



THE URBAN AUDUBON

NEW YORK CITY AUDUBON CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

January-February 2011
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NYC AUDUBON NEWSLETTER

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5 2010 TRIBUTE IN LIGHT

6-8 EVENTS AND
ADVENTURES

10 FALL ROOST

FEBRUARY MEMBER WALK
EAGLES ON THE HUDSON
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2011
8AM-NOON
GUIDES: GLENN PHILLIPS
AND HENRY MAAS

Bald eagles are increasingly seen along the Hudson River in New York City. This van trip will stop at likely vantage points in upper Manhattan and the Bronx, in search of eagles and other winter residents along the Hudson. Limited to 12. Free for NYC Audubon members at the student/senior level and above. To register, visit Trips & Classes at www.nycaudubon.org or call 212-691-7483.

TIME TO MAKE OUR VOICES HEARD

Mary Jane Kaplan

©Dorothy Reilly, Greenbelt Conservancy



Pouch Camp, Staten Island, New York

Advocating for conservation of the natural environment against competing interests is one of the ways that NYC Audubon pursues its mission. That is why we have joined 29 other organizations in supporting Staten Island's Committee to Save Pouch Camp.

Pouch Camp is a core element of Staten Island's Greenbelt, an assemblage of nearly 3,000 contiguous acres of woodlands, wetlands, and meadows near the center of the Island. Most of the Greenbelt is made up of state and city parks; Pouch Camp, situated in the very middle of the Greenbelt, is one of the few remaining parcels of privately owned land. Its approximately 100 acres include a 17-acre lake, a lodge, and miles of hiking trails. Since the late 1940s, the Camp has been owned by the Greater New York Councils/Boy Scouts of America (GNYC/BSA), the administrative organization for the Boy Scouts in this area. Throughout the year, it serves as a unique facility where city children can learn about nature.

It is also a place of great beauty and of vital importance to birds that breed there (including the great horned owl, the eastern screech-owl, and several woodpecker species) and, especially, to the many species that use its varied habitats for stopovers on their spring and fall migrations. Its hilly woodlands host some of the oldest second-growth trees in the city. Because the Camp is situated on a terminal moraine, vernal ponds appear in spring where thousands of spring peepers *continued on page four*

NYC AUDUBON MISSION & VISION

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

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

THE URBAN AUDUBON

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Small Photographs Susan Elbin, Steve Nanz, and Don Riepe



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Glenn Phillips



Last fall, working with the Environmental Protection Agency's Regional Director, Judith Enck, NYC Audubon began monitoring a federal building in Lower Manhattan. In this unique situation, the building's management, the General Services Administration, will collect injured and dead birds both at street level and for the higher-floor setbacks. This new data from setback monitoring will help develop a better understanding of bird collisions with tall buildings and the effectiveness of lights-out programs, leading to a reduction in the number of birds killed.

These new studies complement work done by NYC Audubon's Project Safe Flight over the last decade, which has resulted in two published studies. These two studies are helping build momentum across the country. San Francisco's planning commission has proposed new city planning regulations that will require new buildings to include bird-safe features. These new regulations are based on NYC Audubon's Bird Safe Building Guidelines, published in 2007; and include proposed codes based on data presented in NYC Audubon's 2008 study, which analyzed ten years' worth of Project Safe Flight data.

Shortly, our partners at the American Bird Conservancy will release a second edition of the Bird-Safe Building Guidelines and work with conservation groups across the country to press for local action to help reduce this threat to birds. Already, Minnesota Audubon has created a version for Minneapolis, and is preparing to work with local architects to raise awareness of the issue.

Our work to help birds here in NYC has reached far beyond the City's borders. With all this momentum across the country, now is the time to pressure New York City to adopt some of the strategies that have been developed here. The Mayor's PlaNYC 2030, an ambitious plan for a more sustainable New York City, is scheduled to be updated and revised. With your support, we will make sure that birds are not left out of those plans.



*Morgan Mail Processing Center
Outfitted with Opaque Film over the
Glass to Prevent Bird Strikes*

REMEMBER NYC AUDUBON

A bequest is a thoughtful and straightforward way to protect birds and bird habitat in the five boroughs. It can be expressed "I bequeath [a sum of money or a percentage of my estate] to New York City Audubon Society, Inc. a not-for-profit organization with offices at 71 West 23rd Street – Rm 1523, New York, NY 10010, for its general purposes." Consult your attorney and give Executive Director Glenn Phillips a call at 212-691-7483.

