



# The OSPREY

November/December—Vol. XXXVIII No. 6

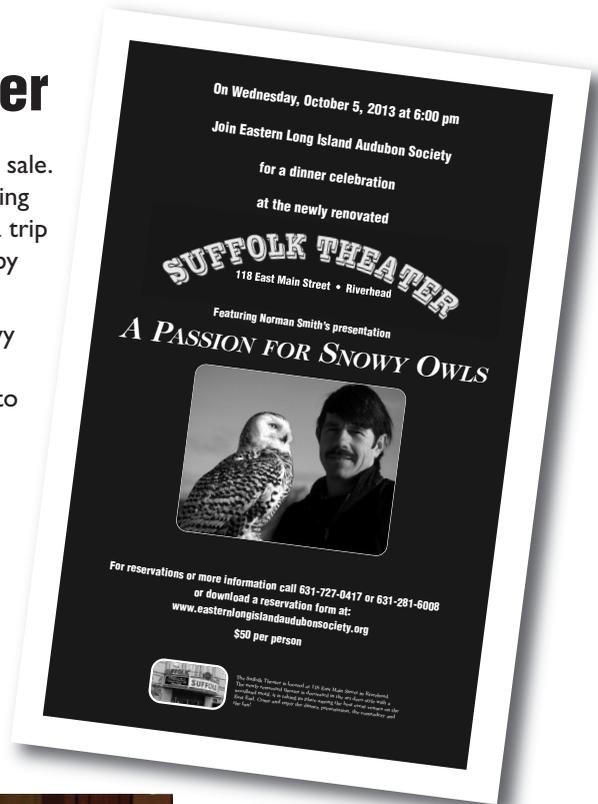
## Dinner Celebration at Suffolk Theater

The beautifully renovated Suffolk Theater welcomed ELIAS and Norman Smith, our speaker, on October 16. Over 85 people enjoyed the evening filled with old and new friends. Byron Young prepared a slide show as people came in featuring the birds of Long Island. Oh yes, he has also put together a calendar that

will be available at the upcoming seed sale. There were over 40 raffle prizes ranging from bird feeders, gift certificates to a trip on The Priscilla, a oystering boat run by the Maritime Museum in Sayville.

Norman Smith spoke about the Snowy Owls and Saw-whet Owls he has worked with. He has used telemetry to track the owls in an attempt to learn where the owls go when they leave Massachusetts and how far and how fast they are able to travel.

Ridgie Barnett won The Osprey Award for her tireless effort as our Hospitality Chair, only one of the hats she wears.



Ridgie Barnett, near left, with Norman Smith, the Snowy Owl expert from Massachusetts and Byron Young, ELIAS president. Far left, an overview of the theater as people were coming in, below, the audience.



DINNER PHOTOS BY ERIN KING

## The President's Corner Year in Review

Byron Young

It does not seem possible that a year has past between Annual Dinners. Last year at various times was a struggle dealing with Hurricane Sandy and its aftermath. If that wasn't bad enough an early snowstorm followed by an even bigger mid-winter snowstorm made for rough sledding as we tried to recover from Sandy and dig out from a record snowfall. However, not everything was bad news.

ELIAS members carried on with a fine series of bird walks, by my count from *The Osprey*, nineteen. The William Floyd Estate received top billing with three visits followed by Smith Point, the North Fork Preserve, Wertheim Wildlife Refuge and Dune Road with two each. Visits were made to the Lakes around Patchogue and further west, to Jones Beach West End, and Robert Moses State Park, and of course to the Quogue Wildlife Refuge. Unfortunately, the trip to the Sunken Forest had to be canceled due to the Federal Budget mess. ELIAS members participated in the Christmas Bird Count, the Great Back Yard Bird Count, the Winter Waterfowl count, and our own bird feeder survey. Add to that our involvement in Earth Day, Migratory Bird Day, and our Annual Bird Seed Sale in with the Quogue Wildlife Refuge and we had a busy year.

