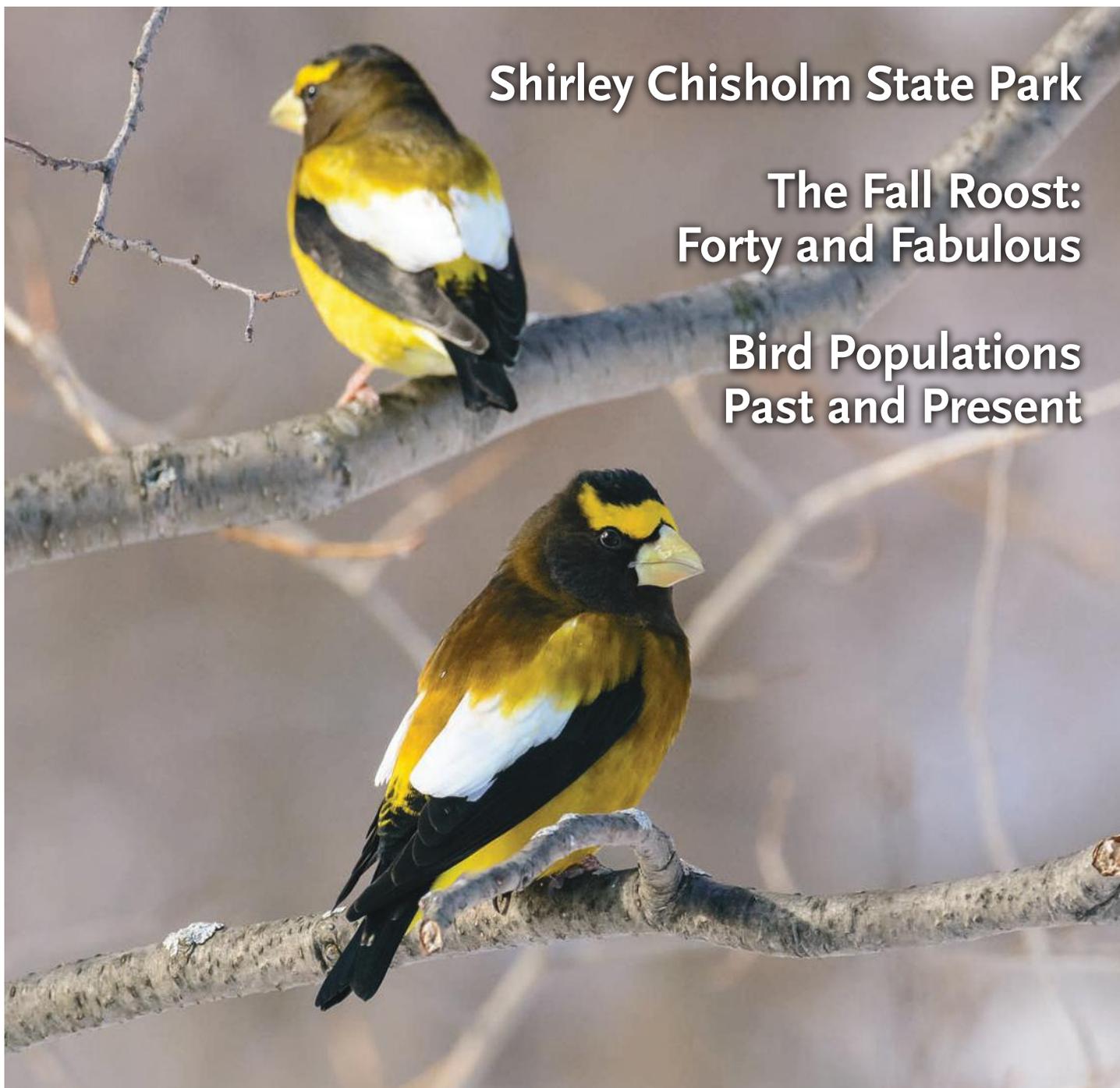




THE URBAN AUDUBON



Shirley Chisholm State Park

**The Fall Roost:
Forty and Fabulous**

**Bird Populations
Past and Present**

NYC AUDUBON MISSION & VISION

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

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

THE URBAN AUDUBON

Editors Lauren Klingsberg, Marcia T. Fowle
Managing Editors Andrew Maas, Tod Winston
Newsletter Committee Seth Ausubel; Lucienne Bloch; Ned Boyajian; Suzanne Charlé; Diane Darrow; Ivy Gilbert; Catherine Schragis Heller; Mary Jane Kaplan; Abby McBride; Rebecca Minardi; Hillarie O'Toole; Don Riepe; Carol Peace Robins

Art Direction and Design Tod Winston
Printing and Mailing Kase Printing, Inc.
Publisher NYC Audubon

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Jeffrey Kimball
Executive Vice President Robert Bate
Vice President Karen Benfield
Vice President Richard H. Fried, VMD
Vice President Catherine Schragis Heller
Vice President Sarah Jeffords
Vice President Lawrence Levine
Vice President Rachel Quiñones
Treasurer Drienne Benner
Secretary Alexander Ewing
Immediate Past President Harrison D. Maas
Directors Seth Ausubel; Marsilia A. Boyle; Shawn Cargil; César A. Castillo; Christian Cooper; Tatiana Kaletsch; Deborah Laurel; Jenny Maritz; Alan Steel; Michael Tannen; Richard Veit, PhD; Michael Yuan

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Co-Chair Marcia T. Fowle*;
Co-Chair James R. Sheffield;
Richard T. Andrias; Sarah Grimké Aucoin;
Claude Bloch, MD; David Burg*; Albert K. Butzel; Cliff Case; Rebekah Creshkoff;
Andrew Darrell; Joseph H. Ellis; Andrew Farnsworth, PhD; Lynne Hertzog; Mary Jane Kaplan; Robert J. Kimtis; Lauren Klingsberg; Kimberly Kriger; Janice Laneve; Pamela Manice; Peter Rhoades Mott*; Dorothy M. Peteet, PhD; Don Riepe; Lewis Rosenberg; John Shemilt; David Speiser; Tom Stephenson
*Past President

STAFF

Executive Director Kathryn Heintz
Director of Conservation & Science Susan Elbin, PhD
Conservation Biologist Kaitlyn Parkins
Field Biologist Emilio Tobón
Programs Manager Danielle Sherman
Advocacy & Outreach Manager Molly Adams
Volunteer Coordinator Aurora Crooks
Director of Development Kellye Rosenheim
Institutional Giving Manager Anne Schwartz
Development Associate Leo Wexler-Mann
Communications Manager Andrew Maas
Communications Content Manager,
Special Projects Tod Winston
Controller David Cavill

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Kathryn Heintz



This year marks the 40th Anniversary of New York City Audubon's founding. In 1979, a small band of bird-lovers, sharing a common concern for the rich but neglected green spaces available for New York City's birds, came together—and changed their world.

In this 40th year, a backward glance at our history has inspired us to contemplate our past, present, and future: our activist roots, the many challenges of today, and precisely how we must grow to better protect birds and their habitats in the coming years. What does it mean to be an urban conservation organization in 2020? How can we best use and leverage our resources? What are the greatest threats and how must we address them? We have grappled with these and many more questions over the past year to produce our *Strategic Plan* for 2020-2025: a renewed commitment to conservation based in science, and a pledge to grow and diversify our community of conservationists and advocates.

This is an extraordinary time. In September, the journal *Science* reported a staggering loss of North American birds: a decline of 29 percent, or almost 3 billion individual birds, since 1970, due in large part to habitat loss and degradation, pesticide use, predation by domestic cats, and window collisions. And if that weren't bad enough, in October National Audubon raised the alarm that two-thirds of these same North American birds are at risk of extinction from climate change.

But there is also good news right here in New York City. NYC Audubon has grown as an organization over the past four decades, building a strong base of science-based conservation work, and we are redoubling our efforts to make New York a more bird-friendly city. New parkland has been opened to the public this year in the form of Shirley Chisholm State Park, providing needed habitat for endangered grassland species. As this issue of *The Urban Audubon* goes to press, a bill in Albany to study building design protections for migrating birds awaits Governor Cuomo's signature, and we are hopeful that bird-friendly building legislation in the New York City Council will pass before the end of the year. Our taking such actions now will improve the chances for many of the species under greatest threat.

We need your help today. Together, let us ensure that the more than 350 bird species that reside, breed, migrate through, and winter in New York City will survive to spark wonder in future generations. We are proud of those who have worked so tirelessly to get us where we are today—and we ask you now to help us achieve a sustainable future. As you make your financial contribution for the year ahead, please consider a personally significant philanthropic commitment for the birds, and please join me in giving an additional \$40 (or \$400, or \$4,000) this year in honor of our anniversary. Each and every "Add \$40" gift will be matched! (See page 21 and the enclosed envelope for more detailed information.)

Thank you for your support, and warmest and best wishes for the New Year.

© Lloyd Spatnik



Threatened Grasshopper Sparrows bred this year in Brooklyn's new Shirley Chisholm State Park.

NYC AUDUBON

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

Cover Photograph:
Evening Grosbeaks © Claudine Lamothe*
Small Banner Photographs:
Susan Elbin, Steve Nanz, and Don Riepe
*This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License.



Mural Artwork © Danielle Mastrom; photograph © Alisha Lewis



Courtesy of Cornell Lab of Ornithology



From *The Empire of the Eagle* by Mike Unwin and David Tipling © David Tipling



Graphic Credits: See p. 3 of the 40th Anniversary *Urban Audubon* at www.nycaudubon.org/fourtyhistory

FEATURES

- 6 **A Local Trailblazer Is Honored in Brooklyn: Shirley Chisholm State Park**
by Molly Adams
- 7 **Flying High on Governors Island**
by Suzanne Charlé
- 8 **Bird Populations Past and Present**
by Don Riepe
- 9 **Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*)**
by Ned Boyajian
- 15 **The 120th Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count and
23rd Annual Great Backyard Bird Count**
- 16 **The NYC Audubon Fall Roost: Forty and Fabulous**
by Hillarie O'Toole
- 19 **We Bid a Fond Farewell to Our Top Scientist, Susan Elbin, PhD**
- 20 **Celebrating 40 Years of Bird Conservation—and
Funding NYC Audubon's Future**

DEPARTMENTS

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|----|-------------------------------|
| 4 | Conservation Notes | 14 | Book Review |
| 5 | Volunteer! | 22 | Avian Advocate Updates |
| 6 | Nominating Committee Report | 22 | News & Notes |
| 10 | Events & Adventures | 23 | Support NYC Audubon's Mission |
| 13 | 2019-2020 Lecture Series | 24 | Give a Gift for the Birds |

CONSERVATION NOTES

These Conservation Notes will be the last edition penned by Director of Conservation and Science Susan Elbin, PhD, who is retiring at the end of this year after more than 10 years of service to NYC Audubon. The thriving programs described here are a reflection of Dr. Elbin's leadership over the past decade. See page 19 for a tribute to Dr. Elbin and a summary of her many conservation accomplishments for this organization.

—The Editors

This fall, NYC Audubon enlisted youthful help to carry out much of our work. Service Learning Interns Elizabeth Draves and Victorya Kaon joined us from the Queens College Environmental Studies program, while we welcomed Aurora Crooks to our staff in the new role of conservation program volunteer coordinator. (Learn more about Aurora in News & Notes on page 22.) The skill and passion of our young colleagues has fueled much of the activity we report below.