NYC AUDUBON BOARD OF DIRECTORS SEEKS NEW MEMBERS

Do you want to be a leader in New York City's most influential organization focusing on birdlife and habitat? NYC Audubon is seeking nominations to its Board of Directors for two-year terms beginning in June 2011. If you are a member of NYC Audubon, you are eligible to submit a nomination.

Board members:

- Lead NYC Audubon in carrying out its mission to "protect wild birds and their habitat in the five boroughs."
- Help strengthen NYC Audubon's financial base.
- Serve on committees that steer our conservation, education, and advocacy work.
- Participate in lectures and member events.

This is an excellent opportunity to get more involved in your community and learn valuable leadership skills. Board elections will be held at NYC Audubon's Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 8, 2011. Submit your suggestions to David Speiser, chair of the Nominating Committee, at nominations@nycaudubon.org.

CONSERVATION NOTES



The National Audubon Society and Toyota launched the five-year TogetherGreen initiative in 2008 to build the promise of a greener, healthier future through innovation, leadership and volunteerism. Over 130 projects totaling more than \$3.5 million dollars have received Innovation Grants to protect land, water, and energy resources nationwide.

This year, NYC Audubon received three grants from TogetherGreen: Volunteer Days, an Innovation Grant in support of Jamaica Bay initiatives, and a Fellowship for Associate Director for Citizen Science and Outreach, John Rowden. Through these three projects, NYC Audubon will expand and improve on-the-ground conservation efforts in New York City.



TogetherGreen Volunteer Days kicked off this past September 25 at Brighton Beach, where over 50 volunteers helped clean the beach as part of International Coastal Clean-up Day. Over the next year, eight more volunteer events in all five

boroughs will seek to bring in over 300 new volunteers to clean beaches and wetlands, remove invasive species and plant native trees and shrubs. Information about 2011 TogetherGreen Volunteer Days will be announced in future issues of *The Urban Audubon*.

A TogetherGreen Innovation Grant helps fund efforts in Jamaica Bay to monitor horseshoe crabs and shorebirds and to document the impact of beach cleaning efforts on both crabs and birds. This year's effort will work with the Auburn Theological Seminary's Multifaith Center to conduct special outreach to communities of faith: churches, synagogues, temples, and mosques. Additional support for this program comes from the Brooklyn Community Foundation and NYC Audubon members, like you.

The TogetherGreen Fellowship supports special training to build conservation planning skills and to inspire innovation from a conservation professional or volunteer. Forty fellows were selected this year, from 22 states, eight from affiliated Audubon organizations across the country. Each fellow is required to complete a special project as a part of the program. For his project, John Rowden will be developing new programs to increase participation in conservation research by recreational bird watchers, including organizing special trips to Long Island's beaches to observe shorebirds and provide data for the International Shorebird Study. In addition, John will be exploring ways to attract a more diverse audience and more novice birders to NYC Audubon's trips and classes.

TogetherGreen is a model program for the National Audubon Society and its relationships with affiliated organizations like NYC Audubon. The program inspires conservation action with measurable results and supports projects that will make a difference for birds across the country.

VOLUNTEER!



Working in our busy and friendly office, you will know you are making a difference for the city's wildlife. Help answer inquiries about wildlife, our field trips, classes, events, and conservation work. We also need help mailing letters, doing research, entering data, photocopying, and filing. Computer skills and knowledge of birds is not required. This is also a great opportunity to learn the ins and outs of a small nonprofit. Volunteer shifts are available for morning and afternoon hours, five days a week. We are always looking for volunteers in the office and in the field. Contact Tod Winston at 212-691-7483 or email volunteer@nycaudubon.org.

Pouch Camp...continued from page one

can be heard. In addition, several species of frogs, salamanders, turtles, and dragonflies have been spotted.

A year ago, the GNYC/BSA announced that it needed to raise money and was exploring ways to take advantage of Pouch Camp's high-potential dollar value. Although the organization would strongly prefer that the land remain green, there are no legal strictures to prevent its sale to residential developers—an outcome that would create a large gap in the habitat of the Greenbelt and negatively affect the ecology of the entire area.

The GNYC/BSA is now in negotiation

©Abby McBride



Unicorn Clubtail Dragonfly

with several parties, including city, state, and federal officials, hoping to put together

a financial package that will allow the Scouts to continue using the land while ensuring its conservation in perpetuity, either by outright purchase as park land, or through a conservation easement, or by some combination of both.

These negotiations are complicated and will not be finished quickly. It is important, however, that elected officials and others with funding authority be made aware of public support for preserving the tract as open land. We urge you to visit www.nycaudubon.org/pouchcamp, where you'll learn how to help protect Pouch Camp.

