

Feathers

Prairie Birding *by David L. Martin*

This spring Sandy and I took a trip to the Great Plains to see prairie birds and make audio recordings. Our trip was uneventful until we reached North Dakota where the weather got progressively worse as we drove west. As we approached Dickinson, rain turned to sticky snow, which soon covered the fields and rendered the highway signs illegible. The high temperature was 40 degrees below normal for the date, which was June 6. The weather was the prime topic of conversation everywhere we stopped, of course, and I overheard some rangers in Theodore Roosevelt National Park talking about it. One of the women commented that when you pack for a trip to North Dakota you should include your bikini and your parka.


The weather moderated, and two days later we were standing on a knoll in the shortgrass prairie near Glasgow, Montana listening to the birds. All around us CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPURS were larking and singing while BAIRD'S SPARROWS sang from tufts of vegetation. HORNED LARKS were everywhere. In the distance we heard a LONG-BILLED CURLEW calling followed a little later by the radi-ca cry of a MARBLED GODWIT. All the while, SPRAGUE'S PIPITS, invisible in the bright blue sky, sprinkled their ethereal song on us. It was glorious.

All of these birds were easy to see, except SPRAGUE'S PIPIT. They only became visible when they flew in front of a cloud, and even then they were so high up that I began to think of them as five-pixel birds – three pixels for the head, body and tail and one pixel for each wing. The wing pixels flickered as the birds flapped. Eventually, we did see a couple OF PIPITS on the ground.

The CURLEWS were noisy and occasionally flew by, but they kept their distance until one afternoon when we happened into what might have been their nesting area on a gentle hillside above a swale. As we walked through the area, two agitated CURLEWS flew around us no more than twenty feet away calling excitedly. One of them landed about 100 feet in front of us and called more quietly, as it slowly walked away from us. The other landed farther away and watched carefully. It seemed to us that the first bird was trying to lead us out of the area. It didn't fake a broken wing, but if we didn't follow along, both would again fly around us calling loudly, and then one would land and walk slowly away while calling quietly. They didn't seem too concerned, however, because one of them stopped to grab a bite to eat as we followed it. We left without searching for the nest or chicks.

We also saw a couple of McCOWN'S LONGSPURS near the knoll, but they weren't singing. A day later we found many of them performing display flights at another location where the vegetation was shorter and sparser. To me, McCOWN'S has the most stylish display flight of all the Longspurs. He flies up, locks his wings in a vee, spreads his tail and sings a long, musical song while he slowly glides down. The other Longspurs' songs are just as good as a McCOWN'S song, but their larking isn't as elegant as a McCOWN'S glide.

People are sometimes as interesting as birds. On our way south to Wyoming, we stopped for a sandwich at a Subway in Glendive. While we were eating our veggie delights a fellow approached our table and said, "You didn't buy a cookie. Isn't that what this is all about?" I admit that I was taken aback by his gambit and didn't have

a good comeback; all I did was agree – we hadn't bought a cookie. There was a pause. Then, he read my baseball cap, "Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve", and asked, "Isn't that in Arizona?" I was surprised that he knew that, and I answered that it is, but before I could say another word, he exclaimed, "That's great!" and turned around and walked away. After cookieman had left the restaurant, the fellow at the next table said "You know who that was, don'tcha?" I replied that I had no idea. He said, "That was our governor – he gets out and talks to people a lot." That revelation clarified things a quite a bit, if he wasn't pulling my leg. A Google search produced a picture of the Governor that looked like cookieman, and so that was our conversation with Brian Schweitzer, the Governor of Montana. Politicians are endlessly amusing, when they aren't being annoying. 

Inside This Issue...

President's Corner.....	70
H.G. Reist Sanctuary	71
Travelling?	71
HMBC Needs You!	71
HMBC Field Trip Reports.....	72
Upcoming HMBC Programs ...	74
Upcoming Field Trips.....	75

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President's Corner



The air is cooler, dryer and moving faster. This also means the raptors are migrating and the passerines in their fall costumes are confusing us. I want to share with you some of the things your elected officers and board members are doing. An ad hoc committee, chaired by past-president David Martin, is upgrading the features of our website.