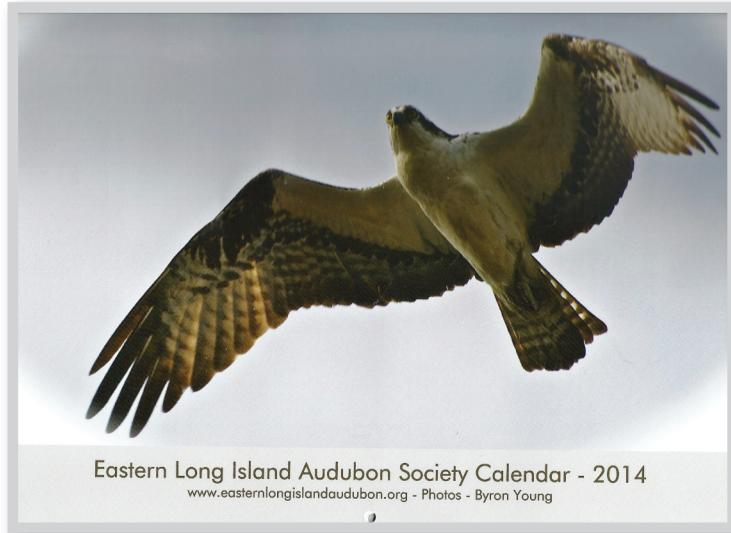
Members also attended several local meetings to express our interest and concerns regarding local environmental issues such as the Calverton Grasslands, the Carmen's River Watershed Management Plan, and the EPCAL scoping plan, a local legislative environmental Round Table, Plum Island, and the North Fork Preserve. This is not intended to be a complete list but does provide an indication of some of the events we attended last year. In addition to that were our monthly meetings and organizational activities. I am certain that I have forgotten something important.

I would like to conclude by thanking everyone who participated in these events. Without your help and participation none of this would have been possible. 

## Seed Sale Fundraiser

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

Stop by and check out the seed sale at Quogue Wildlife Refuge. Everyone was asked to order seed and send in their order forms, but Eastport Feed is bringing some extra seed so you will be able to pick up some seed that day. Bay Gardens is bringing feeders and other nice gift items. ELIAS president, Byron Young, has put together a calendar in a very limited edition which features our local Long Island Birds. These will also be available. It would make a very special gift.



New this year is a calendar with photos by Byron Young. All the photos of the birds featured were taken in our area. Calendars will be available at the Seed Sale and at meetings through the end of the year. Quantities are limited.

Find us on the web at [www.easternlongislandaudubonsociety.org](http://www.easternlongislandaudubonsociety.org) or on Facebook



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Fax: (631) 288-4363

## Join a Nature Walk

John McNeil

Saturday, November 16th @ 9:00 am

### Jamesport State Park and Hallockville Farm Fields

**Trip Leader: MaryLaura Lamont**

The varied habitats of the farm fields, woods, ponds, and dunes on Long Island Sound provide a diversity of migrants and wintering bird residents. Bring binoculars for this 2 hour walk of spectacular views and good birding. For additional details call Hallockville at 631-298-5292. There is a \$5 charge for this walk benefiting the Hallockville Museum Farm.

Sunday, November 17th @ 9:00 am

### Old Mastic Autumn Bird Walk William Floyd Estate

**Trip Leader: MaryLaura Lamont**

The William Floyd Estate in Mastic is 613 acres. The property includes mowed fields, woods, creeks and salt marshes. Round trip walk of 3 miles will turn up wintering hawks, ducks, sparrows, and perhaps Bluebirds. Bring binoculars. Main entrance is 245 Park Drive, Mastic. Call the trip leader MaryLaura Lamont at the Estate at 631.399.2030 for details.

## December 2012

No field trips scheduled because we hope you will join one of our leaders on one of the Christmas Bird Counts.

Saturday, January 4th, 2014 @ 9:00am

### Lakes around Patchogue

**Trip Leader: John McNeil**

Come see our winter-resident waterfowl on the lakes of Patchogue. John tells us "these lakes are God's little oases for wintering waterfowl. There's always a surprise or two to peek your interest!" Join John for either a half or full-day excursion (conditions permitting). Meet at 9 am at the Swan Lake Club House on Swan Lake in East Patchogue. Contact John at 631.281.2623 for details. On the day of the trip, John's cell is 631.219.8947.



## Come to a Meeting

Meetings are held at Quogue Wildlife Refuge, 3 Old Country Road in Quogue, NY. All are welcome, there is no charge.

Monday, November 4, beginning at 7:15 pm

### Long Island: A Migratory Motel

John Turner

Long Island provides permanent, year-round habitat for many species of wildlife such as chipmunks, deer, raccoons, black-capped chickadees and downy woodpeckers. What is less well appreciated is the role the Island plays in providing essential habitat for a wide variety of migratory species. This lecture introduces you to the fascinating stories of two dozen species that migrate through or to Long Island.

John Turner, co-founder of the Long Island Pines Barrens Society and recently retired director of Brookhaven Town's Division of Environmental Protection, is the author of *Exploring the Other Island*, a seasonal guide to the non-paved areas of Long Island



Monday, December 2, beginning at 7:15 pm

### A Brief History of Bird Field Guides: Their authors and illustrators

Ken Thompson

This should be an interesting talk, one that explores the dilemmas we are faced with each time we bird. What is the best approach, who has the best illustrations? Should they be drawings or photos? This will be Ken's second program for us — I'm sure you can recall his unique and very entertaining, *Birding from inside my car...* and who can forget the finale, involving a rabbit, a mink and a bald eagle!