Explore the Greenbelt and Pouch Camp by joining the winter hike on Saturday, January 22, that is listed on page 6.

VOLUNTEERING IN THE GULF

Christina Rubin

“The crisis is over, but there is still a lot to do.” These were the words that greeted us this past August when Gabriel Willow (NYC Audubon field trip leader) and I (art director for *The Urban Audubon*) arrived at the Audubon Volunteer Response Center in Moss Point, Mississippi. National Audubon set up this volunteer hub to respond to 34,500 people across the country who wanted to take action after BP's disastrous oil spill on April 20, 2010. With the exception of two paid staff, Jillian Rubio, director, and Dustin Renaud, volunteer coordinator, the Center was manned entirely by volunteers.

By August, the focus had shifted from recovery efforts to monitoring efforts. Numerous enlisted volunteers were urging other volunteers in the Gulf Coast region to participate in the Coastal Bird Volunteer Watch, a survey of resident and migrating birds. My assignment was to create easy-to-read bird identification sheets as well as other educational materials.

Gabriel's task was to conduct birding classes for volunteers unfamiliar with the species of birds found along the coast. Gabriel also led evening bird-counting groups. Although the counts were low since it was early in the migration season and many species had not yet arrived, I enjoyed tagging along.

We were instructed to be particularly alert for birds exposed to oil contamination. Fortunately during our stay, we spotted only two: a great egret with remnants of oil on its neck and a sanderling with oil covering a small area of its back. The volunteer monitor of our group noted these findings and filed a detailed report.

Gabriel, a skilled artist as well as an expert birder, assisted artist Nancy Garrett in painting a larger-than-life mural in the lobby of the Audubon Volunteer Response Center, an inspirational picture for all participants.

Although Gabriel and I arrived too late after the initial April crisis to take part in the recovery effort, our contribution, though small, made us feel involved, and we met a lot of extraordinarily dedicated people. The Audubon volunteer effort continues today and plays an important part in the assessment of the oil spill's long-term effects.

To follow this effort, log on to <http://gulfoilspill.audubon.org/oil-and-birds-too-close-comfort>.

©Gabriel Willow



Painting the Wall Mural at Moss Point, Mississippi

September 11 is a date seared into the consciousness of Americans, and there are many ways, public and private, that New Yorkers mark that day each year. One of the most visible memorials to the lives lost that day is the annual Tribute in Light: twin beams of light that illuminate the night sky over lower Manhattan from dusk on September 11 until dawn on September 12. While the beams give us pause to contemplate and remember, they also pose a risk to migratory birds, which use light cues in the night sky to guide their journeys.

Since 2005, NYC Audubon has partnered with the Municipal Art Society (MAS), which produces the Tribute in Light, to monitor the beams with the goal of preventing bird mortality. NYC Audubon and MAS have a protocol in place that calls for the beams to be extinguished for a period of 20 minutes if:

- (a) large numbers of birds (greater than 1,000) become disoriented in the beams or
- (b) any birds are killed because of the beams.

NYC Audubon volunteers take two-hour shifts through the night to monitor the beams and report whether either of those criteria is met.

Every year is different and this year several conditions came together to create a difficult situation for migratory birds. The moon is an important visual cue for birds that migrate at night, and this year the new moon fell on September 8. That meant that on September 11 the sky was moonless after 8:45pm and natural light cues for birds were non-existent. In addition, conditions had been poor for migration for a number of days before September 11, due to consistent winds from the south, causing a “back-up” of birds north of New York City.

Soon after the beams were turned on it was apparent that it was going to be a major night for migration; birds were already circling in the lights and appeared disoriented. NYC Audubon volunteers monitored the beams and, as the numbers built, conducted patrols on the streets around the tribute site, looking for compromised birds. At approximately 11pm a dead pine warbler was found on the street below the beams and well over 1,000 birds were circling within the beams.

The lights were extinguished for twenty minutes to allow birds to clear out. After consultation between the MAS producers and NYC Audubon staff on site, the lights were extinguished an additional four times. No other dead birds were discovered by patrols for the rest of the night, a hopeful sign that the birds made their way through the city successfully.

The loss of life that occurred on September 11 is a painful memory. The dedication and efforts of volunteers and the supportive partnership NYC Audubon has with the Municipal Art Society ensures that more lives—avian lives—are not lost each year.