Our Reist Sanctuary steward, Mike Gann submitted a report for the capitol improvement of the sanctuary. The Board approved a plan to replace the four major bridges; they will have uniform construction with increased safety.

We have a group scoping the potential of doing an audio visual history of the club.

Besides our current field trips, we are supporting the Albany Pine Bush by leading trips around their Discovery Center. Everyone of these projects could use your support: if you could help with websites, carrying light lumber to the bridge sites, design footbridges, lead field trips and/or contributing to our "history" - please volunteer. Whether the project is big like the bridges or small like a field trip guide, they are equal in importance.

If the club is important to you, then stay in touch: our website, HMBirds, contacting myself, or your elected officers will get you a volunteer position. The birds are always grinding it out; so are we. Please volunteer to help YOUR club. To RMB: A bird in the hand SHOULD be put back in the bush.

— Gary Goodness 

HMBC Contact Information

BIRDLINE of EASTERN NEW YORK: (518) 439-8080

E-mail: contact@hmbc.net

HMBC website: <http://hmbc.net>

HMBC Board Meetings

HMBC Board meetings are open to all Club members. Meetings are held at Five Rivers Center or other local venues at 7:00 PM, usually on the second Monday of odd-numbered months.

Newsletter Contributions Desired

- Have anything you think other birders would be interested in?
- Have a favorite birding spot you want to share?
- Are there any stories or photos that would inspire others?

Share them with the HMBC membership by submitting them to the addresses below:

Please send all *electronic* submissions *via e-mail* to: Chris Grossman at bgrossman@nycap.rr.com

Send **all** paper submissions to:

Chris Grossman

7 Nott Rd.

Rexford, NY 12148

The HMBC is embarking on a “capital improvement” project at our sanctuary in Niskayuna. We plan on building and/or repairing several bridges this fall. Volunteers are needed to do construction, moving materials, or just handing tools and nails. It is a nice opportunity to meet fellow club members and improve the trails in our sanctuary. Please contact our hard-working club president **Gary Goodness** at (518) 862-9260 or goodness@nycap.rr.com

Travelling?

There is a fabulous website that can match you up with local birders when you travel.

www.birdingpal.org will give you info on hot birding spots and has a list of bird watcher volunteers to guide you. They do it for free to share their passion for birds.

The listings are by country, state, town or region, and availability. These folks will help you have a great birding adventure, and you'll make new friends.

HMBC Needs You!

The field trip committee is beginning work on the club field trip schedule for 2010 and we need more trip leaders and coordinators. The field trips that the club is able to offer depend on the willingness of club members to volunteer their time so that we can offer a variety of trips. Without leaders, there will be fewer field trips we can offer.

You do not need to be an expert birder to lead a field trip. You choose where to lead your trip. It doesn't need to be a hotspot- you may know of a nice location that you bird on your own that others might enjoy also. You just need to know the birds usually found there so that you can help the group locate and identify them be familiar enough with a trip site so you can plan the route you will take.

By leading field trips you can hone your own birding skills as well as pick up tips from other members of the group from their birding knowledge and experiences. You also contribute to promoting birding by sharing your love of it with others.

Every one of us that has led field trips had to lead their first one in the past and now it's YOUR turn. Please contact one of the field trip members and volunteer to lead a trip in 2010!

2010 Field Trip Committee

Donna Zimmerman – Chair
518 869-6624
HMBCBirder95@yahoo.com

Bernie Grossman
518 399-9159
bgrossman@nycap.rr.com

John Hershey
518 371-3114
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Corrigendum

Our report on *Century Run 2009* in the August edition of *Feathers* inadvertently omitted the names of those individuals participating with the F group. The portion of the report regarding Group F should have read:

Group F – Carl George*, John Blanchard, John Hershey, Bill Lee, Kathleen LoGiudice, Nancy Slack, Hank Stebbins and Kurt Weiskotten. Watervliet Reservoir, Black Creek Marsh, Beaver Dam Rd., Thacher Park, Chase Rd. Pond, Cole Hill State Forest, Bear Creek Marsh, Basic Creek Reservoir, Stanton Pond, Blossom Hill, Albany, Cohoes Falls, Round and Saratoga lakes and Saratoga Co. Airport, 0500-1730, 113 species. Gadwall, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Sora, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Bonaparte's Gull, Black Tern, Horned Lark, Purple Martin, Tennessee Warbler and Vesper Sparrow.

