



THE URBAN AUDUBON

The newsletter of New York City Audubon • 71 W. 23rd St. • Suite 1523 • New York, NY 10010
40th Anniversary Issue

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October 2019



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF NEW YORK CITY AUDUBON



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.

THE URBAN AUDUBON 40TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

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A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH

Kathryn Heintz &

Jeffrey Kimball



As this 40th anniversary issue of *The Urban Audubon* goes to press (October 2019), the journal *Science* has reported a staggering loss of North American birds. A decline of 29 percent, or almost 3 billion individual birds since 1970, is thought to be due in large part to habitat loss and degradation, pesticide use, predation by domestic cats, and window collisions. Particularly sharp declines were observed in grassland birds (53 percent), shorebirds (37 percent), and warblers (37 percent). Over the last decade, the mass of migrating birds, as detected by radar, has itself dropped by 14 percent—and the greatest decline was observed in birds migrating through the eastern US.

This loss hits home, and deeply. The findings are even more disturbing in light of the great and uncertain threat posed to our birds by climate change. Looking back on our organization's accomplishments, we are struck by the foresight of early NYC Audubon activists in addressing threats to the City's birds and their habitat. And as we seek to be as effective as we must be in the next 40 years, we must return to our activist roots—and pledge to engage the vast and diverse population of New York City in our struggle.

The challenges are enormous—but NYC Audubon's conservation work gives us hope. Warblers and other migratory songbirds are among the most common victims of bird-window collisions—and this year we successfully advocated for the introduction of bird-friendly building design legislation in the New York City Council. We support and monitor green roofs and capped-landfill parks that host native plants and grassland areas. Staten Island's Freshkills Park and Brooklyn's Shirley Chisholm State Park are examples of such new urban spaces that provide habitat for Grasshopper Sparrows, Eastern Meadowlarks, and Bobolinks. These grassland areas build upon NYC Audubon's early successes, such as the 1985 preservation of Floyd Bennett Field.

We maintain our long-time commitment to protecting waterbirds and the rich habitat provided by our city's 578 miles of coastline. We survey both nesting and migrant shorebirds to better understand their habitat needs, and continue our 35-year monitoring of the Harbor Herons. Many waterbird species depend upon the wetland and island habitats preserved by NYC Audubon's early advocacy work, as detailed in this issue. Our long-term scientific data can be marshalled to defend these birds and prevent further habitat loss.

NYC Audubon began as a grassroots organization run by far-sighted volunteers. We owe them an enormous debt—a debt we can repay by moving their work forward. Four decades on, we are a larger organization with a professional staff. Our goals remain the same, however, and we walk in our founders' footsteps by using sound science and advocacy to protect birds and their habitat in New York City. As you read the history of NYC Audubon in this issue, we hope you will be inspired to take a step for our birds. *Where will that step lead you?*

To learn about NYC Audubon's plan for the future, visit www.nycaudubon.org/strategicplan2020-2025.



Board President Jeff Kimball, Executive Director Kathryn Heintz in Madison Square Park

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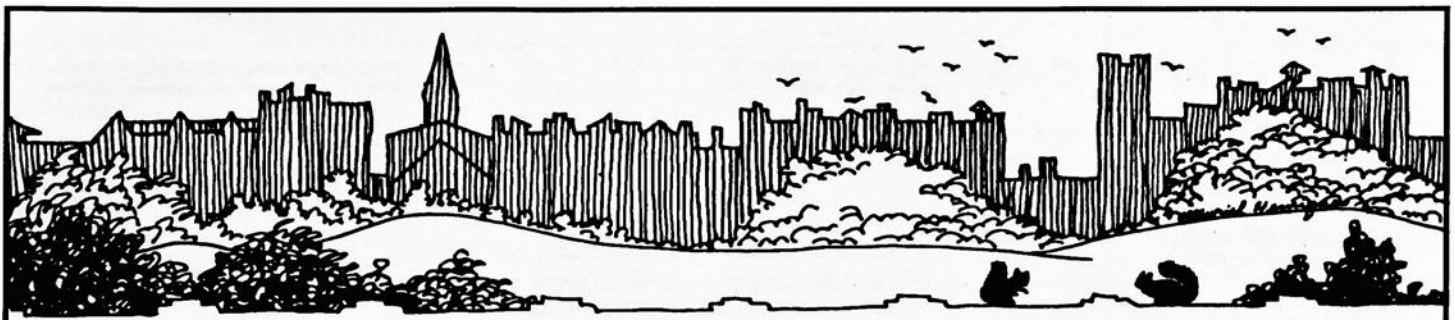


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**Founding board member, elected December 12, 1979.*

NYC AUDUBON'S VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF

Since its inception in 1979, New York City Audubon's conservation work has been accomplished by hundreds upon hundreds of people, both volunteers and staff, dedicated to protecting the City's birds. Volunteers founded this organization—and our board and advisory council, acknowledged on this page, are indeed themselves volunteers. Volunteers have been this organization's lifeblood: They've spoken out against unwise development, worked diligently to protect and enhance vulnerable habitat, answered phones and stuffed envelopes in the office, led bird walks across the City, pounded the pavement to document dead and injured birds, tagged spawning horseshoe crabs in the dark, and surveyed and monitored the City's birdlife. They've donated countless photographs and art pieces. They've created *The Urban Audubon*, the *Look Around New York City* children's newsletter, and our website. As NYC Audubon has grown, some of this work have been assumed by our staff—a staff, like our volunteer corps, that has carried out a labor of love. NYC Audubon's 40 years of volunteers and staff are too numerous to acknowledge here by name. We would be nothing, however, without all those who have given their time, energy, and passion on behalf of New York City's birds. Thank you.

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Marcia T. Fowle

Marcia T. Fowle, NYC Audubon's first executive director, later served as board president and is currently co-chair of the advisory council. She has been co-editor of The Urban Audubon since 1998, and co-authored The New York City Audubon Guide to Finding Birds in the Metropolitan Area.

In 1992, the all-volunteer NYC Audubon was seeking its first executive director—and I completed a Master of Science degree at Hunter College's Graduate School of Urban Affairs and Planning. I interviewed with the board of directors and landed the job, with no inkling of how life-changing it would be.

I was not a “birder” in 1992, but had always been a conservationist and an outdoor enthusiast—a hiker, biker, and, when my children were young, a catcher of snakes and toads. My coursework at Hunter covered environmental law, so I felt prepared to tackle this new challenge. I found a NYC Audubon already well versed in environmental controversy, however: the intrepid young chapter had successfully opposed the Westway Project along the Hudson River, a Con Edison plan to use high-sulfur oil and coal in Queens and Staten Island, and a New York City Department of Parks & Recreation (NYC Parks) plan to spray pesticides to control gypsy moths.

During the six years I served as executive director; numerous experienced volunteers helped with the day-to-day operation. Norman Stotz, the soul of the organization and the fount of all things Audubon, was with me most days. He manned the telephone, answering all sorts of birdy questions with authority and humor. Calls were beginning to come in about dead birds at the base of glassy buildings; Rebekah Creshkoff and her Project Safe Flight team soon revealed the enormity of this issue in the City.

After I'd been on the job for a bit, Board Member Peter Mott (later board president) and I enticed two potential funders out to see nesting herons on Shooters and Prall's Islands, off Staten Island's northwest shore. We set out on the “Nautubon,” a temperamental 12-foot powerboat—and in the

middle of the Arthur Kill, it conked out, a microscopic vessel among huge container ships. With a single oar and as Snowy and Great Egrets flew overhead, Peter paddled us to Staten Island's marshy shore. The funders and I got back to Manhattan, hours later, quite exhilarated. And NYC Audubon garnered two foundation grants, perhaps by scaring the funders out of their wits.

In 1994 Board Member (also later president) David Burg and I launched the Jamaica Bay Coastal Habitat Restoration Project. For two years experts surveyed breeding, migratory, and wintering birds; marine invertebrates; and dragonflies and butterflies. This scientific research led to restoration and management strategies including a diverse assemblage of Girl Scouts, City Volunteers, and the neighboring Rockaway community.

With the aim of diversifying our audience and membership, in 1994 we offered free family bird walks at Central Park's Dana Discovery Center, at the edge of Harlem. These walks were not well attended, unfortunately—and we discontinued them, vowing we'd try again. Sure enough, NYC Audubon now leads popular free walks throughout the City, and continues to expand programming in underrepresented communities.

As I wound down my years as executive director, 50 volunteers completed an official Breeding Bird Census of Central Park. We confirmed 31 nesting species; American Robins topped the list at 207 pairs. Also included were Pale Male and Blue, his mate at that time.

My years with New York City Audubon have been an inspirational ride. I've discovered that birdlife in the City awakens a special appreciation of nature, in all its complexity and unpredictability. I've worked with an extraordinary group of peers: compassionate, smart, witty, and determined. And whether perilously adrift in the Arthur Kill, disappointed at the Dana Discovery Center, or eaten alive by mosquitoes in the Rockaways, I have treasured my work with this rare organization. I cheer on NYC Audubon, now in its 40th year, for its innovative, informed, and courageous support of New York City's wildlife.



© Betty Hamilton



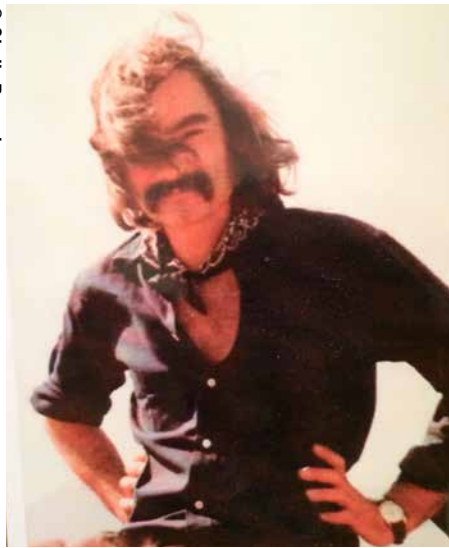
Marcia T. Fowle and past Board President, Interim Executive Director, and current Advisory Council Member Peter Rhoades Mott attend a 1997 ceremony designating Jamaica Bay as an Important Bird Area (IBA) of Global Significance. (November 1997)

THE BEGINNING

Lew Rosenberg

Lew Rosenberg is a founding member of NYC Audubon and original co-editor of *The Urban Audubon* (with Sally Ellyson). He later served as vice president and is a longtime member of the advisory council.

© Sheila Rosenberg



Lew Rosenberg in the 1970s

As reported in the very first issue of *The Urban Audubon*, published in September 1979 (see original cover on page 7), thirty fellow birders and I met in May 1978 to explore the possibility of forming a New York City chapter of the National Audubon Society. While the Linnaean Society of New York at the American Museum of Natural History filled the niche for bird study, many of us saw an unmet need for a local, broad-based environmental organization that could advocate for habitat in City parks and other natural areas. At the time, the City was just emerging from the financial crisis of the early 1970s, when funds for parks were scarce and maintenance was in decline.

Even before NYC Audubon was formally established, future members emerged as a force to be reckoned with, giving birders a new identity as environmental activists. Several early successes involved Central Park: In 1977 the City closed the Central Park Boathouse during the winter months, denying access to its heated snack bar and logbook of bird sightings (conceived by notable birder Sarah Elliott, long before the advent of eBird). A successful petition to reopen the Boathouse enlisted birders, joggers, and cyclists—as well as then City Councilman (and later NYC Parks Commissioner) Henry Stern. Similar tactics had earlier effected the return to the Central Park Police Precinct of “birdwatching cop” Dennis Foley, after he had been involuntarily transferred out of the park. A *New Yorker* article reported on a party at the Boathouse

celebrating his return—and focused on my wife and fellow birder Sheila, who also served on NYC Audubon’s early board of directors.

From 1978 to 1982, a cadre of regular Central Park bird watchers successfully opposed a Central Park Conservancy plan to “restore” the Ramble through changes such as tree removal. Having formed a committee and met with the task force and landscaper overseeing the work, Sheila and other bird-watchers spent hundreds of hours preparing the 40-page *Report of Birding Areas in the Ramble*. Based upon this assessment that implemen-

tation of the conservancy’s plan would diminish bird habitat, NYC Audubon appeared before relevant community boards in opposition to the plan—and in the end, the plan was altered to be more bird-friendly. The chapter’s actions were prominently covered in *The New York Times*. NYC Audubon then participated in forming the Central Park Woodlands Advisory Board, which continues to provide naturalist input on park planning.

At the first general meeting in October 1979, Emily Jones, later elected as NYC Audubon’s first president, was introduced as chairperson. Formation of the first committees was announced—headed by Betty Brookshire, Geoffrey Cobb Ryan, Sally Ellyson, and myself—along with a calendar of upcoming events. (See the original text below.) The speaker for the December meeting was Robert Arbib, then editor of *American Birds* and the coordinator for the annual Christmas Bird Count. Coincidentally, Sheila and I were the compilers of the Central Park Christmas Count the following year, after which the dozen participants gathered to compare notes over a cup of coffee at the Central Park Boathouse. Paul Montgomery, a *New York Times*

NOVEMBER 1979

FIRST GENERAL MEETING OF NYC AUDUBON

More than 160 people attended the first general meeting of the New York City Chapter (in formation) of the National Audubon Society on October 17. The lively meeting indicated we will have an active chapter with members involved in everything from bird-watching to problems of urban living.

