feeder.
- Record the largest number of each species that you see in your count area during the eight-day count period.
- Do not add counts from previous days together. Be specific with the species name, e.g. we can't use just the name Sparrow, Blackbird or Gull.
- At the end of the count period, record your final tallies and send in the form immediately.

Personal observations and comments are welcome as are suggestions to improve the surveys and reports.

There are three ways to participate:

1. Mail the survey to:

Feeder Survey c/o John McNeil
168 Lexington Road
Shirley, NY 11967

2. Send your information via the internet

go to:
easternlongislandaudubon.org
and

- 1) Click on: Chapter Projects
- 2) Click on: Feeder Statistics
- 3) Click on: To submit via the internet and follow the prompts

3. Email the results to:
birdwchr@gmail.com

**Survey Dates:
March 6 to March 13**

Name _____
Address _____

Town _____
Phone _____

- _____ Mourning Dove
- _____ Northern Cardinal
- _____ Blue Jay
- _____ House Finch
- _____ Black-capped Chickadee
- _____ Tufted Titmouse
- _____ Downy Woodpecker
- _____ White-throated Sparrow
- _____ Dark-eyed Junco
- _____ House Sparrow
- _____ White-breasted Nuthatch
- _____ Song Sparrow
- _____ Red-bellied Woodpecker
- _____ American Crow
- _____ European Starling
- _____ Common Grackle
- _____ Carolina Wren
- _____ Northern Mockingbird
- _____ American Goldfinch
- _____ Red-winged Blackbird
- _____ Hairy Woodpecker
- _____ Common Flicker
- _____ Rufous-sided Towhee
- _____ American Robin
- _____ Brown-headed Cowbird
- _____ Sharp-shinned Hawk
- _____ Rock Dove (pigeon)
- _____ Gray Catbird
- _____ Yellow-rumped Warbler
- _____ Red-breasted Nuthatch
- _____ Other _____

**Survey Dates:
April 3 to April 10**

Name _____
Address _____

Town _____
Phone _____

- _____ Mourning Dove
- _____ Northern Cardinal
- _____ Blue Jay
- _____ House Finch
- _____ Black-capped Chickadee
- _____ Tufted Titmouse
- _____ Downy Woodpecker
- _____ White-throated Sparrow
- _____ Dark-eyed Junco
- _____ House Sparrow
- _____ White-breasted Nuthatch
- _____ Song Sparrow
- _____ Red-bellied Woodpecker
- _____ American Crow
- _____ European Starling
- _____ Common Grackle
- _____ Carolina Wren
- _____ Northern Mockingbird
- _____ American Goldfinch
- _____ Red-winged Blackbird
- _____ Hairy Woodpecker
- _____ Common Flicker
- _____ Rufous-sided Towhee
- _____ American Robin
- _____ Brown-headed Cowbird
- _____ Sharp-shinned Hawk
- _____ Rock Dove (pigeon)
- _____ Gray Catbird
- _____ Yellow-rumped Warbler
- _____ Red-breasted Nuthatch
- _____ Other _____

**ELIAS is now on Facebook
Check it Out and Become a Friend**

**Brian O'Keefe, please contact John McNeil at
birdwchr@gmail.com or 631.281.2623 about missing bird data.**

Eagles along the Hudson River John McNeil

The real EagleFest may have been cancelled, but a group of ELIAS birders, with birding scopes and binoculars in hand, braved the winter chill and ventured up to Croton Point Park a week later on Feb. 12th. The Bald Eagles were there in numbers. There were 11 at Croton Point Park, sitting in trees, on the Hudson River ice, and several majestically flew by. Also at the park were several ground species, Juncos, Tree Sparrows and White-throated Sparrows all feeding in the bare grassy patches.

At our next stop, the Croton Point boat-ramp near the railroad

station, several mature Bald Eagles were perched in the trees. Then Tom Moran spotted a close fly-by, a mature Bald Eagle gently glided by, ever so slowly right in front us. It made its way to the trees opposite us to sit with its friends.

We moved along to several more viewing areas along the Hudson observing mature and juvenile eagles. In all, we saw over 50 Bald Eagles, 12 Common Merganser, along with the more common winter species.

A good time was had by all, and we were back in Patchogue by 4 pm. 



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 & MEMBERSHIP**

For \$15 a year, you will receive 6 copies of this newsletter. You will be supporting our local education and conservation activities. (Members of National Audubon who are not chapter members receive one copy of this newsletter per year.)

This is a Renewal New Membership

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Email _____

Please be sure to include your email. You will receive an email confirmation, a pdf of the first newsletter and occasional updates. And, no we do not share this list!

Make check payable to:

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Mark Your Calendars

- Sat., March 5** Field Trip: Belmont & Argyle Lakes, Ocean Parkway, & the West End of Jones Beach, Robert Moses State Park Leader: John McNeil (see p. 3)
- March 6 to 13** Feeder Survey (see pg. 10)
- Mon., March 7** Nature Program Legends of How Wildflowers Received Their Names Leader: MaryLaura Lamont (see p. 1)
- Sun., March 20** Kaler's Pond Sponsored Program Breeding Warblers of Long Island at Center Moriches Library (see pg. 3)
- Sat., March 5** Field Trip: THE FAR EAST—Orient Point (see p. 3) Leader: MaryLaura Lamont
- April 3 to 10** Feeder Survey (see pg. 10)
- Mon., April 4** Nature Program: GASLAND (see pg. 1)
- Sat., April 16** Kaler's Pond Sponsored Event Clean-up & Celebration of Earth Day
- Sat., April 23** Earth Day Celebration
Jointly sponsored by ELIAS and Quogue Wildlife Refuge from 10 to 3 join us at The Refuge.

If there are any changes in programming, it will be announced on Facebook and on the website. Join ELIAS on Facebook, click to become a friend.

Don't forget to send you email to birdwchr@gmail.com to receive notices.

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