Champlain Valley: Essex County
Sunday, January 25, 2009

The first stop on the Champlain Valley field trip was the Peru apple orchard where a NORTHERN HAWK OWL had been wintering for several weeks. Usually reliable, the owl was found quickly atop a telephone pole south of the orchard. We were able to approach closely and had good scope views and photos of a very obliging owl. Bohemian Waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks had recently been seen nearby, but we were able to locate only EASTERN BLUEBIRDS, a welcome bit of color on this cold winter's day.

Moving on to the Lake Champlain shore at Cumberland Head, where the ferry to Vermont operates through the winter and keeps an area of water open for wintering waterfowl, the usual COMMON MERGANSERS were accompanied by a drake RED-BREASTED MERGANSER. No sign of the several Barrows Goldeneyes present there in past winters. Moving south along the Champlain shore below Plattsburgh with stops at Valcour, Ausable Point State Park, Port Kent, Essex, Whalon's Bay and Westport, many more waterfowl of the usual wintering species were seen. All three merganser species, BUFFLEHEAD, COMMON GOLDENEYES, RING NECKED DUCKS, and a HORNED GREBE, in addition to the ubiquitous AMERICAN BLACK DUCK and MALLARD DUCK, were all that we could find. Open water toward the middle of the lake held rafts of many hundreds, or more probably thousands, of wintering ducks, tantalizingly just beyond spotting scope range.

With birding of the lake shore completed, we moved inland to the "Essex Triangle", hoping to add wintering passerines to the trip list. Here, too, we were to be disappointed as the usual wintering birds were not to be found. A COMMON RAVEN, a flock of WILD TURKEYS, and a pair of BALD EAGLES soaring along a ridge line were about all to be found. A snow squall approaching from the mountains to the west would soon limit visibility, so we headed for the Northway and home, with only 30 species on the trip list. Thank heaven for the Northern Hawk Owl, which made it all worthwhile.

— Bill Lee

Mohawk River: Cohoes to Crescent
Saturday, February 14, 2009

Seventeen participants gathered at the Cohoes "Flats" on a cold but sunny morning. After scoping the "Flats" from River Street, we caravanned to stops at Bridge, Dyke, and Tibbetts Avenues, where COMMON GOLDENEYE and BUFFLEHEAD allowed a close approach and view in good light. A pair of Peregrine Falcons had taken up residence in a newly placed nest box on the "Collar City" bridge on the Hudson and had been observed by the Thursday Birding Group two days before. Unfortunately, neither could be found that day, apparently hunting elsewhere than the adjacent pigeon roosts. A BALD EAGLE nest in the nearby Green Island Industrial Park was being added to and decorated by a pair of eagles as observed by one of the participants whose office window overlooked the nest site. Although the nest was empty when we arrived, one of the pair was perched nearby in clear view on a limb of a Cottonwood adjacent to the river. A magnificent adult, the eagle was comfortable enough with our presence to remain until each of us had the opportunity to take as many photos and scope views as desired. It was a very nice consolation prize for the absent Peregrines.

We re-traced our route through Cohoes to start upriver along the Mohawk towards Crescent. The pool below Cohoes Falls had a good number of waterfowl but almost no gulls. A female LESSER SCAUP stood out among the many COMMON GOLDENEYE, BUFFLEHEAD, COMMON MERGANSERS, and HOODED MERGANSERS. The view of the falls was spectacular with a substantial volume of water flowing, despite the mostly ice covered river above.

At the Crescent Power Plant pool, an immature BALD EAGLE took flight as we approached and a FISH CROW announced its presence with its nasal call. None of the gulls (much reduced from the usual number) on the ice along this stretch of the river near the Colonie Landfill was the WHITE-WINGED, GLAUCOUS or ICELAND GULLS often found here in winter. Nor could a Lesser Black-backed Gull be found among the GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULLS. With no gulls to be

looked over on the river west of the Crescent Bridge, the trip was ended. With a very low total of twenty-three species recorded, the trip leader consoled himself with the knowledge that some of the participants had been introduced to unfamiliar wintering waterfowl, which were life birds for a few, and had spectacular views of Bald Eagle and Cohoes Falls – both natural wonders.

