

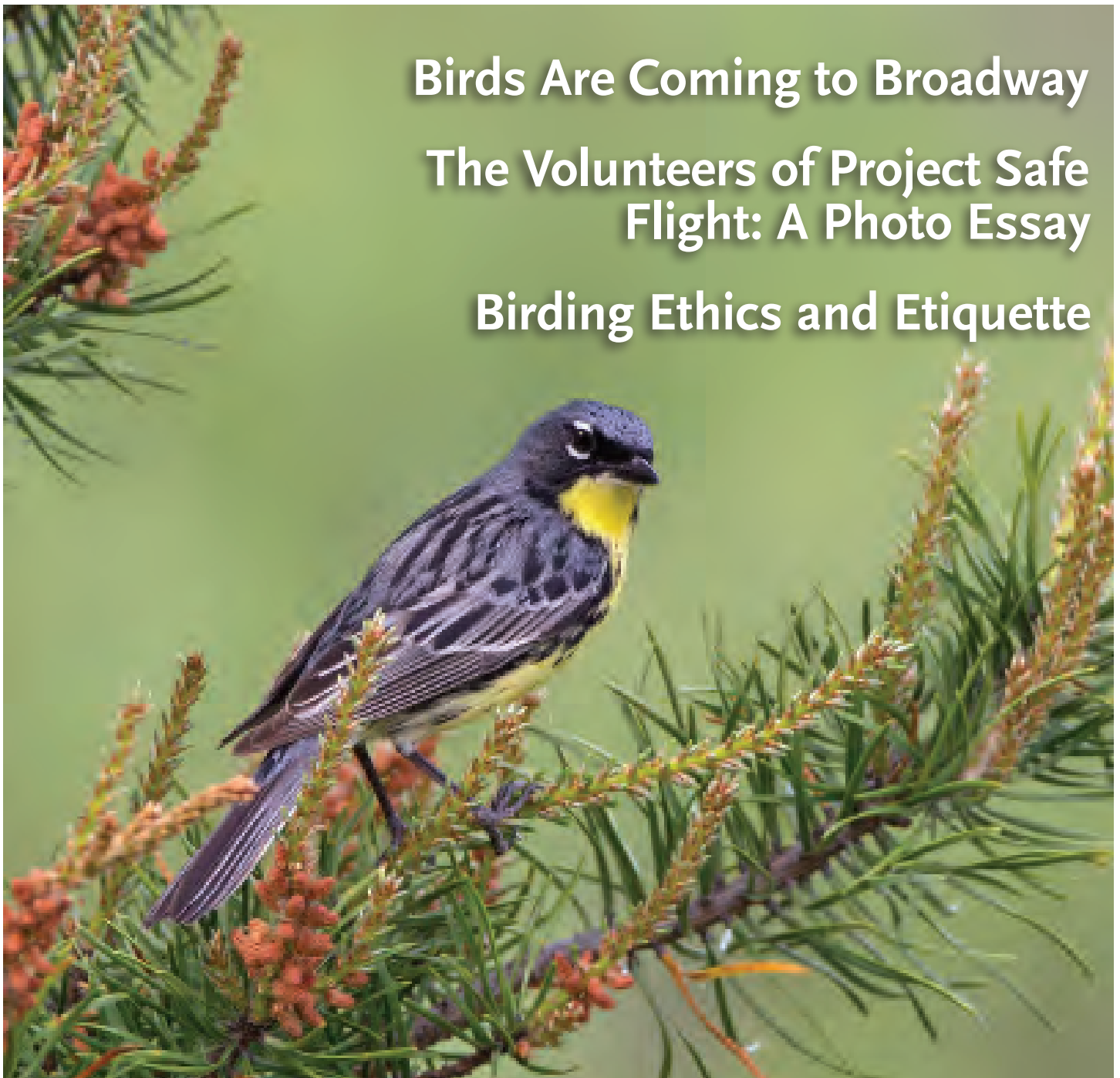


THE URBAN AUDUBON

Birds Are Coming to Broadway

**The Volunteers of Project Safe
Flight: A Photo Essay**

Birding Ethics and Etiquette



NYC AUDUBON

MISSION & STATEMENT

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.

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Printing & Mailing Kase Printing, Inc.

Design Whitehouse & Company

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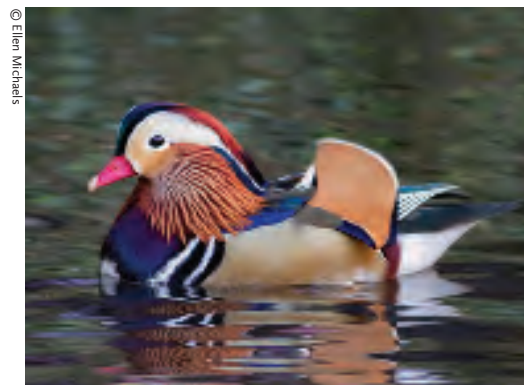
New York City has a new avian star. Not since Pale Male over a decade ago has an individual bird captured as much attention as the male Mandarin Duck, holding court as of this writing in The Pond at Central Park, in the extreme southeast corner of the Park across the street from the Plaza Hotel. This is no ordinary duck; it's a spectacularly beautiful bird native to East Asia, with mad splashes of color and feathers that stand upright like little sails. It's no wonder his presence was noticed immediately.

While the provenance of this bird is unknown, we do know one thing for sure: he did not fly himself here from East Asia. He has a leg band indicating he had been part of someone's collection, most likely as a private pet, as none of the area zoos have reported a missing Mandarin Duck. But he is free-flying and chose Central Park as a winter stopover, comfortably settling in with native Mallards and even associating with a native Wood Duck, North America's own version of the Mandarin with similarly ravishing colors and patterns.

Many in the birding community originally pooh-poohed all the hubbub. Not being a "wild" bird, but a species you could see at the zoo, it certainly couldn't be "counted" on your birding lists. While I was originally of that mindset, I have a few takeaways from this whole Mandarin affair. First and most obviously, he is a stunningly beautiful creature. That something like him exists in nature is simply a blessing. And seeing him next to the male Wood Duck, which conveniently overwintered in the same pond, somehow enhances the native duck's beauty. Even the green hoods of the ubiquitous male Mallards that surround the Mandarin seem to be more vibrant in the presence of this unexpected visitor. And anything that draws us to the beauty of nature, I count as a good thing.

Furthermore, as a result of the duck's newspaper and TV coverage, hundreds of people have stopped by The Pond to take a look, and thousands more have heard or read about the story. Now, countless folks who would not normally pay any attention to birds in our midst are embracing a bit more of the wider world and noticing the nature all around us. This duck is truly an ambassador for birds and nature.

And that, in many ways, is the key to this story. Not only did Central Park invite this wayward straggler to alight in the middle of our city, but it has allowed him to thrive here. Turns out, New York City offers healthy habitat for birds. Who knew?! Well, we did, of course, and every day NYC Audubon works to keep it that way. Our mandate is to make the five boroughs a welcome habitat for our year-round avian residents, a viable stopover for spring and fall migrants, and—as it turns out—even a vacation spot for exotic visiting dignitaries with a message to share.



Mandarin Duck in Central Park, November 8, 2018

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Cover Photograph:
Kirtland's Warbler © David Speiser
Small Banner Photographs:
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CONSERVATION NOTES

Spring migration is just around the corner, so we are gearing up for Project Safe Flight and other 2019 field season programs. In the meantime, we are happy to share with you some highlights of our winter activities and to introduce you to new spring and summer projects.

PROJECT SAFE FLIGHT

Making New York City safer for migratory birds is a year-round effort. Our devoted Project Safe Flight (PSF) volunteers patrol specific routes, looking for dead or injured birds—victims of collision with glass. (See page 16 for a photo essay on PSF volunteers.) Conservation Biologist Kaitlyn Parkins carefully maps routes, locating where to collect data that will answer specific research questions. One such question we are now looking to address is how proximity to natural areas (stopover sites), such as Central Park, increases risk of bird collisions. As more funding becomes available, we plan to expand our collision monitoring program into the outer boroughs, collecting data near stopover sites like Prospect Park.

For the past two years, we have been increasingly focused on the correlation between artificial light at night, density of birds flying overhead, and collisions with nearby glass. A new initiative was developed in 2018, part of a capstone project at New York University's (NYU) Center for Urban Science and Progress, that further studies the interaction among these three variables using "big data" (exceptionally large data sets of radar and light emission). Scientists Greg Dobler (NYU), NYC Audubon Advisory Council member Andrew Farnsworth (Cornell), and I (NYC Audubon) are co-advisors of the project. This research augments our ground-breaking work at the September 11 Memorial & Museum's Tribute in Light, where we study how beacons of light affect migratory behavior.

The NYU students have made tremendous strides in manipulating the data sets.

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So far, they have generated lighting maps for buildings in lower Manhattan by integrating light measurements gathered from cameras placed midtown at One Bryant Park with radar data taken at 15-minute intervals over the course of two migration seasons. The students detected correlations between the brightness of buildings in lower Manhattan and concentrations of birds flying overhead during these migration seasons.

The next step, planned for 2019, is to set up a new, hyperspectral camera facing uptown. This specialized camera will allow us to identify light quality as well as quantity as we continue to correlate light pollution with bird behavior during migration. We will again pair this high-tech approach with NYC Audubon's PSF monitoring for dead or injured birds. Facing the camera north, we will be able to investigate light pollution in the vicinity of Central Park.

Knowing how different types of light impact migratory birds will allow us to approach elected officials to limit light pollution and achieve a bird-friendly lighting ordinance in New York City. In the meantime, our advocacy efforts for NYC bird-friendly building legislation continue as we work with New York State Assemblymember Deborah Glick, updating the bird-friendly building legislation she first introduced in 2017.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

We continue to work with green infrastructure projects and newly created green space that provide habitat for birds and other wildlife. We are happy to report the Justice Avenue Bioswale project is finished, transforming a desolate traffic island in Elmhurst, Queens, into a small patch of habitat that captures excess stormwater and increases local flora and fauna biodiversity. Ecologist Dustin Partridge will continue post-construction monitoring of the site for changes in insect and bird diversity and abundance.

We will continue our work with the Jacob K. Javits Center, studying biodiversity at its

green roof as it changes over time. In late October, we installed native bee "hotels" and camera traps on the roof as part of a native bee/honey bee study. The cameras will also allow us to document birds that perch on the roof when we are not there surveying in person. Of course, we are interested in any changes to the roof's biodiversity since the recent completion of many of the Hudson Yards skyscrapers that tower over the Javits Center.

Thanks to a generous grant from The New York Community Trust, Dustin will continue to lead the NYC Green Roof Researchers Alliance (see "The NYC Green Roof Researchers Alliance," *The Urban Audubon*, Fall 2018) for another year. Stay tuned for noteworthy news and conference dates from this group of committed scientists.

WATERBIRDS OF NEW YORK HARBOR

Winter is mostly the time where we analyze data and confer with colleagues about next year's projects. Field Biologist Emilio Tobón traveled to Louisiana in November to participate in the 18th annual American Oystercatcher Working Group meeting. This meeting provides an important opportunity for those working with oystercatchers to share local experiences in a larger context and take part in setting species priorities for the next 10 years. By the way, our American Oystercatchers are doing well at Rockaway Beach, Queens. Our partners at NYC Department of Parks & Recreation Wildlife Unit reported 1.48 chicks fledged per nesting pair last season at the beach. Pairs on the Breezy Point Peninsula did not fare as well, with only .41 chicks fledged per nesting pair. This difference in fledgling success between the two sites is possibly because the nests at Breezy Point were more likely to be flooded during high tides and storm events than the ones at Rockaway Beach.

NYC Audubon once again convened the 14th annual Harbor Herons and Waterbirds of

Susan Elbin, PhD



the Greater New York/New Jersey Harbor Working Group meeting. This year's two-day meeting in December brought together over 80 professional scientists and managers from governmental agencies, nonprofits, and academia, who are working in the region to conserve and protect waterbirds and their habitats. NYC Audubon Research Associate Tod Winston delivered the flagship presentation, showing stable trends in NYC waterbird nesting populations and gearing us up for a full survey in 2019 of all possible nesting islands in our city. Kaitlyn Parkins, with the help of Research Associate Debra Kriensky's analysis, presented data on the Semipalmated Sandpipers we have been tracking with signal-emitting NanoTags over the past three years. We know our Jamaica Bay sandpipers go north to breed, and then head back south,

but we were thrilled to learn that our tagged birds were detected in Colombia and French Guiana.