The Steering Committee members reported at the meeting, introduced by Chairperson Emily Jones. Fieldtrip Chair Bette Brookshire, co-editor of URBAN AUDUBON Lewis Rosenberg, and Environmental Issues Chair Geoffrey Ryan all outlined plans and goals for their committees. Marshal Case, NAS Northeast Regional Representative welcomed the formation of the new chapter, and two prize winning nature

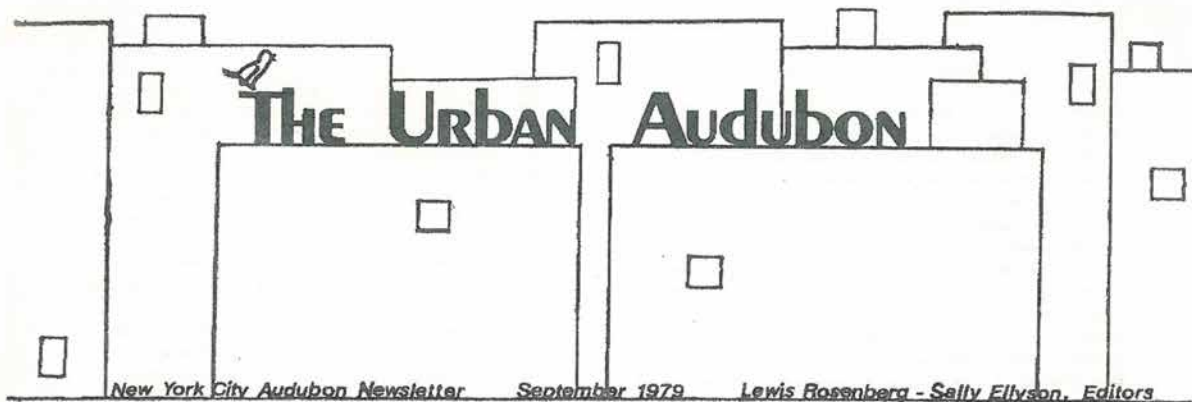
films were shown. The Constitution and Nomination committees reported on the formalities of becoming a chapter and members voted to accept the constitution as prepared by the Constitution Committee and presented by William Fleming. Many people stayed on for informal discussions.

ELECTIONS COMING UP

The next step in becoming a chapter is the election of officers and board members. A slate for President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer and at least six Board Members will be presented at the December meeting at which time nominations can also be made and seconded from the floor.

continued on page 2

All reproductions from historical issues of *The Urban Audubon* are labeled with their issue date. (The reproduction above is from the November 1979 issue.)



AN INVITATION TO NEW YORK CITY AUDUBON MEMBERS

Did you know that there are 7,000 Audubon members in the city, but there has never been a local chapter? Now, at last, one is being formed. You can be part of this important event. Come to the first General Meeting on Wednesday, October 17, at 7:00 p.m.

Place: Pace University, City Hall Park

See: Two outstanding films:

WILD AMERICA: WHO NEEDS IT?, superb Audubon production, examining the role of wilderness.

KANGAROO ISLAND, Blue Ribbon winner in Nature and Wildlife category at the recent American Film Festival. A beautifully-photographed, no-nonsense picture of life in an Australian nature preserve.

Hear About:

Plans for field trips in the New York City area; projects for conservation action; programs for future months

Discuss:

The formation of a New York City Chapter of National Audubon

Meet: Your fellow members from all over the five boroughs

Get Involved:

Volunteer for one of the committees -- but only if you want to. No pressuring.

Free: No fee, no requests for contributions. You're already a member!

How To Get There:

Pace University is on Park Row, just southeast of City Hall. The meeting will be held on level B of the new modern-design building. Take the elevator down from the main lobby.

IRT-Lexington -- #4, 5, 6 to Brooklyn Bridge stop

IRT-7th Ave. -- #2, 3 to Park Place

WELCOME FROM NATIONAL AUDUBON

New York City is graced with a generous share of urban virtues. We house the liveliest, most diversified mix of people to be found in any metropolis. We enjoy some of the great parks of the world. Here is found some of the most magnificent natural topography to be found in any city. Our great harbors, rivers, cliffs, and wetlands impart to us a sense of history, geologic and human, and remind us that we are part of nature. Our bridges prove that technology need not be divorced from beauty, and our cultural institutions fulfill the vision of a city as that place where man can find his highest expression as a human being.

However, we live in a time of urban crisis. As significant a manifestation of this crisis as are poverty, unemployment, and inadequate housing, is the serious decay of our urban environment. Our essential needs for clean air, clean water, and decent transportation are disregarded. The great natural beauty of the city is threatened with obliteration.

National Audubon has traditionally been concerned with wildlife and wilderness conser-

Continued on page 2

NAS PRESIDENT RUSSELL W. PETERSON
TO SPEAK ON ENERGY
NOV. 27, 7:30 P.M., SCHIMMEL AUD.,
PACE UNIVERSITY (see page 11)

BMT -- RR to City Hall

IND -- A, AA, E to Chambers Street,
walk 2 blocks east

Come meet and talk with people who share your interests and concerns. We'll be looking for you.

-- Emily Jones
President, Pro-Tem

Front Page of the First Issue of The Urban Audubon (September 1979)

reporter who accompanied us, wrote up his experience in an article entitled "A Holiday That Counts." The Central Park Christmas Bird Count, now presided over by the chapter, has grown to involve many participants who gather at the Arsenal for a festive celebration and an elaborate digital compilation.

The first election of NYC Audubon officers was held at the December 1979 meeting, where the proposed Westway project, planning a broad highway along the Hudson River on Manhattan's West Side, was hotly discussed. Westway was later ruled unlawful by the federal

court as environmentally unsound, in a groundbreaking ruling, after a suit brought by the Sierra Club. Early board meetings were held at my law firm's conference room, until we rented an office in Masonic Hall, where the office is today. That first office was occupied exclusively by volunteers led by Norman Stotz, until the scope of activity and the budget justified full-time staff.

In the years that have followed, I've watched NYC Audubon blossom beyond my wildest imagination to a position of preeminence in the birding and environmental arena. The

chapter's volunteers and staff continue to foster the values that we who formed it hoped would be adopted, but never could envision so fully actualized. Those values have never been more needed: my wildest imagination could also not have foreseen the challenges we now face in the undermining of fundamental environmental regulations, including the Endangered Species Act, undertaken by the present administration in Washington. We must redouble our efforts to preserve not only birds, but the planet itself, through continued education and advocacy.

NYC AUDUBON TIMELINE

1979

First issue of *The Urban Audubon* (Sept.)

First general meeting (Oct. 17)

First board of directors elected (Dec. 12)

DECEMBER MEETING

At the regular meeting on December 12, Robert Arbib of American Birds spoke and showed slides on the history and present-day activities of the Christmas Bird Count. Following the speech, the newly-chartered Provisional Chapter elected its first slate of officers and Board of Directors, all of whom will serve until June 30, when there will be another election for a full year.

Officers

President, Emily Jones
Vice President, Blanche Brown
Recording Secretary, Echo Evetts
Corresponding Secretary, Lorraine Beshar
Treasurer, Bill Fleming

(January 1980)

Inventory of city habitat planned by Al Appleton and Asher Fried

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES REPORT

Inventory of open spaces continues in Queens, Staten Island, and the coasts of all five boroughs. To join in, call Al Appleton evenings at 427-5695.

Mike Delle Cesse has joined newly formed Friends of Pelham Bay Park, which wants to save that valuable area from further abuse and neglect. Phone 597-0991.

The move to save Sea View lands from sale to developers and to establish an official Green Belt on Staten Island gains momentum. Sen Marchi's bill for a 1-year moratorium and a planning study seems assured of passage, but may get polluted by efforts to place the study under the Koch-controlled City Planning Department. (See March 1980).

(May 1980)

1980

Westway Project, high-sulfur oil and coal, Indian Point Nuclear Plant opposed

WESTWAY

Whereas, the proposed construction of the Westway Interstate highway project is the City's most important transportation decision of the 1980s; and whereas, the project will have a massive impact on the City's urban environment, affecting its economy, land use, transportation network, air quality, water quality and energy use; and whereas, numerous analyses have established that Westway is environmentally destructive and economically unsound; and whereas, the use of Westway funds on other transportation projects such as the support of mass transit would be both economically and environmentally preferable;

NOW THEREFORE, the New York City Audubon Society resolves that it is opposed to the construction of the Westway highway project in its present form and authorizes and directs the Society's Conservation Committee to act on such resolution as appropriate; and further to develop an alternative proposal that will better satisfy both the economic and environmental goals at stake and to work with the City's business and community groups as well as its political leaders to educate them to the benefits of potential alternatives to the Westway project.

(November-December 1980)

House Finch voted "official chapter bird" at first annual meeting

8 www.nycaudubon.org

First fund-raising ecocruise (September)

Floyd Bennett Field grasslands sanctuary proposed by Jean and Ron Bourque

1981

Christo installation in Central Park successfully opposed

Conservation

Christo Parks Commissioner Gordon Davis rejected the artist's proposal to adorn some 27 miles of Central Park with nylon panels (see UA Jan-Feb & Mar-Apr. 1981). To support his decision, Davis filed an extensive report resembling a legal brief which drew heavily on information and opinion provided by NYCAS, most notably Al Appleton, and contained a valuable statement on the public functions and policy of Central Park and the City's parks in general. Christo, through attorney Theodore W. Kheel, is appealing the ruling.

(May-June 1981)

First office rented in Masonic Hall

CHAPTER OFFICE SPACE

The New York City Audubon Society opened its own office on November 1. NYCAS headquarters will be at Suite 1828, 71 West 23rd Street, Manhattan.

Chapter President Al Appleton expressed particular gratification at the speed with which the chapter found suitable space. He stated Al Andrade, Education Committee chairperson, was largely responsible and deserved the thanks of all chapter members for his initiative.

The new office meets virtually all the requirements set forth in the President's appeal for office space in the last issue of *Urban Audubon*. It is centrally located, in a safe, active neighborhood. The building is an efficient 24-hour high-rise owned by the Fraternal Order of Masons. It is readily accessible to mass transit. The Sixth Avenue IND stops at the door, it is one avenue away from the Seventh Avenue IRT and the BMT, and all other subways are readily accessible by the 23rd Street cross-town bus. The price was well below the amount projected, freeing up resources for more chapter programs.

(November-December 1981)

First annual photo contest

1982

Opposition to habitat destruction in the Ramble led by Lew and Sheila Rosenberg

RAMBLE REPORT

A limited number of copies of *Birding Areas in the Ramble of Central Park*, which was reviewed in the September-October 1979 *Urban Audubon*, are available. This valuable guide to the most fruitful birding areas of Central Park was endorsed by the chapter as a significant conservation statement.

(March-April 1982)

First Harbor Herons Survey of Shooters and Prall's Islands

Pesticide spraying for gypsy moths defeated

Support for a state-wide bottle bill, federal Clean Air Act, Endangered Species Act renewal

1983

First birding course, by Emily Jones, is "oversubscribed"

1984

Look Around New York City first created by Naola Gersten-Woolf

First NYC Audubon Birdathon

NYC Audubon "adopts" Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

1985

Prall's Island Urban Audubon Wildlife Refuge established (Feb. 21, 1985)

First annual chapter awards

First consecutive Harbor Herons survey (of 35)

1986

Floyd Bennett Field grasslands restoration project begun

Harbor Herons boat, the "Nautubon," acquired

1987

Jamaica Bay's Mott Basin Wetland preserved

Buffer the Bay published

Staten Island's Goethals Bridge Pond purchased by NY State

1988

Jamaica Bay's Dubos Point Wildlife Sanctuary and Bayswater Point State Park established (Oct. 6, 1988)



Steve Gonzalez and William Castro of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation hold up the Bayswater Point State Park plaque.

(Photo and caption, March 1992)

Audubon Council of New York State formed by Geoffrey Cobb Ryan and Norman Stotz
South Brother Island acquired by NY State

1989

Campaigns to preserve Long Island Sound and Sterling Forest, NY

1990

Exxon oil spill in the Arthur Kill

Pale Male hatches

Butterfly gardens created at Jamaica Bay NWR, Floyd Bennett Field, Fort Tilden

1991

Birding without a Car pamphlet published

1992

Buffer the Bay Revisited published

Opposition to garbage incineration by New York City

1993

Marcia T. Fowle hired as first executive director

Volunteer Service Award for "valuable ecological research" received from Mayor David Dinkins

Advocacy for NY State Adirondack Bill and Environmental Bond Act

1994

Family birding walks at Dana Discovery Center

NYC Audubon library created by Jessie Kitching

Earth Defender Award received from National Audubon

1995

Earth Day events held in all five boroughs

NYC Audubon advisory council formed

1996

Advocacy for NY State Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act



Governor George E. Pataki, David J. Miller, executive director of National Audubon's New York State field office, and Geoffrey Cobb Ryan, board member and chair of the Audubon Council of New York State at the September 28th Audubon Council dinner at Bear Mountain Inn (Photo and caption, December 1996)

Jamaica Bay, Central Park, Harbor Heron Islands nominated as Important Bird Areas

1997

Project Safe Flight founded

Songbird migration study on islands west of Staten Island

Support for creation of Hudson River Park

1998

Breeding Bird Census of Central Park

Opposition to Alley Pond Park bike trail

1999

Claude and Lucienne Bloch lecture series founded

2000

Toxic pesticide Avitrol banned in NYC

Direct NYC Audubon membership program instituted

Bird Sanctuary in Riverside Park created

2001

The New York City Audubon Guide to Finding Birds in the Metropolitan Area published

An Islanded Nature published with the Trust for Public Land

2002

Pale Male documentary screenings hosted

E. J. McAdams hired as executive director

First Tribute in Light monitoring

2003

American Kestrel logo adopted

Audubon Urban Chapter Network (AUCN) founded

Advocacy for bird-friendly design at World Trade Center site

2004

Pale Male and Lola nest removed from 927 Fifth Avenue (December 7)

Tribute in Light memorial monitors observe thousands of migrants in light beams

2005

New nest platform for Pale Male erected

Lights Out New York program introduced

Bird-Safe Building Guidelines published

© Alan Thomas



Pale Male enjoys a bird-friendly Christo installation, "The Gates," from a distance.