**Remember there is no January meeting.**

**See you in February!**

CONSERVATION COLUMN

# CHRISTMAS TREES, GO REAL?

*“Nobody can do everything  
but everyone can do something”*

**Beth Gustin**

With autumn starting to wind down and the holiday season right around the corner, it is a good time to think about Christmas trees. Environmentally speaking, is it better for us to purchase a live tree or an artificial one?

- Growing Christmas trees as agricultural products helps to preserve open space by keeping tree farmers in business.
- Christmas trees are renewable—for each tree that is cut down, a farmer may plant up to 3 trees in its place.
- Real trees reduce the amount of carbon in the air. A single Christmas tree can soak up one ton of CO<sub>2</sub> in its lifetime!
- Real trees are easy to recycle—many municipalities collect the trees and turn them into mulch. They also work extremely well in a backyard brush pile which provides shelter for birds and small mammals.
- Artificial trees are usually made of polyvinyl chloride (PVC), a type of plastic that is difficult to recycle and is not biodegradable. Although recycled PVC is sometimes used in the manufacturing process, it requires lots of fossil fuels and electricity from coal fired power plants to produce an artificial tree.
- 85% of artificial trees sold in the United States are produced in China, where various harmful chemicals (including lead in older models) may have been used in the manufacturing and decorating processes (think fake snow on the needles). Shipping the trees around the world requires even more fossil fuels. Although families generally do not purchase a new artificial tree each year, there are still at least 10 million fake trees sold each year in the U.S. alone!

- Some downsides of growing real trees are that fertilizers are often used in the growing process and the trees are often sprayed with pesticides.
- For those people who live in warm climates, the live trees are shipped longer distances which requires lots of fossil fuels.

With these things in mind, the general consensus among tree huggers is that it is better to go with a live Christmas tree than an artificial one. Try to buy it as close to home as

possible, from a local tree farm (cut it yourself!) or nursery, and make sure it gets recycled properly. If you are feeling really green (and ambitious) buy a balled and burlapped tree that can be planted after the holidays. I have three of these growing in my yard and my dream is that one of them will end up in Rockefeller Center in about 60 years!






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## Christmas Bird Counts & Winter Waterfowl Censuses John McNeil

As the holiday season approaches, it is once again time to think about the winter bird counts. Each year, ELIAS members participate in a series of ten counts — five Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) sponsored by the National Audubon Society and five winter waterfowl censuses sponsored by the New York Ornithological Association (NYSOA). Dates and compilers for the counts are listed below.

If you would like to participate as either a field observer or a feeder watcher in any of the listed CBC's, or as a participant in any of the waterfowl censuses, please contact the compiler of that count. No fee will be collected this year and the results will be available online. There is no fee to participate in the Waterfowl Censuses. Usually the compilers are very flexible and participants can bird with the group until they need to go. So...please do not hesitate to ask if you can participate. All help is welcome.

**Contact the compiler if you would like to participate. You don't need to be an expert birder to participate. If you are in a count area, you can offer to count birds at your feeder.**

Experienced birders are needed for each of the counts, but beginners are most welcome. If you are not an experienced birder, field parties who are familiar with the territory will help you learn your way around. We hope that new observers will find the counts to be as exciting as experienced birders find them to be, and that they will continue to participate in the future. This is the way we can develop an adequate pool of skilled, committed observers to continue the tradition.

Feeder watchers who live within the count circle are needed to provide additional coverage by recording the number of individuals and the variety of species that appear at the feeder during the count day.

For the most part, counting begins as soon

Count	Date	Compiler	Contact Information
<b>Quogue to Water Mill CBC</b>	Sat., Dec. 14	Steve Biasetti	Hm 874.4684 Wk 765.6450 x205 biafamily@optonline.net sbiasetti@eastendenvironment.org
<b>Montauk CBC</b>	Sat., Dec. 14	Karen Rubinstein Angus Wilson	karrubi@gmail.com oceanwanderers@gmail.com
<b>Sagaponack CBC</b>	Undetermined		Consult ELIAS web site for compiler & date
<b>Central Suffolk CBC</b>	Fri., Dec. 27	Eileen Schwinn	516.662.7751 beachmed@optonline.net
<b>Orient CBC</b>	Sat., Dec. 28	MaryLaura Lamont	631.722.5542
<b>Smith Point to Shinnecock Inlet WF Census</b>	Contact Coordinator	Jay Kuhlman	sjkuhlman@aol.com 631.878.4461
<b>Yaphank to Peconic Bay WF Census</b>	Midweek Jan 19 to 27	John McNeil	631.281.2623 jpmcneil@verizon.net
<b>Montauk to Amagansett WF Census</b>	Jan 18 to 26 Target Jan. 18	Frank Quevedo	631.537.9735 sofoexdir@optonline.net
<b>Reeves Bay to Noyack Bay WF Census</b>	Midweek Jan 18 to 26	John McNeil	631.281.2623 jpmcneil@verizon.net
<b>Fresh Pond to Sag Harbor WF Census</b>	Midweek Jan 18 to 26	John McNeil	631.281.2623 jpmcneil@verizon.net