One major action item emerged from the meeting: NYC Audubon submitted on behalf of the working group a petition to the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation to raise the conservation status of the Black Skimmer from "NY State Species of Special Concern" to "NY State Endangered." We will let you know via our *eGret* email newsletter about opportunities for you to lend your voice in support of this significant change.

AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

We had one major field activity this winter: the 119th Audubon Christmas Bird Count, held all across New York City from

December 15 to December 23. Kaitlyn Parkins organized the counts for the New Jersey-Lower Hudson count circle, which includes Manhattan, parts of Queens, the New Jersey Meadowlands, and the Palisades. NYC Audubon again hosted the count in Central Park on December 16. We had 59 intrepid birders join us in the Park on a cold and rainy day, counting 5,323 birds of 57 species. It turned out to be a good day for seeing birds of prey. The rainy weather kept raptors grounded, making it easy to count 13 Red-tailed Hawks, 2 Red-shouldered Hawks, and 3 species of owl: Great Horned, Northern Saw-whet, and Barred. Central Park's world-famous Mandarin Duck made an appearance, but not being a wild bird, he was not included in count totals. Visit www.nycaudubon.org/cbc to see final tallies from all five count circles in New York City.

VOLUNTEER!

Work in NYC Audubon's friendly office or in the field and make a difference for New York City's wildlife. There are many ways you can help. Unless otherwise noted, contact citizenscience@nycaudubon.org if interested in any of the projects listed below. For information on spring volunteer events such as beach clean-ups and tree plantings, visit us at www.nycaudubon.org/volunteer-events.

OFFICE PROJECTS

Help with mailings, filing, and general office work. Computer skills and birding knowledge are helpful, but not required. Contact volunteer@nycaudubon.org if interested.

THE URBAN AUDUBON

Join the newsletter committee and contribute your writing

skills to four seasonal issues. Meetings are bi-monthly in the early evening. Contact comm@nycaudubon.org if interested.

CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Become a citizen scientist and help conduct conservation research; read below about the various ways to get involved. All orientations are held at our office unless otherwise noted and require registration in advance.

Project Safe Flight: Light and glass pose major threats to migratory birds as they move through New York City. Help NYC Audubon biologists collect data on building collisions during migration by monitoring designated buildings for collisions. This opportunity requires a time commitment of about one hour one morning a week from April through early June. Orientations

will be held Thursday, March 14, and Tuesday, March 19, 6-7pm.

Horseshoe Crab Monitoring:

Horseshoe crab eggs are an important food source for migratory shorebirds. Collect data on horseshoe crab spawning by helping count horseshoe crabs in Jamaica Bay. We count on 12 nights in May and June, but you don't need to be able to make every count to sign up. Orientations will be held Thursday, April 11, and Tuesday, April 16, 6-7pm.

Spring NYC Shorebird Blitz:

Contribute to NYC Audubon's conservation efforts by helping us take a one-day snapshot of spring shorebird activity throughout New York City on Sunday, May 19. The NYC Shorebird Blitz is a citizen-science initiative that aims to find the total number of shorebirds using our city during

a 24-hour period, helping us answer important conservation questions, such as how many shorebirds are coming through our area during spring migration, how they are distributed throughout the City, and what disturbances they face.

PLUMB BEACH VOLUNTEER CLEANUP

Saturday, April 27, 10am-1pm

Each winter, debris winds up in our waters and washes up on our shores. It's unsightly and polluting, and it prevents urban wildlife like migratory birds and horseshoe crabs from feeding and nesting on the beaches. Come out on a spring day and get our beaches ready for them. All equipment is supplied, as well as snacks and water. Transportation via bus from Manhattan is available for a limited number of volunteers. Advance registration is required. Learn more and register at www.nycaudubon.org/plumb-beach.



BIRDS ARE COMING TO BROADWAY

Suzanne Charlé

The Double-crested Cormorant is a frequent visitor to The Pool in the northern quadrant of Central Park, hanging out with the Mallards, Canada Geese, and other wintering waterfowl. On May 17, a compatriot—albeit much larger, by about 1,500 pounds—will land four blocks west, its wings spanning the Broadway median between 104th and 105th streets.

This cormorant is part of *Nicolas Holiber: Birds on Broadway, the Audubon Sculpture Project*, a public art exhibition presented by the Broadway Mall Association, a non-profit raising funds from the public to beautify and maintain 10.6 acres of gardens in the center of Broadway on the Upper West Side, and in partnership with NYC Audubon, Gitler & _____ Art Gallery, and NYC Department of Parks & Recreation. For eight months this year, 12 bird sculptures will perch along the medians on Broadway, from 64th Street (where a 10-foot-tall Red-necked Grebe and three chicks will greet bypassers) to 166th Street—not far from the site of John James Audubon’s estate.

At work in a massive garage-cum-studio-turned-aviary in Flatbush, Brooklyn, Holiber noted, “All the birds are native to New York City or pass through.” The materials he is using for the project are also native to the City: many truckloads of scrap lumber and other reclaimed materials.

Birds on Broadway is an outgrowth of the *Audubon Mural Project*, which was begun three



© Nicolas Holiber: Birds on Broadway, Audubon Sculpture Project
Rendering of Double-Crested Cormorant Sculpture on Broadway Mall between 104th and 105th Streets and half years ago in response to the National Audubon Society’s 2015 *Birds & Climate Change Report*. Avi Gitler, of Gitler & _____ Art Gallery and curator of the mural project, said that so far muralists have painted a third of the 314 North American species that are threatened or in danger of extinction because of climate change. (See “Uptown Birds,” *The Urban Audubon*, Fall 2018.)

When the idea of expanding the project to sculptures came to Gitler, he reached out to Holiber, who had previously done a one-man show in his gallery. The project, both men explained, is meant to stop New Yorkers in their tracks and get them thinking about climate change, and how it impacts birds and other species—humans included.

“Climate change impacts everything,” said Holiber. “We immediately think how human populations are impacted, but the reality is that all life is at risk.” Each sculpture will be accompanied by a bio from the

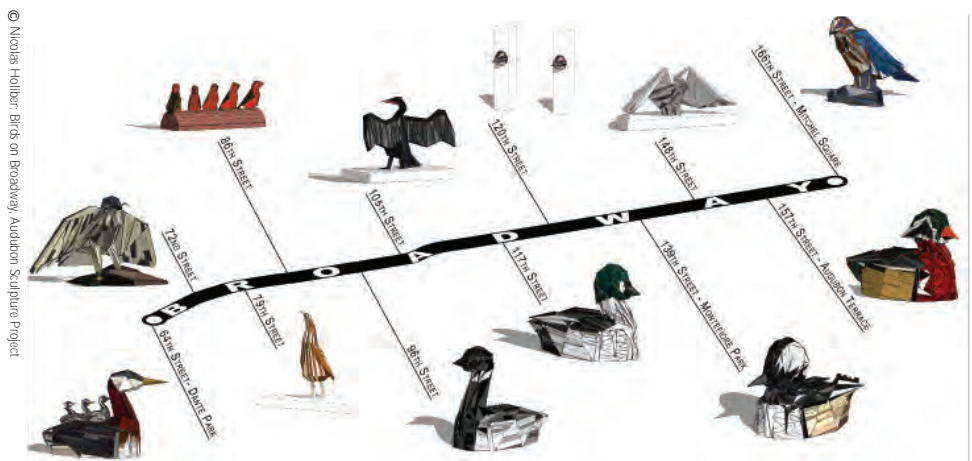
National Audubon Society describing how the bird will be affected by climate change. Some include dire statistics: Hairy Woodpeckers, two of which will peek out of tall wooden poles at the 120th Street Broadway median, are expected to lose 78 percent of their summer range by 2080. The Merlin, which will perch in Mitchel Square at 166th Street, may lose 97 percent of its current summer range by that year.

Holiber, who chose birds that were “the most eye-catching and diverse,” built the sculptures with reclaimed wood donated by Big Reuse in Gowanus. Using hammer and chisel, he fashioned feathers out of pallets, crown molding, floorboards, and shutters; a beak from a chair leg; glittering wings of the Double-crested Cormorant with the heads of screws. (In all, over \$8,000 worth of screws was donated by Marjam Supply Company.) “It was like a giant 3D puzzle,” said Holiber. Using John James Audubon’s prints as a guide, he painted the birds (with paint donated by Farrow & Ball) but drew the line at water-proofing them: “I want to show the effects of weather.”

When the Broadway Mall Association’s art exhibition ends in December, Holiber and Gitler hope that the sculptures “will migrate south” to another welcoming city. Perhaps, Gitler suggested, New Orleans, where Audubon once lived—and a place that knows the dangers of climate change all too well.



© Nicolas Holiber: Birds on Broadway, Audubon Sculpture Project
The Hooded Merganser sculpture is pictured here in progress at Holiber’s studio, standing over eight feet tall and almost 13 feet long.



© Nicolas Holiber: Birds on Broadway, Audubon Sculpture Project
Map of the 12 Bird Sculptures to Be Displayed on Broadway Malls from 64th Street to 166th Street

RODENTICIDES: A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER TO BIRDS OF PREY

Carol Peace Robins

Owls may be portrayed as wise, but they don't always know the difference between a healthy meal and food that can kill. For them, as well as the hawks, falcons, and other birds of prey, rodents slowly dying of poison are mighty tempting, but hazardous, targets.

It is well known that rodents serve as vectors for disease transmission to people. According to The Centers for Disease Control, rats and mice are responsible for the transmission of over 35 diseases worldwide, including hantavirus, rat-bite fever, and plague. In populous cities, such as New York City, where food (garbage) and housing (easy access to shelter) are abundant, rodents are widespread.

Rodent populations need to be controlled and poisoning is a standard method, but the problem is that a poisoned rodent can become a poisoned bird. Rodent poisons widely used today are anti-coagulants, which often don't take effect for several days. During that time, the poisoned rodent is free to roam where birds of prey are looking for food. If a bird consumes a poisoned rodent, it can be secondarily poisoned. If the bird is small enough, like a nestling, or has eaten enough poisoned prey, the toxin can be lethal. In one study by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Wildlife Health Unit, second generation anticoagulant rodenticides were detected in 84 percent of dead birds of prey found in New York City.

It's the ultimate goal of NYC Audubon to have rodenticides banned in City parks. NYC Audubon is in close communication with the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation Wildlife Unit, encouraging and supporting them to stop using rodenticides during hawk breeding season in areas where birds of prey are nesting. As an alternative to rodenticides, the City Department of Health has embarked on a program to use dry ice (frozen carbon dioxide) to eliminate rats in parks. The program calls for dropping dry ice into rat burrows and covering over the holes with soil. The dry ice gradually melts and permeates the holes, depriving the rats of oxygen—and effectively “putting them to sleep.”

While NYC Audubon works closely with NYC Parks & Recreation to limit rodenticide use, word needs to spread beyond the parks. Landscaped grounds and gardens outside of buildings, as well as basement and trash areas in buildings, attract rodents. It is legal for building managers to hire pest removal professionals who often use rodenticides. NYC Audubon has published a new pamphlet called “Rodenticides and Birds of Prey,” aimed at private sector rodent control managers and building tenants. The pamphlet addresses the dangers of rodenticides and describes successful alternative methods of getting rid of rodents. The pamphlet can be viewed at www.nycaudubon.org/rodenticide, and will be handed out at outreach festivals and other NYC Audubon events.

The pamphlet emphasizes that the best line of defense against rodents is removing access to food and water and excluding the



© Loves, Taisiana

Red-tailed Hawk with Rodent

animals from human habitation. The pamphlet emphasizes the following:

- **Remove access to food** by keeping trash areas clean and using locked trash bins. Rats can easily tear through plastic trash bags.
- **Remove access to water** by fixing leaky pipes and places where standing water pools.
- **Exclude access to your home** by sealing all possible entry and exit points, such as cracks in basement walls, sidewalks, streets, or trashcan areas, with strong stainless steel mesh. Also seal off landscaped areas. Exclusion is a strategy that doesn't kill rodents, but prevents them from becoming a problem. At my own apartment building, when rats were invading our tree pits, we hired a landscaper with rat control experience who installed a tight mesh barrier several inches below the topsoil. Three years later, there's no sign of these rodents among our mums or begonias.