(Photo and caption, September-October 2005)

Morgan Mail Building windows altered to be more bird-friendly

2006

First Annual Shorebird Festival at Jamaica Bay with American Littoral Society

Task force created to facilitate transfer of wetlands to NYC Parks

© Lynn Rollins



At the Wetlands Task Force signing ceremony (left to right): NYC Audubon Executive Director E.J. McAdams, Richard Colon (Staff of City Council), Council Member James Gennaro, Alex Brash (National Parks Conservation Association), Mayor Michael Bloomberg, DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd, NYC Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe, and Paul Mankiewicz (GAIA Institute). (Photo and caption, January-February 2006)

2007

South Brother Island transferred to New York City Parks

© NYC Audubon



North and South Brother Islands

Glenn Phillips hired as executive director

(Continues on page 10)

NYC AUDUBON TIMELINE (CONTINUED)

2008

Pale Male nest platform studied and altered by Sandy Fiebelkorn

Opposition to development of Highland Park/Ridgewood Reservoir

Director of Conservation and Science Susan Elbin, PhD hired

2009

Horseshoe crab monitoring and beach cleanups, funded by Toyota TogetherGreen

Chimney Swift nesting towers erected as a memorial to founder Geoffrey Cobb Ryan

Breeding Bird Census of Prospect Park

2010

Harbor Herons Conservation Plan published

Opposition to development of Pouch Camp in Staten Island Greenbelt

2011

Development of Four Sparrow Marsh opposed
Webcam featuring NYU red-tailed hawks “Bobby, Violet, and Pip,” in partnership with *The New York Times*

Shorebird monitoring with Rocking the Boat students in the Bronx

American Oystercatcher banding on Jamaica Bay beaches begun



A banded American Oystercatcher

2012

Be a Good Egg program launched

Advocacy for birds and habitat in the General Management Plan for Gateway NRA

2013

Plan proposed for restoration of Jamaica Bay West Pond

2014

D-Bird.org data tool launched

Program with the Port Authority to trap, band, and relocate Snowy Owls from airports

Bird-friendly glass testing begun at Bronx Zoo flight tunnel



A Hooded Warbler at the flight tunnel

Native plant garden established in McGolrick Park, Brooklyn

Kathryn Heintz hired as executive director

Bird-friendly renovation of Jacob K. Javits Convention Center completed by FXFowle Architects

2015

Bird-friendly Building Design updated



Great Egrets fitted with GPS/SMS transmitters to study their migration in research partnership

Tribute in Light turned off a record eight times to protect migrating birds

2016

Brooklyn's Kingsland Wildflowers green roof created in partnership with Broadway Stages



Kingsland Wildflowers at Broadway Stages green roof

NanoTag research with Semipalmated Sandpipers begun

2017

Feathered Friends after-school program launched in the Bronx



A Feathered Friends bird walk

Governors Island environmental center debuts
Green Roof Researchers Alliance founded

2018

Board committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion created

Bird-friendly building legislation proposed
Ridgewood Reservoir protected in collective victory of multiple partners

2019

“Rodenticides and Birds of Prey” pamphlet published

35th consecutive year of Harbor Herons Nesting Surveys

Bird-friendly building design legislation introduced in New York City Council

CONSERVATION NOTES THROUGH THE YEARS

Susan Elbin, PhD

© NYC Audubon



© David Speiser

NYC Audubon's conservation work protects many kinds of birds in New York City. Left: Dr. Elbin prepares leg bands for Double-crested Cormorants. Right: The Blackburnian Warbler is one of many neotropical migrants that benefit from bird-friendly building design and native stopover habitat in the City.

Susan Elbin, PhD, NYC Audubon's director of conservation and science since 2008, is an ornithologist specializing in behavioral ecology and conservation. She is co-chair of the Harbor Herons Subcommittee, holds leadership roles in the Waterbird Society and the Ornithological Council, and is an adjunct professor at Columbia University.

After four decades, NYC Audubon's conservation work is still very much grounded in the efforts of our organization's founders. These environmental pioneers were volunteers who collected data themselves, and hired scientific consultants as necessary, to identify and protect critical wetland, grassland, and upland bird habitat. As we've grown as a professional organization, we've brought conservation and science "in house": in 2008 NYC Audubon created a Director of Conservation position, expanding that department in 2014 to include Science and Conservation. Looking forward to the next 40 years, our expanded staff is well-

positioned to employ its scientific expertise. We will continue to protect wild bird habitat in the City from development or degradation—while providing safe passage to migratory birds through bird-friendly building design and green roof habitat.

In preserving habitat and providing safe passage, NYC Audubon protects two principal groups of birds: waterbirds and migratory songbirds. Waterbirds use our harbor for nesting and stopover habitat. As top-level predators in the harbor estuary ecosystem, they help recycle nutrients in the harbor—and their success here is an indicator of clean water, secure nesting sites, and a plentiful food supply. Our 35-year-old Harbor Herons nesting survey continues to collect vital data on the health of breeding waterbirds, while our migratory shorebird research provides insight into these vulnerable species' movements and use of our harbor's ecological resources.

Migratory songbirds pass through our City in spring and fall by the tens of millions, mostly at night, often landing

in the City's rich natural areas to refuel. And as our early Project Safe Flight volunteers discovered, many die in collisions with windows. Armed with scientific data provided over many years by our monitoring volunteers, through continuing collaborative research, and our crowdsourced [D-Bird.org](https://d-bird.org) database, NYC Audubon is committed to making the City safer for our visiting migrants. We will do so by demanding bird-safe building design, by reducing light pollution, and by creating and enhancing habitat, including green roofs, as safe havens for birds.

In the following pages, you'll read both past and current accounts of our conservation programs. We applaud those who've brought us this far—and hope that reading about their efforts will inspire you to get more deeply involved yourself. All of our programs began in the same way: a simple desire to make a difference for the 350 species of birds that breed, winter over, and migrate through New York City.

PRESERVING HABITAT FOR FOUR DECADES

Don Riepe is a past NYC Audubon vice president and secretary, a current member of the advisory council, and a longtime birding guide and research partner. Following a career in the National Park Service, Don became northeast chapter director and Jamaica Bay Guardian for the American Littoral Society.

Since its inception in 1979, NYC Audubon has been deeply involved in preserving habitat for birds throughout New York City. In the 1980s the society initiated the “Buffer the Bay” program, whereby vacant lands in Queens and Brooklyn surrounding Jamaica Bay were surveyed and prioritized according to ecological values. Most of these lands were being held by New York City agencies such as Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Economic Development Corporation (EDC). NYC Audubon worked with the Trust for Public Land and the American Littoral Society to have these lands transferred to NYC Parks. Fortunately, Henry Stern, then the NYC Parks Commissioner, was greatly in favor of accepting these lands as preserves. The first successful transfer was a 25-acre parcel in Far Rockaway named Dubos Point Wetlands Preserve. This site name was coined by a local activist named Bernie Blum in memory of Dr. René Dubos,

© Betty Hamilton



“Captain” Don Riepe, Chief, Resource Management at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge and dedicated Auduboner, tours us through his back yard.

(Photo and caption, August-September 1995)

who wrote about people interacting with nature using Jamaica Bay as a prime example.

Following that success came Brant Point (named for the little Brant goose) and Four Sparrow Marsh (named by past Board President and Secretary Ron Bourque and his wife Jean). The latter site borders Flatbush Avenue and the Belt Parkway. My favorite site is Vernam-Barbadoes Terrapeninsula, a 20-acre Forever Wild* preserve bordered by Vernam and Barbadoes basins in Arverne, Queens. The local community board wanted to allow a developer to build a truck-body-customizing plant there. After a two-year letter writing campaign to have this lovely peninsula transferred from the EDC to NYC Parks, persistence prevailed. The site was given to the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) whose commissioner at the time was Al Appleton, a former NYC Audubon president. Appleton then turned it over to NYC Parks. On the day of dedication, Henry Stern arrived at the site in a small motor boat. He was dressed in battle fatigues (including helmet) and planted the NYC Parks’ green maple leaf flag on the shore, stating, “I claim this land as part of New York City’s Emerald Empire.” Additional Buffer the Bay site successes included a

NYCAS CONSERVATION SITES

The following are land areas protected through efforts of the New York City Audubon Society during the first ten years of existence.

HARBOR HERONS PROJECT

Island/wetland system to preserve nesting and feeding habitats of herons, egrets, cormorants, and other wildlife.

1. Pralls Island – NYC Dept. of Parks owned/NYCAS managed
2. Isle of Meadows – NYC owned/protected by Dept. of Sanitation
3. Shooters Island – multiple owners/working toward full protection
4. Goethals Bridge Pond – partially owned and protected by NYS DEC
5. South Brother Island – Bond Act purchase by NYS DEC

BUFFER THE BAY PROJECT

Campaign to protect all undeveloped, unprotected areas of Jamaica Bay

6. Bayswater Park – NYS owned/NYCAS managed
7. Dubos Point Park – NYC Dept. of Parks owned/NYCAS managed

8. Floyd Bennett Field Grasslands Restoration Project – joint effort of NYCAS & National Parks Service

(November 1989)

wooded shoreline at Fresh Creek, Brooklyn, also transferred to NYC Parks.

Another early habitat victory was persuading the National Park Service to set aside over 140 acres of open area next to runways at Floyd Bennett Field as grassland habitat for the Grasshopper Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Upland Sandpiper, American Kestrel, and other open-field-dependent species. Ron and Jean Bourque, along with NYC Audubon volunteers, cleared the site of woody vegetation so it could be mown yearly by the National Park Service. Along with the Bourques, past Board President, Vice President, and current Advisory Council Member David Burg, a longtime advocate for grassland birds and their habitat, was instrumental in this restoration effort.

Over the years NYC Audubon has been involved in many other projects and programs that protected and enhanced habitat

© Calvin Wilson/NYC Parks



NYC Parks Commissioner Henry Stern signing over management of Dubos Point Sanctuary to NYC Audubon. Also seated (left to right): past Board Member Drew Lehman and past Board President and Secretary Geoffrey Cobb Ryan. Standing (left to right): Bernard Blum of Friends of Rockaway, Marc Matsil of NYC Parks, past Board President and Vice President Albert F. Appleton, and NYC Parks Deputy Commissioner Diana Chapin.

(January-February 1989)

for birds. We advocated for and won protection for several of the Harbor Heron islands: the Isle of Meadows and Shooters and Prall's Islands, off Staten Island's western shore, and North and South Brother Islands, in the Bronx. We continue to monitor all 20 nesting islands as part of our 35-year-old Harbor Herons survey project. Other initiatives have included collaborative work to conserve Goethal's Bridge Pond on Staten Island, Bayswater State Park in Queens, Ridgewood Reservoir on the Brooklyn-Queens border, and Shirley Chisholm State Park in Brooklyn. Most recently, NYC Audubon has been in the forefront of creating bird habitat on some

© Betty Hamilton



Pictured (left to right): past Board Member Barbara Cohen; Mickey Cohen; Andy Stone of Trust for Public Land; David Burg; Elizabeth Goldstein of NYS Parks; Albert F. Appleton; Queens Borough President's Special Assistant for Parks Elaine Castas; NYC State Parks Commission Chair Cynthia Wainwright; John Graham; and two volunteers from the City Volunteer Corps.

(March 1992)

of the City's rooftops, in the form of green roofs, which we also monitor for wildlife including birds, bats, and insects. (See below to learn more about our green infrastructure work.) None of these projects could have been accomplished without NYC Audubon members, volunteers, and partners. NYC Audubon continues to provide the initiative and scientific basis for preserving open space and bird habitat in all five boroughs of New York City.

** The Forever Wild Program is a NYC Parks initiative to protect and preserve the most ecologically valuable lands within the five boroughs.*

BUILDING A GREENER FUTURE

Kaitlyn Parkins

Kaitlyn Parkins, NYC Audubon's conservation biologist, has a special research interest in animal migration and movement, as well as in innovative approaches to creating habitat in urban spaces.

Historically, NYC Audubon has advocated for the conservation of natural areas with two primary goals in mind: the preservation of habitat for birds, and the safeguarding of ecological services that protect our city. Projects such as *Buffer the Bay* (1987), *Buffer the Bay Revisited* (1992), and *Jamaica Bay Coastal Habitat Restoration Project* (1994-1996) aimed to protect land surrounding Jamaica Bay as bird habitat, and as a buffer from storms and flooding. In recent years, as the need to protect the City has become ever more imperative in the face of climate change, city planners have begun to design built infrastructure to mimic the ecosystem services provided by natural areas. Such projects include bioswales, permeable pavement, and green roofs.