as it is light enough to see (around 6:30 to 7:00 am) and continues until it is too dark to see anymore (around 5:00 pm). However, to hunt for owls, some observers start a few hours before daylight and continue for a while after dark. At least eight hours of field observation during daylight hours in a CBC circle is required for acceptance of a CBC report.

Field coverage is primarily done by some combination of walking and driving, but bicycles, boats, motorcycles, and other modes of transportation may also be used.

**The Winter Waterfowl Censuses** have been compiled throughout the state of New York since 1955. These too are done in assigned territories, but only birds such as ducks, geese, swans, cormorants, grebes, and coots are counted. These censuses are usually done in mid-January by the same CBC compilers. If you would like to participate please contact a compiler.

See the chart above are the people to contact to join the CBC and the Waterfowl Census.



# Eastport Feeds, Inc.

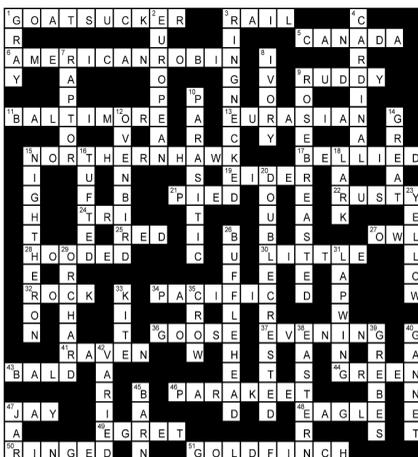
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## Get Involved

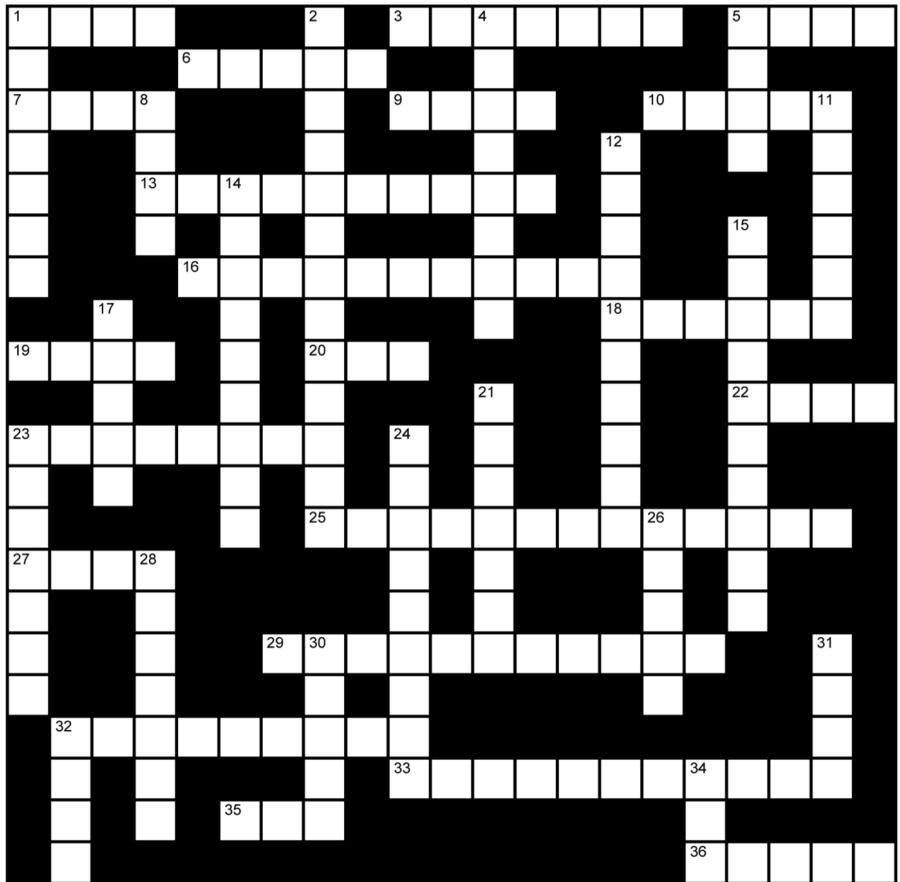
Would you like to submit  
 an article or a photo?