Once rodents find a way into your space, what method can you use to remove them quickly and permanently? Among the most effective methods are traps: the old-fashioned wooden snap traps, their more modern plastic versions, and electronic traps. They all kill rodents immediately. Glue traps are not a humane solution. These traps will hold the rat—or mouse or bird—until it starves or dies of exhaustion.

You don't have to be a rodent control professional to play a role in keeping our birds of prey safe. Learn more about how to get rid of rodents responsibly on NYC Audubon's new Rodenticide webpage. Print out the pamphlet there and give it to your friends, neighbors, and building managers. If loose garbage is a problem in your building or you know that your building manager is using poisons, suggest one of the non-toxic alternatives. Insist on it. Your neighbors, including the descendants of Pale Male, will thank you for it.

BIRDCAST MIGRATION MAPS ADD EXCITEMENT TO SPRING AND FALL

Heather Wolf

We regularly check the daily weather forecast, but what about the daily “birdcast”? As a web developer for Cornell Lab of Ornithology, I have had the pleasure of working with the BirdCast team led by NYC Audubon Advisory Council member Andrew Farnsworth, PhD. BirdCast has been providing nocturnal migration forecasts based on radar through its website, www.birdcast.info, since 2012, but these predictions involved some human input. The team recently announced a significant update to BirdCast that provides two new auto-generated tools to help birders know the best days to find migrants: a three-day migration forecast, and an up-to-the-moment replay of nocturnal migration activity.

While weather radar has long been used to analyze and predict bird movement, it was previously unfeasible to auto-generate forecast models with the existing technology. Recent improvements in data processing have enabled BirdCast to do that, using a trained model, developed by Benjamin Van Doren and Kyle Horton of the BirdCast team. The model synthesizes over 20 years of spring migration data from 143 U.S. weather radars combined with data on atmospheric conditions.

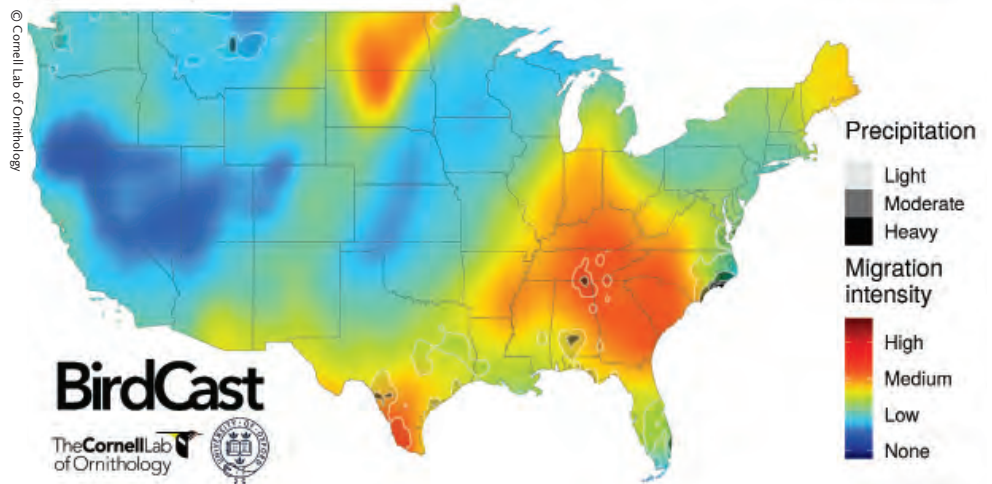
Maps generated from BirdCast’s model show the predicted intensity of nocturnal migration all across the U.S. for three hours after local sunset for the next three days. Areas with expected high activity are shown in “warm” colors (red, yellow, orange) and areas with low or no expected activity in “cool” colors (blue, green, purple). Live migration maps complement the forecast maps by showing nocturnal migration in near real-time, updating every 10 minutes throughout the night. These animated maps, using an algorithm designed by BirdCast’s Adriaan Dokter, light up in varying degrees of brightness according to the concentration of birds, with arrows indicating the direction

of bird movement.

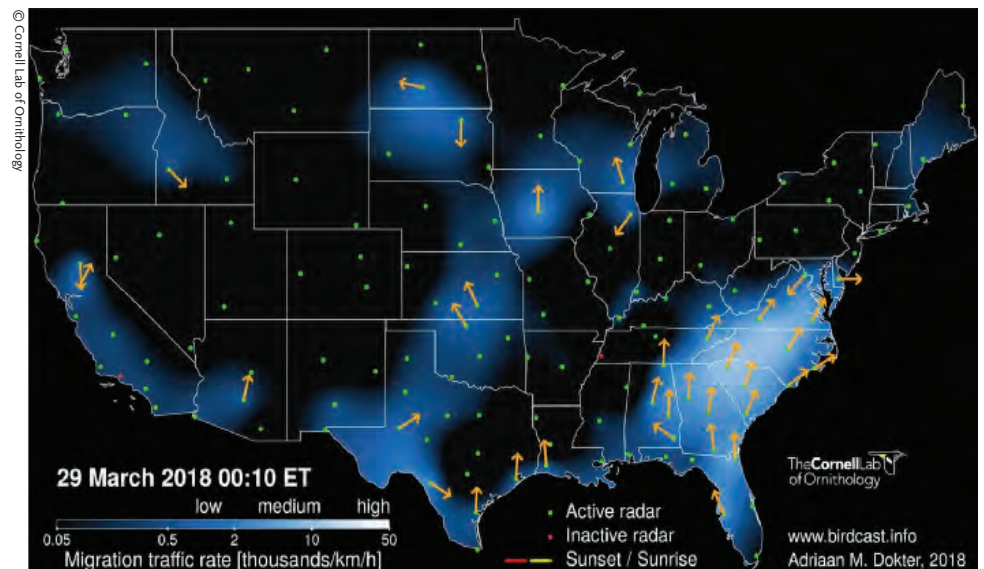
An important aspect of this technology, and one that has always been a goal of the BirdCast project, is its implication for bird conservation. The ability to predict the heaviest migration nights could help keep birds safe. For example, a request made to building managers to turn lights out for only a few nights is more likely to be honored than a request to turn lights off every night during migration. This could potentially

prevent thousands of bird collision deaths. A similar approach could be taken to turning off wind turbines.

An exciting breakthrough for birders and conservationists, BirdCast’s maps add a whole new dimension to migration season. So tonight, visit www.birdcast.info to check whether tomorrow will be a birding day you won’t want to miss . . . or if it’s that rare day during migration when you can catch some extra sleep.



A snapshot of BirdCast’s auto-generated migration forecast for the night of September 13-14, 2018. The color-coded map combines projected weather conditions and bird movements measured by radar to show where and when the most intense migrations are expected, up to three days in advance.



BirdCast’s near real-time analysis maps show intensities of actual bird migration as detected by the U.S. weather surveillance radar network, updated every 10 minutes. This map, for the night of March 28-29, 2018, shows heavy migration activity in the Southeast occurring at 12:10am Eastern Time.

BIRDLINK: ENGAGING COMMUNITY, SUPPORTING URBAN BIRDS

Meryl Greenblatt

Art and environmental awareness come together in *BIRDLINK*, a proposed network of native plant sculptures designed to connect isolated patches of urban bird habitat while promoting awareness of migratory bird species that pass through our city. The brainchild of artist and landscape architect Anina Gerchick, *BIRDLINK* made its debut in prototype form last July at NYC Audubon's seasonal nature center on Governors Island. From there, the *BIRDLINK* prototype moved to East River State Park in Williamsburg, and plans are underway for a separate full-scale version to debut this summer in Sara D. Roosevelt Park in lower Manhattan.

All versions of *BIRDLINK* are planted with a variety of native plants such as Purpletop Tridens and Black-eyed Susans to attract both birds and insects. The plants, donated by New York City Department of Parks & Recreation Greenbelt Native Plant Nursery, are rooted in a series of wire mesh baskets supported by modular bamboo ladder-like structures. This free-standing, spiraling green wall of native plants is designed to be a conversation-starter for people, a valued rest stop for migratory birds, and an inspiration for backyard and rooftop gardeners. Over time, Gerchick envisions multiple installations, with the goal of linking wildlife corridors through neighborhoods in New York City that will support local and migratory birds and motivate local communities to support habitat conservation and biodiversity.

Gerchick found inspiration for this project at a Lower East Side park, where neighborhood songbird pet owners often bring their caged birds. "Watching the songbirds fly around in the cages, I thought a public art project could engage the community by supporting urban birds through habitat creation," says Gerchick. "That led me to focus on the world of wild birds in the City and the challenges they face."

Last September, *BIRDLINK* was relocated from Governors Island to East River State Park in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, where it will reside at least until May 31. There it joins another structure designed to help migrating birds, a Chimney Swift nest tower created in 2009 in memory of Geoffrey Cobb Ryan, a founding member of NYC Audubon. In June, another *BIRDLINK* living sculpture will be installed in Sara D. Roosevelt Park on Manhattan's Lower East Side, very close to the park where Gerchick originally took inspiration for the project. Says Gerchick, "My work now as an 'Eco-Artist' is to bring the plight of urban birds and their survival to public notice."

Learn more about the project at www.birdlink.world/new-york-city, and be on the lookout for information about events planned around the project later this year.

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The BIRDLINK prototype installed at Governors Island last July was planted with a variety of native plants in a series of wire mesh nets supported by bamboo ladder-like structures.

© Anina Gerchick / BIRDLINK



BIRDLINK moved from Governors Island to Williamsburg's East River State Park last September, accompanied by a sign with information on bird migrations through New York City and ways you can help keep migratory birds safe.

© Anina Gerchick / BIRDLINK



Artist Rendering of the Planned Full-scale BIRDLINK Sculpture at Sara D. Roosevelt Park in Manhattan's Lower East Side, Scheduled to Be Installed This June

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES

- NYC Audubon Events
 - Partnership Events
- Overnight Trips

- **WINTER BIRDS OF THE BARRIER ISLANDS, LI**
Friday, March 1, 8am-4pm
Guide: **Tod Winston**

This trip is sold out.

- **WINTER WALK AT INWOOD HILL PARK, MANHATTAN**
Saturday, March 2, 10am-12pm
Guide: **Nadir Souirgi**

Inwood Hill Park, simply put, is a jewel. Nestled between the Hudson River, Dyckman Street, and Seaman Avenue, 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. Search for wintering species, including ducks in the tidal marsh. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

- **INTRO TO BIRDING: BIRD WALK IN CENTRAL PARK**
Saturday, March 2, 8-10:30am
Guide: **Tod Winston**

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

- **WINTER BIRDS OF BARNEGAT, NJ**
Sunday, March 3, 9am-4pm
Guide: **Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC**

This trip is sold out.

- **SPRING BIRDING AT WAVE HILL, THE BRONX**
Sundays, March 10, April 14, and May 12, 9:30-11:30am
Guide: **Gabriel Willow**
With **Wave Hill**

Meet at the Perkins Visitor Center. Naturalist Gabriel Willow contributes

his extensive knowledge of bird species and their behaviors on these captivating walks. Wave Hill's garden setting overlooking the Hudson River flyway provides the perfect habitat for resident and migrating birds. Ages 10 and up welcome with an adult. No registration required. No limit. NYC Audubon members enjoy two-for-one admission (see www.wavehill.org for more information)

- **FIRST DAY OF SPRING IN CENTRAL PARK**
Wednesday, March 20, 8-11am
Guide: **Tod Winston**

This trip is sold out.

- **THE SKY-DANCE OF THE WOODCOCK**
Saturdays, March 23 and 30, 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 early in the spring, soon after the snow melts in the northern U.S. We'll 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. Each trip limited to 12. \$92 (64) per trip

- **PELHAM BAY PARK SPRING BIRD WALKS, THE BRONX**
Sundays, March 24-May 19, 9-10:30am
Guide: **NYC Audubon**
With **Pelham Bay Park**

Meet at Orchard Beach Parking Lot. Join NYC Audubon to explore some of the best birding our city has to offer. Three times the size of Central Park, Pelham Bay offers diverse habitat that attracts a variety of spring migrants. Past rarities include Purple Sandpiper and Northern Goshawk. No registration necessary. No limit. Free

- **AUDUBON MURAL PROJECT TOURS IN NORTHERN MANHATTAN**
Sundays, March 24, April 14, May 12, and June 16, 10am-12pm
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 also make us aware of the challenges they face. In addition to seeing 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. Each walk limited to 20. \$30 (20) per walk

- **BEGINNING BIRDING**
Classes: **Wednesdays, March 27, April 3 and 10, 6:30-8:45pm**
Trips: **Sunday, April 7, 8am-2:30pm (Jamaica Bay) and Sunday, April 14, 8-10:30am (Central Park)**
Instructor: **Tod Winston**

This series is sold out.