PROJECT SAFE FLIGHT

This fall 32 volunteers monitored the Project Safe Flight sites chosen during the 2019 spring migration season: the Metropolitan Museum of Art, two routes in Lower Manhattan, and a route in Brooklyn Bridge Park. Data are still being collected; results will be shared in the spring 2020 *Urban Audubon*. As we go to press more than 500 dead or injured birds have been reported to our crowd-sourced D-Bird database during this fall migration season. Many of these birds are brought into the NYC Audubon office, where we freeze them for later donation to museums and universities for use in collections and research projects.

Aurora Crooks accompanied volunteers on their collision routes, filled scheduling gaps, and met with volunteers when they came to the office to submit data or dead birds. She has also begun making plans to expand and improve our spring community science programming.

© Maryjane Boland



American Woodcocks are frequent victims of window collisions. A record 20 injured or dead woodcocks were entered in D-Bird in one day, on November 13 2019.

TRIBUTE IN LIGHT

We conducted our 18th annual monitoring of the National September 11 Memorial & Museum Tribute in Light with the help of 22 community science volunteers. As the monitoring occurred on Aurora's second day of work, she pulled an "all-nighter" as she greeted volunteers and helped Dr. Susan Elbin, Conservation Biologist Kaitlyn Parkins, Advocacy and Outreach Manager Molly Adams, and Advisory Committee Member Dr. Andrew

Farnsworth monitor the beams. The migration flight started off light that night; very few birds and even fewer insects were noted. The weather front changed shortly after 3am, however, and birds began to appear. The Michael Ahern Production Services team switched the beams off twice in the early morning hours, allowing thousands of birds to continue their migration.

FALL FOR BIRDS

In early October, NYC Audubon took part in a panel discussion on bird conservation and habitat protection in the City, part of the "Fall for Birds" program hosted by the Bronx's New York Botanical Garden. The panel consisted of Kaitlyn Parkins, Molly Adams, American Bird Conservancy's Director of the Glass Collisions Program Christine Sheppard, PhD, and National Audubon's Plants for Birds Partnership Manager Marlene Pantin. Annie Novak, manager of the Botanical Garden's Edible Academy, moderated the session. Panelists spoke about threats to birds, especially urban birds—and the actions that individuals can take to mitigate those threats, including planting native plants and advocating for bird-friendly building design legislation.

© NYC Audubon



Kaitlyn Parkins and Aurora Crooks monitor the Tribute in Light.

© Stephanie Kale



Fritted glass at the Javits Center: In this photo, we see both the reflections of buildings behind the photographer and the New Jersey shoreline through the glass. By making the glass surface itself visible, fritting keeps birds from being deceived by reflections and transparency—and helps them avoid collisions.

BIRD-FRIENDLY BUILDING LEGISLATION

Our team has been hard at work helping with advocacy efforts in support of the New York State Bird-Friendly Building Council Act (S25B/A4055B) and New York City Council bill (Int. 1482-2019). Both bills have received strong local support; at a September hearing for the City Council bill, Project Safe Flight volunteers, including several children, delivered moving testimony in favor of the bill. Read more about this legislation and our advocacy work in the Avian Advocate Updates section on page 22.

GREEN ROOFS

The second annual Green Roof Researchers Alliance (GRRA) conference, funded by a grant from The New York Community Trust, was held on September 27 at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center. NYC Audubon Board member and Javits Center CEO Alan Steel helped us position the all-day event as part of “Climate Week,” and it attracted 250 participants. The all-day program included presentations and panel discussions by members of the GRRA, including NYC Audubon’s Dustin Partridge and Dr. Susan

Elbin. Topics included mapping green roofs, measuring their environmental and biological benefits, and policy regulations. Workshops included environmental and biodiversity monitoring, and green roofs as classrooms. The conference’s “big reveal” was the product of a collaborative effort among GRRA members: the Alliance’s new website, www.greenroofsnyc.com. Plans are already under way for next year’s conference.

WATERBIRDS OF NEW YORK HARBOR

In early November, Field Biologist Emilio Tobón, Research Associate Debra Kriensky, Kaitlyn Parkins, and Dr. Susan Elbin attended the 43rd Annual Waterbird Society meeting, presenting research on American Oystercatchers, Piping Plovers, Semipalmated Sandpipers, and urban gulls. At the time of this writing, we await Semipalmated Sandpiper re-sighting data in the form of band observations and nanotag transmitter detections. We have also just scheduled the 15th annual meeting of the Harbor Herons and Waterbirds of the Greater New York/New Jersey Harbor working group for Tuesday and Wednesday, December 10 and 11.

VOLUNTEER!



Make a difference for the City’s wildlife by volunteering with NYC Audubon. There are many ways to help this winter. Learn about Breeding Bird Atlas, advocacy, and community outreach opportunities at right. (To learn about the **Audubon Christmas Bird Count** or the **Great Backyard Bird Count**, see page 15. For up-to-date information on early spring volunteer events such as beach clean-ups, visit www.nycaudubon.org/volunteer-events.)

BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

New York State’s third Breeding Bird Atlas begins January 1. From 2020 to 2024, we need ongoing volunteer birders to enter sightings of breeding birds using eBird. To sign up, contact Molly Adams, New York City’s regional coordinator, at madams@nycaudubon.org (Learn more about the Breeding Bird Atlas at ebird.org/atlasny.)

BIRD-FRIENDLY ADVOCACY

Take a stand for the safety of New York City’s birds. You can impact local policy and raise awareness about the conservation issues that affect birds. Join us for a training session hosted by Alison Newell and Joe Herrera from Underdog Strategies. The session will be held Thursday, January 9, 6-7:30pm. Contact Molly Adams at madams@nycaudubon.org to sign up and learn more.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

NYC Audubon is seeking outgoing, bird-loving community ambassador/educators to expand our advocacy and outreach across the City’s five boroughs. An orientation session covering key NYC Audubon messaging and programs, public-speaking tips, and more will be held on Thursday, January 23, 6-8pm. Contact Aurora Crooks at acrooks@nycaudubon.org to sign up and learn more.

A LOCAL TRAILBLAZER IS HONORED IN BROOKLYN: SHIRLEY CHISHOLM STATE PARK

Molly Adams

In 1968, Shirley Anita Chisholm became the first black woman ever elected to the US House of Representatives. Four years later, she was the first black person to run as a major-party candidate for president of the United States, and the first woman to run for the Democratic Party nomination. Brooklyn-born Chisholm (1924-2005) was known for breaking barriers, and NYC Audubon applauds the decision to name the City's newest state park after her.

Shirley Chisholm State Park spans over 400 acres and hosts 10 miles of walking trails, making it Brooklyn's third-largest park. The park sits atop former (capped) landfill sites at the south end of Pennsylvania and Fountain Avenues, and consists mostly of reclaimed grassland, coastal meadow, and marsh habitat bordering East New York and Jamaica Bay.

According to the recent *Science* report on the decline of North American birds (see News & Notes on page 22 for details), grassland birds are one of the hardest hit groups, having lost over 50 percent of their population since 1970. Capped landfills, when planted and maintained as bird habitat, offer an urban solution to this conservation crisis.

Mural artwork © Danielle Mastrion; photograph © Bruce Handy



Shirley Chisholm is quoted in a Park mural by Brooklyn artist Danielle Mastrion: "Service is the rent we pay for the privilege of living on this earth."

We hope to partner with Shirley Chisholm State Park to monitor grassland species in this area over time.

NYC Audubon also plans to have an outreach presence here, offering more bird walks as the second phase of the Park opens. With habitat similar to that found at another capped landfill, Freshkills Park on Staten

Island, the Park may host a variety of grassland birds such as Grasshopper Sparrows, Savannah Sparrows, and Blue Grosbeaks in summer; Northern Harriers and Snowy Owls may visit in the winter months.

Learn about activities at Shirley Chisholm State Park in *The Urban Audubon*, *The eGret* eNewsletter, and on our online calendar.

© Jorja Feldman/Audubon Photography Awards



Left: Blue Grosbeaks may be drawn to breed in Shirley Chisholm State Park. Right: a NYC Audubon group birds the Park's grassy slopes.

© Karen Benfield



NOMINATING COMMITTEE SEEKS SUGGESTIONS FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NYC Audubon is seeking suggestions for new members of the board of directors for three-year terms beginning in June 2020. To make our board more representative of the City's diversity, we are especially interested in candidates who are racially/ethnically diverse, women, residents of boroughs other than Manhattan, and/or with financial or New York City government policy/advocacy expertise. Please submit your suggestions to Alexander Ewing, chair of the nominating committee, at nominations@nycaudubon.org.

FLYING HIGH ON GOVERNORS ISLAND

Suzanne Charlé

Annie Barry led a dozen people, armed with binoculars, out the door of Nolan Park #17. “It’s a little on the quiet side,” she warned. Fall migration had stalled for a bit. No problem: Barry, who began surveying birds on Governors Island in 2013 and has since posted 146 species on eBird, gave fascinating insights into the behavior of the birds we encountered. When the American Redstart, for instance, flicked its tail as it swooped from one branch to another, she noted: “It’s flushing out insects.”

As one of the nonprofits chosen by the Trust for Governors Island, NYC Audubon has been hosting visitors at the yellow wood-frame house, the former home of a military officer, since 2017. This year, from June through October, nearly 3,000 people were treated to a variety of educational and artistic programs. (In 2020, the house will be open from May through October.)

Nineteen bird walks—a perennial favorite—were led by Barry, Gabriel Willow, and new volunteer Ryan Zucker, a 16-year-old “birding prodigy with a very calm air,” said Danielle Sherman, NYC Audubon’s program manager. In June, NYC Audubon’s sixth annual Governors Island “It’s Your Tern!” Festival taught visitors about the island’s continuing colony of New York State-threatened Common Terns, and offered tern-related entertainment and games.

Throughout the season, 17 Nolan Park was also an art gallery, displaying winners of the 2019 National Audubon Photography Awards, ranging from a photo of the mysterious eye of a Black-browed Albatross in the Falkland Islands to the grand prize winner, a Red-winged Blackbird “blowing smoke rings” as it sang on a cold morning in Alexandria, VA. Other exhibits included Gail Karlsson’s shots of birds in New York City and Annie Novak’s paintings for a new book on migration.

NYC Audubon’s artists-in-residence ran workshops for children and adults. Autumn Kioti returned, this year constructing a bird puppet from reclaimed materials, while Zach Lombardi carved whimsical sculptures out



Visitors create a mural with Ibex Puppetry

of wood: a walrus toothbrush, a hat that birds could perch on. Tristan Higginbotham, also working with wood, built a bird blind and hanging birdseed dispensers. Artists from Ibex Puppetry, run by Heather Henson, Jim Henson’s daughter, gave five workshops, using puppets to tell stories of conservation and indigenous culture.

Weekend nights were particularly special this year, thanks to evening hours that allowed the public to stay late on the island. Ibex Puppetry showed film shorts focused on the environment, and Lykanthea presented musical migration soundscapes. NYC Audubon Board Member Kellie

Quiñones and long-time supporter and bird photographer Bruce Yolton led 35 people on our first-ever bat walk on the island, honing in on the creatures’ ultrasonic echolocation calls with a cell-phone based detection app.