We would like  
 to hear from you. Contact:  
 eliasosprey@optonline.net.

Answers to last issue's Sept/Oct puzzle  
 An Autumn Puzzle by Tom Moran



## Winter Birds by Tom Moran



**Across**

- 1. Winter \_\_\_\_\_, aptly named for the season
- 3. Tiny birds with short, slender bills, short tailed
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_ Bunting
- 6. Great Blue \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_ Sparrow
- 9. Cat got your tongue swan?
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_, Shearwater
- 13. \_\_\_\_\_ Shrike, seen at Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary 2010
- 16 Great \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Gull
- 18. Eastern \_\_\_\_\_, onomatopoeia name?
- 19. Tundra \_\_\_\_\_, uncommon visitor from ... well the tundra
- 20. Snowy \_\_\_\_\_
- 22. \_\_\_\_\_ - crowned Kinglet
- 23. \_\_\_\_\_ Starling, would that Shakespeare's Hotspur never mentioned this species to vex his in-law.
- 25. \_\_\_\_\_ Cormorant
- 27. Blue or Green-winged \_\_\_\_\_
- 29. \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Teal
- 32. Another onomatopoeia?
- 33. \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Nuthatch
- 35. Blue \_\_\_\_\_
- 36. \_\_\_\_\_ - winged Crossbill, part of an irruption last year

**Down**

- 1. Birders on our ELIAS hike at the William Floyd Estate last November were lucky to see this Kingbird
- 4. Red or White-breasted
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Kinglet
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_ Scoter, the one with the one with the white head patch
- 8. Iceland \_\_\_\_\_, a little early but check Iron Pier
- 11. Northern \_\_\_\_\_, hooked tip bill
- 12. Downy or Hairy \_\_\_\_\_
- 14. Barrows or Common \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_
- 15. Cory's \_\_\_\_\_
- 17. \_\_\_\_\_ Woodpecker
- 21. Cave \_\_\_\_\_, seen at Point Lookout last November
- 23. \_\_\_\_\_ Bluebird
- 24. \_\_\_\_\_ Swan, will dredging at Yaphank Lake be appreciated?
- 26. Great \_\_\_\_\_
- 28. Northern \_\_\_\_\_, rare visitor from across the pond, seen at Montauk Deep Hole last November
- 30. \_\_\_\_\_ Duck
- 31. Having two or more colors in blotches
- 32. Easy prey for an Eagle
- 34. Northern \_\_\_\_\_ - whet Owl. Seem last year around this time at North Fork Preserve.

**Dear Eastern Long Island Audubon Society**

Thank you so much for sponsoring me to attend a week at the DEC camp, Pack Forest. I am very grateful for the opportunity of a this, maybe, once in a lifetime experience. I had a great time there, Not only was it beautiful, but I learned many new things about the environment. I met new friends and I got to met new counselors there. I went fishing, woke up at seven each morning to jump in the lake and then take a nice hot shower. We played Frisbee every morning, and eagerly looked forward to the day's lesson. The food there was superb. I always looked forward to it, breakfast, lunch and dinner. On Wednesday we went an "overnight". We choose between different themes, hunter safety, hiking or climbing with a choice of two mountains. I chose Giant Mountain which is one of the forty-six high peaks in New York State. It is, in fact, the twelfth. From the top there were spectacular views of the Adirondack Mountain Range. According to our counselor we could see over 150 miles to the mountains of Massachusetts and to the edge of the Catskills.

All together my time there was amazing. I believe your sponsorship was definitely worth it. It was the most fun I had all summer, and I hope I can go back next year, I can't wait to see what new experiences that would bring. I now believe that these great DEC camps have made a significant influence on the way I view the environment, and I believe that one of my career paths is leading to becoming an environmentalist. I want, not only to learn how to conserve, but create new ways we can conserve by reducing the resources we waste on this planet and reducing the harmful objects that we pollute the earth with. This has become on of my goals in life and I am grateful that you gave it to me.

Thanks you so much!

David, Riverhead

**SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE**

**for teens to attend DEC Summer Camp**

**E**astern Long Island Audubon Society is offering scholarships for four students in grades 7 through 12 to attend New York State Department of Conservation camps for one week. Campers will choose between camps in the Adirondacks, Catskills, or western New York State. Campers enjoy fishing, hiking, canoeing, volleyball, and hunter safety training. Activities such as sampling streams for aquatic life and hiking in the dark to listen to the sounds in the woods are designed to bring conservation concepts to life. More information about the camps is available at [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov). Search for teen camps. A perfect candidate would be interested in the environment, and anxious to learn more. (Although parents do not have to be Audubon members, the camper must live in Eastern Long Island.)