- **QUEENS BOTANICAL GARDEN BIRD WALKS**
Saturdays, March 30, April 27, and May 18, 9:30-10:30am
Guide: **NYC Audubon**
With **Queens Botanical Garden**

Explore Queens Botanical Garden in search of migrant songbirds and

learn about the valuable resources the Garden offers birds and other wildlife. Binoculars available. Register for one date or the whole series of five walks (walk-ins welcome). To register, email info@queensbotanical.org or visit www.queensbotanical.org/calendar. Each walk limited to 25. Free (with Garden admission)

- **EARLY SPRING BIRD WALK AT JAMAICA BAY**
Saturday, March 30, 10am-1pm
Guide: **Don Riepe**
With **American Littoral Society, Gateway National Recreation Area**

Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge and enjoy a slide program as well as a hike around the ponds and gardens to look for returning Osprey, Eastern Phoebe, Glossy Ibis, and other early spring migrants. For more information and reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriep@gmail.com. No limit. Free

- **SPRING MIGRATION IN PELHAM BAY PARK, THE BRONX**
Saturday, April 6, 9am-4pm
Guide: **Gabriel Willow**

Explore the lovely coves and rocky outcroppings of the City's largest park, Pelham Bay Park, seeking out migrating songbirds, late wintering birds, ducks, and a breeding pair of Great Horned Owls. The rich and diverse habitat makes this park an urban gem and a great home for wildlife. Past rarities include a Northern Goshawk and a Purple Sandpiper. Bring lunch and water. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$90 (63)



© Mark Eden / Great Backyard Bird Count
Yellow-throated Warbler



● **BIRD WALK IN
FLUSHING MEADOWS
CORONA PARK, QUEENS**
Sunday, April 7, 10-12pm

Guide: NYC Audubon
Meet inside the park at the intersection of 69th Road and Meadow Lake Drive. Come explore the bird life of Meadow Lake on this bird walk perfect for beginners. We can expect to see a variety of ducks and other bird species at Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens's largest park. Participants should be prepared for about 30 minutes of easy walking on paved paths. Binoculars available. All ages are welcome. No registration required. Limited to 19. Free

● **BIRDING GEMS OF STATEN ISLAND: SPRING MIGRATION AT FRESHKILLS PARK**
Sunday, April 7, 8am-3pm
Guide: Ed Johnson
With NYC Department of Parks & Recreation
Join us for a springtime exploration

of Freshkills Park with special guest guide and former Staten Island Museum Director of Science Ed Johnson. Start your trip with a journey across the Upper Bay. From wetlands to woodlands to rich, rolling grasslands, Freshkills Park offers a diverse collection of habitats and wildlife. On a spring day, over 100 species of birds and a variety of butterflies can be seen at New York City's latest, greatest park. Transport by passenger van on S.I. from the Staten Island St. George Terminal included. Limited to 12. \$50 (35)

● **BIRDING BY EAR IN CENTRAL PARK**
Tuesdays, April 9-May 7, 7-10am
Guide: Tod Winston

Join Tod Winston for a five-week exploration of all of the chips, tweets, trills, and warbles we hear as we wander Central Park's best migrant spots. Though we certainly won't pass up any non-singing birds, this series is intended specifically for those who'd like to identify birds

by sound alone. We'll discuss the meanings of different songs and calls as we get to know them. All experience levels welcome. Limited to 12. \$127 (89)

● **SPRING BIRDS OF SANDY HOOK, NJ**
Sunday, April 14, 9am-4pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

This trip is sold out.

● **EVENING SPRING MIGRATION WALKS IN CENTRAL PARK**
Mondays, April 15-May 20,
Tuesdays, April 16-May 21,
Wednesdays, April 17-May 22,
5:30-7pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Witness the spectacle of spring migration on this six-week series of walks as songbirds follow the Atlantic Flyway northwards. Look for orioles, tanagers, warblers, vireos, and other migrants in the wilds of Central Park, and learn about the finer points of their

identification and ecology. Each series limited to 15. \$145 (102) per series

● **ADVANCED BIRD WALKS IN PELHAM BAY, THE BRONX**
Wednesdays, April 17 and
May 15, 8-10am
Guides: Joe McManus, Jack Rothman
With Pelham Bay Park

Meet at the Orchard Beach parking lot. Join us at Pelham Bay, New York City's largest park, to explore some of the best birding the City has to offer. This advanced bird walk will seek out spring migrants, waterfowl, and more. Registration in advance preferred but not required. No limit. Free

● **BIRDS, TECHNOLOGY, AND CITIZEN SCIENCE: eBIRD WORKSHOP**

Thursday, April 18, 7-8:30pm
Instructor: Gabriel Willow
Birders increasingly use technological tools to locate birds, share their

... CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

NYC AUDUBON MEMBERS-ONLY EVENTS

Join us for a free NYC Audubon member event this spring. Please note: Member events are free for contributing NYC Audubon members at the Student/Senior level and up. Except for the KIDS walk, all member walks are limited to 20 people. As these events are popular and fill quickly, please limit your registration to one free member event in Central Park. Contact Kellye Rosenheim at krosenheim@nycaudubon.org or call 212-691-7483 x306 to register.

SONGS OF CENTRAL PARK
Wednesday, April 24,
7:30-9:30am

Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street to seek out early spring migrants with Tom Stephenson, author of *The Warbler Guide* and creator of the BirdGenie smartphone app.

BROOKLYN'S BEST
Saturday, April 27, 7:30-9:30am

Bird with Tom Stephenson on his home turf. Meet at the entrance to Prospect Park across from Grand Army Plaza and join Tom for a walk around Brooklyn's premier birding location.

SPRING WALK IN THE CENTRAL PARK RAMBLE
Wednesday, May 1, 7:30-9:30am

Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street. Explore the Ramble with NYC Audubon Immediate Past President Harry Maas and marvel at spring migration.

CENTRAL PARK'S NORTH WOODS
Thursday, May 2, 7:30-9:30am

Meet Kellye Rosenheim at Central Park West and 100th Street to see what the North Woods have to offer at the peak of migration.

KIDS MEMBER WALK IN CENTRAL PARK

Saturday, May 4, 3-4:30 pm
Meet at 72nd Street and Central Park West and explore the park's best

birding hotspots with Jeff Ward, Nancy Ward, and Kellye Rosenheim. Walk is only for preregistered KIDS Members 8-12 years old. All KIDS Members must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Please let us know if you need a pair of binoculars. To register, parents should email KIDS@nycaudubon.org.

SPRING MIGRATION
Tuesday, May 7, 7:30-9:30am

Enjoy a spring walk through the Ramble with Jeff Kimball, filmmaker of *Birders: The Central Park Effect* and president of NYC Audubon. Meet at Central Park West and 72nd Street.

EXPLORING GOVERNORS ISLAND
Friday, May 17, 10am-12:30pm

Take a look around one of the final frontiers in New York City birding. Meet at the Governors Island Ferry (Battery Marine Terminal near the Staten Island Ferry) for a short ride to the island and a morning of birding under the guidance of expert Annie Barry.

SPRING MIGRATION IN ASTORIA PARK, QUEENS
Saturday, May 18, 9-10:30am

Meet NYC Audubon Board Member Kellie Quiñones at the entrance to Astoria Park at 19th Street and Hoyt Avenue North as we seek out migratory birds and resident species.

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES (CONTINUED)

sightings, and keep track of their observations. The most widely used of these tools is eBird, a website and app that allows users to upload and track their sightings and see what other users have found. It's also a citizen-science tool that pools all the data, allowing scientists to study trends in bird populations, migration timing, and more. Learn how to use eBird and other modern technological tools like field guide apps and automated bird ID apps. Limited to 12. \$33 (23)

- **AFTERNOON BIRD WALK IN CENTRAL PARK**
Saturdays, April 20 and May 11, 2-3:30pm
Guide: Jeff Ward

Search for spring migrants on a leisurely afternoon walk through Central Park's best birding spots with Jeff Ward, NYC Audubon's newest trip leader (see Winter 2018-2019 *The Urban Audubon* for profile on Jeff). Each walk limited to 15. \$36 (25) per walk

- **BIRDS AND PLANTS: NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN IN SPRINGTIME, THE BRONX**
Sunday, April 21, and Saturday, June 15, 10am-1pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

The New York Botanical Garden is home to a large tract of East Coast old-growth forest. During the peak of spring migration, the beautiful gardens come alive with migrating songbirds. Each walk limited to 15. Entrance fee to NYBG not included. \$39 (27) per walk

- **BIRDING TOURS OF BRYANT PARK, MANHATTAN**
Mondays, April 22-June 3, 8-9am
Thursdays, April 25-June 6, 5-6pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

With Bryant Park Corporation
Meet at the Birding Tour sign at the 42nd Street and Sixth Avenue entrance to the Park. Discover the surprising variety of birds that stop in Bryant Park during migration. No registration required. No limit. Free

- **BIRDING TOURS OF THE NORTH WOODS, CENTRAL PARK**
Mondays, April 22-May 20,
Wednesdays, April 24-May 22,
Fridays, April 26-May 24,
5:30-7pm

Guide: Nadir Souirgi

Meet at the 103rd Street and Central Park West entrance to the Park. Discover birding in the more serene northern part of Central Park during the height of songbird migration. No registration required. No limit. Free

- **THE BATTERY BIRD WALKS, SOUTHERN TIP OF MANHATTAN**
Tuesdays, April 23-May 21, 8-9am
Guide: Gabriel Willow

With The Battery Conservancy

Meet at the Netherlands Memorial Flagpole located at the entrance to Battery Park on the corner of Broadway, Battery Place, and State Street. Join Gabriel Willow and The Battery Conservancy to explore the diversity of migrating birds that find food and habitat in The Battery. RSVP preferred, visit tbc.events.eventbrite.com for more information. No limit. Free

- **MORNING SPRING MIGRATION WALKS IN CENTRAL PARK**
Wednesdays, April 24-May 22,
Thursdays, April 25-May 23,
7:30-10:30am

Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

This five-week series of walks will observe the waves of birds passing through Central Park during spring migration. Each series limited to 15. \$143 (100) per series

- **A SPRING MIGRATION MORNING WALK IN CENTRAL PARK**
Fridays, April 26-May 17, 8-10am
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Join Gabriel Willow for a spring morning walk in Central Park to welcome the arrival of warblers, vireos, tanagers, cuckoos, and other species stopping off in the Park for

a rest and a snack on their way north. We will explore the Ramble and surrounding areas as well as stop for a rest and enjoy a snack ourselves at the Boathouse. Each walk limited to 15. \$36 (25) per walk

- **SPRING MIGRATION AT JAMAICA BAY**
Saturday, April 27, 10am-1pm
Guide: Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society, Gateway National Recreation Area
Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge during peak spring migration for a slide program and hike around the reserve to look for migratory birds

and other wildlife. For reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriepen@gmail.com. No limit. Free

- **VAN CORTLANDT BIRD WALKS, THE BRONX**
Saturdays, April 27-July 20,
9-10:30am

Guide: NYC Audubon
With the Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy

Meet at Van Cortlandt Nature Center. The history of birding and Van Cortlandt Park are inseparable. Influential birders such as Roger Tory Peterson and Allan D.

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

- **CAPE MAY SPRING MIGRATION WEEKEND, NJ**
Saturday, April 27, 9am-Sunday, April 28, 7pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Welcome the spring in lovely Cape May, NJ, the East's capital of birding. On good spring migration days, the area's forests and marshes are swarming with warblers in breeding plumage. We'll visit Cape May Point, Higbee Beach, Cape May Meadows, and more in search of returning songbirds, shorebirds, wading birds, and terns—as well as lingering winter visitors including sea ducks and gannets. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 10. \$340 (\$50)

- **ASSATEAGUE/CHINCOTEAGUE WEEKEND**
Thursday, May 2-Sunday, May 5
Guide: Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society
Spend an extended weekend at this famous wildlife area during spring bird migration. See wild ponies, Bald Eagles, Black-necked Stilts, White Ibis, dolphins, and maybe a North American River Otter. Includes three nights' lodging at Refuge Inn, breakfasts,

a boat tour of marshes, a safari bus tour of backwater dunes, guided hikes along beaches, woods, and marshes, plus two evening programs. For more information and reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriepen@gmail.com. \$425 (\$95 for van transport from Manhattan)

- **DOWN EAST MAINE & ACADIA: A BIRDER'S PARADISE**
Saturday, May 25-Sunday, June 2
Guide: Gabriel Willow

This trip is sold out.