During his residency, Ryan Moritz created “Important Bird Opera,” in honor of biologically rich landscapes critical to bird populations. Having photographed and filmed migrating birds in southeast Michigan, Florida, Texas, Mexico, and South America, and influenced by musical works by Respighi, John Cage, and Jim Fasset, Moritz said originally he imagined “an opera in which the birds sang for themselves.” But as he thought more about climate change and human impact, he incorporated a libretto by Anjuli Raza Kolb. No humans are seen in the video, just a brief glimpse of a nuclear power plant in the distance. “I wanted this to be just about the birds and their world—human impact is unspoken but there’s threat throughout. I wanted to give hope; to show the beauty of birds.”

“Important Bird Opera” is entered in several film festivals, but you can see it online by visiting www.ryanmoritz.com/#/important-bird-opera.



Annie Barry points out a bird high above, in front of 17 Nolan Park. Inset: One or two pairs of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons have been observed nesting on Governors Island since 2015.

BIRD POPULATIONS PAST AND PRESENT

Don Riepe

Recently, the journal *Science* reported that there has been a 30 percent reduction in the bird population of North America since 1970. That's a loss of almost 3 billion individual birds! (See graphic from the *Science* report, below.) This staggering finding, culled from a variety of long-term data sets, confirms what I and other long-time birders have observed with our own eyes: we see far fewer birds today than we did in our early years of birding.

In 1974, as a young ranger at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, I once saw 13 species of warbler in a single shadbush tree. There were also definitely more birds in overall number than we witness today. Others who have been watching birds in the New York City area for many years agree.

Jim Ash, a regular Queens birder in the 1960s and 70s, later executive director of the South Fork Natural History Society, and my early mentor, says: "There is no doubt bird numbers have declined dramatically in the last fifty years. I remember going to Forest Park on a May morning after a favorable weather front and then going to Jamaica Bay in the afternoon and having no trouble racking up over 100 species. And it's not just the diversity that has changed, but the huge

reduction in numbers of birds. Back then the woods would be filled with a cacophony of bird sound that you could hear just by driving along Forest Park Drive. I remember fantastic waves of migration that sometimes were all American Redstarts or Ovenbirds or Red-eyed Vireos or Tennessee Warblers and I would wonder, 'how many birds are there, if there are so many of one kind in just this one place?' That kind of thing just does not happen anymore."

Tom Burke, voice of the "Rare Bird Alert," also remembers birding over 40 years ago. He reflects: "It's interesting that this study has now come out and actually quantified something that many of us 'old time' birders have been feeling for a decade or more now. Material declines have been apparent to me for a while for both spring and fall migrants as well as regionally breeding birds, the latter both here in Westchester and also up in the Adirondacks, where we spend a couple of weeks each July. I often find it both amusing and very distressing when I hear young birders describe a 'huge fallout' they encountered, describing a scene that would have been an expected daily occurrence 30 or more years ago, while a large fallout back then was something we still

remember as a spectacular barrage of many species of migrants in exceptional numbers. The latter will unfortunately probably never be seen again in our area."

Other long-time birders have observed the same trend. Past NYC Audubon President Harry Maas remembers counting 14 Scarlet Tanagers in a single tree in Central Park, one May day 30 years ago.

The confirmation of birders' anecdotal reports of bird decline by long-term scientific data is a call to action. The *Science* report, coupled with National Audubon's new report on birds and climate change, paints a stark future for the world's birds. That future is in jeopardy from continued population growth of our own species; increased burning of remaining tropical forests; notable decline in insect populations; rampant development, including buildings with large glass windows; and the current administration's attack on critical environmental laws. These problems are vast and complex but solutions exist, if only people take action.

To learn how to act locally with NYC Audubon to protect birds, see our new Avian Advocate Updates section on page 22. Read more about the *Science* and *Audubon* reports in News & Notes, also on page 22.

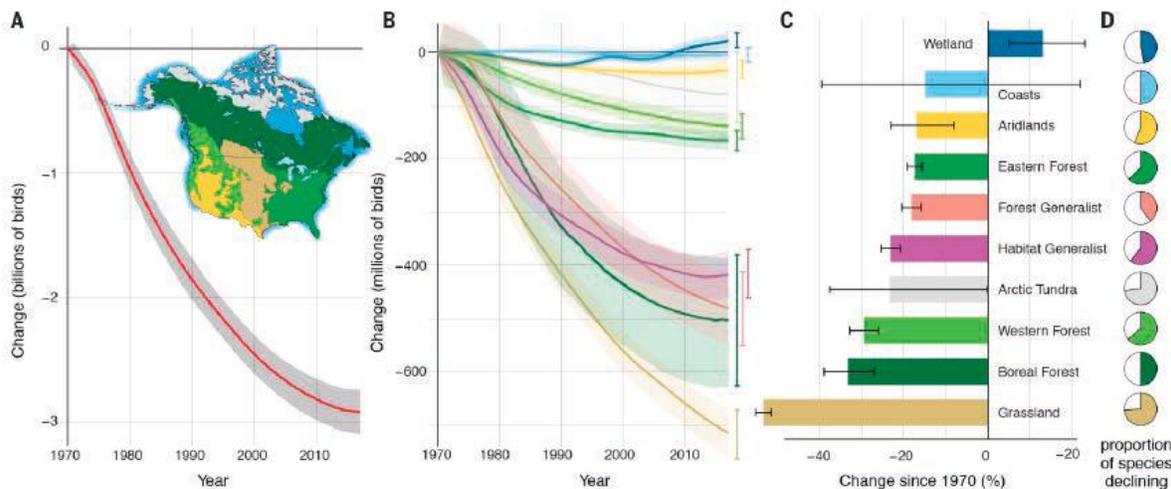


Fig. 1. Net population change in North American birds. (A) By integrating population size estimates and trajectories for 529 species (18), we show a net loss of 2.9 billion breeding birds across the continental avifauna since 1970. Gray shading represents $\pm 95\%$ credible intervals around total estimated loss. Map shows color-coded breeding biomes based on Bird Conservation Regions and land cover classification (18). **(B)** Net loss of abundance occurred across all major breeding biomes except wetlands (see Table 1). **(C)** Proportional net population change relative to 1970, $\pm 95\%$ C.I. **(D)** Proportion of species declining in each biome.

From Rosenberg, Kenneth V., et al. "Decline of the North American avifauna." *Science* 366, 6461 (2019). Reprinted with permission from AAAS.

EVENING GROSBEAK (*COCCOTHAUSTES VESPERTINUS*)

Ned Boyajian

Like showy male American Goldfinches—but twice their size, with larger bills, white wing patches, and a more subtle, somber yellow color—adult male Evening Grosbeaks are striking birds. This author’s first sighting of one, over 40 years ago, is still an indelible memory. The plumage of the adult female (and of immature birds of both sexes) is more subdued, though all birds sport vivid white wing patches.

The choice of the name “Evening” Grosbeak by 19th-century settlers of the Rocky Mountains may have stemmed

from a misunderstanding of this diurnal bird’s habits. Even today our understanding of the species’ ecology remains somewhat shadowy—but observed fluctuations in its range showcase the impacts, both positive and negative, that humans can have on wildlife. In the 1800s, Evening Grosbeaks lived mostly west of the Rocky Mountains, where they devoured seeds during winter and feasted on fruits and spruce budworms when those were available. The species’ range began to extend eastward in the middle of the nineteenth century, perhaps due to eastern outbreaks of spruce budworm and increased planting of box elders, which served as a food source.

In the East, the Evening Grosbeak became known as “an irruptive, erratic fall migrant, winter visitor/resident, and spring migrant, occurring singly, in small groups, or by the hundreds during major irruptions,” according to *Urban Ornithology*, a history of ornithological study in New York City. The species was recorded in the Bronx in the winter of 1915-16 and was an irregular visitor to the New York City area through the 1920s and early 1940s. There are no records of



An adult male Evening Grosbeak

Evening Grosbeaks breeding in the City, but they do breed in northern New Jersey and the Adirondack region of New York State. Matthew A. Young writes in *The Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State* that these birds nest “in coniferous and mixed-coniferous woods, second growth, and occasionally parks ... often nesting in small villages surrounded by forested areas.”

Breeding populations of Evening Grosbeaks rose in New York State after 1946, a change attributed to an increase

in human-stocked bird feeders; an especially large irruption occurred in the winter of 1951-52. In the New York City area, numbers peaked in the 1950s and 1980s; the species has been scarce here since. Between 1966 and 2015, the North American Breeding Bird Survey documented a 97 percent decline in the species’ eastern population.

Sadly, this decline is not limited to the East. Across North America, Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s Project FeederWatch reports that overall sightings “declined by 50 percent between 1988 and 2006. At sites where Evening Grosbeaks continue to be reported, average flock size had decreased by 27 percent.” The species is also among the “boreal forest birds” that have declined 33 percent since 1970, according to the recent *Science* report (see figure on the opposite page). The reasons for the decline are not yet well understood, but a recent *Living Bird* article states that “collective action at a national scale could reverse the bird losses.” Any plan to prevent further declines hinges on the collection of more information, to ensure that the Evening Grosbeak does not fade into eternal night.



Evening Grosbeaks: adult females/immatures with one adult male (second unobscured bird from left)

EVENTS & ADVENTURES

- NYC Audubon Events
- Partnership Events
- Overnight Trips

• THE FRESHWATER PONDS OF LONG ISLAND, NY

Saturday, December 7 and
Wednesday, January 8, 8am-3pm
Guide: Tod Winston

Visit up to seven Long Island freshwater ponds to see a surprising variety of wintering waterfowl and other birds. Possibilities include Hooded Merganser, Ring-necked Duck, Northern Pintail, Redhead, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and Belted Kingfisher. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 20. \$100 (70) per trip

• BIRDING GEMS OF STATEN ISLAND: FRESHKILLS PARK

Sunday, December 8 and early 2019 date TBA, 8am-3pm
Guide: Cliff Hagen

Winter at Freshkills Park is an exciting time: The grass-covered slopes provide seed and shelter to huddled flocks of Horned Larks and Snow Buntings—while tidal creeks host grebes, coots, teal, mergansers, and Northern Pintails. Raptor species such as Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, and Bald Eagle are also possible sightings. Transport by passenger van on S.I. included. Limited to 12. \$57 (40)

• WINTER BIRDING ALONG THE HUDSON: WAVE HILL, THE BRONX

Sundays, December 8, January 12, February 9, and March 8, 9:30-11:30am
Guide: Gabriel Willow
With Wave Hill

Meet at the Perkins Visitor Center. The Hudson River valley hosts impressive bird diversity in the winter. Explore Wave Hill's gardens and woodlands and observe the hardy birds that spend the winter in this urban oasis. Walks run rain or shine. Ages 10 and up welcome with an adult. Two-for-one admission for NYC Audubon members. For admission, see www.wavehill.org.