Here is what the candidates need to do,

- Write an essay stating why they are worthy candidates for the scholarship. Include environmental experiences and interests. Also, describe what benefit they might derive from the experience.
- At the bottom of the essay, the candidate should include his or her name, address, city, state, zip, phone, date of birth, name of school and grade. The student should also note if and when he or she has attended an outdoor education/ecology camp. Previous scholarship winners may reapply.
- Have parents attach a letter stating that they are aware of the transportation stipulation (see below).

**If accepted**

- Campers are responsible for their own transportation to and from the camp and for their own physical examination, if the camp requires it.

**For more information, call Ridgie at 288-3628 or -Evelyn at 631-727-0417.**

Please send essay and information by **January 12, 2014** to:

Education Committee, Eastern Long Island Audubon Society, PO Box 206, East Quogue, NY 11942-0206

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Name of school \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever attended an outdoor education/ecology camp? If SO, what camp, where, and when \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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# Monhegan Island

**MaryLaura Lamont**

OCTOBER 2013 There is a fair and beautiful island I must tell you about. It is called Monhegan, and is about 10 miles out to sea, off the mid coast of Maine. That's what this ancient Algonquin name means— *Out to Sea*. You can get there by reservation on a charter boat line out of New Harbor, Maine, and it is well worth the trip. Going over to the magical island can be a smooth crossing, or a rough one depending on the sea and winds. It takes about an hour or so, but in that time you can find seals, whales, dolphins, a variety of sea birds and even a forlorn and lost land bird.

Upon reaching Monhegan in autumn you will find that the island has trapped, and saved, thousands and thousands of land birds from the open treacherous waters of the mighty Atlantic. Its headlands are the last piece of land before the open and unforgiving sea. There isn't a land bird alive that likes flying over open water, and sometimes in migration they get blown off course and blown out to sea where they face a sure death from the salty sea or the gulls, which drive them into the sea and feast on them.

Enter Monhegan, the last piece of earth in the area before the deep sea, so the birds all strive to land there if they get blown out to sea from the Maine mainland. Last year, as we just started our hike on the island we were greeted by a little Red-breasted Nuthatch in a red spruce tree. I called to my husband "Oh look— a Red-breasted Nuthatch!" A man nearby came up to me and whispered in my ear "lady, there are 10,000 Red-breasted Nuthatch on this island today, maybe even 20,000!" You know what? He was right! As we entered into the magical island forest of abundant spruce and fir we indeed did encounter about 10,000 Red-breasted Nuthatch. It was a tremendous fallout, and they were going about their business of feeding and calling. I literally can't explain what it is like to hear that many calls of "negh, negh, negh." It will always be one of those moments frozen in time that one would never forget for the rest of their life. This year, we had solid northwest



winds for about a week before we got to the island, and those winds brought in just about everything almost imaginable in the way of land birds. When my husband Eric asked a bird watcher what he had seen so far that day, his reply was, "every land bird in North America is here today!" There were incredible numbers of warblers; Black and White Warblers (hundreds), Yellow-rumped Warblers, Parulas, Magnolias, Palm, both Black-throated Blues and Greens, to name just a few. On Long Island, we may see 1 or 2 Blue-Headed Vireos in the course of a migration but I tell you at one time alone in the thick forest we had 20! What a birders delight to be surrounded by vireos, warblers, and little nasal sounding negh, negh birds! There is a small fresh-water marsh and pond on the island too. I had never seen a Sora before. A Sora is a rail, very shy, secretive, and rare. Because the island is such a magnet for birds in migration, it also is a magnet for bird watchers as well, and bird watchers who can really "jostle" with you. I was just about knocked over by a birder who just pushed me out of the way to see this bird. Upon seeing this incident, a kindly birder took me by the shoulders and said "here-look over here!" Who in their right mind would ever think that on an island, off the Maine coast, you would see your first Sora rail?

I won't go on to list all the birds we saw but some are certainly worthy of mention. We saw 8 species of predators in the 2 days we were there this year, and I realized that although this island saves many

little birds from the wild Atlantic it can be a killing field for them as well. The hawks get trapped here too, although they are stronger flyers than the little jobs. They take their toll on the smaller land birds, and I witnessed this many times. There were lots of Merlins and Peregrines. Down at the south point of the island, in the area named Lobster Cove, I came upon a small meadow that had at least 50 Savannah Sparrows creeping about it. I didn't mean to but since I spooked them up they all went to the end of the rocks, before the open sea. They scrambled about, below and into the rocks like rock pipsits! There was no place else for them to go, except into the sea. So, I backed off and went slowly, giving them enough time to flit away back towards the tiny grassy area, which had a spruce tree or two popping up. Out of the open sea came a Merlin, right past me, and it took a perched savannah in the spruce! I was horrified because I felt I had caused it to lose its life. Savannahs are one of my favorite sparrows, and are in steep decline because they nest in fields which are disappearing in the American landscape.