- **MONTAUK SPRING WEEKEND, LI**
Friday, May 31-Sunday, June 2
Guides: Mike Bottini, Mickey Cohen, Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society
Visit the east end of Long Island and enjoy hiking along beaches, bluffs, woodlands, and dunes. Registration includes lodging at the luxurious Montauk Manor, five meals, five guided field trips, two evening slide programs, an evening star watch, and free pickup at the LIRR station in Montauk. For more information and reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriepen@gmail.com. \$395 (\$140 single supplement)

Cruickshank got their starts on Van Cortlandt's ecologically diverse grounds. These walks celebrate the tradition set by these great ornithologists. Participants will look for various species of residents and migrants and discuss a wide range of avian topics. For more information, call 212-691-7483. No registration required. No limit. Free

- **EARTH DAY AT PROSPECT PARK**
Sunday, April 28, 1-4pm
With Prospect Park Alliance

Join NYC Audubon and community partners for Prospect Park Alliance's annual Earth Day celebration at the Prospect Park Audubon Center. Enjoy fun-filled, family-friendly programming that celebrates the environment, including catch-and-release fishing, raptor demonstrations, volunteer cleanups, citizen-science activities, arts and craft, and nature games. No registration required. No limit. Free

- **THE BIRDS OF WOODLAWN CEMETERY, THE BRONX**
Sunday, April 28, 8-10:30am
Guides: Tod Winston, Joseph McManus, Susan Olsen

With the Woodlawn Conservancy
Join us for a morning bird walk and tour of this beautiful cemetery: Tod Winston and Joseph McManus will look for spring migrants and year-round residents on the expansive grounds, while Woodlawn Cemetery Director of Historical Services Susan Olsen will share fascinating stories about the cemetery's history and the interesting mixture of individuals interred there. Limited to 20. \$35 (25)

- **INTRODUCTION TO BIRDSONG**
Class: Friday, May 3, 6:30-8:30pm
Trip: Sunday, May 5, 8am-12pm
Instructor: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Do you ever wonder who is singing? Learn to identify the large variety of migrant and resident birds in New York City. Joe Giunta will first introduce you to the subtleties of birdsong identification in the

classroom, followed by a field trip in Central Park to bird by eye and ear. Limited to 12. \$72 (50)

- **MORNING SPRING WALK AT INWOOD HILL PARK, MANHATTAN**
Saturday, May 4, 9-11am
Guide: Nadir Souirgi

Inwood Hill Park is a jewel. Nestled between the Hudson River, Dyckman Street, and Seaman Avenue, 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 backdrop for observing the many migratory and breeding avian species that are drawn to this hotspot. Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Wood Thrush, and Yellow Warbler breed here, and the Park includes Manhattan's last remaining tidal saltmarsh. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

- **SEASONAL RESIDENCE ON GOVERNORS ISLAND**

Visit our seasonal nature center on Governors Island for family-friendly activities, information on the City's birds and habitats, binoculars to borrow, and opportunities to meet avian-inspired artists at work. Our residence at Governors Island's Nolan Park House 17 will start on Saturday, May 4. Hours of operation, bird walk schedule, and other Governors Island activities will be announced in our email newsletter, *The eGret*, and online at www.nycaudubon.org/gov-island. Interested in volunteering with us on Governors Island? Email Danielle Sherman at dsherman@nycaudubon.org.

- **SPRING MIGRATION ON RANDALL'S ISLAND**
Saturday, May 4, 9am-2pm
Guides: Gabriel Willow, Randall's Island Park Alliance Staff
With Randall's Island Park Alliance
We'll walk across the foot bridge to

Randall's Island, an under-explored location in the East River that hosts restored freshwater wetlands and saltmarsh. We'll look for spring migrants (both waterbirds and landbirds) as we explore the results of recent restoration efforts. Limited to 20. \$40 (28)

- **DAWN BIRDSONG IN CENTRAL PARK'S NORTH WOODS**
Sunday, May 5, 6-10am
Guide: Tod Winston

Get up early to enjoy the chorus of early morning birdsong, right after dawn, in a small group. We'll explore the peaceful and beautiful Great Hill, North Woods, and Loch, listening for warblers, vireos, tanagers, orioles, and more. Limited to 12. \$40 (28)

- **NATURE SKETCHING FOR BETTER BIRDING**
Sundays, May 5-19, 3-5pm
Instructor: Nadir Souirgi

Learn to use the art of nature sketching to improve your birding skills with bird guide and art instructor Nadir Souirgi. Central Park is your classroom for this workshop, where you'll explore the world of birds in a whole new way, focusing on making drawings and taking notes on structure, proportion, patterning, and color. Nadir will share the joy and satisfaction that comes when accurate bird drawing leads to seeing birds accurately as well. Three class sessions in the field allow for intensive work with personalized attention from the instructor. Intended for those with intermediate drawing experience. Limited to 10. \$92 (64)

- **CENTRAL PARK'S SUMMIT ROCK AND RAMBLE**
Friday, May 10, 7-10am
Guide: Tod Winston

We'll start bright and early at Summit Rock and Tanner's Spring to find colorful songbirds at peak migration time, resting and feeding after a long night's flight. Then we'll head to the rich habitats of Turtle Pond, the Ramble, and the Lake. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

- **SPRING WARBLERS**
Class: Friday, May 10, 6:30-8:30pm
Trip: Sunday, May 12, 8-11am
Instructor: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

First learn to identify the 30-plus species of warblers that migrate through our area each spring, using field marks and other techniques. Then go out in the field and reinforce what you've learned on our field trip to Central Park. Limited to 12. \$72 (50)

- **RIVERSIDE PARK SUMMER ON THE HUDSON BIRD WALKS, MANHATTAN**
Fridays, May 10, July 12, and September 13, 5:30-7pm
Guide: NYC Audubon
With Riverside Park Summer on the Hudson

Meet at the park entrance at 120th Street and Riverside Drive and explore Riverside Park on this relaxed, family-friendly bird walk. Who knows what birds we will discover while taking in views of the Hudson River? No registration required. No limit. Free

- **STERLING FOREST WARBLERS, NY**
Saturday, May 11, 7am-3pm
Guides: Don Riepe, Tod Winston

Explore the woodland and pond habitat of the 20,000-acre Sterling Forest preserve during peak spring migration. Look for nesting warblers as well as spring wildflowers, reptiles, and amphibians. Trip involves four-mile hike and some rocky terrain. Bring lunch and water. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$115 (80)

- **SPRING MIGRANTS AT INWOOD HILL PARK, MANHATTAN**
Saturday, May 11, 9-11:30am
Guide: Annie Barry

Join Annie Barry for a hike through a mature forest in search of kinglets, warblers, flycatchers, sparrows, and

... CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES (CONTINUED)

other migrants and residents. We'll then head to the shores of recently restored Muscota Marsh, the last natural saltmarsh in Manhattan, to search for herons and ducks. Some hilly walking required. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

• **RANDALL'S ISLAND BIRDING BONANZA**
Saturday, May 11, 10am-1pm
Guide: NYC Audubon
With Randall's Island Park Alliance
Meet at Little Hell Gate Salt Marsh, south of Icahn Stadium. Randall's Island is home to over 180 species of birds. Enjoy a day of free, family-friendly activities and birding. Learn about the amazing adaptations of birds as they thrive in the Island's restored habitats. No registration required. No Limit. Free

• **EARLY MORNING BIRDSONG IN THE RAMBLE**
Monday, May 13, 6-9am
Guide: Tod Winston
Get up early and enjoy the chorus of early morning birdsong, soon after dawn, in a small group. We'll explore the migration hotspots of Strawberry Fields and the Ramble, listening for warblers, vireos, tanagers, orioles, and more. Limited to 12. \$40 (28)

• **BIRD WALK IN THE NORTH WOODS OF CENTRAL PARK**
Tuesday, May 14, 7-11am
Guide: Tod Winston
Explore the peaceful North Woods and Loch at the height of spring songbird migration. We'll look (and listen) for warblers, vireos, tanagers, grosbeaks, and more. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

• **PEAK MIGRATION DAY AT ALLEY POND PARK AND JAMAICA BAY**
Tuesday, May 14, 8am-4pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC
Join Joe Giunta for this tour of the crown jewels of Queens: Alley Pond Park and Jamaica Bay. First visit Alley Pond's wooded grounds and kettle

ponds to search for warblers and vireos, then hike the trails of Jamaica Bay to see migrant shorebirds, waterfowl, and more. Bring lunch and water. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$115 (80)

• **PROSPECT PARK BIRD WALK**
Friday, May 17, 5-7pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow
Join Gabriel Willow for a leisurely walk to see spring migrants and breeding bird residents of "Brooklyn's Backyard." Beautiful Prospect Park's wide variety of habitats attract a large number of migrants and breeding bird species—significantly more than Central Park, in fact. We will explore the Park's meadows, forests, and waterways in search of waterfowl, warblers, tanagers, and more. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

• **NESTING PEREGRINES AND RED-TAILS OF THE UPPER WEST SIDE, MANHATTAN**
Saturday, May 18, 1-4pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow
Many New Yorkers are astonished to discover that their city of steel and glass is home to a diverse population of large birds of prey: the City boasts the world's highest densities of the Peregrine Falcon—the world's fastest flyer—and a growing population of Red-tailed Hawks (several pairs of which have reached celebrity status). We'll visit the nesting site of a pair of each of these fascinating species, and may glimpse parents feeding their chicks. Limited to 15. \$36 (25)

• **THE BIRDS OF ROCKEFELLER STATE PRESERVE, NY**
Saturday, May 18, 7:30am-2:30pm
Guide: Tod Winston
Explore the forested hills, fields, and ponds of this lovely preserve, a former country estate of the Rockefeller family. We'll look for migrant songbirds as well as local breeding species like Eastern Bluebird, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Blue-

winged Warbler. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$122 (85)

• **BIRDING GEMS OF STATEN ISLAND: CLOVE LAKES PARK**
Sunday, May 19, 8am-12pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow
Journey to the "forgotten borough" to discover some of the beautiful forests and incredible birding spots of Clove Lakes Park. Look for ducks and seabirds in New York Harbor on our way across on the ferry and then catch a bus to the Park. Numerous warblers, vireos, tanagers, and other migratory songbirds can be seen here, as well as nesting Eastern Screech-Owls and Great Blue Herons. We'll even see one of the largest and oldest trees in New York City. Limited to 15. Bus fare (\$2.75 each way; please bring your MetroCard or exact change) not included in registration price. \$43 (30)

• **BIRDING SOUTH BROOKLYN: MARINE PARK AND PLUMB BEACH**
Saturday, May 25, 6:30am-12:30pm
Guide: Tod Winston
We'll arrive early at the Salt Marsh Nature Center at Marine Park to seek out secretive Saltmarsh and Seaside Sparrows, Clapper Rails, and waders—and then head to Plumb Beach right after low tide in search of Ruddy Turnstones, Red Knots, Black Skimmers, and terns. Bring lunch, water, and binoculars. Transport by passenger van. Limited to 12. \$87 (61)

• **PELHAM BAY PARK SUMMER BIRD WALKS, THE BRONX**
Sundays, May 26-June 30, 9-10:30am
Guide: NYC Audubon With Pelham Bay Park
Meet at Rodman's Neck Parking Lot. Join NYC Audubon to explore some of the best birding our city has to offer. Three times the size of Central Park, Pelham Bay offers diverse habitat that attracts a variety

of migrants and breeding birds. No registration necessary. No limit. Free

• **JAMAICA BAY SUNSET CRUISE**
Sunday, May 26, 4-7pm
Guide: Don Riepe
With American Littoral Society, Gateway National Recreation Area
Meet at pier 4 in Sheepshead Bay to board the "Golden Sunshine." Learn about the Bay and its history, management, and ecology. See egrets, herons, ibis, terns, gulls, falcons, and shorebirds. Includes wine and cheese, fruit, drinks, and snacks. For more information and reservations, contact Don Riepe at 718-474-0896 or donriep@gmail.com. Limited to 140. \$55