© John deCuzman



Birds Caught in the 2010 Tribute in Light Memorial

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES

- NYC Audubon Events
- Partnership Events

● NEW YEAR'S DAY BEACHWALK, BREEZY POINT, QUEENS

Saturday, January 1, 11am-1pm
Guides: Mickey Cohen, Don Riepe
With American Littoral Society
Meet at Building #1 in Fort Tilden, Breezy Point, Queens. Start the New Year with a brisk hike on the beach. Visit the dunes, woods, and hawk watch platform; afterward, enjoy cookies, cake, coffee, tea, and champagne. No reservation necessary. For more information contact Don Riepe at 718-318-9344 or donriepe@gmail.com. No limit. Free

● **MONTAUK WINTER WEEKEND & SEAL WATCH, LONG ISLAND, NY**
Friday, January 7-Sunday, January 9
Guides: Mickey Cohen, Don Riepe
With American Littoral Society
Visit Montauk during peak winter birding season and stay at the luxurious Manor House. See seals, loons, scoters, eider, and other waterfowl. Hike dunes, bluffs and woodlands. Includes double-occupancy lodging, most meals, guided hikes, evening programs, star watch, and free pickup at LIRR station in Montauk. To register, contact Don Riepe at 718-318-9344 or donriepe@gmail.com. Limited to 60. \$365 (\$120 single supplement; no member discount)

● **VAN CORTLANDT BIRD WALKS, THE BRONX**
Saturdays, January 8 - February 26, 8-9:30am
Guides: Andrew Baksh or Urban Park Rangers (first Saturday of the month)
With the Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy, NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, and Urban Park Rangers

©Don Riepe



Montauk Beach

Meet at Van Cortland Nature Center. The history of birding and Van Cortlandt Park are inseparable. Influential birders such as Roger Tory Peterson and Allan D. Cruickshank learned their craft on Van Cortlandt's ecologically diverse grounds. Participants will look for winter residents and discuss diverse topics including adaptations for winter survival. For more information, please call 718-548-0912. No registration necessary. No limit. Free

● PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP: WINTER WATERFOWL OF LONG BEACH ISLAND/ BARNEGAT LIGHT, NJ

Saturday, January 8, 6:30am-6pm
(Rain date: Saturday, January 15)
Instructor: David Speiser
Focus on harlequin ducks and purple sandpiper, as well as long-tailed duck, and possible Ipswich savannah sparrows or short-eared owls. Enjoy small-group instruction focusing on exposure techniques (especially challenging for harlequin ducks), camera technique, cold weather photography, and composition. Equipment requirements: DSLR, 200mm-400mm or greater. Tripod not required. Birds may be close, so some flexibility in focal length is desired. Trip includes walking over a mile on uneven or icy trails.

Bring lunch and water. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 8. \$195

● NATURE IN THE GARDEN: DISCOVERY WALKS AT WAVE HILL, THE BRONX

Sundays, January 9 and 23; February 13 and 27, 9:30-11:30am
Guide: Gabriel Willow
With Wave Hill

Meet at the Perkins Visitor Center and explore Wave Hill's woodlands and gardens on these nature discovery walks. Ideal for ages 5 and up and their curious adult companions. Advanced registration is recommended, either online, at the Perkins Visitor Center, or by calling 718-549-3200 x305. (Walks take place rain or shine; in case of severe weather call the number above at x245 for updates.) Free for Wave Hill Members/Non-members \$5. Free for NYC Audubon Members with 2-for-1 admission.

● "SAVE POUCH CAMP" HIKE IN THE GREENBELT, STATEN ISLAND

Saturday, January 22, 9:45am-3:30pm
Guide: Dominick Durso
With Protectors of Pine Oak Woods

Meet on Staten Island Boulevard off Ocean Terrace, directly above the Michael Petrides School. Come explore the imperiled

Pouch Camp property, located within Staten Island's Greenbelt preserve. Discover its vistas and woodlands on a 10-mile hike bordering the property, and learn what can be done to help preserve Pouch Camp. Street parking available. Bring lunch and water, and wear sturdy shoes. For more information please call Dominick Durso at 718-967-0379. No registration necessary. Free

● WINTER PELAGIC BIRDING ADVENTURE, FREEPORT, LONG ISLAND

Sunday, January 23, 8am-4pm
Guide: Paul Guris
With See Life Paulagics

This 8-hour pelagic trip departs from Freeport to explore the undersea rock piles that attract baitfish and the birds that feed on them. Target species include razorbill, common and thick-billed murre, and Atlantic puffin. We will sail aboard the *Captain Lou VII*, a comfortable boat with a heated cabin and bird-able upper deck. For more information, please visit Trips & Classes at www.nycaudubon.org or www.paulagics.com or contact Tod Winston at twinston@nycaudubon.org. NYC Audubon members call 212-691-7483 for member discount code. Limited to 45. \$130