Countless times, sitting on the eastern headlands before the ocean sea, I had observed Peregrines and Merlins chase down a hapless Flicker or Yellow-rumped Warbler. They patrol the cliffs, and when a gust of wind takes the land bird to sea, the hawks will chase them down or into the cliffs. The only hope for the smaller bird is to cling to the land and the forests where

*continued*



they can perhaps escape.

The smaller land birds have to wait for the cover of night to leave their Monhegan way station. If they try it in the day, the hawks will get them, and so will the gulls. They have to wait for a perfect night to take them back to the mainland of Maine, where they can continue on their southbound migration. As I walked on past the area where my little Savannah lost its life, I was surprised to find a Red-necked Grebe near another cove. Here on Long Island we usually, if ever, see them in December and January, so to see one this early (last week in September,) even in Maine, I thought a good find. For a moment it made me forget about the Savannah.

This year was a bumper year to observe

many things. In the stillness of the great forest you could hear millions of bees of all kinds, droning on with their preparations for winter. Birds of all kinds were about – on the forest floor, in the tree tops, and in the bushes. Their calls were incredible to listen too, and they never stopped. You knew a hawk was about because it was just about the only time they all became silent.

Sitting on the headlands near Pulpit Rock, and just below me, I saw common dolphin, grey seals, and a large group of harbor seals bounding away going out to sea. They were breaching out of the water all together – it was like a herd, or pod of breaching whales! And of course there were whales. I spotted several minke whales feeding. When my husband Eric returned to where I had set up I told him

about all the marine mammals I had seen. As we turned to leave he said “what’s that-it’s a large whale!” Sure enough, it was a large whale, and I had my binocs right on it. He said it must be a fin whale because it was so big. Well, I can’t prove it, but I think it was a blue whale, because I clearly saw a lot of whitish spots on it. I had crewed on the old Okeanos whale boat off of Montauk as a volunteer for 14 years, and I’ve seen plenty of fin whales in my time. Whether it was a finback or blue whale it just adds to the lure of this magical island.

There are no vehicles allowed on Monhegan, as it is just a small island (2500 acres). There are only perhaps 6 trucks that belong to a small handful of fishermen. The island has about 45 year round residents who make their living as fishermen, lobstermen and artists. It has been a popular colony for artists to go to since the late 1800’s. Those of you familiar with American art know that famous artists like Rockwell Kent, Edward Hopper, the Wyeth family, all painted Monhegan in all her majesty and mystery. The artists are newcomers. The birders are even newer. The fishermen and lobstermen have been coming to Monhegan since the first Native Americans got there hundreds of years ago. And the birds and whales and seals came before them. We’ll hopefully always return to Monhegan in the autumn. There is no place like it. We met a hiker who told us “People either get Monhegan, or they don’t.” We “get it”, and always will.



## From our field trips Sally Newbert

Field Trips were scheduled for Sept. 14th and Oct. 5th. The October trip was suppose to go to Sunken Forest, but that was closed due to the government shut down. Let’s hope we can reschedule it next year. Many people were looking forward to it.

Instead we went back to Smith Point and notified people by email and facebook. John McNeil lead the first trip, and Eileen Schwinn the second. Both were beautiful days, but perhaps not



the birdiest. I recorded about 22 species in October and just 16 in September.



Left, on September 14th worked to identify a flycatcher and above on October 5th, at Smith Point.

# What happened to the Monarch Butterflies?



So many people have asked me “What happened to the Monarch Butterflies?” Here is an concise answer from Rick Cech the author of *Butterflies of the East Coast*. When I emailed him to ask if I could use the answer he put on the NYS bird list, I mentioned a large roost I had witnessed along Dune Road a few years ago, when hundreds were clinging to a pine tree. Sadly, I guess, at least for now, those days are gone.

**Sally Newbert**

## Here is Rick Cech’s answer to where the butterflies have gone:

My book (*Butterflies of the East Coast*) has a shot of an evening roost of migrating Monarchs along Dune Road. Small world.

I gave a talk to Huntington Audubon this evening (in Cold Spring Harbor) and individuals there had the same questions about the reduced Monarch flight. But it’s not just Long island! Wish I were that local.