• **THE BREEDING BIRDS OF DOODLETOWN ROAD, NY**
Friday, May 31, 8am-4pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC
A great variety of warblers and other songbirds, including species at risk, breed at Doodletown Road in Bear Mountain State Park. Hooded, Cerulean, and Golden-winged Warblers may be seen, as well as Indigo Buntings, Wild Turkeys, and much more. Bring lunch and water. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$122 (85)

• **BREEDING BIRDS OF JAMAICA BAY**
Sunday, June 2, 7am-1pm
Guide: Tod Winston
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge is home to nesting Cedar Waxwings, Brown Thrashers, White-eyed Vireos, Tree Swallows, Yellow Warblers, American Redstarts, Osprey, Willet, and seven species of wading birds. We'll walk the refuge trails and observe these species and many more on their breeding grounds. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$93 (65)



Song Sparrow

• **THE PARAKEETS OF GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY, BROOKLYN**
Saturday, June 8, 10am-1pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow
With Green-Wood Cemetery

Explore Green-Wood Cemetery, rich in both history and wildlife, in search of spring migrants and its unique avian residents: the huge flocks of brilliant green Monk Parakeets that nest there. Native to South America, these charming immigrants flourish even in our harsh winters. Limited to 15. \$46 (32)

• **BIRDING BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK**
Saturday, June 15, 9-10:30am
Guide: Heather Wolf

Meet at the Pier 1 park entrance at

the intersection of Old Fulton Street and Furman Street. Join Heather Wolf, author of *Birding at the Bridge*, for a picturesque bird walk along the Brooklyn waterfront. We'll look for breeding and nesting birds like Gray Catbird, American Robin, Song Sparrow, and more. Visit www.nycaudubon.org/birding-bk-bridge to register. Limited to 19. Free

• **EXPLORE THE NEW JERSEY MEADOWLANDS BY PONTOON BOAT**

Saturday, June 22, 7:30am-12:30pm
Guides: Tod Winston, NJ Meadowlands Docent
With NJ Meadowlands Commission

Explore the Meadowlands on a relaxing pontoon boat ride in search of egrets, night-herons, and kingfishers—along with nesting Osprey, Peregrine Falcons, and Marsh Wrens. We'll travel along the Hackensack River to both man-made and restored wetland sites and learn about the area's environmental history. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 11. \$108 (75)

• **BREEDING BIRDS OF THE HUDSON HIGHLANDS, NY**
Saturday, June 22, 8am-5pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Join Gabriel Willow on a day-long

trip to some of the most exciting and beautiful birding locations in the Hudson Valley: Doodletown Road, Constitution Marsh, and Indian Brook Farm. We'll look for uncommon breeding warbler specialties at Doodletown, such as Cerulean, Hooded, Blue-winged, Golden-winged, and Worm-eating Warblers. We will then head to the Constitution Marsh Audubon Sanctuary, home to breeding Wood Ducks, Bald Eagles, Least Bitterns, Marsh Wrens, and more. After a picnic lunch, we will drive to Indian Brook Farm in search of breeding Field and Savannah Sparrows, Bobolinks, and Indigo Buntings. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$129 (90)

EARLY MEMBER REGISTRATION FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

Summer and early fall events will be posted at www.nycaudubon.org and available for registration to contributing NYC Audubon members starting on Monday, May 13, at 9am. (Registration will open to all on Monday, May 27.)

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 all coach and van trips, the meeting location is in front of 71 West 23rd Street 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.**

SPRING 2019 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.

BIRDSONG: SONG LEARNING AND CULTURAL EVOLUTION

By Ofer Tchernichovski, PhD

Tuesday, March 26, 7pm

Reidy Hall at the Unitarian Church of All Souls, 1157 Lexington Avenue, Manhattan

How and when does a Zebra Finch learn to sing, and what effects does hearing a song have on its brain? How does sleep affect song learning? How does the learning of birdsong compare to the learning of speech in human infants? Learn the answers to these questions and more from Ofer Tchernichovski, PhD, who studies animal behavior and the dynamics of vocal learning and sound production at the Laboratory of Vocal Learning at Hunter College. The lab aims to uncover the specific physiological and molecular brain processes that underlie song learning. Tchernichovski holds a PhD in zoology from Tel Aviv University and is a doctor of veterinary medicine.

NOTE: This lecture was originally scheduled for Tuesday, March 12.

CONSERVATION PROGRAM UPDATE AND ANNUAL MEETING

By Susan Elbin, PhD, and Conservation Staff

Tuesday, June 4, 6pm

The Arsenal Third-floor Gallery, Central Park

Fifth Avenue at 64th Street, Third-Floor Gallery

NYC Audubon conducts scientific monitoring in all five boroughs to understand how birds are using our urban environment and how this environment affects them, via **Project Safe Flight**, our **Jamaica Bay** program, and our **Harbor Herons** project. Join us as Susan Elbin, PhD, Conservation Biologist Kaitlyn Parkins, and our conservation team provide updates on what this research has taught us in the past year. Our board election and annual meeting will precede the lecture. Snacks and refreshments will be provided.

THE VOLUNTEERS OF PROJECT SAFE FLIGHT: A PHOTO ESSAY

© Sophie Butcher



Project Safe Flight volunteers are assigned a specific route to follow once a week during spring and fall migration seasons to look for dead or injured birds.

Spring and fall are incredible seasons for New York City birders, with an abundance of exciting migratory bird species travelling through our City. But as some people look up to admire the dazzling array of migrants, some are also looking down, seeing a very different bird story.

New York City is located at a geographic nexus of the Atlantic Flyway bird migration route, which millions of birds follow each year on their long travels between their northern nesting grounds and southern wintering grounds. Our City's surprising diversity of natural habitat provides these birds with a nice pit stop—a place for them to rest and refuel before continuing on. But for many birds, it's also where their journeys end. Two major challenges confront birds migrating through New York City: highly reflective glass

buildings and light pollution drawing birds to buildings. NYC Audubon estimates that between 90,000 and 230,000 birds are killed yearly in New York City due to window collisions. To help understand the causes behind urban bird collisions and identify ways to prevent them, NYC Audubon launched in 1997 the citizen science program, Project Safe Flight (PSF). Starting out with only a few dedicated volunteers that year, PSF has now expanded to a team of over a dozen passionate volunteers who each fall and spring monitor collision hotspots around Manhattan.

These volunteers are from many different backgrounds—bankers, psychologists, teachers, activists, retirees—but they all believe our City's birds deserve better protection. They wake up at the crack of

dawn and head to some of Manhattan's most problematic glass buildings to search for dead and injured birds. Neither glamorous nor easy work, PSF volunteers are motivated to participate in the name of science, knowing their diligent data collection will be instrumental in making the City a safer place for our birds.

Over the course of last spring, I had the pleasure of accompanying and documenting PSF volunteers on their morning routes as they carried out their meticulous and vital work. The photographs in this piece offer a glimpse into the lives and work of these stalwart PSF volunteers, who are critical in helping NYC Audubon understand the causes of bird collisions in New York City. A full version of this photo essay is available online at www.nycaudubon.org.



© Sophie Butcher

Mia Feldman, a landscape architecture student, started volunteering with PSF after moving from Pittsburgh to New York City. Mia's work with NYC Audubon is a big part of what inspired her to pursue a career designing and advocating for both human and nonhuman animals in urban spaces.



© Sophie Butcher

Cynthia Guile, a psychologist, carefully approaches a stunned Ovenbird. After it rests in the paper bag for about 20 minutes, it is released into a small park nearby. Says Guile, "There's usually not a happy ending for the birds I find, so it feels wonderful when there's a bird I can help return to its life."



© Sophie Butcher

John Thieroff, an avid birder, enjoys the citizen science aspect of PSF: "The data that results from tracking these routes regularly is useful in a variety of ways. It's a consolation to know that some good comes out of the fact that not every bird completes migration successfully."



© Sophie Butcher

Longtime volunteer Gunda Narang logs her findings, noting time, weather, location, species if known, and condition of bird (dead, injured, or stunned). She volunteers for PSF because she loves nature and knows that these data are essential to initiate legal changes to make our City safer for birds.

BIRD ALERT: AN EXHIBITION FEATURING THE WORKS OF SOPHIE BUTCHER AND ANNIE NOVAK

Thursday, April 25, 5-8pm

At Kings County Brewers Collective (KCBC)

381 Troutman Street, Brooklyn, NY

Doors open at 5pm

Panel discussion with artists, NYC Audubon conservation staff, and Project Safe Flight volunteers begins at 7pm

Join us at KCBC during spring migration for an evening of art and conversation centered on migratory bird collisions. Sophie Butcher is a photographer and photo editor based in Brooklyn. Her photographs document the dedicated volunteers behind Project Safe Flight, NYC Audubon's citizen science program studying bird collisions in our city. Her project aims to celebrate the volunteers, but also bring awareness to an important environmental issue. Annie Novak is an author, illustrator, and urban birder. Her new work illustrates nocturnally migrating birds and the changing landscape below their arduous journeys. Visit www.nycaudubon.org/bird-alert to register. Email Nicole Jackson at njackson@nycaudubon.org for more information. Ages 21 and up. Exhibition from 5-7pm limited to 150 registrants. Panel discussion at 7pm limited to 30 registrants. Free

BIRDING ETHICS AND ETIQUETTE

Kellye Rosenheim

The subject of birding ethics involves a concern for the welfare of the birds and the rights of fellow birders. Although sometimes these needs overlap, the welfare of birds and their environment comes first.

For the birds, it all starts with the question, “Is what I’m doing harmful?” As a conservation organization, NYC Audubon protects birds and their habitat, so any field practice is going to be filtered through that question. We rely on the American Birding Association’s (ABA) *Code of Birding Ethics* to guide our staff and trip leaders, available to view at listing.aba.org/ethics.

KEY RULES FROM ABA’S CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

- Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.
- To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.
- Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.
- Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites.
- Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.
- Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise, keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.
- Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.
- Follow this code and distribute and teach it to others.

One of the most controversial topics, one that particularly resonates these days, is the playing of recorded bird sounds in order to bring birds within view. The ABA counsels the limited use of sound and applying ethical judgments to sensitive situations. I recall in my early days as a trip leader, walking a group through the woods along The Palisades en route to the fall hawkwatch atop Hook Mountain. We stopped near a pool and could hear a flock of birds foraging overhead. Eager to see them, I was encouraged to “pish” them down. We were delighted when they turned out to be a mixed-age bunch of Black-throated Green Warblers. However, as an adult male approached the pool, evidently to take a drink, a bullfrog leapt up and very nearly caught him. We would have been regretful indeed if the bird had died because of our actions.

Scientists are still debating whether playback harms birds, but scientists have not always known what birders, diligent observers of the natural world, know. Birders can see for themselves that when

they bring a bird down (even if it doesn’t get eaten by a predator), we’ve stopped its natural activity of feeding or resting. Use playback and pishing judiciously, and never use these attractants when birds are most vulnerable: while nesting. Take care as well to avoid giving the impression that birds exist for our entertainment. They delight us, and delight us most when the natural behavior of the bird is on view.

Whoo doesn’t love to watch a perched owl? Those who give a hoot keep their reports of owl roosting places to word of mouth. When visiting these secretive and sensitive birds, try to kindly educate the yet-to-be-converted that owls are especially prone to disturbance



© Michael Harvey / Audubon Photography Awards

The Barred Owl, like other owl species, is very prone to disturbance. If you find an owl, please be quiet and don’t use flash photography.

and that this period of rest is essential to their survival.

As for fellow birders on field trips, use common sense and be courteous. Do not talk too loudly or too much, elbow your way to the spotting scope and spend too long there, block views of fellow participants at critical moments, hog the leader’s attention, walk ahead of the leader, or go off trail.

And finally, what can you do when someone outside your birding group breaks park rules like allowing dogs off leash, destruction of property, or unlawful vending? The only agency authorized to intervene in New York City parks (like Central and Prospect Park) is the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR). Report rules violations by calling 311 or contacting the office of DPR Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver at 212-360-1305. Calls to organizations like NYC Audubon or the Central Park Conservancy will get you a sympathetic ear, but community members desiring action should bring their concerns directly to DPR. Serious crimes should be reported to 911.