© Lloyd Spatnik



Snow Buntings

• AUDUBON MURAL PROJECT TOURS IN NORTHERN MANHATTAN

Sundays, December 8 and March 22, 10am-12:15pm
Guide: Leigh Hallingby

The Audubon Mural Project is an exciting effort to create murals of over 300 birds in the northern Manhattan neighborhoods of Hamilton Heights and Washington Heights. As all the birds painted are threatened by climate change, the project is designed not only to help us appreciate the beauty of the birds, but make us aware of the challenges they face. In addition to visiting about 30 murals, we will visit John James Audubon's impressive gravesite in the Trinity Church cemetery. Binoculars will be an asset on this walk. Limited to 20. \$30 (20) per tour

• WINTER BIRDS AT JAMAICA BAY

Sunday, December 15, 10am-1pm
Guide: Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society and Gateway National Recreation Area
Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center for a slide program on winter birds and wildlife, followed by a walk around the ponds and gardens. Learn about bird migration, survival, and adaptation to cold temperatures—and look for owls, raptors, finches, and waterfowl. For information and reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriep@gmail.com. No limit. Free

• DROP IN AND BIRD: MORNING BIRD WALKS IN CENTRAL PARK

Thursdays, December 19, January 2, 16, and 30, February 13 and 27, 7:30-9am
Guide: Harry Maas

Meet at the park entrance at East 79th Street and Fifth Avenue, parkside. Start your day off right with brisk winter birding in one of the best birding spots around. No registration necessary. No limit. Free

• NEW YEAR'S DAY BEACH WALK, FORT TILDEN, QUEENS

Wednesday, January 1, 11am-1pm
Guides: Don Riepe, Mickey Cohen
With American Littoral Society and Gateway National Recreation Area

Welcome in the New Year with a brisk hike along the beach, dunes, and woods of Fort Tilden to look for loons, scoters, and long-tailed ducks. Enjoy champagne, coffee, and cake afterward at the Rockaway Artists Alliance. For more information, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriep@gmail.com. No reservations necessary. No limit. Free

• WINTER WATERFOWL ID WORKSHOP

Friday, January 3, 6-7:30pm (class) and Saturday, January 4, 10am-1pm (trip)
Instructor: Gabriel Willow

If it walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it's probably a duck... but is it a dabbling duck or a diving duck? Or could it be a grebe? This class will help you distinguish among ducks, geese, loons, grebes, cormorants, and

more. Following our class, we'll put our newfound skills to work as we seek out the diverse mix of waterfowl to be found in New York City. Limited to 12. \$65 (45)

• CENTRAL PARK WINTER WALKS

Fridays, January 3, January 17, January 31, February 14, February 28, and March 13, 9-11am
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Some of the best sightings await hardy nature-lovers willing to venture out in winter. Several owl species are frequently found in Central Park, along with "winter finches" such as Pine Siskins, redpolls, and crossbills. Observing adaptations for cold-weather survival among Blue Jays, titmice, and other resident species is fascinating as well. Warm up after the walk with a hot chocolate at the Loeb Boathouse. Limited to 15. \$36 (25) per walk

• INTRO TO BIRDING: BIRD WALK IN CENTRAL PARK

Saturday, January 4, 8:30-11am
Guide: Tod Winston

Are you curious about "birding" but don't have much (or any) experience? Come on a relaxed walk in Central Park to go over birding basics and see sparrows, finches, warblers, ducks, and more. Binoculars available upon request. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

• SNOW BIRDS OF FLOYD BENNETT FIELD AND FORT TILDEN, QUEENS

Sundays, January 5 and February 16, 10am-4pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Winter brings many rare birds to the City that can't be found here at any other time. Perhaps most 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. Look for these and other winter visitors such as Horned Larks, American Tree Sparrows, and Rough-legged Hawks, as well as ducks, grebes, and loons. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$100 (70) per trip



OVERNIGHT TRIPS

- MONTAUK WINTER WEEKEND: SEALS, SURF, AND SEABIRDS**
Friday, January 10–Sunday, January 12
Guide: Don Riepe
With American Littoral Society
- PUFFINS, WARBLERS, AND LOBSTER BOATS: THE ENCHANTING COAST OF MAINE**
Saturday, May 23–Saturday May 30
Guide: Gabriel Willow

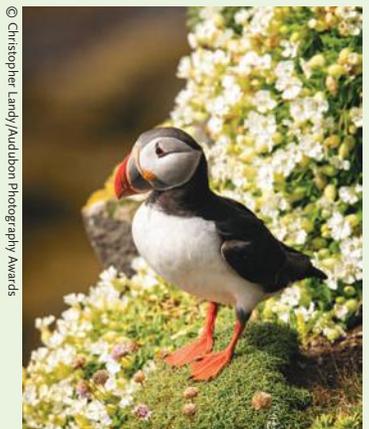
Spend a weekend at the luxurious Manor House during peak winter birding time at Montauk Point. See seals, scoters, loons, eider, razorbills, and much more. Includes two nights lodging, five meals, five guided field trips, two evening programs, and free pickup at the LIRR station in Montauk. For reservations and details, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriep@gmail.com. \$425 (\$150 single supplement)



© Lloyd Spitznik
King Eider

- WINTER WATERFOWL WEEKENDS AT MONTAUK**
Saturday, February 1, 9am–Sunday, February 2, 7pm
Saturday, February 29, 9am–Sunday, March 1, 7pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

The gatherings of sea ducks around Montauk Point are the largest winter concentrations in New York State; the Audubon Christmas Bird Count at Montauk Point consistently tallies from 125 to 135 species. Species that come to feed on the Point's rich kelp and mussel beds include Common and Red-throated Loon, Common Eider, all three scoter species, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Great Cormorant, and Red-breasted Merganser. Harlequin Duck and King Eider also occur here regularly during the winter. Accommodations at Daunt's Albatross in Montauk and transport by passenger van included. Limited to 10. \$340 (\$60 single supplement) per trip



© Christopher Landry/Audubon Photography Awards
Atlantic Puffin

- MORNING BIRD WALKS IN CENTRAL PARK**

Sundays, January 5 and 12, 9-10:30am

Guide: Jeff Ward

Spend a leisurely morning searching Central Park's best birding spots for winter residents and surprises. Limited to 15. \$36 (25) per walk

- EAGLE WATCH AND BIRD WALK AT INWOOD HILL PARK, MANHATTAN**

Saturday, January 11, 8:30-10:30am

Guide: Annie Barry

Enjoy a winter hike through the varied landscapes and habitats of Inwood Hill Park. Right at the northern tip of Manhattan where the Harlem River meets the Hudson, Inwood Hill Park offers shoreline vistas, mature forest, and the last natural saltmarsh in Manhattan. We'll scan the Hudson for Bald Eagles sighted there in recent winters, search the forest for songbirds, and scan the saltmarsh for wintering ducks. Some hilly walking. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

- WINTER BIRDING ON THE SOUTH SHORE OF LONG ISLAND**

Saturdays, January 11 and March 7, 9am-6pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Winter in New York brings the excitement of possibility: Will Snowy Owls alight in the dunes? Will Harlequin Ducks appear in waters close to the City? Will irruptive northern finches and Bohemian Waxwings arrive from Canada? All these species are possible on Long Island in the winter, along with more expected species such as loons, grebes, eider, Northern Harriers, and Purple Sandpipers. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$102 (72) per trip

- WINTER BIRDS OF DEKORTE PARK, NJ**

Sunday, January 12, 8am-1pm

Guide: Tod Winston

Explore the ponds, marshes, and feeding stations of this lovely

nearby park in search of wintering waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds. Last year's sightings included Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Northern Pintail, Canvasback, Common Goldeneye, and all three Merganser species. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$97 (68)

- FOREST PARK FEEDER WATCH AND OWL PROWL, QUEENS**

Sundays, January 12 and January 26, 9:30-11am

Guide: Corey Finger

Explore the depths of the largest contiguous forest in Queens. Highlights include the feeding station at the famed Waterhole and a search for owls in the pine groves. Common feeder sightings include woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadee, American Goldfinch, and Brown Creeper. Past years have also seen Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Pine Warbler. On the owl prowl, look for sightings of Great Horned, Northern Saw-whet, and Long-eared Owl. Limited to 15. \$36 (25) per walk

- BIRD WALK IN CENTRAL PARK'S NORTH END**

Wednesday, January 22, 8-11am

Guide: Tod Winston

Meet for a winter birding exploration of Central Park's north end. We'll traverse the waterways, meadows, and forests of the north end in search of wintering songbirds, waterbirds, and raptors. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

- RANDALL'S ISLAND WINTER WALK**

Saturday, January 25, 9-11am

Guide: Nadir Souirgi

Explore this lesser-known spot in the East River, where recently restored freshwater wetlands and saltmarsh provide habitat for many varieties of birds. We'll look for rarities such as Common Goldeneye, Lesser Black-backed Gull, and Iceland Gull. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

... CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

EVENTS & ADVENTURES (CONTINUED)

- **SOARING RAPTORS: EAGLES AND OWLS OF THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY, NY**

Wednesday, January 29, 9am-4pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

You don't have to travel to Alaska to see our country's emblem, the Bald Eagle. Thanks to one of the most successful reintroduction programs on record, many eagles now soar over the Hudson Valley. Come see this spectacular raptor and try to spot the secretive Short-eared Owl. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$103 (72)

- **WINTER WATERFOWL OF THE BROOKLYN COAST**

Saturday, February 1, 9am-3pm
Guide: Kellye Rosenheim

Join Kellye Rosenheim on a tour of Brooklyn's most productive coastal winter waterfowl sites. We'll visit Bush Terminal Piers Park, Gravesend, and Calvert Vaux in search of saltwater species such as Common Goldeneye, Long-tailed Duck, and Common Loon, as well as Horned and Red-necked Grebe. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$96 (67)

- **WATERFRONT BIRD WALKS AT THE BATTERY, SOUTHERN TIP OF MANHATTAN**

Tuesdays, February 4, 11, 18, and 25, 8-9am
Guide: Gabriel Willow

With The Battery Conservancy

Meet at the Netherlands Memorial Flag Pole located at the entrance to the park on the corner of Broadway, Battery Place, and State Street. Join Gabriel Willow to explore the diverse wintering birds that find food and habitat on lower Manhattan's waterfront, such as ducks, geese, loons, grebes, and gulls. Seals may also be seen. RSVP preferred, visit tbevents.eventbrite.com for more information. No Limit. Free

- **WINTER WALKS AT INWOOD HILL PARK, MANHATTAN**

Saturdays, February 8, February 29, and March 7, 9am-12pm

Guide: Nadir Souirgi

Explore Inwood Hill Park, the jewel of northern Manhattan. Nestled along the Hudson River, this last tract of largely undeveloped oak and tulip forest transports you to another world and another time. Glacial "pot holes," towering trees, and stunning river views create an unrivaled birding backdrop. Limited to 15 per walk. \$36 (25) per walk

- **WINTER THAW BIRD WALK AT JAMAICA BAY**

Saturday, February 22, 10am-1pm

Guide: Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society and Gateway National Recreation Area

Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center for a slide program and hike around the ponds and gardens to look for late winter birds. Learn how wildlife survives the winter. For more information and to register, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriepen@gmail.com. No limit. Free

and learn about the ecology of the Meadowlands. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$97 (68) per walk

- **WINTER BIRDS OF THE BARRIER ISLANDS, LI**

Sunday, March 1, 8am-4pm

Guide: Tod Winston

Several bird species that nest in the far North spend the winter at Jones Beach, in a habitat similar to their summer homes. We'll visit Point Lookout and Jones Beach in search of Harlequin Ducks, Common Eider, scoters, Horned Larks, and Snow Buntings. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$97 (\$68)

- **WINTER BIRDS OF BARNEGAT, NJ**

Thursday, March 5, 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, as well as Snowy and Short-eared Owls. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$118 (83)

- **INTRO TO BIRDING: BIRD WALK IN CENTRAL PARK**

Sunday, March 8, 8:30-11am

Guide: Tod Winston

Are you curious about "birding" but don't have much (or any) experience? Come on a relaxed walk in Central Park to go over birding basics and see sparrows, finches, warblers, ducks, and more. Binoculars available upon request. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

- **THE SKY-DANCE OF THE WOODCOCK, BROOKLYN**

Saturdays, March 21 and 28, 5-9:30pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