● WATERFOWL AND WOODLANDS: BIRDING IN THE GREENBELT, STATEN ISLAND

Saturday, January 29, 9:15am-2pm (Rain/snow date: Saturday, February 12)
Guide: Gabriel Willow
With the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation and the Greenbelt Conservancy

Meet at the Manhattan terminal of the S.I. Ferry and begin your tour on water, as we make our



way to the Greenbelt, a 3,000-acre flagship park of New York City. Explore Willowbrook Park, a part of the Greenbelt which boasts abundant waterfowl and wooded trails. Includes refreshments afterward at the Greenbelt Nature Center and transportation on Staten Island. Limited to 20. \$35

● **SOARING RAPTORS: EAGLES AND OWLS OF THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY, NY**
Saturday, February 5, noon-7pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

You don't have to travel to Alaska to see our country's emblem, the American bald eagle. Thanks to one of the most successful reintroduction programs on record, many eagles now soar over the nearby Hudson Valley. Travel with us to see this spectacular raptor. Part of the Hudson River EagleFest at Croton Point. Bring lunch, water, and binoculars. Transport by private coach included. Limited to 35. \$80

exciting are the "snow birds" of the Arctic tundra, such as snow buntings and snowy owls, that can occasionally be found in tundra-like habitats further south. We will travel to Floyd Bennett Field in search of these and other winter visitors. We will then head to Fort Tilden and Breezy Point to look for wintering ducks, grebes, loons, and other seabirds. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$75

● **PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP: WATERFOWL OF LONG ISLAND**
Saturday, February 12, 8am-12pm
(Rain date: Saturday, February 26)

Instructor: David Speiser
 Meet at Massapequa Preserve and learn how to "get low" for photographing waterfowl while visiting at least three Long Island wintering duck hot-spots. Look for common, red-breasted, and hooded mergansers; ring-necked ducks; black ducks; and more.

is desired. Carpooling may be arranged. Limited to 8. \$70

● **WINTER WILDLIFE WALK AT JAMAICA BAY**
Saturday, February 12, 10am-1pm
Guide: Don Riepe
With Gateway National Recreation Area

Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center for a hike along the trails to look for signs of wildlife. Look for owls, ducks, geese, and other overwintering birds and learn how plants and animals adapt to winter. To register, contact Don Riepe at 718-318-9344 or donriep@gmail.com. Free

● **WINTER SEALS AND WATERBIRDS OF NY HARBOR**
Saturday, February 26, 11am-1pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Meet at South Street Seaport's Pier 17 and come aboard NY Water Taxi's eco-friendly vessel for a winter adventure in New York Harbor! Look for harbor seals on the rocky shores of Governor's, Hoffman, and Swinburne Islands. Learn about the surprisingly diverse winter birds of New York Harbor, including ducks and loons, many of which migrate south from the Arctic. Dress warmly and bring your binoculars. Limited to 60. To register, contact New York Water Taxi at 212-742-1969 or www.nywatertaxi.com. \$35 for adults; \$25 for children under 12 (no member discount)

● **WINTER BIRDS OF BARNEGAT, NJ**
Tuesday, March 1, 9am-4pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Explore Barnegat Inlet's expansive beach to view the winter birds that gather where land, bay, and sea meet. Search

for harlequin ducks, horned larks, Lapland longspurs, snow buntings, winter finches, and snowy and short-eared owls in this introduction to birds of the NJ shore. Bring lunch, water, and binoculars. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$80

● **WINTER BIRDS OF SANDY HOOK, NJ**
Sunday, March 6, 10am-5pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Take a trip to Sandy Hook, a barrier island at the northernmost point of the NJ coast. This spectacular peninsula hosts a variety of species including migrants from the Arctic and harbor seals that lie on the beach to warm up in the sun. Other possible sightings include loons, rarely seen ducks, snow buntings and horned larks. Bring lunch, water, and binoculars. Transport by private coach included. Limited to 40. \$65

● **THE END OF WINTER AT JONES BEACH, LONG ISLAND**
Tuesday, March 8, 8am-4pm
Guide: Peter Mott

Several bird species that nest in the far north spend the winter at Jones Beach, where they prosper in a habitat similar to their summer homes. We will start at Point Lookout and work eastward as far as Robert Moses State Park in hopes of finding an interesting variety of avian guests. Bring lunch, water, and binoculars. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$40

● **BEGINNING BIRDING Classes: Mondays, March 14 and March 21, 6:30-8:30pm**
Trips: Saturday, March 19, 10am-2pm (Jamaica Bay) and Saturday,