THE RUDDY TURNSTONE (*ARENARIA INTERPRES*)

Don Riepe

The Ruddy Turnstone is one of two turnstone species, the other being the Black Turnstone, which is found along the Pacific Coast. Ruddy Turnstones are small, stocky shorebirds, aptly named for their ruddy-colored backs and their foraging habit of turning over stones, shells, and seaweeds with their short, stout beaks to look for amphipods and other marine invertebrates. To the best of my knowledge, no other shorebirds use this strategy. They also feed on marine worms, barnacles, and even the eggs of other bird species. One of the tamest shorebirds, they are usually last in a mixed flock to fly when disturbed. I've even had one walk right next to me on a dock in Florida.

Ruddy Turnstones nest in the Arctic tundra from Alaska to Greenland and migrate south in fall to New York and southern U.S. coastlines. Some venture all the



Ruddy Turnstones in breeding plumage have a calico patterned back, a black-and-white face, and orange legs.

way to the southern tip of South America. They also spend winters along the coastal areas of Western Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia. Strong flyers, Ruddy Turnstones can undertake extensive migrations: Some have been recorded flying over 4,700 miles nonstop from Australia to Taiwan in just six

days. Others have been known to make the 3,000-mile overwater journey from Alaska to Hawaii.

One of the few shorebird species to overwinter in Jamaica Bay and Long Island, they can often be found in small numbers resting on docks, bulkheads, jetties, and rocky shorelines, as well as beaches and marshlands. Good spots to look for Ruddy Turnstones in winter are the jetty at Breezy Point, Queens, or along the north shore of Long Island.

In breeding season, Ruddy Turnstones have brightly colored plumage, with orange legs, a dappled rufous back, and a bold black-and-white harlequin pattern on the head and breast. Some people call it a "calico appearance." During their northward migration in May, they are usually found roosting on marshland in Jamaica Bay at high tides, along with Red Knots, Dunlin, Black-bellied Plovers, and Semipalmated Sandpipers.

THIRD ANNUAL HORSESHOE CRAB FESTIVAL AT JAMAICA BAY

**With American Littoral Society and Gateway National Recreation Area
Sunday, May 19, 8:30am-2pm**

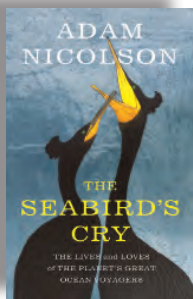
Join us for a day of celebrating the annual arrival of horseshoe crabs to our local shores. During the full and new moons of May and June, these prehistoric animals, which date back approximately 400 million years, come ashore to mate. The females lay billions of eggs at the high tide line each season. At the same time, thousands of migrating shorebirds arrive in the northeast bays to feed on the eggs, regaining the body weight they lost during their long journey north. At the festival you'll see and hold live horseshoe crabs and learn about their important ecological and medicinal values. For more information on the festival, contact the American Littoral Society at 718-474-0896 or email Don Riepe at donriepe@gmail.com. The program is free, but suggested donations of \$20 for adults and \$10 for children to NYC Audubon are suggested to offset the festival cost. To inquire about van transportation from Manhattan, call NYC Audubon at 212-691-7483 x304.



Participant Holding Horseshoe Crab at 2017 Horseshoe Crab Festival

The Horseshoe Crab Festival at Jamaica Bay is a NYC Audubon partnership program with American Littoral Society and Gateway National Recreation Area.

BOOK REVIEWS



The Seabird's Cry: The Lives and Loves of the Planet's Great Ocean Voyagers
By Adam Nicolson
Henry Holt & Co., 2018

Adam Nicolson was eight when his father took him to the tiny uninhabited Shiant Isles off the coast of Scotland. Puffins, razorbills, and other nesting seabirds abounded on these rocky islands. The seabirds' stench and the din might have horrified another child, but for Nicolson it was "dazzling and almost overwhelmingly thick with the swirl of existence . . . 300,000 birds, a pumping, raucous, polymorphous multiversity in which everything was alive and nothing refined. . . . It was a section through creation, the column of life itself."

Now an author of over 20 books, Nicolson returns to his childhood passion in *The Seabird's Cry*, a generous, far-ranging, spirited account of seabirds. Each of the book's 10 chapters focuses on a different species or family of seabirds, with drawings by Kate Boxer that are as graceful and ethereal as the birds themselves.

Only 350 out of the 10,000 or so known bird species are seabirds, able to live in three elements: air, land, and sea. These "edge choosers" are long-lived, slow to breed, and largely monogamous; they often raise just one chick. Young birds learn wind and ocean currents, and may even map the seas by smell, in a "slow cumulative mastery which amounts in the end to genius."

Nicolson limns how seabirds have entered our myths, songs, poems, even our very bodies. He ranges from ancient times to

the present, from birds to humans and back again. For example, the chapter on the Northern Fulmar discusses—among many other things—the bird's flight mechanics; the belief of whaling crews that fulmars were the spirits of bygone Greenland ship captains; and the story of one geolocator-fitted fulmar that, on a journey of nearly 3,900 miles from its nest and back, homed in on its destination with the same technique used by Viking navigators.

Over the past 60 years, seabird numbers have declined by about two thirds. There is hope, though, that advances in technology can help us better understand the challenges these birds face. Today, miniature monitors can get so intimate with seabirds that we can judge the stress level of a Black-legged Kittiwake. Nicolson asks if we can infuse our detailed scientific knowledge with the empathy of our poets to appreciate, respect, and protect the unique way seabirds experience their world, their "Umwelt." —MT



THE NEW YORK PIGEON: BEHIND THE FEATHERS
By Andrew Garn
powerHouse Books, 2018

Fans of New York City's favorite maligned species will rejoice with the publication of *The New York Pigeon: Behind the Feathers*. Photographer Andrew Garn gives *Columba livia*—the Rock Pigeon—the royal treatment through a series of portraits showcasing these illustrious birds and the people who care for them.

Relative newcomers to North America in the 17th century, Rock Pigeons were one of the first domesticated animals, with remains found

near human settlements as far back as 300,000 years ago. The ancient Egyptians were one of the first to recognize the pigeons' value, cultivating them for their nutrient-rich droppings, which served to fertilize crops in the Nile River Valley. Notable for their homing instincts, they were recruited as messengers as early as 2500 BC in Sumeria; Genghis Kahn and the Roman Brutus also made use of their services. And they have been studied by no less than Charles Darwin and B.F. Skinner. Darwin incorporated the pigeons into his theory on the mutability of species, while Skinner's studies supported his own theory of positive reinforcement.

Garn devotes a chapter to pigeon anatomy and social structure. Half a Rock Pigeon's weight is made up of 1,500 feathers, each with a unique shape. They can fly 500 miles at sustained speeds of 50 mph without stopping for food or water. Devoted parents, Rock Pigeons typically live in large flocks, share nest-building chores, and even feed others' young. A mated couple can produce four to seven clutches per year.

Published in association with the Wild Bird Fund (WBF), this book also delves into the "Pigeon People" who care for injured and rescued birds. Notable among these is Rita McMahon, founder of the WBF. The stories are endearing, demonstrating the deep bonds that can form between humans and their charges.

At the centerpiece of *The New York Pigeon* are Garn's exquisite photos: intimate portraits capturing the City's *Columba livia* across their wide variety of plumage. Each bird photographed is given a personal name, often accompanied by the story of how it arrived at the WBF. Many are rescues that were treated at the WBF and later released or adopted. Garn highlights their beauty and individuality in a way reminiscent of fine portrait photography.

This veritable love letter to pigeons, with an introduction by Emily S. Rueb and an afterword by Rita McMahon, is sure to engage even those who think twice before devoting a New York City minute to this ubiquitous bird. —MG



*Saving Central Park: A History
and a Memoir*
By Elizabeth Barlow Rogers
Knopf, 2018

For good portions of the '60s and '70s, you might have thought twice about taking a walk in Central Park; it wasn't considered safe. Benches and buildings were broken. Bridges, rocks, and sculptures were covered in graffiti. Many areas were known better as places for illicit activity than as sites for nature watching.

Into that scene stepped Texas native Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, first as the head of the Central Park Task Force, then as Central Park administrator, and finally as founder, in 1980, of the privately funded Central Park

Conservancy, where she served as president until 1996.

Rogers begins *Saving Central Park* with a description of the park's creation in 1857 at the artistic hands of Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux. Their design, filled with winding paths, diverse collections of shrubs and flowers, vast open meadows, and irregular clustering of trees, among other features, lent the park a romantic and informal aesthetic. Rogers then explores the (unfortunate, in her view) changes made to their masterpiece by two Parks Commissioners: Robert Moses, who converted portions of the "Olmstedian" landscape into playing fields and playgrounds in the '50s; and Thomas Hoving in the '60s, who opened the park to large-scale demonstrations, concerts, and unregulated sports—all of which unintentionally played a part in the park's decay.

Rogers's goal "to make Central Park clean, safe, and beautiful" meant meticulously adhering to Olmsted's vision. She saw the park as a "framed landscape," putting her up against some parks commissioners in the '80s and '90s who saw it as a collection of separate

features and venues. While Gordon Davis was both friend and kindred spirit, Henry Stern was friend—but not so kindred.

The memoir delves into clashes between the Conservancy and the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, mayors, and citizens. The "Battle of the Ramble" started when she ordered a dozen small black cherry trees to be cut down because they were too prolific. Birders and NYC Audubon considered this a desecration of wildlife habitat. Another contentious episode was the Conservancy's plan to remove the Naumburg Bandshell because it blocked the view of and from the Wisteria Pergola. That, and the Conservancy's unpopular proposal to relocate the Tennis House, never materialized.

Lovers of Central Park will find the history and politics of this public-private relationship intriguing. Rogers's habit of skipping around in time is sometimes challenging. (What year? Which commissioner?) And while the photos are excellent, the book really should include a park map to follow as you read. Oh, well. You can probably get one from the Conservancy. —CPR

A MESSAGE TO NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERS

Many of you may not know that **New York City Audubon Society** is a separate organization from the **National Audubon Society**. We are completely independent, with our own board, nonprofit certification, membership, and conservation programs, just like many other Audubon chapters. We affiliate with National Audubon and collaborate on a number of issues. Our organizations, of course, have identical missions: to conserve and protect birds and their habitats. However, NYC Audubon concentrates its efforts exclusively on the birds and habitat of New York City, and in so doing, develops tools to share with other urban chapters across the Audubon network. Some people know this and choose to hold membership in both organizations.

To date, we have sent our newsletter, *The Urban Audubon*, to National Audubon members residing in New York City. National Audubon offers a reimbursement to our organization for the cost of printing and posting our newsletter to its members. With rising costs, however, and a reimbursement figure that has not changed since the 1990s, we've decided to follow in the footsteps of other indepen-

dent chapters and only send *The Urban Audubon* to brand-new National Audubon members on a trial basis for three issues.

If your Spring 2019 newsletter contains a "This could be your last issue" envelope, it means you are a new National Audubon member and will only receive our newsletter for this three-issue trial period. If your Spring 2019 newsletter contains a "This is your last issue" envelope, you are a current National Audubon member and will no longer receive the newsletter. As always, *The Urban Audubon* is available to read online at www.nycaudubon.org/our-publications, no matter your membership status.

If you would like to support local bird conservation, or just continue to receive the newsletter, please join us. NYC Audubon membership includes added benefits, such as a 30 percent discount on most local trips and classes and access to free Members-only events. Just as important, your support will help our organization continue expanding its research of urban bird conservation issues, advocacy for bird-friendly practices, and programs that introduce people of all ages to the joys of birds and nature in New York City.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NYC Audubon's conservation work and public programs are made possible by philanthropic contributions from members, friends, corporations, foundations, and government agencies. We are grateful to all those who have sustained our work this past season, including the 1,288 members and donors whose individual gifts in amounts up to \$2,499 collectively provided \$167,259 in support of our mission from June 1 to December 31, 2018.