The American Woodcock is a remarkable bird. It is in the sandpiper family but lives in woodlands, often far from beaches. The male performs an incredible crepuscular aerial display and song in early spring, soon after the snow melts in the northern US. We'll

© David Spenser



Short-eared Owl

- **BIRD WALK TO CENTRAL PARK'S RAMBLE AND RESERVOIR**

Sunday, February 9, 8-11am

Guide: Tod Winston

Enjoy a morning of birding's simple pleasures with a walk in Central Park in search of wintering songbirds, waterfowl, and raptors. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

- **WINTER EAGLES ON THE HUDSON**

Saturday, February 15, 9:30am-4pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Come seek out one of New York's wonders: Bald Eagles wintering along the Hudson River by the dozens or even hundreds. We'll travel in comfort by Metro-North to Croton Point Park, where we will look for eagles before hiking up to Croton Point to seek out wintering Short-eared and Snowy Owls, Snow Buntings, Horned Larks, and more. Limited to 20. Round-trip Metro-North fare (\$20.50) not included in trip price. \$53 (37)

- **VAN TRIP TO THE WINTER THAW BIRD WALK AT JAMAICA BAY**

Saturday, February 22, 9am-3pm

Register for our van trip to the Winter Thaw Bird Walk (see description above) and get to Jamaica Bay the easy way—by passenger van. Limited to 12. \$85 (60)

- **WINTER BIRDS OF DEKORTE PARK, NJ**

Sundays, February 23 and

March 15, 9am-2pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Explore the wilds of the New Jersey Meadowlands at DeKorte Park. We'll be on the lookout for large flocks of Canvasbacks, Northern Pintails, Buffleheads, and Northern Shovelers. And we'll scan the skies for hunting raptors including Rough-legged and Cooper's Hawks, Northern Harriers, and perhaps even a Snowy or Short-eared Owl. We can warm up at the environmental center

look for it (and bats, owls, and other critters) at Floyd Bennett Field. Bring a headlamp or flashlight and a snack. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$92 (64) per trip

● **EARLY SPRING WALK IN CENTRAL PARK**

Wednesday, March 25, 8-11am
Guide: Tod Winston

Celebrate spring with NYC Audubon! Explore Central Park's hotspots in search of lingering winter visitors and early spring migrants. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

● **WINTER BIRDS OF SANDY HOOK, NJ**
Saturday, April 4, 9am-4pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Sandy Hook, a spectacular barrier island at the northernmost point of the New Jersey coast, hosts a variety of species including Arctic-bound migrants and harbor seals that lie on the beach to warm up in the sun.

Other possible sightings include loons, sea ducks, Snow Buntings, and Horned Larks. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$103 (72)

● **BEGINNING BIRDING**

Classes: Wednesdays, April 8, 15, and 22, 6:30-8:30pm

Trips: Sundays, April 19, 8am-3pm (Jamaica Bay) and April 26, 8-10:30am (Central Park)

Instructor: Tod Winston

Learn the keys to identifying the spectacular variety of birds that migrate through New York City every spring. Even if you've never picked up a pair of binoculars, you'll soon be identifying warblers, thrushes, waterbirds, and more—both by sight and by ear. Three fun and educational in-class sessions and field trips to both Central Park and Jamaica Bay (transport to Jamaica Bay included). Limited to 12. \$200 (140)

© Megumi Aizu/Audubon Photography Awards



Pine Warbler

TO REGISTER FOR ALL NYC AUDUBON EVENTS and for more information, visit www.nycaudubon.org or call Danielle Sherman at 212-691-7483 x304 unless otherwise specified.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **Contributing Members (Student/Senior level and up) receive a 30% discount on most local trips and classes. (On discounted events, the discounted price appears in parentheses after the nonmember price). See membership form on page 23.**
- **Classes meet at 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1523.**

- **For paid trips requiring advance registration, the meeting location will be disclosed in your trip registration confirmation email.**
- **For coach and van trips, the meeting location is in front of 71 West 23rd Street unless otherwise specified.**
- **We depart promptly at the stated start time.**
- **For overnight trips, NYC Audubon membership at the Student/Senior level and up is required.**

EARLY MEMBER REGISTRATION FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

More winter and early spring events will be posted and available for registration for contributing NYC Audubon members starting on Monday, February 24, at 9am. (Registration will open to all on Monday, March 9.) Register at www.nycaudubon.org.

2019-2020 LECTURE SERIES

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

THE BIRDS AND THE BEES

By Chef Joseph Yoon

Monday, January 13, 7pm

Join Chef Joseph Yoon, founder of Brooklyn Bugs, for a special presentation created exclusively for NYC Audubon. Brooklyn Bugs was founded in 2017 with a mission to raise awareness and appreciation for edible insects through delicious, creative, and educational programming. The company's outreach and advocacy have reached millions of households through media outlets including *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, the Smithsonian Channel, *Live with Kelly and Ryan*, and National Public Radio. Learn why the United Nations endorses edible insects to address issues of food security and sustainability. And try a few: edible insect samples will be served.

NEW YORK RISING:

THE FORCES THAT SHAPED NEW YORK

By Thomas Mellins

Monday, February 10, 7pm

Throughout its history, New York City's natural spaces have been shaped by urban planning and development. Join author, curator, and architectural historian Thomas Mellins to explore this process through the lens of his book, *New York Rising*, an illustrated history of real estate development in Manhattan. Learn about the big ideas, big personalities, and big risks that collectively shaped the natural spaces that we love—and love to bird. Mellins is also the co-author, with Robert A. M. Stern, of *New York 1880*, *New York 1930*, and *New York 1960*. He has organized exhibitions at the Museum of the City of New York, the National Building Museum, and Yale University. Copies of *New York Rising* will be available for purchase and signing after the lecture.

IN CONVERSATION:

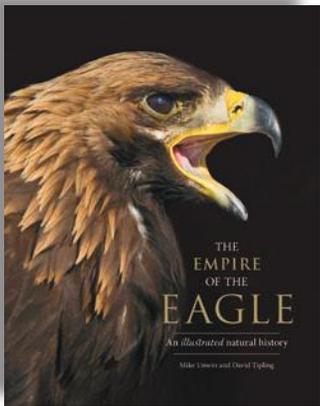
THE AUDUBON MURAL PROJECT

By Gail Albert Halaban, George Booruju, and Avi Gitler

Monday, March 2, 7pm

Join us for an evening's exploration of the Audubon Mural Project, a public art initiative of the National Audubon Society executed in partnership with Gitler & _____ Gallery. Inspired by the legacy of John James Audubon, the project commissions artists to paint murals of birds threatened by climate change in hopes of calling attention to their plight. This "conversation" will feature three unique perspectives: Gail Albert Halaban is a photographer whose quest to document the murals recently culminated in an exhibit at the Aperture Foundation. George Booruju is an artist who has been an integral part of the project and whose work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. Avi Gitler is the owner of Gitler & _____ Gallery and the driving force behind the project.

Our lectures are held at the Parish House of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, on Madison Avenue between 73rd and 74th Streets.



THE EMPIRE OF THE EAGLE:
AN ILLUSTRATED NATURAL HISTORY
 By Mike Unwin and David Tipling
 Yale University Press, 2018

Mike Unwin and David Tipling have done it again—produced a gorgeous, informative, large-format book about an iconic group of birds. Following 2017’s *The Enigma of Owls*, the pair’s new publication covers all 68 eagle species currently listed by BirdLife International.

Mike Unwin is credited with the text, which should by no means be overlooked just because the photos are so compelling. Each species is given a summary of basic information—appearance, size, distribution, and conservation status—followed by taxonomic and cultural history, breeding

and nesting habits, diet, and conservation efforts.

Species are arranged not by genus or geographic range, but by habitat: uplands (7 species); plains (14); woodlands (15); rain forest (22); and water edges (10). As mentioned in the book’s introduction, we tend to envision eagles soaring over mountains (uplands), whereas far more make their living darting among trees or swooping down on prey from a perch.

North America is home to only two eagle species, but each is distinguished among its peers in some way: the Golden Eagle has the broadest distribution of all eagles, appearing in mountainous areas across the northern hemisphere. And our national symbol, the Bald Eagle, may win the prize for the biggest nests yet discovered, with some weighing as much as a ton.

The Steller’s Sea-eagle outdoes them both, however, in superlatives: in size, with an average weight of 16.8 pounds; and in boasting the largest bill, described as a “yellow hatchet,” to match its enormous yellow feet. It might be worth a trip to the Russian Far East to see 700 of these giant birds together at a salmon spawning river.

Some general facts: Most eagles mate for life, performing elaborate aerial mating dances each year, often with talons interlocked as they do loop-de-loops through the sky. Most reuse nests, either their own or

those of other species, and the nests grow in size each year. Reproduction is usually slow, partly because eaglets take three to five years, or even more, to reach maturity, and partly because many species engage in “cainism,” also known as siblicide, if more than one egg hatches.

Before focusing on the text, most readers will first scan the book’s spectacular photos, chosen by David Tipling (with some of his own included). Many eagles are of an elegant brown or gray color, but there are also stunners like the Bateleur Eagle of Sub-Saharan Africa. With “a harlequin patchwork plumage” of black, chestnut, white, and gray, together with a red face and legs, this eagle with an owl-shaped head looks like it’s dressed for a costume party.

Half of the 68 species included are listed as of “Least Concern” by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, but in almost every case we are reminded of ongoing hazards: habitat loss, hunting, poisoning, and, sadly, collisions with wind turbines. Conservation statuses for the other species range from “Near Threatened” to “Critically Endangered” (three species). And one can’t help but wonder about the fate of the half-dozen kinds of eagles living in Brazil’s burning rainforests—not to mention the impact of global climate change on all 68 species.



Adult Bald Eagle



Immature (left) and adult Bateleur Eagles in South Africa’s Kruger National Park

Both photos: from *The Empire of the Eagle* by Mike Unwin and David Tipling.
 Bald Eagle © David Tipling; Bateleur Eagles © Blickwinkel/Alamy Stock Photo

THE 120TH ANNUAL AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count, a beloved tradition first proposed by ornithologist Frank M. Chapman on Christmas Day 1900, is the nation's longest-running community-science bird project. NYC Audubon plays its part in this annual bird population survey, which is now conducted across North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, Bermuda, and the Pacific Islands. The data collected by observers over the past century allow researchers, conservation biologists, and other interested individuals to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America.

The 120th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count will take place nationwide and in all five boroughs of New York City this December. NYC Audubon reports data for the Lower Hudson Count Circle, which includes all of Manhattan and parts of New Jersey. And we host Manhattan's Central Park compilation gathering at the Central Park Arsenal each year. For more information about the Central Park Audubon Christmas Bird Count, visit www.nycaudubon.org/cbc.