These green infrastructure projects are usually designed with stormwater capture and management as a main priority, but they provide countless other benefits to our urban ecosystem, including lowered temperatures, improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, increased recreational space, and habitat for wildlife. Thus far NYC Audubon has been involved in the creation of three green infrastructure installations, at which we have also conducted biodiversity monitoring focused on birds, bats, and insects: the Libra Triangle bioswale in Queens, the Kingsland Wildflowers at Broadway Stages green roof in Brooklyn, and the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center green roof

© NYC Audubon



The Jacob K. Javits Convention Center green roof. Inset photo: American Kestrel.

in Manhattan. The seven-acre green roof atop the Javits Center, designed by architects FXCollaborative, can absorb up to seven million gallons of stormwater runoff each year.

Most recently, NYC Audubon has facilitated creation of the Green Roof Researchers Alliance, a group of over 50 researchers in green roof science, policy, and education. Collaborative partnerships will be of critical importance as we continue to support green infrastructure in New York City. Such projects demonstrate how our urban environment can provide solutions to habitat loss, enabling birds to survive and even thrive here.

THE ORIGINS OF PROJECT SAFE FLIGHT: FROM LONE LUNATIC TO POPULAR PROGRAM

Rebekah Creshkoff founded Project Safe Flight during her long career in corporate communications and now sells artisanal bread at a farmers market, studies voice, and improves habitat for pollinators on her five-acre property in Callicoon, NY.

Something the color of a New York City taxicab caught my eye, so bright that the throng of office workers pouring out of the subway station parted slightly to avoid treading on it. I picked it up and stood there, marveling at it, as the crowd continued flowing down William Street in lower Manhattan. It weighed less than a mouse. I stroked its soft breast and was amazed by the luxuriant density of its feathers. The tiny body was still warm. Apart from canaries,



Rebekah Creshkoff collects a Common Yellowthroat killed in a window collision, in downtown Manhattan

I had never seen such a yellow bird and had no idea they even existed in New York City. How had it come to be dead on a sidewalk at the bottom of this concrete canyon?

Years later, Sarah Elliott, the grande dame of Central Park birding, wrote in *The Urban Audubon* about night-migrating birds being disoriented by light and flying into skyscrapers. She urged armchair activists to call on captains of industry to dim building lights during migration. I exhorted the American Bird Conservancy policy council to address the issue. In response, they faxed me an article from their newsletter about Toronto's Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP). As I read it, my jaw dropped. I called FLAP's founder, Michael Mesure,

and told him I wanted to get building managers to turn off lights at night. "You're going to need to show them data first," he told me.

So reluctantly, in April 1997, I started going downtown early in the morning. Did I actually get there at 5:45 am? I circled 10 buildings at the World Financial and World Trade Centers, looking for birds at the base of the mammoth structures. I recorded each day's findings on a hand-drawn map in order to identify particularly hazardous facades. Despite getting up early, I could scarcely sleep at night, so worried was I about all the birds migrating over the City at that very moment. That first year, working alone, I found 413 casualties at those 10 buildings—296 dead and 117 injured—and 49 at other locations. I wrote about my findings



Over 449 bird collisions were recorded in 1997, the first year of Project Safe Flight.

for *The Urban Audubon*. And, having felt like a lone lunatic on my peculiar quest, I urged others to join me.

Past Board Member Ned Boyajian, current Board Member Kellie Quiñones, and Allison Sloan were among the first who responded to the call. We divvied up the days of the week and found other problematic sites. We approached building managers and had some successes: at the World Trade Center and 26 Federal Plaza, they put up netting to prevent birds from striking the most dangerous windows. We educated architects about the issue (thank you, Bruce Fowle!). And E. J. McAdams, then the executive director of NYC Audubon, persuaded the huge USPS mail-processing facility in midtown to black out its reflective glass panels (they weren't even functional windows!) along its southwest wall, which reflected mature trees.

We called our effort Project Safe Flight. It has been gratifying beyond belief to see the collisions issue gradually become ever more mainstream as NYC Audubon has professionalized and expanded the work.

Note: in March 2019, The New York City Council under the leadership of Speaker Corey Johnson, and with input from NYC Audubon, introduced legislation that would require all new and significantly altered buildings to use bird-safe glass and design.

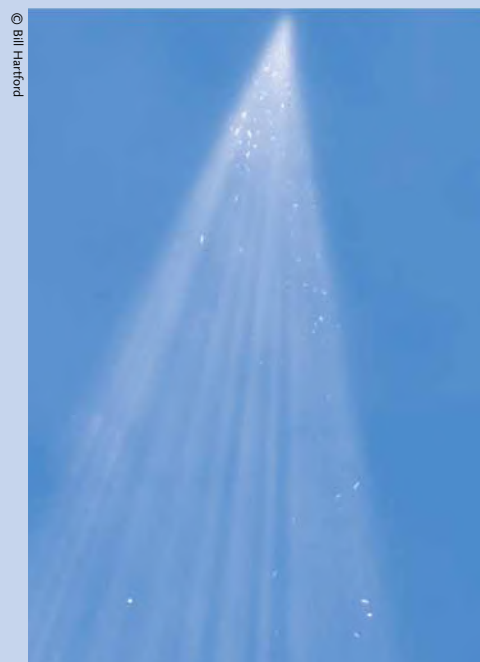
NYC Study Site Collisions—1997

	Spring		Fall	
	Rescued	Dead	Rescued	Dead
1. Virginia Rail			1	1
2. American Woodcock	1	1	6	12
3. Rock Dove		1		
4. Mourning Dove				1
5. Black-billed Cuckoo		1		
6. Red-bellied Woodpecker✓				
7. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		1		4
8. Northern Flicker				1
9. Eastern Wood-Pewee	1			
10. Great Crested Flycatcher		1		
11. Brown Creeper			2	2
12. House Wren		2	2	1
13. Winter Wren				1
14. Marsh Wren			1	
15. Ruby-crowned Kinglet		1	3	3
16. Swainson's Thrush✓				
17. Hermit Thrush		2	5	6
18. Wood Thrush	1	1	1	
19. American Robin				1
20. Gray Catbird		3	3	
21. Tennessee Warbler			1	1
22. Nashville Warbler				2
23. Northern Parula		1		2
24. Chestnut-sided Warbler			1	1
25. Magnolia Warbler		3	1	4
26. Black-throated Blue Warbler		5	1	10
27. Yellow-rumped Warbler		1	2	6
28. Black-throated Green Warbler		3	1	2
29. Pine Warbler				1
30. Prairie Warbler		1	1	
31. Palm Warbler			1	
32. Bay-breasted Warbler		1		
33. Blackpoll Warbler		1	1	5
34. Black-and-white Warbler	1	2	7	6
35. American Redstart		1	2	7
36. Ovenbird	5	24	5	9
37. Northern Waterthrush		2	2	6
38. Kentucky Warbler		2		
39. Connecticut Warbler				2
40. Mourning Warbler✓				
41. Common Yellowthroat	6	21	22	21
42. Canada Warbler	1	5		
43. Yellow-breasted Chat				2
Warbler sp.		1		5
44. Scarlet Tanager	1			
45. Indigo Bunting		1	1	1
46. Eastern Towhee✓				
47. Chipping Sparrow		1		1
48. Field Sparrow				1
49. Fox Sparrow			3	3
50. Song Sparrow			1	8
51. Lincoln's Sparrow		1	1	5
52. Swamp Sparrow	1	1	4	5
53. White-throated Sparrow		10	9	43
54. Dark-eyed Junco		1	12	23
55. Common Grackle		1		
56. Orchard Oriole		1		
57. House Finch		1		
58. House Sparrow		3		2
Unidentified				2
TOTAL	18	109	103	219

✓ = Uninjured bird(s) seen at study site

TRIBUTE IN LIGHT

NYC Audubon staff and volunteers have monitored the Tribute in Light memorial since 2002 to ensure that night-migrating songbirds, which in some years are attracted in huge numbers to the Tribute's powerful light beams, are not exhausted and injured during the all-night event. In 2004, a great number of birds became trapped in the lights: according to Rebekah Creshkoff, who had monitored the first two tribute years, "this one was very different from the others. With no moon to guide them, thousands of nocturnally migrating birds became trapped in the columns of light. The beams were visibly filled with chaotically swirling birds for their entire height." This



The Tribute in Light, September 12, 2004, 1:30am

phenomenon repeated itself most dramatically in 2010 and again in 2015, when the lights were shut down a record eight times. Tribute in Light Producer Michael Ahern, who passed away in 2015, was an important partner in this endeavor. NYC Audubon continues to work closely with the National September 11 Memorial & Museum and Michael Ahern Production Services to minimize any harm to migrating birds during this powerful tribute. -Tod Winston

HARBOR HERONS LOOKS TO THE PAST

How the Harbor Herons Project Came To Be

Peter Rhoades Mott

You could start the history of Harbor Herons with the history of the Audubon Society. In New York City, toward the end of the nineteenth century, a movement began to stop the slaughter of egrets, herons, and other birds in prime breeding plumage to get feathers for ladies' hats. This carnage had reduced some bird populations to dangerously low levels. (It's hard to know how badly decimated bird populations were, but one example came from a regular observer in Massachusetts. He went three years at the end of the nineteenth century without seeing a herring gull!) The final result of this early conservation campaign was the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1914. The treaty among the United States, Canada and Mexico gives protection to migratory birds.

Under protection, the bird populations came back. Through the 1930s and 1940s it was still unusual to see egrets in the New York area. By the 1950s they were seen regularly and by the 1960s the egrets had moved their breeding range north as the population grew. I remember finding snowy egrets nesting in the Isles of Shoals off the coast of New Hampshire in the early 1960s.

As the new heron population moved north, it went right by New York City. Imagine the excitement of Scotty Jenkins and friends when they found egrets nesting on islands around Staten Island in the early 1980s. It seems that under the 1972 Clean Water Act water quality in the waters of the city had improved enough to allow egret food to prosper in the shallows of the Arthur Kill and in the Meadowlands.

Scotty and the other Staten Islanders notified New York City Audubon of the nesters, and the protection efforts and annual censuses began. The city asked NYC Audubon to study and co-manage Prall's Island with its colony of great, cattle, and snowy egrets, night-herons and glossy ibises, creating the Harbor Herons Project.

Peter Rhoades Mott is a past president of NYC Audubon and Harbor Herons Project chairperson.

(Article and caption, June-July 2003)

PRALLS ISLAND URBAN AUDUBON WILDLIFE REFUGE A REALITY



Mayor Edward I. Koch signs a management agreement for Prall's Island with NYC Parks/NYC Audubon on Thursday, February 21, 1985. Pictured (left to right): past Board Member Peggy Kane, past Board President and Vice President Albert F. Appleton, NYC Parks Commissioner Henry Stern, past Board President and Vice President Bette Brookshire-McGrath, Mayor Edward Koch, and Wally Popolizio.

(April-May 1985)

SHOOTERS ISLAND

Whereas, Shooters Island is an important and unique heron rookery and wildlife habitat; and whereas, the island is a prime example of how nature, left alone, will over time heal an area of its destructive human impacts; and whereas, Congress has authorized the Army Corps of Engineers to destroy Shooters Island; and whereas, the proposed destruction would provide no economic or social benefit that would in any way justify the loss of the ecological and wildlife resources on Shooters Island;

NOW THEREFORE, the New York City Audubon Society resolves that permanent protection should be provided for the island in its existing state; and authorizes and directs the Conservation Committee to explore what form of protection would be most appropriate and to take such steps as are required to obtain it and to do so in consultation with the local Audubon chapters in Union and Hudson counties, New Jersey.

Shooters Island resolution passed by the conservation committee (November-December 1980)

Tod Winston, Harbor Herons nesting survey leader and communications content manager for special projects, also teaches Beginning Birding and leads bird-filled adventures including his spring birdsong series. Past NYC Audubon roles include program manager and managing editor of The Urban Audubon.

In 2019, NYC Audubon's Harbor Herons project marked its 35th year of consecutive surveys of New York Harbor's breeding population of egrets, herons, ibis, and other waterbirds. In the early years of its history, NYC Audubon helped win protection for nesting islands such as the Isle of Meadows and Prall's Island in the Arthur Kill, Shooters Island in the Kill Van Kull/Newark Bay, and South Brother Island in the Bronx. Relevant NYC Audubon publications have included *An Islanded Nature* (2001), co-produced with the Trust for Public Land, and the *Harbor Herons Conservation Plan* (2010). We hold a leadership role in the Harbor Herons Subcommittee of the New York/New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program, created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to protect, conserve, and restore our estuary.

Over the past three and a half decades, the “mirror pole”—the tool used to carefully count egret eggs and nestlings, high up in trees and shrubs—has changed hands several times. Katharine Parsons was the first official survey leader, from 1986 to 1995, followed by Paul Kerlinger (1996–2004), Andy Bernick (2004–2007), Liz Craig (2008–2013), and myself. Our data collection methods have remained consistent, however, creating a rare and valuable long-term data set that can provide insight into the conservation needs of our birds—and a critical benchmark for future research into the effects of climate change and environmental contaminants.