Snowy Owl

● **SNOW BIRDS OF FLOYD BENNETT FIELD AND FORT TILDEN, QUEENS**
Sunday, February 6, 10:30am-4pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Winter brings many rare birds to NYC that can't be found here at any other time! Perhaps most

Enjoy small-group instruction focused on composition and camera skills. Equipment requirements: DSLR, 200mm-400mm or greater. Tripod not required. Birds may be close, so some flexibility in focal length

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES (CONTINUED)

March 26, 8-11am (Central Park)
Instructor: Starr Saphir

Learn how to identify the birds that migrate through New York City from Central and South America on their way north. Includes two classes, and then two trips—one to Central Park to see vireos, warblers, and tanagers, and one to Jamaica Bay to see herons, egrets, and shorebirds. Limited to 13. \$85

● **EARLY SPRING MIGRANTS AT JAMAICA BAY, QUEENS**

Saturday, March 26, 10am-1pm

Guides: Don Riepe, Andrew Baksh

With Gateway National Recreation Area

Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. Hike



American Oystercatcher

around East and West Ponds and the gardens to look for returning ibis, egrets, oystercatchers, phoebes, and other migrants. Digital slide program before hike. Limited to 25. Free

● **SPRING HIKE IN THE GREENBELT, STATEN ISLAND**

Saturday, April 2, 9:15am-2pm
(Rain Date: Saturday, April 9)

Guide: Gabriel Willow
With the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation and the Greenbelt Conservancy

Meet at the Manhattan terminal of the S.I. Ferry and begin your tour on water. Explore the 3,000-acre Staten Island Greenbelt and learn about the imperiled Pouch Camp property: 143 acres of unspoiled woods and wetland habitat under threat of development. Look for early spring migrants and learn about the ecology of the Greenbelt's diverse woodland and wetland ecosystems. Includes refreshments afterward at the Greenbelt Nature Center and transportation on Staten Island. Limited to 20. \$35

● **TO REGISTER FOR ALL NYC AUDUBON EVENTS** and for more information, visit www.nycaudubon.org or call 212-691-7483 unless otherwise specified.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **Classes meet at 71 West 23rd St. room 1523.**
- **Members at the Student/Senior level and up receive a 10% discount on most local trips and classes. See membership form on page 11.**
- **For all coach and van trips, the meeting location is in front of 71 West 23rd St. in Manhattan unless otherwise specified.**
- **We depart promptly at the stated start time.**
- **For all overnight trips, membership in NYC Audubon at the Student/Senior level and up is required. See membership form on page 11.**

INTERNATIONAL TRIPS: See the back cover for exciting expeditions to Costa Rica and Trinidad and Tobago.

2010-2011 LECTURE SERIES

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

THE ARSENAL
CENTRAL PARK
64TH STREET AT 5TH AVENUE

THE DOUBLE LIVES OF DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS
By Susan Elbin, Director of Conservation, NYC Audubon
Wednesday, February 9, 2011, 6pm



Double-Crested Cormorant

For the past five years, NYC Audubon has been paying close attention to the cormorants nesting among the Harbor Herons on the islands of New York City. Join us as we reveal an emerging picture of this enigmatic species and its coastal breeding and wintering ecology.

SAVE THE DATES:

THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF BIRDING
By Richard Crossley
Wednesday, April 13, 2011, 6pm

INVESTIGATING THE PRIVATE LIVES OF BIRDS
By Bridget Stutchbury
Wednesday, May 11, 2011, 6pm

ANNUAL MEETING AND LECTURE: MIGRANT SONGBIRDS IN NEW YORK'S LAKE ONTARIO BASIN
By Mike Burger
Wednesday, June 8, 2011, 6pm

*Do Hummingbirds Hum?
Fascinating Answers to
Questions about Hummingbirds*
by George C. West and
Carol A. Butler



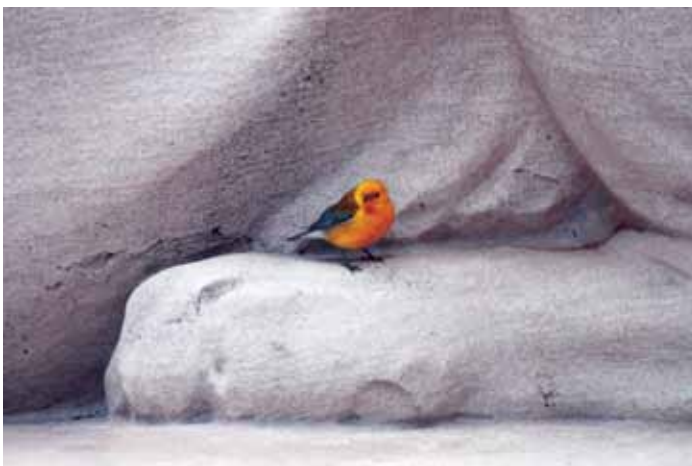
*How Fast Can a Falcon Dive?
Fascinating Answers About
Birds of Prey*
by Peter Capainolo and
Carol A. Butler
(Rutgers University Press, 2010)