Each circle's count day ends with a gathering in a warm place; participants refuel and socialize as coordinators compile data for the entire circle. New participants, even those less skilled at spotting and identifying birds, are welcome in all boroughs. Compilers will ensure participants are directed to territories

© Camille Cerezi/Audubon



Central Park Audubon Christmas Bird Counters Survey the Lake.

where they will be most useful. A participant can join a different count every year—or even several counts in the same year if they occur on different days within the count period. As noted in National Audubon's 2014 *Birds & Climate Change Report*, the

Christmas Bird Count plays an essential role in monitoring the health of our bird populations. But it's also a lot of fun—so sign up! To register for any counts in New York City and get more information, please contact the borough coordinators listed below:

NYC COUNT INFO (Count circle: date, contact name, email, website if available)

- **Bronx & Westchester:** Sunday, December 22, Michael Bochnik, bochnikm@cs.com, www.hras.org/count/96thbw.html
- **Brooklyn:** Saturday, December 14, Roberta Manian, roberta.manian@gmail.com, brooklynbirdclub.org/event/120th-kings-county-christmas-bird-count
- **NJ-Lower Hudson (including Manhattan):** Sunday, December 15, Kaitlyn Parkins, christmasbirdcount@nycaudubon.org, www.nycaudubon.org/cbc
- **Queens:** Sunday, December 15, Corey Finger, 10000birdsblogger@gmail.com (please contact Corey by Sunday, December 1)
- **Staten Island:** Saturday, December 14, Cliff Hagen, chagen72@gmail.com

THE 23RD ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT FEBRUARY 15-FEBRUARY 18, 2019

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) has a shorter history than the CBC, but is equally important for monitoring bird populations. Begun in 1998 as a joint effort of National Audubon, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and Bird Studies Canada, the goal of the GBBC is to capture a snapshot of bird numbers in a short period of time. Community scientists are asked every February to spend at least 15 minutes counting birds in their backyards—or anywhere else. (New Yorkers without backyards can count in neighboring parks and other green spaces.) Submit a separate checklist for each new day and location, or the same location if you counted at a different time of day. With eBird, it's easier than ever to submit your data. For more information, go to gbbc.birdcount.org.

© Laura Meyers



Northern Cardinal

THE NYC AUDUBON FALL ROOST: FORTY AND FABULOUS

© All Fall Roost Photos: Alison Lee Photography



Looking back on four decades of bird conservation gave party-goers much to celebrate at this year's Fall Roost. On October 15, new supporters gathered with NYC Audubon's founders at the Tribeca Rooftop, in honor of the organization's rich history, vibrant present, and emerging future. While recent reports of dramatic declines in North American bird populations were front of mind, the atmosphere was far from "doom and gloom": NYC Audubon's many successes served as an inspiring lesson in how much progress is possible when ordinary people act, speak out, and support efforts to protect and restore birds and their habitat.

"I don't deserve this, nor do I deserve this touch of arthritis," quipped Lew Rosenberg, recognized as one of NYC Audubon's founders, as he recalled NYC Audubon's activist beginnings in 1979. Additional speakers included Board President Jeff Kimball, first Executive Director Marcia Fowle, Executive Director Kathryn Heintz, Director of Conservation and Science Susan Elbin, and Board Member Kellie Quiñones. The Roost guests were treated to first-hand accounts of early activism including opposition to the Westway project, the preservation of Jamaica Bay wetlands and Floyd Bennett Field grasslands, the creation of Project Safe Flight, and the

16 www.nyc Audubon.org

safeguarding of Pale Male and Lola's nest site. More recent successes were also celebrated, such as the development of the online D-Bird crowd-sourcing database and the bird-friendly building design legislation introduced this year in the New York City Council.

A stunning film, *NYC Audubon History*, was next shown to an eager audience that cheered as favorite bird species graced the screen. Created by Board Vice President Karen Benfield and her company Lark Song Media, the film showcased the restoration of many City parks, the bird-friendly renovation of the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, and the Harbor Herons program, among other notable achievements. One of NYC Audubon's primary goals for the coming years is the expansion of free public programming across the five boroughs to reach and engage new audiences. As Kellie Quiñones discussed the importance of introducing nature to new audiences through public engagement, NYC Audubon's educators and guides were invited to the main stage while live donations were projected on the big screen. It was thrilling to watch the numbers climb as the attendees donated on their mobile devices in real time. These spontaneous donations topped \$38,000 before the evening came to an end.

The Roost's silent auction and raffle once again featured an



impressive array of items, many difficult to secure: the Wingspan board game, exotic trips to Belize and Botswana, and a special-edition Great Horned Owl pendant created in our honor by Janet Mavec (see Give a Gift for Birds on page 24). Demand was also high at the pop-up shop, which offered Fairhope Graphics wrapping paper, hand-crafted notebooks, and aromatic shade-grown coffee.

Additional touches included a 40th anniversary booklet at each table setting, listing the “top 40” birds, plants, and birding spots in NYC. Upon each table sat a unique centerpiece by Sviba Floral Designs. Each guest also took home a very special gift: a commemorative 40th Anniversary issue of *The Urban Audubon*. A treasure trove of history, photos, and memories, it is highly recommended reading.

Overall, this year’s event raised more than \$280,000 to support NYC Audubon’s public programs and conservation campaigns. Thanks to Co-Chairs Karen Benfield, Marcia Fowle, Cathy Heller, Tatiana Kaletsch, and Jenny Maritz for making the 2019 Fall Roost a joyous and inspiring celebration of NYC Audubon’s first 40 years—and many more to come.

Learn more about the NYC Audubon History film and the 40th Anniversary Urban Audubon on page 20.

ROOST PHOTOGRAPHS (all identified left to right)

1. Founding NYC Audubon Board Member, past Vice President, and current Advisory Council Member **Lew Rosenberg** addresses the Roost
2. Silent Auction photography and artwork by **William Wegman and Maria Rivans**
3. Executive Director **Kathryn Heintz** on stage to kick off the night’s program celebrating 40 years of NYC Audubon
4. Board Vice President **Sally Jeffords** and Director of Conservation and Science **Susan Elbin, PhD**
5. Conservation Program Volunteer Coordinator **Aurora Crooks** takes orders for bird-friendly coffee by **Cafe Mesa de Los Santos**
6. NYC Audubon’s board of directors and advisory council
7. Fall Roost Event Co-Chairs **Marcia Fowle, Cathy Heller, Tatiana Kaletsch, Karen Benfield, and Jenny Maritz**
8. Silent Auction storyboards by **Deborah Jones**
9. **Wynn Senning, Board President Jeffrey Kimball, and Field Biologist Emilio Tobón**
10. Past Board Vice President and current Advisory Council Member **Lynne Hertzog** and Roost Volunteer **Ryan Zucker**
11. Advisory Council Member **Claude Bloch** and wife/longtime *Urban Audubon* contributor **Lucienne**, with grandchildren **Emily Kohlberg** and **Jonah Nielson**
12. Outreach staff and trip leaders join the stage behind Board Member **Kellie Quiñones** for the night’s crowd-raise, which raised \$38,021 to fund NYC Audubon’s public engagement throughout all five boroughs of New York City.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE FALL ROOST

CO-CHAIRS

Karen Benfield
Marcia T. Fowle
Catherine Schragis Heller
Tatiana Kaletsch
Jenny Maritz

HOST COMMITTEE

Karen Benfield and
John Zucker
Joe and Barbara Ellis
Catherine and Lloyd Heller
Jeffrey Kimball and
Pamela Hogan
Jenny and Philip Maritz
Joyce F. Menschel



Marsilia A. Boyle
Christian Cooper
The Dobson Foundation
The Durst Organization
Marcia and Bruce Fowle
Philip Fried and
Bruce Patterson
Ginarte Gallardo Gonzalez
Winograd LLP
Kathryn and Vincent G.
Heintz
Jacob K. Javits
Convention Center
Sarah Jeffords
Tatiana Kaletsch
Alan Steel
Virginia Stowe
Emily Tyrer
Samuel Wertheimer and
Pamela Rosenthal
Wood Thrush Fund



Gina Argento
Tony Argento
Robert Bate and
Tracy Meade
Driane Benner
Claude and Lucienne Bloch
MaryJane Boland and
Daniel Picard
Broadway Stages
Virginia Carter
Central Park Conservancy
Alexander Ewing and
Wynn Senning
Richard H. Fried and
Stella Kim
Richard and Ronnie
Grosbard
Laura and David Harris
Robert Kimtis and
Susan Bynum
Jennifer Kouvant and
Hans Li
Andrea Krantz and
Harvey Sawikin

Jade Lau
Janice Laneve and
Peter Joost
Renee Lucier
Patrick Markee and
Elias Markee-Ratner
The Marta Heflin
Foundation
Edith McBean
Clark Mitchell
Cheryl Reich and
David Dewhurst
Genie and Donald Rice
Lew and Sheila Rosenberg
Steven and Donna Schragis
D. Bruce Yolton

CONTRIBUTORS

Mady Ahern
American Littoral Society
Richard T. and Jane Andrias
Anonymous
Seth Ausubel and
Mary Normandia
Ann Bailey
Catherine Barron
Nora Benoliel
Lynee Bradley
Linda and Stephen Breskin
Barbara Bristol
Gay Brookes
Susan and Coleman Burke
Albert and Brenda Butzel
César A. Castillo
Rebekah Creshkoff
John and Judy Day
Art Sills and Sarah DeBlois
Marisa DeDominicis
Douglass Winthrop
Advisors, LLC
Alan Drogin
Margot Ernst
Sandy Fiebelkorn
Kate and Andrew French
FXCollaborative
Mark and Rebecca
Campbell Gibbel
Joshua Ginsberg
Avi Gitler
Edward and Diana Greene
Robert and Cassandra
Greene
Miriam T. Gross
Linda Gui
Nancy Hager
Star Herman
Lynne Hertzog and
Steve Pequignot
Jon Hogden and
Karen Tenser
Jill and Ken Iscol
Tracey Johnson
Mary Jane Kaplan
Gail Karlsson
Joel Kassin and
Wendy Brandes

Jane Kendall and David W.
Dietz
Mary Kilbourn
Michael Klein
Nancy Kricorian
Robert D. Krinsky
Christopher Laskowski
Deborah Laurel
Heather Loebner
Tom Loizeaux
Kevin Maas
Margaret MacCary
Ellen Manos and
Peter Skoufalos
Hope Matthiessen and
David Boorstin
E.J. McAdams and
Kathleen Ruen
Alice McInerney
Kathy Mele
Alan Messer
Leslie and Richard Miller
Anne Montana
Adriana and Shawn Ogiba
Gale Page
Mindy Papp
Will Papp
Mona Payton
Tracy Pennoyer
Dorothy Petet
Jean Pettibone
Dan Piselli
Warrie and James Price
Cristina Profumo
Marilyn and Michael Ratner
Alison Bruce Rea
Liz Reitman
Don Riepe
Deborah Rivel
Lynn Rollins
Jeff Rosenheim
Matthew Rymkiewicz
Jim and Jill Sheffield
John Shemilt
Mary Shuford
David Spawn
Daniela Stallone
Tom Stephenson
Leslie Sternlieb
Virginia Stotz
Terry Taylor
Karen and David Thomas
Irene and Richard Van Slyke
Richard Veit
Elizabeth Wainstock and
Suzanne Little
The Walt Disney Company
Foundation
Nancy Ward
Laura Whitman and
Thomas Danziger
Frederic and Robin
Withington
Michael Yuan and
Nicky Combs