Over time, the pattern of wader nesting in the harbor has shown great variability. Since the early 1980s, breeding activ-



Great and Snowy Egrets are among the ten wader species that have been found nesting on the Harbor Heron islands since NYC Audubon's first official survey in 1982.

ity has shifted completely from the “pioneer” rookeries west and north of Staten Island; the most populous colonies are now found on South Brother Island, Hoffman Island in the lower bay, and Subway Island in Jamaica Bay. In recent years, several previously productive islands—Goose and Huckleberry Islands, in Long Island Sound, and Elders Point East Island, in Jamaica Bay, have been abandoned. Encroachment by predators and people are possible suspects in all three recent cases, while fre-

quent flooding may also be a culprit in Jamaica Bay—an unsettling foreshadowing of what awaits our coastal areas in coming decades. Though the harbor's wading bird population has remained fairly stable over the decades, recent years have indicated a possible decline. NYC Audubon is currently working to increase signage on the largest colonies to discourage visitation during nesting season, and will continue to be vigilant in protecting these charismatic and vulnerable species from harm.



Passing the mirror pole: current and former Nesting Survey Leaders Tod Winston and Liz Craig, in 2013



Black-crowned Night-Heron nestlings

NYC AUDUBON TAKES A STAND

Molly Adams

Molly Adams joined NYC Audubon in 2019 in the newly created position of advocacy and outreach manager. Molly is the founder of the Feminist Bird Club, a growing organization that now sports chapters across the US and around the globe.

Since our founding as an activist, grassroots organization, NYC Audubon has been at the forefront of advocacy successes for birds and their habitat in all five boroughs of New York City.

CITYWIDE ADVOCACY

Pesticide Use (1982-present) In 1982, NYC Audubon successfully opposed a NYC Parks plan to spray pesticides to control gypsy moths. In 2000, following intensive NYC Audubon advocacy, Governor Pataki signed into law a New York City ban of Avitrol, a pesticide used for pigeon control but toxic to other bird species. In 2019, we published a new *Rodenticides and Birds of Prey* brochure aimed at private-sector rodent control managers and building tenants.

Bird-Safe Buildings (1997–present) Armed with bird-collision data collected for Project Safe Flight, founded in 1997, NYC Audubon gave testimony supporting the use of bird-friendly design in all new buildings at the World Trade Center site (2003), published *Bird-Safe Building Guidelines* (2005), and formed the Bird-Safe Glass Working Group (2007). Currently, we are leading the local campaign to pass a New York City Council bill requiring all new and significantly altered buildings to use bird-safe glass and design.

New Green Spaces (2000s-present) We advocate for new built habitats, including green roofs and capped-landfill parks that host native grasslands, such as Staten Island's Freshkills Park and Brooklyn's Shirley Chisholm State Park.

Central Park (1981-present) NYC Parks rejected a proposal by the artist Christo to adorn all of Central Park, including the Ramble, with 14,000 nylon panels during bird migration—and in doing so, acknowledged the legal brief submitted by NYC Audubon as influential in its decision. (In 2005, a more bird-friendly proposal by Christo went unopposed by NYC Audubon.) In 1982 we successfully opposed destruction of bird-friendly habitat in the Ramble—and continue to provide input on changes in the Park as part of the Woodlands Advisory Board.

Hudson River (1980) We joined a group of environmental organizations in opposing the Westway Project, a proposed interstate highway along the Hudson River that was ultimately defeated.

Con Edison (1980) Early NYC Audubon activists and other environmental groups succeeded in defeating Con Edison's plan to use high-sulfur oil and coal in its power plants in Staten Island and Queens.

Floyd Bennett Field (1979-present) Building on early work to preserve and restore the 140 acres of grasslands at this former airport, NYC Audubon continues to oppose plans that would encroach on these areas and advocate for appropriate habitat maintenance.

Staten Island Habitat (1979-present) Throughout our history, we've advocated for preservation of bird habitat including the Staten Island Greenbelt, Isle of Meadows and Prall's and Shooters Islands, Arlington Cove Marsh, and the Goethals Pond Complex.

Van Cortlandt Park (1980s-1990s) NYC Audubon has long advocated for the protection of both the City's natural habitat and its upstate water supply. When a federally required water filtration plant was constructed under Van Cortlandt Park, we were part of a coalition that successfully advocated for over \$300 million in mitigation funds to improve Bronx parks.

South Brother Island (1980s) For years, we advocated for the preservation of South Brother Island, the site of the second largest of the Harbor Heron colonies, which NYC Audubon has surveyed since 1982. South Brother Island was purchased by New York State in 1988 and transferred to NYC Parks as a wildlife sanctuary in 2007.

Ridgewood Reservoir (2008-2018) In 2008 we joined a coalition of local stakeholders advocating for the preservation of Ridgewood Reservoir, on the Brooklyn-Queens border. (In 2018, nearly 30 acres of the property were protected under New York State's Freshwater Wetlands Act.)

Four Sparrow Marsh (2011-2012) We advocated against development adjacent to Four Sparrow Marsh, an important habitat for Seaside and Saltmarsh Sparrows.

Jamaica Bay Conservation (1979-present) Building on years of advocacy, including successful opposition to a planned bike path into the Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge, NYC Audubon was instrumental in the creation of Dubos Point Wildlife Sanctuary and Bayswater Point State Park, established in 1988. *Buffer the Bay* and *Buffer the Bay Revisited*, roadmaps for conserving the Jamaica Bay ecosystem, were jointly published by NYC Audubon and the Trust for Public Land in 1987 and 1992. In more recent years, we advocated for a bird-friendly *Gateway General Management Plan*, encompassing habitat in both Queens and Staten Island—and following Hurricane Sandy led a coalition of local groups in publishing a restoration plan for the wildlife refuge. This coalition ultimately achieved repair of the refuge's West Pond loop by the National Park Service in 2017.

VOLUNTEER!

NYC Audubon's work has been accomplished in large part by countless dedicated volunteers. Here we share a small sampling of historical pieces. Please see page 4 for an acknowledgment of the volunteers who have carried out NYC Audubon's mission to protect birds and their habitat.

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Support the conservation, education, and outreach work of NYCAS. We need volunteers for full or half days to help with office work from filing to public relations. Interesting work, interested co-workers. Call NYCAS at 212-691-7483, Monday to Thursday, 10 A.M. to 4 P.M., for more information.

(April 2001)

Faster, Easier, More Powerful than Ever! Armchair Activist Harnesses the Power of the Internet

Susan Michajlo

The Armchair Activist program of New York City Audubon Society (NYCAS) is a powerful way for members to make a difference without leaving the comfort of their home. In December, I will have been the Armchair Activist Coordinator for four years, and I'm proud to say that over 200 members of NYCAS are on the activist roster.

Now, we're ready for the next step—delivering you information and updates rapidly via email! Not only will this make Armchair Activist more timely, it will provide savings for the chapter since we can cut out the costs of developing and posting paper mailings.

Starting in January, each month a sample letter and background information will be emailed to participants. It's still a good idea for participants to mail paper letters and

cards to targeted individuals—studies show these carry more weight than emails. But, when possible, the targets' email also will be included.

PLEASE SEND US YOUR EMAIL TODAY!

Whether you're already an active member, or would like to join now, please send your email address to the office <nycas@verizon.net> to be put on the Armchair Activist distribution list. If you don't currently have an email account, your local librarian will have information on free e-mail services.

Thank you and happy letter writing!
Sincerely,
Susan Michajlo, Armchair Activist Coordinator

(November-December 2001)



BETTY HAMILTON

Roughneck Committee Seeks Volunteers

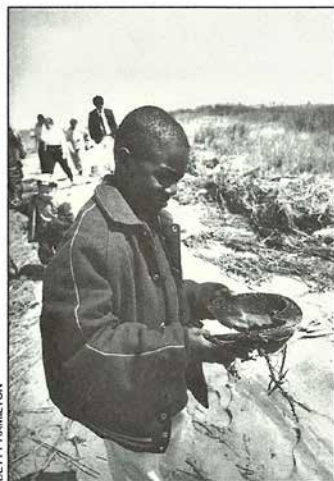
Dubos Point: Saturday, September 21 – meet at 9:45 AM at Jamaica Bay Refuge Rangers' Station. Call Fran Lauer (212) 935-7515. Daytimes/evenings until 9:30 PM. Saturday, October 19. Same as above.

Butterfly Meadow: Saturday, October 5 – meet at 9:45 AM at corner of Prospect Park Southwest and 16th Street entrance to the Park. Call Joan Allen (212) 423-1155 daytime (9 AM–5 PM)

Organizational Meetings: Wednesdays, September 18 and October 16 at 6:30 PM at the office—feel free to bring a brown bag snack and relax.

Mark these dates down on your calendar. We will be announcing more outings in the near future on the monthly "short list" and at the monthly meetings. We look forward to hearing from you. A closing note—when I asked the crew members about their best experience with this site restoration work, I got answers ranging from "saw good birds" and "needed the exercise" to "learned about plants" and "got me out of my apartment." But my favorite answer was "I met some nice people." The sense of camaraderie which developed during these outings was very real. Hope to see you at one of our meetings, or better yet, out in the field!

(August-September 1985)



BETTY HAMILTON

(June-July 1995)

Getting Reacquainted With Nature

On Saturday, April 22, NYCAS hosted a celebration of Earth Day's 25th anniversary at Dubos Point Wetlands Sanctuary in Arverne, Queens, with students from P.S. 42 and the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (above and left). Joanne Dittersdorf, former NYCAS Jamaica Bay Coastal Restoration Project Coordinator is shown in the second photo at the far right.

The following week, the Girl Scouts from South West Queens II Service Unit assisted NYCAS in spreading wood chips and planting red cedar seedlings at Bayswater State Park (see top photo). The event was organized by Naola Gersten-Woolf, a Girl Scout and NYCAS volunteer, Joanne Dittersdorf, and Mickey and Barbara Cohen, NYCAS Bayswater State Park managers.

LECTURES

Over the past four decades, NYC Audubon has offered free lectures by hundreds of scientists, field experts, activists, authors, and artists who specialize in birds and other wildlife. Speakers have included Joanna Burger, Kevin Karlson, Elizabeth Kolbert, Peter Matthiessen, Roger Tory Peterson, Jonathan Rosen, Carl Safina, Erik Sanderson, David Allen Sibley, Bridget Stutchbury, Robert Sullivan, Scott Weidensaul, and Marie Winn. Since 1999, our lecture series has been made possible by the generous support of Claude and Lucienne Bloch.

NEW YORK CITY AUDUBON CALENDAR

November 27 (Tuesday), 7:30 P.M., Student Union, Pace University

Russell W. Peterson, NAS President and a member of the President's Commission to Investigate the Accident at Three Mile Island, will speak on Energy Futures. Please note change in meeting place from Schimmel Auditorium to Student Union. Open to the public.

(November 1979)

APRIL 8: *The Real Nuclear Threat to New York*, by Dr. Jan Beyea and Dr. Leonard Solon.

Dr. Jan Beyea, National Audubon Society's Senior Energy Scientist, will discuss the nuclear reactors operated by Con Edison and the Power Authority at Indian Point near Peekskill on the Hudson River. Dr. Beyea will testify at Nuclear Regulatory Commission hearings dealing with safety issues related to Indian Point. Dr. Leonard Solon, a radiation expert with the New York City Health Department, will discuss transportation of nuclear materials within City limits.

(March-April 1982)

2005-2006 LECTURE SERIES IN HONOR OF DR. CLAUDE BLOCH

Iceland: Land of Puffins, Glaciers & Waterfalls*

By Don Riepe

Wednesday, November 2, 2005

Return to Wild America: A Yearlong Search for the Continent's Soul

by Scott Weidensaul

Wednesday, January 11, 2006

Why Birds Sing

by David Rothenberg

Wednesday, March 8, 2006

(September-October 2005)

BIRDING AT THE INTERSECTION OF ART AND SCIENCE BY DAVID SIBLEY

Wednesday, March 11

With Audubon New York

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The author and illustrator of the comprehensive *The Sibley Guide to Birds*, expounds on the pleasures and challenges of creating a field guide to birds. Beginning with his childhood drawings, Sibley will explore the gradual development of his ideas and the struggle to combine the artistic and scientific aspects of bird identification into a single book.

(March-April 2009)



Pale male. Photo by Rik Davis.

OCTOBER PROGRAM

Wednesday (not Thursday), October 9, 2002 at 6 P.M.

Pale Male: A documentary by Frederic Lilien and discussion with Marie Winn

The red-tailed hawk Pale Male was first sighted in Central Park in the winter of 1991. His every movement has been watched and recorded by thousands of birders for eleven years. To date, he and his four successive mates—First Love (who later became Mom II), Mom I, Blue, and Lola—have raised 21 chicks on Fifth Avenue, 18 of which have successfully fledged. Frederic Lilien's new award-winning documentary narrated by Joanne Woodward

tells much of the story. John Tierney of the *New York Times* writes "it is a beautifully made documentary about a hawk paterfamilias and the community of humans following him." Marie Winn, one of Pale Male's biggest fans and author of the highly acclaimed *Red-Tails in Love*, will add her anecdotes and insights to a discussion following the film presentation.

Refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the program.

Monthly Programs are held at 6 P.M. at the Lighthouse (Ames) Auditorium, 111 East 59th Street, between Lexington and Park Avenues, near the subway station at 59th Street and Lexington Avenue. All programs are open to the public free of charge.