To simplify a bit, there are two major migratory Monarch populations in North America, east of Rockies and west of Rockies. We’ll discuss the former here.

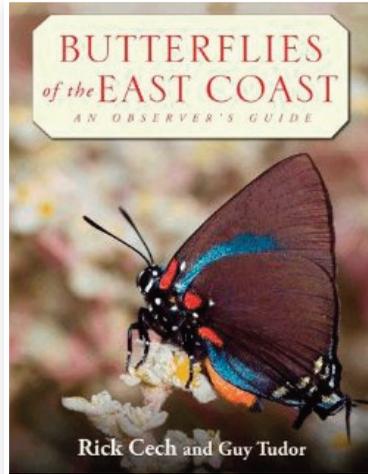
Each year, the final brood of summer Monarchs in the East fly down to overwinter in Oyamel Fir forests in the Transvolcanic mountains of Michoacán, Mexico (at 2400 to 3600 meters).

In the spring, new broods travel north, repopulating North America. Historically, millions of Monarchs have congregated in a small areas in Mexico each winter.

Many of these southbound emigrants come from the East (incl. southern Canada), but numerically most hail from the upper Midwest.

Lately, illegal logging in Mexico has damaged the overwintering sites

More importantly, perhaps, much of the corn grown in the Midwest is genetically modified to be resistant to the herbicide Roundup; farmers douse the landscape with this herbicide to eliminate weeds, thus destroying the host plant for Monarchs (milkweeds), while leaving the corn unaffected (at least by this; their special-



ized genetics seem to be leaving them susceptible to other blights, however, such as Goss’s wilt, as recently reported in NYT.)

Some are now suggesting this will lead to a loss in the biological phenomenon of Monarch migration.

A number of factors led to a small northern return flight of Monarchs in 2013

Some reached northern climes late in the summer, however where milkweed was profuse this year, so there is at least some eastern southbound migration this fall

It is likely to be small trickle compared to earlier years, however

Invertebrates are hearty and resilient, but no telling how long they will be able to withstand the headwinds they now face

That is the story for the moment...

Thanks for asking,  
**Rick Cech**

*The attractive Monarch Caterpillar feeds on Milkweed which is growing scarcer.*



The second annual Long Island Natural History Conference will take place Friday, December 6 at the U.S. Department of Energy’s Brookhaven National Laboratory in Upton, NY. The conference will comprise sixteen presentations by leading Long Island wildlife biologists and naturalists. Topics include the impacts of Hurricane Sandy on our flora and fauna, survey results for the American eel, bats, mammals, moths and carnivorous plants of Long Island, conservation issues related to the eastern box turtle, eastern tiger salamander, red knot and saltmarsh sparrow, and two interesting history presentations on the menhaden fishery and Long Island’s environmental movement.

The conference is open to the general public and promises to be the largest regional forum for researchers, natural resource managers, students, and naturalists to present and exchange current information. It will serve as a premier venue to identify research and management needs, foster friendships and collegial relationships, and encourage a greater region-wide interest in Long Island’s natural history by bringing together people with diverse backgrounds.

The conference is a project of the Long Island Nature Organization, committed to promoting nature studies on Long Island by sponsoring specific projects, providing opportunities to increase communication among wildlife researchers, managers, and the general public, and building a web-based clearing house for Long Island Natural History information.

Conference sponsors include Coastal Research and Education Society of Long Island, The Nature Conservancy, North Shore Land Alliance, Peconic Land Trust, Quogue Wildlife Refuge, Seatuck Environmental Association, South Fork Natural History Society, Group for the East End, Long Island Pine Barrens Commission and Brookhaven National Laboratory.

To register, go to [LongIslandNature.org](http://LongIslandNature.org)  
General admission: \$25; students: \$15.

# Feeder Survey for November & December

## John McNeil

The Survey will be conducted the first full week of the month starting on Sunday and ending the following Sunday. This survey takes place from October to June.

### 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.

**Please send your report to:**

John McNeil  
168 Lexington Rd  
Shirley NY 11967-3212



SALLY NEWBERT

**Survey Dates:**

**Sun., Nov. 3 to Sun., Nov. 9**

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:**

**Sun., Dec. 1 to Sun., Dec. 7**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ Mourning Dove
- \_\_\_\_\_ Northern Cardinal
- \_\_\_\_\_ Blue Jay
- \_\_\_\_\_ House Finch
- \_\_\_\_\_ Black-capped Chickadee
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tufted Titmouse
- \_\_\_\_\_ Downy Woodpecker
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- \_\_\_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_\_\_

# The **OSPREY**

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## Chapter Renewal & Membership

For \$20 a year, you will receive 6 issues of *The Osprey* and you will be supporting our local education and conservation activities.

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