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN

Valentin Abend
Seth Ausubel and
Mary Normandia
Robert Bate
Jennifer Beaugrand
Adrian Benepe
Driane Benner
Nora Benoliel
MaryJane Boland and
Daniel Picard
Marsilia A. Boyle
Jennifer Collins
Ned Dewees
Susan Elbin
Alexander Ewing and
Wynn Senning
Charlotte Ford
Marcia T. Fowle
Philip Fried and
Bruce Patterson
Richard Grosbard
Linda Gui
Kathryn Heintz
Catherine Heller
Constance Herndon and
James Henly
Jon Hogden
Tatiana Kaletsch
Richard Katz
Jane Kendall
Stella Kim
Ryder Kimball
Jeffrey Kimball and
Pamela Hogan
Robert Kimtis and
Sue Bynum
Jennifer Kouvant and
Hans Li
Andrea Krantz and
Harvey Sawikin
Deborah Laurel
Donald Liloia
Heather Loebner
Lisa Lopez
Renee Lucier
Michael Mason
E.J. McAdams and
Kathleen Ruen
Alice McInerney
Louise and Tom Middleton
Adriana Ogiba
Hillarie O'Toole
Dale Peck
Dan Piselli
Cristina Profumo
Liz Reitman
Kate Rodgers
Matthew Rymkiewicz
Purbita Saha
David Slavin
David Spawn
Alan Steel
Scott and Dhuane Stephens

Virginia and Peter
Tobeason
Celeste Torello
Jacqueline Tran
Samuel Wertheimer and
Pamela Rosenthal
Tod Winston
Michael Wise
Michael Yuan
John Zucker

SILENT AUCTION DONORS

American Princess Cruises
The Carlyle
Central Park Boathouse
Chan Chich Lodge
The CORE: club
John Derian Company
Disney Theatrical Group
Easton Foundation
inzgreen
Island Oyster
Jacob K. Javits
Convention Center
Kings County Brewers
Collective
The Late Show with
Stephen Colbert
Liberty Gallery
MasterVoices
Metropolitan Opera
New York University
Staten Island Yankees
Stew Leonard's
Farmingdale
Wilderness Safaris and
EXPLORE
Carl Zeiss Group



Annie Barry
Karen Benfield and
John Zucker
Driane Benner
Ned Boyajian
Marsilia A. Boyle
Shawn Cargil
Christian Cooper
Rebekah Creshkoff
Susan Elbin
Alexander Ewing
Richard Fried
Joe Giunta
Hugo Guinness
Kathryn Heintz
Cathy Heller
Tatiana Kaletsch
Mary Jane Kaplan
Jeffrey Kimball
Autumn Kioti
Deborah Laurel
Jenny Maritz
Darren Mays
Kaitlyn Parkins
Don Riepe

SILENT AUCTION DONORS (CONTINUED)

Maria Rivans
Jeff Rosenheim
Will Schragis
Nadir Souirgi
Tom Stephenson
Alan Steel
Paul Sweet
William Wegman and
Christine Burgin
Gabriel Willow
Tod Winston
D. Bruce Yolton
Michael Yuan

RAFFLE & POP-UP STORE DONORS

Cafe Mesa de Los Santos
and Hacienda El Roble
plantation
Jennifer Berlinger and
Fairhope Graphics
Judith LaBelle
Roberta Laidman
Lark Cookies
Janet Mavec
Orvis
Patagonia
The Roost Ladies

SPECIAL THANKS

Silent Auction Coordinator
Karen Benfield

NYC Audubon History Film

Producer: Lark Song
Media/Karen Benfield
Editor: Matt Hensel
Director of Photography,
Interviews: Rob Bondy

Wildlife Photography

Jeffrey Kimball, Frederic
Lilien, Cathy Weiner, Bruce
Yolton

Pop-up Store, Raffle Support

Catarina Abend, Arden
Berlinger, Jennifer
Berlinger, Lynne Hertzog,
Hank Marriott, Julia
Rosenheim, Phoebe
Rosenheim, Ryan Zucker

Floral Art

Sviba Floral Decorators

Storyboards

Deborah Jones and Karen
Benfield

Graphic Design

studiokat/Kat Nemeč

Silent Auction

Community Brands

Good Fairy-Wrens

Karen Benfield, Marcy
Boyle, Sandy Ewing,
Marcia Fowle, Tatiana
Kaletsch, Jenny Maritz,
Alan Steel

WE BID A FOND FAREWELL TO OUR TOP SCIENTIST, SUSAN ELBIN, PHD

Susan Elbin, NYC Audubon's longtime director of conservation and science, has announced that she will retire at the end of this year. While we search to fill her very big shoes, the Conservation and Science program will continue in the good hands of her team: Kaitlyn Parkins, Emilio Tobón, Dustin Partridge, Tod Winston, and Molly Adams.

Dr. Elbin joined NYC Audubon in 2008. She has seen the organization—now starting its fifth decade—grow and flourish, making our great metropolis safer for migrating and breeding birds. Known for her collaborative nature and ability to incubate projects among peers locally, regionally, and internationally, she has achieved too much in the past decade to list here comprehensively—but principal accomplishments include the following:

- * Long-term monitoring of and research on nesting and foraging herons, egrets, ibis, and cormorants in the New York Harbor; monitoring migratory and beach-nesting shorebirds in Jamaica Bay; making the City safer for migratory land birds by monitoring collision risks and improving stopover habitat; and ensuring our data were part of landmark ornithological papers on collisions and artificial light
- * Starting a rigorous bird-banding program, including transmitters and geolocators, to study waterbirds including American Oystercatchers, Semipalmated Sandpipers, Common Terns, Great Egrets, and Double-crested Cormorants
- * Adding science to the data collection at the Tribute in Light, and advancing Project Safe Flight by adding persistence and detectability studies

© NYC Audubon



Susan with a banded Great Egret on South Brother Island, 2013

- * Creating the annual two-day Harbor Herons and Waterbirds of the Greater NY/NJ Harbor Conference, co-authoring the *Harbor Herons Conservation Plan* (2010), and forming a Grassland Bird Working Group for the Department of Environmental Conservation
- * Overseeing the creation of the regional Green Roof Researchers Alliance, recognizing the value of green roofs to urban habitat connectivity

While this news marks the end (and beginning) of chapters for both Dr. Elbin and NYC Audubon, it is by no means the end of our shared story. Among the items on her to-do list is the publication of a manuscript on the waterbirds of New York Harbor, drawn from NYC Audubon's 35+ years of data. This study will form the centerpiece of the December 2020 regional Harbor Herons Conference, organized and hosted by NYC Audubon.

Please join us in congratulating Susan!

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF BIRD CONSERVATION

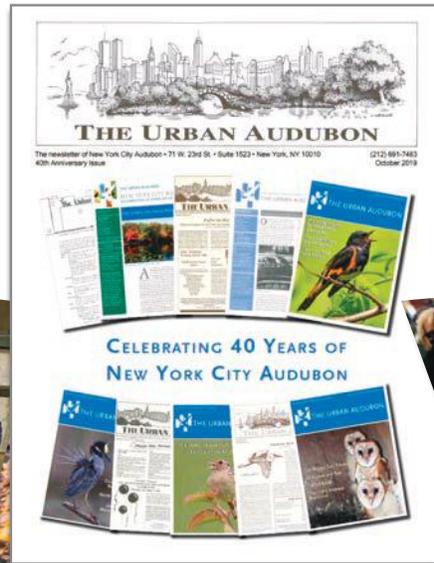
NYC Audubon's history was joyously celebrated at this year's Fall Roost—and memorialized with two commemorative pieces created especially to trace the organization's path of conservation accomplishments over the past four decades. Both pieces depict the fierce determination that NYC Audubon activists have felt over these past 40 years, as they've battled to protect our city's birds and their habitat. View and share both of these NYC Audubon keepsakes at www.nycaudubon.org/our-history.

NYC AUDUBON HISTORY FILM

This year's Fall Roost guests were inspired by Board Vice President Karen Benfield's moving depiction of NYC Audubon's activist history and ongoing conservation successes. Created by Karen and her company, Lark Song Media, the film includes fascinating first-hand accounts of how Project Safe Flight, Harbor Herons, the defense of Pale Male and Lola, and the protection of the City's wild habitat were all inspired by a deep love of birds—and enabled by the courage to demand change. Hear these stories from NYC Audubon Founding Board Member Lew Rosenberg, Project Safe Flight Founder Rebekah Creshkoff, past Board Vice President Don Riepe, first Executive Director Marcia Fowle, and former NYC Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe, as well as current staff. Featuring exquisite video footage of Jamaica Bay and wild birds across the City thanks to the generosity of Bruce Yolton, Cathy Weiner, Frederic Lilien, Dan Hendrick, Don Riepe, Jeff Kimball, and others.

40TH ANNIVERSARY URBAN AUDUBON

This special 32-page commemorative issue of *The Urban Audubon* is a tribute to all our organization has accomplished for birds—and a treasure trove of all things NYC Audubon. The full-color piece includes personal stories by Lew Rosenberg, Marcia Fowle, and Rebekah Creshkoff, describing how they were each inspired to get involved and make a difference. An illustrated timeline of our history features clippings from *Urban Audubons* since the inaugural September 1979 issue, and an Events & Adventures section spanning four decades. Also included is a gallery of featured bird artwork and photography through the years, a map of our advocacy work, and listings of those honored by Chapter Awards and Fall Roosts since the beginning. The issue was created by former and current *Urban Audubon* Managing Editors Tod Winston and Andrew Maas in collaboration with longtime Editors Marcia Fowle and Lauren Klingsberg, the publications committee, and the organization's volunteers and staff.



Left-hand Color Painting: Crowded House, South Brother Island, by Alan Messer. Other Photo and Graphic Credits: visit www.nycaudubon.org/our-history.



—AND FUNDING NYC AUDUBON'S FUTURE

Looking back on our four decades of conservation accomplishments, we are inspired by the foresight of early NYC Audubon activists in addressing threats to the City's birds and their habitat. To successfully confront both ongoing and new challenges in the next 40 years, we must return to those activist roots—and engage the vast and diverse population of New York City.

The challenges are enormous—but NYC Audubon's conservation work gives us hope. This year we successfully advocated for the introduction of bird-friendly building design legislation in the New York City Council. We support and monitor green roofs and capped-landfill parks such as Freshkills Park and Shirley Chisholm State Park, providing habitat for Grasshopper Sparrows, Eastern Meadowlarks, and Bobolinks.

We maintain our longtime commitment to protecting waterbirds and our city's 578 miles of coastline. We survey both nesting and migrant shorebirds to better understand their habitat needs, and continue our 35-year monitoring of the Harbor Herons. Our long-term scientific data can be marshalled to defend birds and prevent further habitat loss.

NYC Audubon's education and outreach connect New Yorkers in all five boroughs to the birds in their neighborhoods and parks, fostering a love of nature and a passion to protect it. We are actively expanding our free

programming in underserved areas, while diversifying our organization at all levels to better represent the people of New York City.

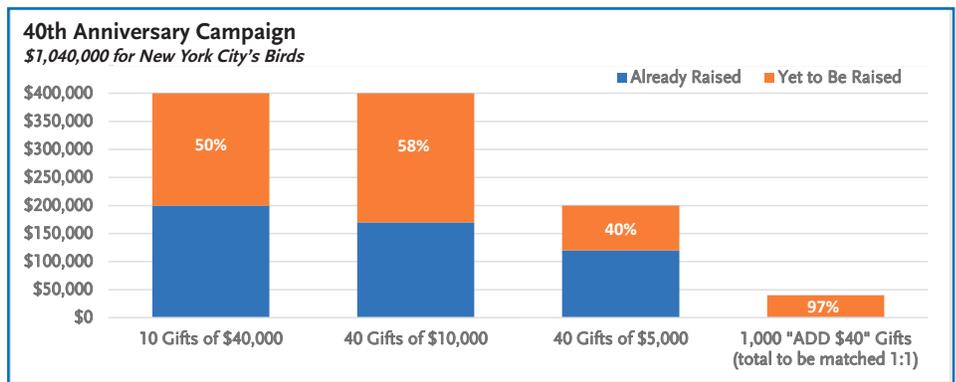
NYC Audubon began as a grassroots organization run by far-sighted volunteers. Four decades on, we are a larger organization with a professional staff—and we walk in our founders' footsteps by using sound science and advocacy to protect New York City's birds and their habitats.