(October 2002)

BOOK REVIEWS & READER SUBMISSIONS

Letters to the Editor

"Think this is a great idea! Pleased to have an opportunity for a more active interest in local Audubon--urban that is!"

Henrietta J. Barnes
New York, New York

"I would like to see more balance. Speak out against Westway, if you wish, but also present opposing views. For that, contact AAA."

Alex Siodmak
Jackson Heights, N.Y.

"It fills a great need for a source of information concerning local issues and matters of interest."

Lorna Pinto Hollander
Brooklyn, New York

(November 1979)

To the editor:

Congratulations to your and the rest of the staff on the newly professional tone of The Urban Audubon. I applaud especially the breadth of subjects covered, a span that compares well with the parent Audubon and with Sierra Club and FOE publications. To be sure, I have strong reservations about the praise of gray squirrels which are a major pest of trees in the city since they are not kept in check by predators or starvation in years when acorn crops fail. Each year, the groups I work with have to spend large sums on repairing the cavities in trees hollowed by squirrels.

M. M. Graff
Brooklyn

(May 1980)

The Bathers

Hank Heitmann

Three sparrows, city dwellers
Sharing a sunny summer morning
Bathing in the steady drip
From a worn out hydrant,
Oblivious to the squalor and the garbage
Fluttering in the glittering spray
Dipping in the raging curbside flow
The scene charmed by a rainbow.

(October 2003)



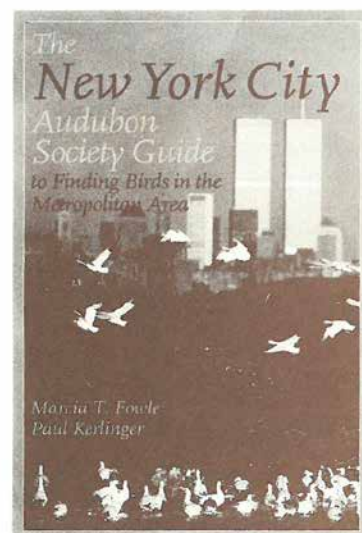
(April-May 1985)

The New York City Audubon Society Guide to Finding Birds in the Metropolitan Area Is Here!

Lauren Pera

Following in the tradition of Susan Drennan's *Where to Find Birds in New York State* (published in 1981) and Robert Arbib's *Enjoying Birds Around New York City* (published in 1966), but with up-to-date and even more detailed information, *The New York City Audubon Guide to Finding Birds in New York City* thoroughly covers every nook and cranny in the metropolitan area and beyond. This book embodies what former president of the Wildlife Conservation Society William Conway says makes a guide to finding birds good: it "offers specific, immediate detail about bird locality plus a world of background information putting it in context." It is, according to Conway, "the best one yet.... This book widens our options, expands and enriches our experience with unique insights, and makes finding our way around much easier with the support of clear maps."

(December 1988)



JOSH'S STORY AS TOLD TO SUSAN ANTENEN IN THE WAVE HILL WOODS

If you had asked me what I thought about bird watching six months ago, I would have said, "Aw, that's for sissies." But now ...

It all started back in the winter. On a whim I sent in \$2.00 and a coupon from the back of a cereal box for a bird feeder. I'd forgotten about it by the time it arrived six to eight weeks later. I hung it at the edge of my terrace on the 10th floor of a high-rise along the parkway. Birds came right away! Little purple birds and birds with black on their heads. I didn't know what they were so I bought a bird book. Found out I had house finches and chickadees.

It wasn't very long before I was stopped by the super. The people below me didn't like the mess of sunflower shells. I moved the feeder to a hedge away from the building. From my apartment I began to see more kinds and bigger birds ... blue and red and black colored. But I

couldn't see them very well. So I bought a pair of binoculars.

Spring was in the air. I figured there must be birds elsewhere. In Fieldston I started visiting a private park early in the mornings where I learned to recognize white-throated sparrows, song sparrows, mockingbirds and grackles. Great place to look for birds. But I got kicked out by the guard. Guess the neighbors didn't like a stranger wandering around with binoculars. That's when I discovered Wave Hill. I've found an oriole nest and am starting to recognize some of the warblers. And now you say that the land along the river is Riverdale Park and is open to the public?

I'm trying to get my parents interested in bird watching. So far, no luck. But I'm hooked.

Susan D. Antenen



(September-October 1981)

TYPEWRITER NEEDED

The typewriter in the New York City Audubon office has expired from terminal overaction, and a replacement is eagerly sought. If you, or someone you know, have a usable IBM Selectric or comparable model typewriter to donate to NYCAS, it would be most appreciated.



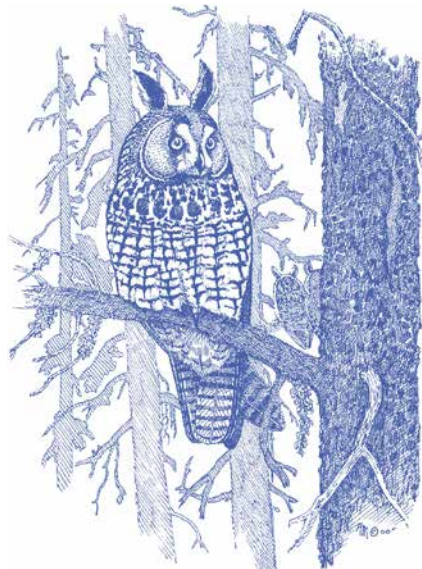
(June-July 1988)

40 YEARS OF ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY

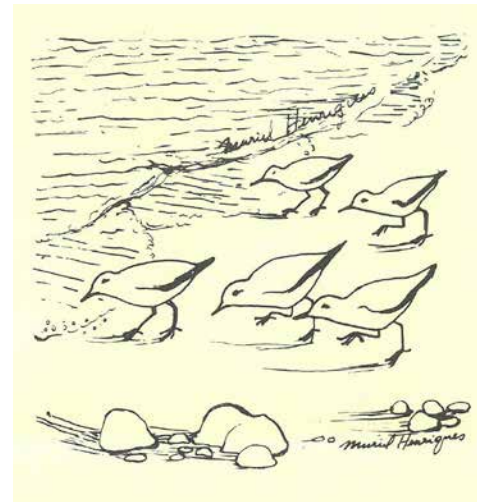
Dozens of artists and photographers, generous both in spirit and talent, have donated their work to *The Urban Audubon* over the years. Here is a sampling of their work.



Merlin by Judy Katz (March 1980)



Long-eared Owl by Alan Messer (March-April 2004)



Sanderlings by Muriel Henriques (September 1980)



Raven by Richard Krieger (March 2000)



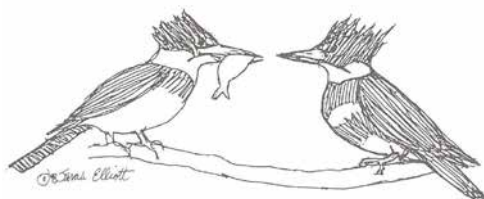
Common Yellowthroat by David Speiser (Fall 2013)



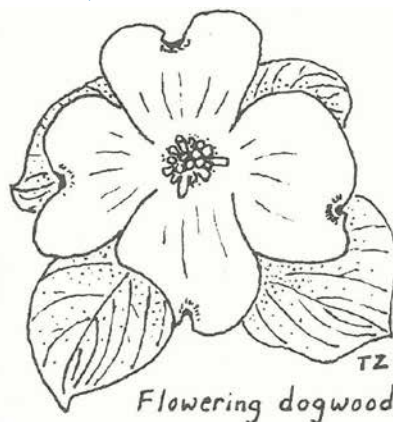
Least Bittern by Jamie Felton (Summer 2014)



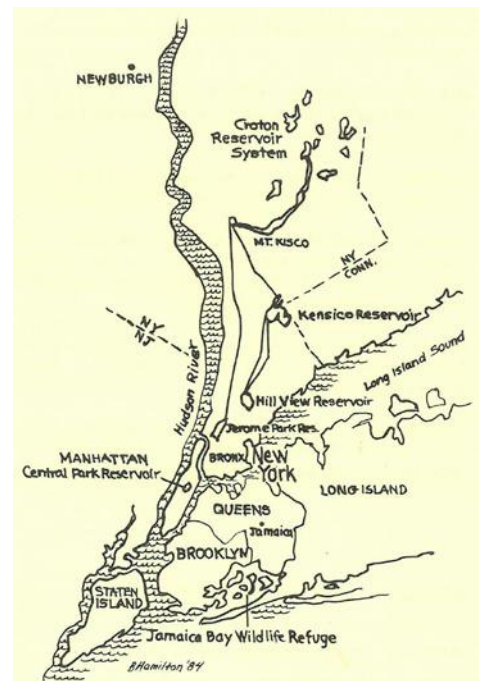
Nesting Osprey at Jamaica Bay by Don Riepe (November-December 2010)



Kingfishers at Hallett Nature Sanctuary by Sarah Elliott (March 2000)



Flowering Dogwood by Ted Zinn (May 1991)



NYC Water System by Betty Hamilton (August-September 1984)



Gull Chicks by Milton Heiberg (January-February 1995)



Hooded Warbler by Steve Nanz (Summer 2013)



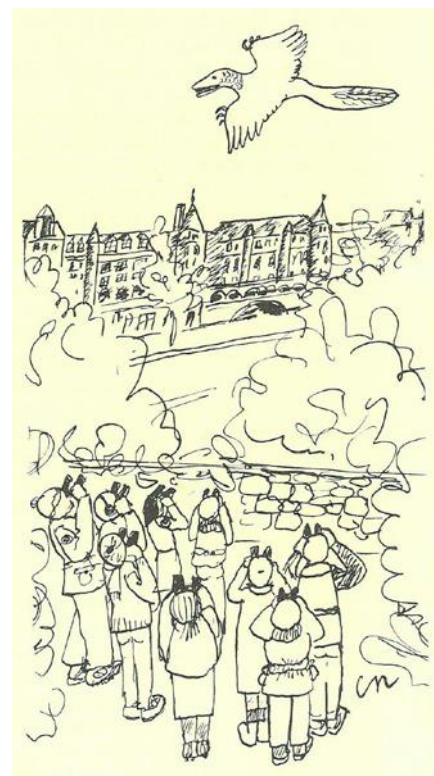
American Kestrel by David Taft (April-May 1986)



Owls in Winter by James McGaw (Illustration Awards, January-February 1983)



Hooded Mergansers by Lloyd Spitalnik (Fall 2012)



Archaeopteryx by Carol Newman (October-November 1987)



Tree Swallows by Laura Meyers (Summer 2016)



Northern Harrier Landscape by Abby McBride (Summer 2014)



Jamaica Bay by François Portmann (Winter 2012)

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES

Mary Jane Kaplan

"KEEPING IN TOUCH": THE FIELD TRIP

"Loving the land" in New York City is hard. Living every day in concrete canyons or on side streets of two-story homes with carefully planned lawns and trees, we lose touch with nature and begin to think of it as distant -- something we see in magazines or visit on vacations.

But the natural world is more potent than that and won't be shunted from us so easily. From birds singing in the Bronx at 5:00 in the morning to the delights of Central Park just five minutes from the crowded bikeway to a 9,000-acre sanctuary in Queens, hosting 300 species of birds only a short walk from a subway stop -- nature is very much a part of the city. All that's needed is a refresher course: "keeping in touch" with the natural world. Walking with people who turn their eyes to the earth, trees, and sky to see it all afresh and share their enthusiasm for the conformation of a plant or the flight of a bird-- this is the point of field trips for me ... it's what makes us care.

Here are some outings planned for the Fall.

Sept. 9, 1 p.m. -- Inwood Park in Upper Manhattan. Call Linda Pascale -- 437-4840.

Sept. 16, 9 a.m. -- Repeat of tour of northern Central Park. Call B. Brookshire -- 548-3691.

Sept. 29, 8:30 a.m. -- Hawk Watch at Hook Mtn. in Upper Nyack, led by Doris Metraux, head of the Rockland County Audubon Chapter. L. Pascale.

Oct. 13, 9:30 a.m. -- a walk through Prospect Park led by Bob Makla who has put forth a proposal for a model nature center in the Park. Call Bette Brookshire.

Oct. 20, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. -- tour of the Connecticut Audubon Center in Greenwich in the morning and of the nearby Fairchild Gardens in the afternoon. Call Bette Brookshire.

We have tried to diversify in area and interest. Groups are purposely kept small so that the trips can be as meaningful as possible for the individual, as well as peaceful for the habitat. Be sure to sign up early with the person indicated so you won't be disappointed. If you are closed out, don't be discouraged; trips which draw great interest may be repeated.

-- Bette Brookshire
Chairperson, Field Trip Committee

(September 1979)

SPRING WARBLER CLASS

Experienced birder Joe Giunta, bird guide for the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, will lead a class on the warblers of Central Park. This two-part session (one class and one field trip) is for the advanced beginner birder who wants to master these beautiful, but hard-to-identify spring migrants.

Wednesday, May 4 at 6:30-8:30pm
NYC Audubon Office

Sunday, May 8 at 7:30-9:30am
Central Park
Meet at the Loeb Boat House

(March-April 2005)

24 www.nyc Audubon.org

October 12 (Sun.) • 8:30 am • Central Park Bird Walk. Led by Linnaean Society member, Sarah Elliott, who has given many walks through the park. Timed for late migrants.