Do hummingbirds hum? Their wings do, as they beat up to 200 times per second. How fast can a falcon dive? 200 mph. As their titles imply, these books, which are part of a series, provide lively and informative looks into two groups of fascinating birds: hummingbirds and raptors. Written for curious amateurs as well as the more scientifically inclined, the

books ask which hummingbird is smallest: the reddish hermit or the bee, weighing less than a penny. The largest, the giant, doesn't quite reach an ounce. You'll learn that hummingbirds have one of the largest brains in relation to their size of all birds; and they're the only birds that can fly backwards, up and down, and side to side. As for raptors, the smallest is the elf owl at 5 inches long and a mere 1.5 ounces; the largest, the Andean condor at 30 pounds with a ten-foot wingspan. The golden eagle flies 60 miles an hour, while the secretary bird does his hunting on foot. Amply illustrated in color and black and white, the books contain useful appendices (such as how to attract hummingbirds; where to observe birds of prey) and information on conservation.

A RARE FALL VISITOR TO THE PUBLIC LIBRARY *Matthew L. Rymkiewicz*

©Ardith Bondi



Sitting in the Lion's Paw

ached for views, which he luxuriously dispensed. We scrutinized his every move, were dismayed by the company he kept, and ceaselessly pondered his presence. Why was he here of all places? Would he be able to find his way south? Was he eating right? Conjecture, like awe, was abundant.

But then one morning he was gone. Had the night's northern winds carried him away? He checked out leaving no hints or clues to help us with our questions—not that he had ever minded our concerns. We were left to bless our luck and the mysteries of migration. Sometimes the winds call for a unicorn to pop into town. It's best to be prepared—he may show up at your feet.

At the main branch of the New York Public Library in midtown, out-of-towners always wander about, captivated by the architecture, the lions, and the oasis of Bryant Park. Like the house sparrows and rock pigeons, they're alien yet commonplace. Recently, a certain out-of-towner turned the tables and had this urban birder and many others oohing and ahing.

Around noon on October 21, I saw a brilliant gold and blue male prothonotary warbler at 40th and 5th. There he was, not 20 feet from the street vendors behind me, amid the bustle and roar of midtown, virtually at the feet of oblivious pedestrians. After a hurried, excited post on the ebirdsnyc site by a breathless-and-still-to-this-day-unbelieving birder, people started pouring in to bask in the glow of this golden swamp warbler.

For the next eight days, he held us under his spell. We

©Ardith Bondi



Waiting to Be Fed

THE FALL ROOST: PAYING TRIBUTE TO NEW YORK'S ENVIRONMENTAL PIONEERS

Tod Winston

1. Board Members Peter Joost and Dimitri Sevastopoulo with event co-chair Catherine Rassenberger
2. Al Cacese (Audubon NY) with Gini Stowe
3. Past honoree Daniel Biederman with Councilmember Jessica Lappin and John Flicker
4. Fran Smith with National Audubon President David Yarnold, Marian Heiskell, and Al Cacese
5. Founding Board Member Lewis Rosenberg and Board Member Harry Maas

Photos ©Titus Kana



President Oakes Ames, honorees Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, Henry Christensen III, and Beryl Thurman, and Executive Director Glenn Phillips

Prospect Park, Central Park, and Staten Island's Arlington Marsh: conservation-minded New Yorkers know that each of these green oases is crucial to New York City's birds, but some may not know the environmental pioneers behind their preservation and restoration: Henry Christensen III, Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, and Beryl Thurman. NYC Audubon's 2010 Fall Roost honored these dedicated conservationists, and Roost guests paid further tribute by generously bidding on a diverse collection of artwork, gifts, and trips donated to the evening's Silent Auction.

Brooklyn's Prospect Park owes much to Henry Christensen III, founding board chairman of the Prospect Park Alliance. During his more than 20 years of service, he oversaw rebuilding and replanting of the park, the founding of the Prospect Park Audubon Center, and the creation of the Brooklyn Academy for Science and the Environment. He continues to serve on the Alliance board.