A CAMPAIGN FOR THE FUTURE

Our *Strategic Plan 2020–2025: A Vision for the Future* creates a road map to guide us forward. To begin, we are committed to raising \$1,040,000 in our anniversary year. We are well on our way to meeting that goal—we're just about halfway there, with \$456,200 raised. But as you can see in the chart below, there is still a long way to go.

Help us help our birds. Read the *Strategic Plan* at www.nycaudubon.org/strategic-plan-2020-2025—and call us to discuss philanthropic opportunities at every level. And, please be sure to ADD \$40 (or \$400, or \$4,000) when you give, renew your membership, or register for NYC Audubon events throughout the year. Every ADD \$40 gift will be matched up to a total of \$40,000.

To discuss ways you can contribute to NYC Audubon's future, contact Executive Director Kathryn Heintz at kheintz@nycaudubon.org and 646-434-0423, or Director of Development Kellye Rosenheim at krosenheim@nycaudubon.org and 646-502-9611



NYC AUDUBON'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION OUR FUTURE DEPENDS ON ENGAGING ALL NEW YORKERS

NYC Audubon believes all people have the right to a close connection to the natural world and the right to a healthy environment. Preserving our environment is only possible if we all feel that connection.

We recognize that inequities in our society are widespread and hinder access to nature. Only by embracing equity, diversity, and inclusion as values and striving for them in practice will we begin to foster a love of nature in all people and inspire them to be active stewards of the environment.

We further believe that to thrive as an organization and effectively advance our mission and vision, the diversity of New York City's people must be represented in, and welcomed into, our leadership, staff, and membership. The expertise, values, and perspectives of a diverse and inclusive organization are fundamental to expanding the reach and impact of our conservation, advocacy, and educational efforts.

We commit to building an equitable, diverse, and inclusive NYC Audubon, dedicated to protecting nature for all of New York City's people and its wild birds.

We're at the beginning of a journey. Can you come be a part of this journey with us?

--Dorceta E. Taylor, PhD

AVIAN ADVOCATE UPDATES

Molly Adams

Since joining NYC Audubon in February 2019 as outreach and advocacy manager, the bulk of my efforts have been focused on an advocacy campaign in support of bird-friendly design legislation at the city and state level. Below, we provide a brief update on our advocacy priorities in this area. Due to the slow nature of print, some bills may move between press time and the mailing of this issue of *The Urban Audubon*. See the website links at the end of this section to get current updates online and find out how you can help.

NEW YORK CITY

In March of this year, Int. 1482-2019, a New York City Council bill that would require new buildings to use bird-friendly design, was introduced by Council Member Rafael L. Espinal, Jr. and Council Speaker Corey Johnson. After hundreds of postcards, letters, and meetings with City Council members and staff, there are now 20 co-sponsors of the bill (as of November 15, 2019). Dozens testified in person at a public hearing in September, providing overwhelming support. We hope that the City Council will pass this bill by the end of the year; a majority vote in favor is required. Please check the website link at the end of this section. If the bill has not yet been enacted and your council member does not already sponsor this bill, please contact them and ask them to vote for it.

NEW YORK STATE

The Bird-Friendly Building Council Act (S25B/A4055B), passed this year in the New York Senate and Assembly, will create a Bird-Friendly Building Council required to write recommended guidelines for bird-safe buildings, but will not require the use of bird-safe design. This bill was delivered to the governor on November 8, and we hope that he will sign it into law before the end of the year. Visit the website below to see the current status.

For current details on the bird-friendly building design legislation above, and to find out the advocacy actions that you can take, visit sites.google.com/view/birdsafeglass/home.

BECOME AN AVIAN ADVOCATE!

Want to have an impact on bird-friendly building legislation and other bird conservation issues in New York City? Enroll in our Avian Advocates email list to join our core group of volunteer policy advocates. You'll receive periodic updates on what's happening and what you can do to help. Visit www.nycaudubon.org/avian-advocates to learn more and get involved.

NEWS & NOTES

SCIENTISTS RAISE THE ALARM: NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS ARE IN TROUBLE

Two reports published this fall have dismayed bird-lovers across the globe. In September, the journal *Science* published "Decline of the North American Avifauna." This study from Cornell University and American Bird Conservancy states that North American bird populations have declined 29 percent since 1970—which equates to a loss of nearly 3 billion individual birds. (See an article figure on page 8; a free abstract is available at science.sciencemag.org/content/366/6461/120.) On the heels of this first study, a new National Audubon report warned that two-thirds of North American bird species are at

increasing risk of extinction from global temperature rise. You can view this publication, "Survival by Degrees: 389 Bird Species on the Brink," at www.audubon.org/climate/survivalbydegrees.

BIRD-FRIENDLY BUILDING

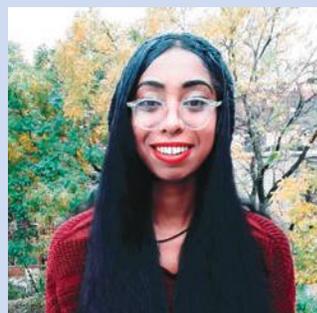
At press time, we are hopeful that two bird-friendly building bills may be enacted: New York City Council Int. 1482-2019 and the New York State Bird-Friendly Building Council Act (S25B/A4055B). See Avian Advocates Updates above.

GRRA HOSTS SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

On September 27, NYC Audubon coordinated the Green Roof Researchers Alliance's second annual conference, "The State of Green Roofs in NYC." Held at the

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, the meeting drew a packed crowd of 250 attendees. Read more about the conference in Conservation Notes on page 5.

NYC AUDUBON WELCOMES AURORA CROOKS



We are happy to announce that Aurora Crooks joined the NYC Audubon staff in early September as NYC Audubon's conservation

program volunteer coordinator. In this new role, Aurora will support our conservation team by growing and diversifying the volunteer corps that accomplishes so much of NYC Audubon's work. Aurora has an interest in conservation, ecology, preservation of coastal habitats, and diversifying STEM (the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Since completing her studies at University of Mary Washington, she has sought to support globalized scientific inquiry and ecology via positions at The New York Academy of Sciences, Christodora (a secular nonprofit dedicated to environmental education in New York City), the National Park Service, and Girls Who Code.

SUPPORT NYC AUDUBON'S MISSION

AFTER ALL THIS TIME, THE BIRDS STILL NEED YOUR HELP

There are three billion fewer birds in the US today than there were in 1970, according to a September 2019 study published in *Science*. You can make sure that birds have a future in New York City. Nearly 350 species nest, breed, or migrate through here. We protect them. Celebrate our Big Year by contributing to our 40th Anniversary Campaign. Your support is essential.

GIVE MONTHLY

Provide ongoing monthly support to ensure our birds are protected throughout the year. You can make a huge difference for as little as \$5 per month. See the membership form below or donate online at www.nycaudubon.org/donate.

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN KESTREL CIRCLE

Soar above the rest by making a donation of \$2,500 or more. American Kestrel Circle Patrons enjoy special access and exclusive tours. See the membership form below or donate online at www.nycaudubon.org/donate. Contact us to learn more.

To learn more about how you can help NYC Audubon philanthropically or to underwrite a strategic initiative, contact Director of Development Kellye Rosenheim at krosenheim@nycaudubon.org or 646-502-9611.

GIVE A MATCHING GIFT

Supporters can double or triple the value of donations through their employers' matching gift programs. Contact your company's personnel office to learn how. Be sure to specify New York City Audubon as the designee.

REMEMBER THE BIRDS IN YOUR ESTATE PLAN

Make sure that New York City remains a haven for the birds and wildlife you love. A bequest to NYC Audubon is a generous and straightforward way to safeguard birds and their habitat in New York City's five boroughs. This can be expressed in a will as simply as, "I bequeath [a sum of money, a percentage of my estate, or an IRA, life insurance policy, or investment/bank account] to New York City Audubon Society, Inc., a not-for-profit organization with offices at 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1523, New York, NY 10010." Consult with your attorney to determine what is best for your situation. To learn more about planning a gift for NYC Audubon, visit www.nycaudubon.org/leave-a-legacy, or contact us.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE Contributions are essential to our work. Help us reach our goal of \$1,040,000 in individual gifts during our 40th Anniversary year.

Count me/us in with my/our support of wild birds in New York City:

Anniversary Leadership Gifts: [] \$40,000 [] \$10,000 [] \$5,000
Anniversary Celebration Gifts: [] \$2,500 [] \$1,000 [] \$500 [] \$100
 [] Other amount: \$ _____

[] **Additionally, I would like to ADD \$40 to my gift above!**
"ADD \$40" gifts received before October 31, 2020 will be matched.

TOTAL AMOUNT: \$ _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

[] Enclosed is my check payable to NYC Audubon
 [] Charge my credit card: [] VISA [] MC [] AMEX [] DISC

CARD #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Security Code: _____

Mail this form with your payment to:
 NYC Audubon • 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1523 • New York, NY 10010

NYC Audubon is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible within the limits prescribed by law. A copy of the latest Annual Financial Report may be obtained online at www.nycaudubon.org or www.guidestar.org or upon request from the New York State Office of the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 28 Liberty Street, 15th Floor, NY, NY 10005 or NYC Audubon, 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1523, NY, NY 10010.



American Robin by Abby McBride



New York City Audubon
71 West 23rd Street
Suite 1523
New York, NY 10010

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
HUDSON NH
Permit No. 82

DATED MATERIAL: Winter 2019-2020 Newsletter

GIVE A GIFT FOR THE BIRDS

BUBO OWL PENDANT BY JANET MAVEC



All owls are special—but artist Janet Mavec has created this limited edition pendant just for NYC Audubon, in honor of our 40th Anniversary. Named "Bubo" for the Latin name of the Great Horned Owl, *Bubo virginianus*, this highly versatile piece of jewelry will please any nature lover.

Jewelry details:

- 18K gold-plated brass
- Matte antique finish
- Adjustable 28-30"-long chain

Buy Bubo through Janet's website, and she'll donate part of the proceeds to NYC Audubon for bird conservation: www.janetmavec.com

GIVE A GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP

Protect birds and their habitat in New York City with a gift membership to NYC Audubon

Members receive *The Urban Audubon* newsletter and *The eGret* e-newsletter, enjoy discounts on field trips and classes, and make a difference for the City's wildlife.

- American Kestrel Circle \$2,500 Conservationist \$500 Advocate \$250 Supporter \$100
 Family \$75 Friend \$25 Dual Friend \$50 Student/Senior(65+) \$15 Dual Senior \$30

Additionally, I would like to ADD \$40 to my gift above!

"ADD \$40" gifts received before October 31, 2020 will be matched.

Gift Message to Recipient: _____

Gift Membership Recipient Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Gift Membership Contributor Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Enclosed is my check payable to NYC Audubon

Charge my credit card: VISA MC AMEX DISC

CARD #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Security Code: _____

Mail this form with your payment to:

NYC Audubon • 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1523 • New York, NY 10010

Membership in NYC Audubon does not include National Audubon membership or *Audubon* magazine. Donations to NYC Audubon are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. NYC Audubon is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.