(September 1980)

July 27 (Saturday) • Shinnecock and Mecox Bays (Hampton Bays, NY) All-day birding trip to see early migrating shorebirds and nesting summer residents. Be prepared to get your feet wet. Car pool. Bring lunch. Leader: Harry Maas.

(June-July 1985)

NYC AUDUBON'S SUNSET ECOTOURS TO HERON ISLANDS



(July-August 2005)

JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE PROGRAM APRIL 9

Donald Riepe, a most dedicated and knowledgeable naturalist employed by Jamaica Bay, will deliver a slide presentation at our regular meeting on April 9 highlighting the refuge's features of habitat, plant and bird life. He will also discuss some of the features resulting from management by the parks service including the newly constructed bird blind and nest boxes erected on some of the remote islands. Those of us who have seen Mr. Riepe's presentation eagerly look forward to another interesting and informative session.

(March-April 1981)

BEGINNING BIRDING

Classes: Thursdays, May 9 and 16,

6:30-8:30pm

Trips: Saturdays, May 11 and 18

Instructor: Tod Winston

Learn to identify the spectacular variety of birds that migrate through New York City. Even if you've never picked up a pair of binoculars, you'll soon be identifying warblers, thrushes, waterbirds, and more--both by sight and by ear.

(Spring 2013)

Mosquito Safari in the Rockaways



(December 1994)

October 2 & 3 (Saturday overnight) Atlantique (Fire Island, NY)

Bird watching and slide show in conjunction with the Appalachian Mountain Club. Led by Lenore Swenson and Anne Lazarus.

(August-September 1999)

JUNE 5 • (SUNDAY) •

Staten Island Greenbelt

(Staten Island, NY) Bird walk through some of the borough's beautiful natural areas for migrating species and breeding locals. Leader: Howie Fisher. Car pool. Bring lunch.

(June-July 1988)



We're Sorry

We goofed. In the last issue, one of our field trips suggested collecting mushrooms within a sanctuary. NYCAS bans all collecting from any refuge or sanctuary. The plants and wildlife are there for us to observe and enjoy, not to take home. Our apologies to the Westmoreland Sanctuary in Mt. Kisco.

(October 1990)

Mary Jane Kaplan, a longtime supporter of NYC Audubon and frequent contributor to The Urban Audubon, is a past board treasurer and current member of both the advisory council and the publications committee.



© Karl Holtschue

StarrTrips



Fall Migration Walks in Central Park

Monday and Wednesday Morning
Ramble Walks

When: Every Monday and Wednesday morning in October

Where: Meet at 81st Street and Central Park West, the S.E. corner

Time: 7:30 A. M. to 10:30 A. M.

Tuesday Morning North End Walks

When: Every Tuesday morning in October

Where: Meet at 103rd Street and Central Park West, the S.E. corner

Time: 9:00 A. M. to 12:00 noon

(October 1998)

Wildlife Walks in Wave Hill, Riverdale in the Bronx

Sundays, October 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31 at 8:30 am

With New York City Audubon naturalist Gabriel Willow, enjoy the spectacle of songbirds stopping over in this urban oasis while on migration from their northern breeding grounds to their southern wintering grounds.

(September-October 2004)

AFTERNOON BIRD WALK IN CENTRAL PARK

Saturday, April 20, 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.

(Spring 2019)

WALKS ON GOVERNORS ISLAND Fridays, October 6 and October 20, 8:30-10:30am

Meet at the Governors Island Ferry for a short ride to the island and a morning of birding under the guidance of expert Annie Barry.

(Fall 2017)

AUDUBON SPRING PICNIC—SUNDAY, JUNE 3

A Party, A Picnic, A Nature Treasure Hunt, Games, Field Trips, Music, Adoption Ceremony—Come and Get to Know the N.Y. AUDUBON "Family" (rain date June 10)



by Cheryl Miller

(March-May 1984)

THE BIRDS OF INWOOD HILL PARK, MANHATTAN

Saturday, May 23, 2-5pm

Guide: Nadir Souirgi

Meet at the Muscota Marsh viewing area. Nestled on the northern tip of Manhattan, the largely undeveloped oak and tulip forest of Inwood Hill Park transports you to another time and place. Glacial "pot holes," towering trees, and stunning river views create an unrivaled backdrop from which to observe migratory and breeding birds.

(Spring 2015)

June 14 SOCIAL GATHERING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Festivities will include flamenco dancing and other musical entertainment.

(March-May 1984)



NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY COURSE

At press time, there are still a few places left in our introductory course in nature photography. A working course for the serious amateur, there are two sections (Monday and Tuesday evenings), beginning the week of February 27 for a total of 10 weekly sessions, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

(January-February 1989)

Pale Male Family Days

Saturday, April 26

Sunday, April 27

11 A.M. and 2 P.M.

The Arsenal Gallery, The Arsenal, Central Park

(64th Street and 5th Avenue)

Bring your children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews to New York City Audubon's Pale Male Family Days in Central Park on Saturday, April 26, and Sunday, April 27.

NYC Audubon will present Frederic Lilien's *Pale Male*, an award-winning film about a big city hawk and the New Yorkers who love him. After each showing, NYC Audubon volunteers will lead a tour to view Pale Male's nest on Fifth Avenue.

Pale Male is a wonderful introduction to nature. City kids will thrill to Pale Male's aerial acrobatics, and laugh at the little hawklings' antics, which are sure to capture every child's imagination.

Come out and create the next generation of hawk watchers!



Pale male. Photo by Rik Davis.

(April 2013)

THE EVOLUTION OF A LOGO

In January 1980, *The Urban Audubon* first posed the question, "What Bird for New York?" And after a spirited debate, the House Finch was elected. Originally native to the western US and Mexico, this colorful songbird was illegally marketed and sold here in the early 1900s as the "Hollywood Finch." A number of birds were released around 1940; they quickly naturalized (and spread across the US). This "immigration success story" thus seemed a perfect choice for our city of immigrants. In 2002, however, the decision was made to find a symbol more specifically representative of New York City's Audubon chapter...and in 2003 our American Kestrel logo took flight. That journey continues: NYC Audubon will launch a new logo in the near future. Visit www.nycaudubon.org/ournewlogo to learn more.

OUR OFFICIAL BIRD

Have you sent in your nomination for the New York City Audubon Society bird yet? Many suggestions have already come in, but we want your vote too. We will add the letter nominations to the in-person nominations to be taken at the June meeting (see page 1 for details).

So far, we have a surprisingly large number of nominations for the Peregrine falcon ("glorious, gorgeous, untamed, dangerous, infinitely beautiful and irresistible creature" says Selma Linde of Manhattan); as well as many suggestions for the House Finch (they prefer high elevations... and we are a city of skyscrapers" says Frances Edwards Duras of the Bronx). Another possibility is the lapwing or pewit, says Fred Rosenstiel of Manhattan, because it "has given its name to the Kibitzer, the well-known type of meddlesome New Yorker."

And of course we have received nominations for the Cardinal, a symbol of the Red Apple, according to Lynne Silver of Queens; and for the Blue Jay -- ("it's sassy, noisy, pushy, quick, intelligent, beautiful, ingenious --it survives", writes Dorothy Holmes of Brooklyn); and for the House Sparrow -- ("an immigrant, like many of us, and has adapted the city to its needs," according to K.D. Korybut of Manhattan).

(May 1980)

OFFICIAL BIRD CONTEST

Don't forget to cast your ballot for the official bird of the New York City Audubon Society at our June 11 meeting or before. Unfortunately, two of the highest vote-catchers (peregrine falcon and blue jay) have been eliminated because they already represent neighboring bird clubs. The other top contenders at this time are glossy ibis, house sparrow, house finch and herring gull. And still in the running are cardinal, downy woodpecker, myrtle warbler, and of course, rock dove. Send your written nomination to: Sally Ellyson, THE URBAN AUDUBON, 285 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10025, or come to the June 11 meeting (see page 1 for details).

(March 1980)

Chapter Patch

This attractive patch features the House Finch perched in front of a NYC skyline. The design co-ordinator is member Betty Hamilton who chose the brown, white, red and green colors against the blue background. The patch costs only \$2.50 plus \$.50 handling charge and is available through the mail.



(November-December 1980)



When President Marcia Fowle, Board Member Ned Boyajian and I sat down with the award-winning designer Roger Whitehouse to discuss the new New York City Audubon logo, I was all ready to tell him why we had chosen the American kestrel—how it is an urban raptor, an elusive nester on buildings, etc. But Roger said he knew all about kestrels; a pair had nested on the facade of his office at 16th Street off Union Square, and he had had a front row seat from which to watch the parents and young. Right then and there, the three of us knew we had the right graphic designer.

And what a design it is: it balances the hovering flight of a kestrel with the blue rectangular shapes that suggest the city (streets, walk-ups, skyscrapers). Most importantly, the logo is unique and easily recognizable. You will be able to spot your fellow NYC Auduboner from across the park!

(November-December 2003)

A New Logo for NYCAS? What Should It Be?

After years of faithful service, the house finch will retire as the official logo of the New York City Audubon Society.

We're seeking a stronger, more dynamic, more inspirational emblem...one

that will best represent the strength and resilience of the chapter and of nature in New York City.

We can use your help in finding exactly the right logo. When you think of wildlife in New York, what comes to your mind? We want to know!

Please send us your recommendations for a logo, along with a short explanation of your reasons. You also may submit original sketches or artwork; if you want these returned, please state so in your letter and clearly mark the artwork with your name and address.

Please send submissions postmarked by November 29, 2002 to New York City Audubon Society, 71 W. 23rd St., Rm. 1529 New York, NY 10010, Attn: Logo Contest/Ned Boyajian.



(October 2002)

IN MEMORIAM

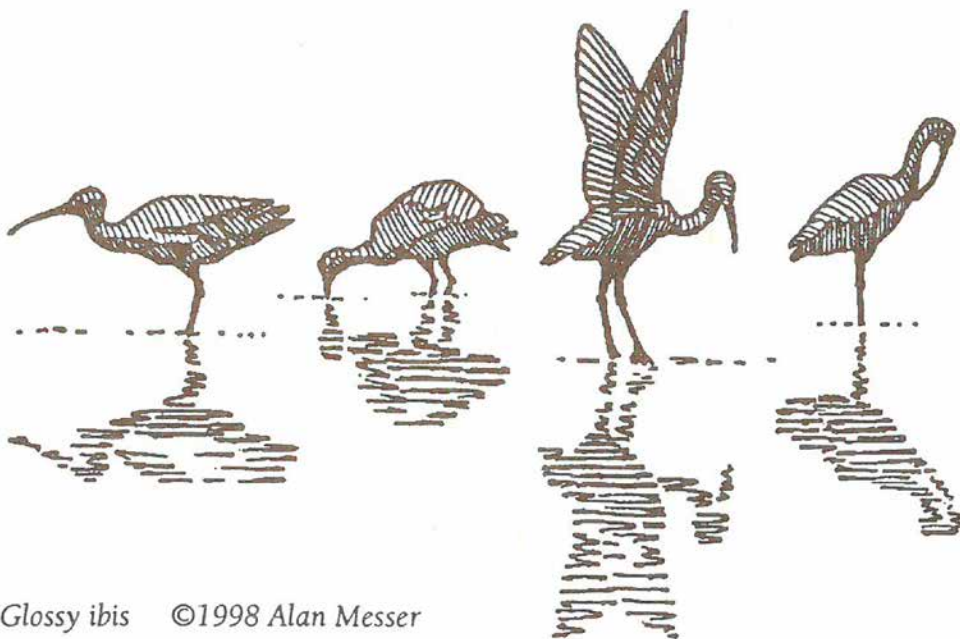
Over the past 40 years, the following individuals have been honored with a special mention in *The Urban Audubon*, in recognition of their service to New York City Audubon. Many of these individuals were also honored with memorial gifts.

Michael Ahern	Sylvia Cohen	Jessie Kitching	Geoffrey Cobb Ryan
Oakes Ames	Thomas H. Davis	Diane LeAve	Starr Saphir
Peter A. A. Berle	Sarah McCarn Elliott	Julia Loomis	Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff
Bernard P. Brennan	Richard Garretson	Helen Mattin	Fredric Spar
Jean Bourque	Richard Gershon	Mary Tyler Moore	Norman Stotz
Irving Cantor	Ralph Ginzburg	George J. Mullen, Jr.	Ted Zinn
Kirsten Christophe	Emily Jones	Alfred Ott	
Clara Clayman	Charles Kennedy	Lambert Pohner	

MEMORIAL GIFTS Over the past 40 years, gifts to New York City Audubon have been made in memory of those listed below.