The organization and restoration of Manhattan's Central Park is thanks in large part to the work of Elizabeth Barlow Rogers. Founding president of the Central Park Conservancy, a public-private partnership created in 1980, she was also the first Central Park administrator. An author of numerous works on the environment and living landscapes, Elizabeth currently serves as president of the Foundation for Landscape Studies.

Staten Island's Arlington Marsh is one of the North Shore's last unprotected wetlands, and Beryl Thurman, founding president of the North Shore Waterfront Conservancy, has worked to empower local communities to protect it and adjacent properties. As a result of her efforts, in 2009 the EPA recognized the North Shore as an Environmental Justice Showcase Community. As Beryl described her fight for environmental justice to the Roost's guests, in a world where "more often than not, wrong is right, and doing right is wrong," her evident passion stirred the room and served as a reminder that we all must do our part in fighting for what is right for our fragile urban environment.

In the end, the Fall Roost's guests made their own contribution to conserving New York City's ecosystem through the Silent Auction. Top fund-raisers included two trips: a winter birding expedition to New Mexico with Victor Emanuel Tours and a tour of Montana's Owl Research Institute with biologist Denver Holt. In sum, a total of \$128,000 was raised to support NYC Audubon's conservation and education programs, to continue the vision and hard work of the evening's honorees.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Fall Roost is NYC Audubon's biggest event of the year and is a vital source of funding for operations. Our conservation and educational programs are made possible by the extraordinary generosity of the Host Committee and Silent Auction donors.

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SPECIAL THANKS

to Kristen Bannister for generously donating her outstanding graphic designs over the last sixteen years.

News & Notes

SHOREBIRD STUDY AT REFUGE'S EAST POND

NYC Audubon has received funding from the Disney Worldwide Conservation fund to study shorebird foraging behavior at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. The information collected will help guide management of water levels at the East Pond.

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT, FEB. 18-21

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an important tool for scientists to better understand what is happening to birds during the winter in the United States and Canada. It's easy to participate: just count birds you see for fifteen minutes one day during the count period and submit your results at www.birdsource.org/gbbc.

HOG ISLAND CAMP REOPENS

National Audubon's famed Hog Island Camp has re-opened under the auspices of the Seabird Restoration Project (Project Puffin). The camp, where Roger Tory Peterson once taught, will feature sessions led by Peter Dunne, Ken Kaufman and many other notables. For a full schedule visit hogisland.audubon.org.

JOIN NYC AUDUBON

Members are essential to our education and conservation work. Help protect birds and habitats in the five boroughs by joining our flock.

Mail this form with your payment to:
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INTERNATIONAL TRIPS



COSTA RICA: TALAMANCA HIGHLANDS AND PACIFIC LOWLANDS

Tuesday, February 1–

Saturday, February 5, 2011

Workshops: January 12 and 26, 6-8pm

Guides: Glenn Phillips and Richard Garrigues

Join Executive Director Glenn Phillips and Richard Garrigues, author of *Birds of Costa Rica*, for an introduction to the birds of Costa Rica and the diverse biomes of the country. Costa Rica is one of the finest tropical birding destinations because of its biodiversity, ease of travel and safety. This short trip will feature two designated Important Bird Areas with high levels of endemism, the Talamanca Highlands and the Pacific Lowlands. Likely species include resplendent quetzal, scarlet macaw, trogons, toucans, and a host of other species—both

tropical residents and Neotropical migrants. Two pre-trip workshops will prepare you to take full advantage of the trip. Includes: lodging, local transportation, local guide, all meals, and all park fees. Airfare not included. For more

information, call 212-691-7483 or email: gphillips@nycaudubon.org. For a detailed itinerary, visit <http://www.nycaudubon.org/home/ecotour>. Limited to 12. \$1,199 per person, double occupancy (\$120 single supplement)



Chestnut-Mandibled Toucan

MIGRATE TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Monday, April 11-Tuesday, April 19
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Escape the cold and follow our migrant species to a tropical getaway! Spend a week at the world-renowned Asa Wright Nature Centre and Lodge, a 200-acre wildlife sanctuary in Trinidad's rain-forest, and at the Blue Waters Inn in Tobago. Travel with expert local guides to visit unique natural areas and see dozens of species of hummingbirds and other exotic tropical species rarely seen anywhere else, such as the rare cave-dwelling oilbird and the gorgeous scarlet ibis. Don't miss this incredible journey to a true tropical paradise. Includes double-occupancy lodging, meals, guided walks, and transportation within Trinidad. Limited to 15. \$2,695 (\$595 single room supplement; no member discount)

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