AMERICAN KESTREL CIRCLE

Tylee Abbott and Katie Ermilio
Gina Argento
Tony Argento
Rob Bate & Tracy Meade
Karen Benfield & John Zucker
Claude & Lucienne Bloch
MaryJane Boland
Ronald Bourque
Marsilia A. Boyle
Virginia Carter
Chris Cooper
Jonathan Cuneo
Althea Duersten
Helena Durst
Joe & Barbara Ellis
Aline Euler
Henry Euler
Alexander Ewing & Wynn Senning
Andrew Farnsworth & Patricia Ryan
Marcia & Bruce Fowle
Philip Fried & Bruce Patterson
Rich Fried & Stella Kim
Nancy Hager
Ellen & Scott Hand
Kathryn & Vince Heintz
Cathy & Lloyd Heller
Sarah Jeffords
Tatiana Kaletsch
Mary Jane Kaplan
Jeff Kimball & Pamela Hogan
Lauren & Ethan Klingsberg
Deborah Laurel
Jennifer Lee
Pete Lengyel & Patty Woo
Adrienne Lynch
Jenny & Flip Maritz
Patrick Markee & Lizzy Ratner
Andre Meade
Joyce Menschel
Tom & Louise Middleton
Clark Mitchell
Malcolm & Mary Morris
Will Papp
Cheryl Reich & David Dewhurst
Lew & Sheila Rosenberg
Jeff & Kellye Rosenheim
Michael Scheer
Jennifer Shotwell
Art Sills & Sarah DeBlois
Fredric & Winnie Spar
Alan Steel
Antonia Stolper & Bob Fertik
Virginia Stowe
Mary & Michael Tannen
Elizabeth Weinschel & Joel Goldfarb
Sam Wertheimer & Pamela Rosenthal

Elizabeth Woods & Charles Denholm
John Anthony Wright

CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS, AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Achelis & Bodman Foundation
AmazonSmile Foundation
American Littoral Society
Anova
The Apple Hill Fund
Atlas Obscura
The Bay and Paul Foundations
Broadway Stages
Brooklyn Bird Club
The Capital Group Companies
Charitable Foundation
Con Edison
Custom Ink
The Dobson Foundation
The Durst Organization
FXCollaborative
Harry & Rose Zaifert Foundation
Hudson River Foundation
Innisfree M & A Incorporated
Investors Bank Foundation
Ioby
Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
Jewish Federation of Metropolitan
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Kickstarter
Kimball Foundation
Kings County Brewers Collective
Leaves of Grass Fund
Leon Levy Foundation
Manomet Center for Conservation
Sciences
The Marta Heflin Foundation
National Audubon Society
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
National Park Service
New York City Department of
Environmental Protection
The New York Community Trust
New York State Department of
Environmental Conservation
New York State Office of Parks,
Recreation, and Historic Preservation
Patagonia
Peak View Foundation
Robert & Joyce Menschel Family
Foundation
The Strachan & Vivian Donnelley
Foundation
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
The Walt Disney Company Foundation
William C. Bullitt Foundation
The Wood Thrush Foundation

IN-KIND DONATIONS

AguaViTea Kombucha
Anima Mundi Herbs
Annie Barry
Karen Benfield
Drianna Benner
Jennifer Berlinger
MaryJane Boland
Brooklyn Brewery
Brooklyn Gin
Brooklyn Grange
Christine Burgin & William Wegman
David Burg
Virginia Carter
Chukar Cherries
Chris Cooper
Curious Elixirs
The Easton Foundation
El Refugio de Intag Lodge
Susan Elbin
Alexander Ewing
Fairhope Graphics
Fishes Eddy
Marcia T. Fowle
Joe Giunta
Hugo Guinness & John Derian
Hacienda Cusin
Kathryn Heintz
Cathy & Lloyd Heller
Herban Cura
The Honeybee Conservancy
Iglooplay
Island Oyster
Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
Peter Joost & Janice Laneve
Kikkerland
Jeff Kimball
Kings County Brewers Collective
Kings County Distillery
David & Esther Kirinmonth
Autumn Kioti
Kimberly Kriger
Lark Fine Foods
The Late Show with Stephen Colbert
Deborah Laurel
Loren Manufacturing
Tanya Marcuse
MasterVoices
McKittrick Hotel
Alap Momin
Neversink Spirits
Newtown Creek Alliance
Orvis
Kaitlyn Parkins
Patagonia
Gail Persky
Cara Piazza

Pilot Kombucha
Juan Carlos Pinto
Pollock-Krasner House and Study
Center
James Prosek
REI
Don Riepe
Jeff L. Rosenheim
Buddy Ryan
San Jorge de Tandayapa Lodge
Will Schragis
John Shemilt
Short Path Distillery
Nadir Souirgi
Alan Steel
Stew Leonard's Farmingdale
Paul Sweet
Troutbeck
Upstate
Van Leeuwen
Gabriel Willow
Tod Winston

TRIBUTE GIFTS

Richard Andrias
Annie Barry
Alexander Ewing
Marcia T. Fowle
Philip Fried
Kathryn Heintz
Cathy Heller
Pamela Hogan
Jeff Kimball
Michele McCue
The NYC Audubon Staff
Ellyn Polansky
Wynn Senning
Jim Sheker

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Doris Ali
June Corona
Anna Lee Culp
Jim Heckenbach
Jessica Karp
Gerhard Kiefer
Carol Kramer
Lillian L. Langsan
Barbara Maas
Elizabeth M. Schill
Sid Schwager
Wily

BEQUESTS

Estate of Evelyn Nerthercott

REMEMBER THE BIRDS

Make sure that New York City remains a haven for the birds and wildlife you love. A bequest is a generous and straightforward way to safeguard birds and their habitat in New York City's five boroughs. It can be expressed as, "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, Suite 1523, New York, NY 10010." To learn more, contact Director of Development Kellye Rosenheim at krosenheim@nycaudubon.org or 646-502-9611.

SUPPORT NYC AUDUBON'S MISSION

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO PROTECT NEW YORK CITY'S WILD BIRDS

In addition to becoming a member or making a one-time donation, there are several ways to play a larger role in supporting NYC Audubon's mission to protect wild birds and their habitat in the five boroughs of New York City:

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.

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.

LEAVE A LEGACY

When you designate New York City Audubon as a beneficiary in your will, IRA, life insurance policy, or investment/bank account, your gift will support the conservation of the birds you love for many years to come. Visit www.nycaudubon.org/leave-a-legacy, or contact us to learn more.

To learn more about any of the above, contact Director of Development Kellye Rosenheim at krosenheim@nycaudubon.org or 646-502-9611. Save paper, time, and money by making your contribution online 24/7 at www.nycaudubon.org/support-us.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Contributing members are essential to our conservation and outreach work. As a member of NYC Audubon, you will receive *The Urban Audubon* newsletter and *The eGret* email newsletter; enjoy discounts on field trips and classes; and make a difference in helping to protect the City's wildlife and natural areas.

I would like to become a member by making a **recurring** donation in the amount of \$ _____ **each month**.

I would like to become a member by making a one-time donation:

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

Additionally, I would like to make a donation to NYC Audubon in the amount of \$ _____.

I'm already a member but would like to make a **gift** in the amount of \$ _____.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: H: _____ C: _____ Email: _____

Enclosed is my check payable to NYC Audubon

Charge my credit card: VISA MC AMEX DSC

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 subscription to *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.

NEWS & NOTES

WELCOME ABOARD MOLLY ADAMS

We are thrilled to welcome Molly Adams as NYC Audubon's advocacy and outreach manager. Molly will coordinate and lead our organization's environmental policy activism, government affairs, inter-agency advocacy, public engagement, and community outreach. Molly previously served as outreach coordinator for the New York Aquarium. She also founded the NYC-based Feminist Bird Club in 2016. We are excited to add Molly to our team, especially as we intensify our efforts to promote bird-friendly building legislation and grow the ranks of our engaged membership.

RIDGEWOOD RESERVOIR PROTECTED

Ridgewood Reservoir, a 50-acre birding gem bordering Queens and Brooklyn, was designated as a Class 1 freshwater wetland on December 23, 2018, by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. This designation will guarantee that all three basins of the Reservoir on the Brooklyn-Queens border will be safeguarded from development and permanently protected as a natural area. Built in 1859, Ridgewood Reservoir provides habitat for over 160 species of birds. NYC Audubon joined efforts led by NYC H2o, Brooklyn Bird Club, and concerned citizens in strongly advocating that the reservoir be preserved. Congratulations to all who successfully fought this decade-long battle to keep this important bird habitat as a natural area.

FREDRIC J. SPAR: 1948-2018

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of NYC Audubon board member Fred Spar. Born in Brooklyn, Fred led an active life and career that had many chapters: He worked as an elementary-school science teacher before completing a PhD (1980) at Brown University, where he studied Chinese history. He lectured at Keene State College before working 36 years as a communications consultant at Kekst & Company in Manhattan. Fred was a member of the 2010 class at Harvard University's Advanced Leadership Initiative and applied his experience thereafter advising or serving on the boards of environmental organizations, including our own, as well as the Watershed Institute and Friends of Princeton Open Space. He joined NYC Audubon's board of directors in 2013 and served as the Treasurer for two years. Fred will be fondly remembered by NYC Audubon for his graciousness, imagination, thoughtfulness, and outstanding leadership, tirelessly helping to protect wildlife habitat in New York City and elsewhere.



New York City Audubon
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Suite 1523
New York, NY 10010

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DATED MATERIAL: Spring 2019 Newsletter

KINGSLAND WILDFLOWERS AT BROADWAY STAGES EVENTS

Unless otherwise noted, all events meet at Kingsland Wildflowers at Broadway Stages, 520 Kingsland Avenue, Brooklyn, NY. Register for Kingsland Wildflowers events at www.kingslandwildflowers.com. More events will be posted on this website throughout the spring.

SAVING THE DARK FILM SCREENING

Friday, March 15, 6:30pm

Kingsland Wildflowers will host a special screening of *Saving the Dark*, a non-profit documentary film by Sriram Murali that explores the significance of the night skies for humans and wildlife. A dark-sky advocate, Sriram produced the film to raise awareness of light pollution's costly impact on astronomy, human health, and wildlife, show the work of non-profits like NYC Audubon that are fighting to preserve dark night skies, and explain what individuals can do to fight light pollution. A tour of the green roof will precede the screening. Registration required. Limited to 35. Free

COMMUNITY SCIENCE ON THE BANKS OF NEWTOWN CREEK

Saturday, April 6, 12-4pm

Join Newtown Creek Alliance as well as academic and community partners for an afternoon symposium on Newtown Creek-based research and monitoring projects. As large-scale cleanup efforts progress on Newtown Creek, a diverse ecology of plants, insects, birds, and marine wildlife are slowly returning to this once vibrant waterway. The symposium will feature a series of presentations and discussions between speakers and attendees. Food and drinks will be provided for attendees. Registration required. Free

NORTH BROOKLYN BIRD WALKS

Greenpoint Avenue Bridge to Calvary

Cemetery: Sunday, April 7, 8-10am

McGric Park: Sunday, May 19, 8-9:30am

Guide: Heather Wolf

Come along with Heather Wolf, author of *Birding at the Bridge* and web developer for Cornell Lab of Ornithology's eBird.org, for a leisurely walk to see spring migrants and breeding bird residents in North Brooklyn. Registration required. Limited to 20. Free

FIELD DAY FRIDAYS

Fridays, April 19, May 17, and June 21, 4-7pm

With Newtown Creek Alliance

Tour the Kingsland Wildflowers green roof and learn about Newtown Creek Alliance's work to restore, reveal, and revitalize Newtown Creek. Field Day Fridays provide an opportunity to participate in community discussion and workshops focused on conservation, stewardship, and ecology. No registration required. Free

OPEN HOUSE SATURDAYS

Saturdays, April 20, May 18, and June 22, 12-3pm

Tour the native plant garden and visit our community engagement space as we open Kingsland Wildflowers to the general public. No registration required. Free

JANE'S WALK: GREENPOINT WALKING TOUR

Sunday, May 5, 12-2:30pm

Guide: Mitch Waxman

Kingsland Wildflowers is excited to take part in Jane's Walk, an annual festival of free, citizen-led walking conversations inspired by urbanist and activist Jane Jacobs. For this Jane's Walk event, Newtown Creek Alliance historian Mitch Waxman will lead a walking tour from McCarren Park's Demonstration Garden, traveling to the new Sergeant William Dougherty Park, followed by a visit to Penny Bridge, and ending at Kingsland Wildflowers. Registration required. Free

NYC AUDUBON ECOLOGY LECTURE AND SUNSET WALKING TOUR

Date and Time TBD

With Atlas Obscura

Join Kingsland Wildflowers and Atlas Obscura for a roof tour and lecture with NYC Audubon ecologists, who will present findings from the past year of monitoring and research at the Kingsland Wildflowers green roof. NYC Audubon ecologists will discuss green roofs as habitat for birds, bats, and arthropods in urban environments, the benefits of native plants as a way to attract biodiverse pollinators, the value of quality stop-over habitat for birds, and more. Registration required. Free

Funding for Kingsland Wildflowers at Broadway Stages provided by the Office of the New York State Attorney General and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation through the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund.