Doris Ali	Carol Kramer	Wendy Pilbeam	Ringo Tucker-Drob-Goldberg
Shahin Alirkan	Mark Krotter	Yves Provencher	Sam Vella
John Alsano	Charles Kuralt	Maria Quiñones Gonzalez	Michael Waskovich
Albert Bacchus	Lillian L. Langsan	Harold Robbins	Soloman Weinstock
David Bain	Margaret Lee	Thomas Ronga	Ellen Wendy Weiss
Charles F. Barber	Manny Levine	Erma Rosen	Suzanne Wexler-Shafer
Mary Birchard	Barbara Maas	Madlyn Jane Rowe	Eve Winer
Dorothy Blaser	Jack Mailman	Anne Ruane	David Woolf
Abe Bloom	Frank and Kathleen Marano	Eva Kinne Saffran	Mariska Zelazinsky
Joan Bonagura	Stefan A. Mayer	Marcello Scacalossi	David
James Brown	Helen Mazzitelli	Elizabeth M. Schill	Fluffy
Betty Brummett	Sean McBride	Sid Schwager	Hannah the Cat
Jewell Bukantz	Lee Metcalf	Max and Annemarie	Josephine
William I. Campbell	Jean Mills	Schweizer	Leo
Ria Charisse	Mr. and Mrs. H.G. Moy	Harvey Lewis Seldman	Lilly
Baukje Cohen	John Olden	Mary A. Shea	Lola
Anna Conte	Catherine O'Niel-McCarthy	Flora Speiser	Milly
June Corona	Mrs. Ouellette	James Stevenson	The Passenger Pigeon
Christine M.	Michael Evans Parisi	Barbara Steward	Rocko
Crichton Mannella	Judith Patchell	Paul Julien Sude	Sugar
Catherine A. Cullen	Regina Patchell	M. Scott Sullivan	Suzanne
Anna Lee Culp	Frances Loomis Payer	Dearest Mother of Jackie Talt	Timothy and Milly
Ruth Dalmus	Lynn Payer	Eleanor Tauber	Wily
John E. Daniel	Melinda Pendleton	Joseph Tobin	
Rik Davis	Laurie Phillips	Adele Towbin	

Gerard DeFrancesco
Mary Delaney
Charles Denlinger
John Endres
Lydia Enriquez
Daniela Francisco
Jonathon Franks
Edith Rankin Gold
Jim Heckenbach
Christiana Ley Parker
Hendrix
Jason Hittman
John Hofmann
Lola R. Holze
Rudy Hopkins
Jennifer Kao
Jessica Karp
Kirsten Hermansen
Kavanaugh
Gerhard Kiefer



Glossy ibis ©1998 Alan Messer

NYC AUDUBON AWARDS

Throughout its history, NYC Audubon has honored distinguished service to the environment. Chapter Awards were bestowed annually from 1985 to 2005. The Fall Roost benefit, first held in 2004, continues to celebrate those most dedicated to protecting New York City's birds and their habitats.

© Geraldine de Haugbort



Leslie Gershon; past Board Vice President and Advisory Council Member Richard Gershon; and founding Board Member, past Vice President, and Advisory Council Member Lewis Rosenberg (January-February 2007)

© Titus Kara



Past Board President, Vice President, Advisory Council Member, and honoree Oakes Ames; honorees Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, Henry Christensen III, and Beryl Thurman; and past Executive Director Glenn Phillips (January-February 2011)*

© Betty Hamilton



Honorees past Board President, Interim Executive Director, and current Advisory Council Member Peter Rhoades Mott; past Board President and Secretary Geoffrey Cobb Ryan; Educator and Birding Guide Sarah Elliott; and past Executive Director, Board President, and current Advisory Council Co-Chair Marcia T. Fowle (June-July 1999)

** Individuals are noted as "honorees" regardless of the year in which they received an award.*

1985

Marcy Benstock
Thomas Davis
George Goode
Peggy Kane
Udall's Cove Preservation Committee
Farida Wiley

1986

Jean and Ronald Bourque
David Krauss
John Oakes
Protectors of Pine Oak Woods
Arline Thomas

1987

Albert Appleton
Boy and Cub Scouts of Pack and
Troop 196 of the Greater New York
Rainbow District
Bertel Bruun
Clara Clayman
John Yrizarry

1988

Emily Jones
Norman Stotz

1989

Tom Fox
Lynne Matusow
Francisco Mendes
Propect Park Environmental Center
Don Riepe

1990

Green Guerillas
Hudson River Sloop-Clearwater, Inc.
Drew Lehman
Starr Saphir

1991

Blanche Brown
Paul Ehrlich
Milton Heiberg
The Village Voice

1992

City Limits
Barbara and Mickey Cohen
Geoffrey Cobb Ryan
The Ecology Club

1993

Dona Lakin Tracy
Marc Matsil
Danielle Ponsolle
Norman Stotz
Marie Winn

1994

Albert Appleton
Alwyn Gentry
Naola Gersten-Woolf
New York Newsday
Theodore Parker
Don Riepe

1995

Peter A. A. Berle
Eugenia Flatow
Ralph Ginzburg
Jessie Kitching
SoundWatch Inc.

1996

Alley Pond Environmental Center
Katharine Parsons
Dorothy Poole
Henry Stern

1997

Richard Garretson
Harry Jenkins
Natural Resources Defense
Council
Ellen O'Flaherty Pratt

1998

Brooklyn Bird Club
Helen Hayes
Alan Hevesi
Patricia Soteropoulos
Herbert Trossman
Gregory Xikes

1999

Sarah Elliott
Marcia T. Fowle
Hudson River Park Alliance
Howard Snyder
Guy Tudor

2000

Durst Organization, Fox &
Fowle Architects, and Tishman
Construction Corporation
Merrill Higgins
Mary Kelly
Bette Midler and the New York
Restoration Project

2001

David Burg
Thomas Burke
Jorge Santiago
Norman Stotz

2002

Karen Asakawa
Peter P. Blanchard III
Rebekah Creshkoff
Gail and Jonathan Jankus
Nellie Larsen
Geoffery Nulle
Allison Ott

2003

Ben Cacace
Miriam Gross
Patrick Harty
Peter Rhoades Mott
Allison Sloane
Paul Teddy

2004

Joy Garland
Maura Lout
Elliot Spitzer
Jacquelyn Talt
Roger Whitehouse

2005

Kristen Bannister
Adrian Benepe
Stephen Feingold
Dan Ionescu
Frederic Lilien
Barbara Loucks
Mary Tyler Moore
Christopher Nadareski
Cecelia Rogers

2006

Hugh L. Carey Battery Park City
Authority

2007

Daniel A. Biederman

2008

Hillary Brown

2009

Joseph Ellis
Don Riepe

2010

Elizabeth Barlow Rogers
Henry Christensen III
Beryl Thurman

2011

Peter Joost
George J. Mullen, Jr.
Maria Torres

2012

Ajamu Brown
Helena Durst
Christopher Ward

2013

Oakes Ames
Claude Bloch
Karen Heidgerd
Ritamary McMahon
Starr Saphir

2014

Convention Center Development
Corporation
FXFOWLE Epstein Architects
Jacob K. Javits Convention Center

2015

ARNOLD GLAS
Marsilia A. Boyle
Deborah Jones

2016

Phil Cusimano
Harrison D. Maas
Michael Ahern Productions

2017

Gina Argento, Tony Argento, and
Broadway Stages
MaryJane Boland

2018

Annie Barry
Andrew Farnsworth

© David Rodgers



Honoree Bruce Fowle; Director of Conservation and Science Susan Elbin, PhD; and honorees Larry Dalziel, Barbara Lampen, Alan E. Steel, and past Board President Harry Maas (Winter 2014)

© Ronald Bourque



Past Board President and Advisory Council Member Lynn Rollins, honoree Geoffrey Cobb Ryan, and Roost designer and honoree Kristen Bannister (September-October 2005)

© Betty Hamilton



Past Board President and Treasurer and honoree Norman Stotz (June-July 1992)

© Jeff Kolbunner



Past Board Vice President and Secretary, current Advisory Council Member, and honoree Don Riepe (November-December 2009)

© Geraldine de Haugbart



Honorees Adrian Benepe and Mary Tyler Moore and past Executive Director and Advisory Council Member E. J. McAdams (January-February 2006)

© Milton Heberg



Honoree Geoffrey Cobb Ryan; honoree Henry Stern (with Boomer); past Board President, Vice President, current Advisory Council Member, and honoree David Burg; past Harbor Herons Survey Leader and honoree Katharine Parsons; honoree Peter Rhoades Mott; past Vice President and Secretary Leslie Sharpe; past Board Member and honoree Dorothy Poole; Irene Scheid and Aline Euler representing honoree Alley Pond Environmental Center; and past Board Member Gloria Kuhn (June-July 1996)

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Longtime NYC Audubon supporters and Roost attendees Virginia Stotz, Nancy Hager, and Betty Hamilton (November-December 2008)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS OVER 40 YEARS: LEADERSHIP CUMULATIVE GIFTS, BEQUESTS

NYC Audubon's conservation science and public programs are made possible by philanthropic contributions from members, friends, corporations, foundations, and government agencies.

Throughout our 40 years, these organizations have provided multi-year leadership support enabling our work and saving countless birds:

Leon Levy Foundation
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

We are also grateful to the thousands who have sustained our efforts since our founding, and in particular, to the people and organizations named here for their cumulative gifts of more than \$10,000.

INDIVIDUALS

Barbara Abel	Nancy Hager
Tylee Abbott and Katie Ermilio	Betty Hamilton and
John and Emily Alexander	Geoffrey Cobb Ryan
Oakes and Louise Ames	Scott and Ellen Hand
Gina Argento	Kathleen Heenan and
Tony Argento	Clary Olmstead
Rob Bate and Tracy Meade	Kathryn and Vince G. Heintz
Barbara Belknap	Cathy and Lloyd Heller
Karen Benfield and John Zucker	Sally Jeffords
Drianne Benner	Dawn and Tommy Lee Jones
Claude and Lucienne Bloch	Peter Joost
MaryJane Boland	Tatiana Kaletsch
Ronald Bourque	Mary Jane Kaplan
Marsilia Boyle	Kevin and Karen Kennedy
Virginia Carter	Songmei and Jared Keyes
Clifford Case	Jeff Kimball and Pamela Hogan
Jim Chervenak	Robert Kimtis and Susan Bynum
John and Judy Craig	Lauren and Ethan Klingsberg
Rebekah Creshkoff	Carol and Robert D. Krinsky
Art Sills and Sarah DeBlois	Janice Laneve
Titia de Lange	Jade Lau
Strachan and Vivian Donnelley	Adrienne Lynch
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Margot Ernst	Edith McBean
Aline Euler and Henry Euler	Andre Meade
Alexander Ewing and	Joyce Menschel
Wynn Senning	Clark Mitchell
Andrew Farnsworth and	Malcolm and Mary Morris
Patricia Ryan	Lenore and Peter Rhoades Mott
Alfred C. Finger	George and Rachel Mullen
Mary and Joseph Fiore	Paul Newman
Marcia and Bruce Fowle	Heidi Nitze
Philip Fried and Bruce Patterson	Jane Orans
Rich Fried and Stella Kim	Hank and Wendy Paulson
Beatrice Goelet Manice	Mona Payton
Edward and Diana Greene	Terry and Bill Pelster
	Cheryl Reich and David Dewhurst

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Luanne Rice
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Pamela Rosenthal
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CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS, AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Achelis & Bodman Foundation
American Bird Conservancy
ARNOLD GLAS
Aviator Sports & Events
The Bay and Paul Foundations
The Bobolink Foundation
Broadway Stages Ltd.
Brooklyn Community Foundation
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Disney Worldwide Services
Dobson Foundation, Inc.
The Durst Organization
The Educational Foundation
of America
Environmental Protection Agency
The Eppley Foundation
for Research
The Ferriday Fund
Fiduciary Trust International
First Cornerstone Foundation
FXCollaborative
General Contractors Association
of New York
Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
Hudson River Foundation
Investors Bank Foundation
Ittleson Foundation
Jacob K. Javits Convention Center

Jewish Federation of
Metropolitan Chicago
JP Morgan Chase Foundation
Kickstarter
Kimball Foundation
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Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Inc.
The Liz Claiborne Foundation
Manomet Center for
Conservation Sciences
The Marta Heflin Foundation
National Audubon Society
National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration
National Park Service
The Nature Conservancy
New England Interstate Water
Pollution Control Commission
New York City Department of
Environmental Protection
The New York Community Trust
Norcross Wildlife Foundation
Patagonia
Peak View Foundation
The Port Authority of NY & NJ
Robert and Joyce Menschel Family
Foundation
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Schaffer, Schonholz &
Drossman, LLP
Sims Metal Management
SUNY College of Environmental
Science & Forestry
Taconic Foundation
Toyota Together Green
Trust for Public Land
The Walt Disney
Company Foundation
Williams
The Wood Thrush Fund

BEQUESTS AND ESTATES

Anne Howat
Barbara Jean Junge
Charles F. Kehoe III
Kathryn R. Lewis
Frank Maira
Helen Mattin
Esther Morse
Evelyn Nethercott
Christina J. Norton
Fred Rosenstiel
Everett S. Steinmetz
Norman Stotz

AFTER ALL THIS TIME, THE BIRDS STILL NEED YOUR HELP

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

GIVE MONTHLY

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

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN KESTREL CIRCLE

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

GIVE A MATCHING GIFT

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

REMEMBER THE BIRDS IN YOUR ESTATE PLAN

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

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

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

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

Anniversary Leadership Gifts: [] \$40,000 [] \$10,000 [] \$5,000

Anniversary Celebration Gifts: [] \$2,500 [] \$1,000 [] \$500 [] \$100

[] Other amount: \$ _____

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

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

TOTAL AMOUNT: \$ _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

[] Enclosed is my check payable to NYC Audubon

[] Charge my credit card: [] VISA [] MC [] AMEX [] DSC

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

Mail this form with your payment to:

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



*American Robin by Abby McBride
(Summer 2011)*

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Crowded House, South Brother Island, by Alan Messer (Spring 2015)