— Bill Lee

Noblewood Park
Joint Trip, Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club and
Northern New York Audubon Society
Saturday, August 22, 2009

I arrived at Noblewood about an hour before the start of the field trip, and was greeted by a nice mixed species flock along the edge of the woods just across from the blue brick house by the entrance. To my surprise and delight, this flock contained a nice adult male GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER—a first for me at Noblewood. This mixed species flock was still present when trip participants arrived shortly before 9 am, but unfortunately, we could not relocate the GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER. However, the size and activity of the flock made up for its absence, as we spent a solid 15–20 minutes standing in one spot, watching all of the different birds in the area. These included two EASTERN BLUEBIRDS, a few EASTERN WOOD-PEEWEEES, BALTIMORE ORIOLE, ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK, SCARLET TANAGER, VEERY, PINE WARBLER, a family group OF RED-EYED VIREOS, several WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES and a single RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH, many Cedar Waxwings, and even two fly-over CHIMNEY SWIFTS! I occasionally see small flocks of birds in this area, but I think this was the most impressive mixed species flock I've ever seen at Noblewood!

We finally pulled ourselves away from this flock and headed down to the Bouquet River mouth. Although this area did not host the hundreds of gulls and terns that can be present at this time of year, we did all enjoy nice looks at two adult CASPIAN TERNS, a few BONAPARTE'S GULLS in various plumages, an OSPREY, and two BELTED KINGFISHERS. There were only three BONAPARTE'S GULLS present when we arrived, but after I told the group that gulls would sometimes materialize out of thin air, their numbers eventually swelled...all the way to six. Not exactly the six hundred

that I was hoping for, but amazingly, along with these six BONAPARTE'S GULLS was a single second-winter LITTLE GULL! Pat Thaxton and I both picked this bird out independently, and I believe that Sean O'Brien saw it briefly, but as we were alerting the group, it first disappeared behind a larger Bonaparte's, and then it apparently flew off.

The weather was so nice along the lake that we lingered for over an hour, during which time various members of the group saw other birds like SHARP-SHINNED HAWK, RED-TAILED HAWK, HOODED Merganser, two WOOD DUCK, and our only shorebird of the field trip, a KILLDEER. On our way back towards the upper part of the park, we stopped briefly to scan the river for turtles, and we were not disappointed, finding at least three COMMON MAP TURTLES and one PAINTED TURTLE.

I'd like to thank all of the people (about 15 altogether) who joined me on this trip. It was really nice to see a mix of old friends together new faces. We'll have to do it again next year!

— Matt Medler

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

Sunday, August 23, 2009

A trip to Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge in New York City is a wonderful opportunity for local birders to find a wide variety of bird species that are uncommon, rare, or unheard-of in our local 11-county area. Our day trip was carefully scheduled according to the tide tables for Jamaica Bay to coincide with the optimum morning time for shorebirds at the East Pond of the Refuge. Our planning for this day and time could have easily been scuttled by a number of potential problems to be encountered on the trip. First of all was the weather. The forecast called for considerable uncertainty due to Hurricane Bill having passed up the Northeast coast just prior to our arrival. Some rain was predicted for the morning with a possibility of thunderstorms beginning as early as noon. Our major interest on this trip was the celebrated East Pond where each year in late summer the water is drawn down to attract migrating shorebirds. A major concern for birders on the East Pond is the presence of water and sometimes deep mud. Our group was mostly prepared with

waterproof boots of varying heights ranging from ankles to knees. Some decided to go with just plain sneakers that they didn't mind getting immersed in mud and water. Finally, there was the risk of serious traffic jams in the New York City area, either arriving or leaving the Refuge.

Four vehicles and 9 birders converged on Jamaica Bay from different departure points in the Capital Region, and also from New Jersey for one participant. Many of us arrived at the Visitors Center around 9 am. At this point, early bird David Harrison had already located the previously reported MARBLED GODWIT on the West Pond. While we were waiting for the rest of the group to arrive, he was able to lead us to it for our first major sighting. For good measure we also spotted 3 YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS, at least ONE BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON, and an OSPREY and nest. We then proceeded across the street to the south end of the East Pond, joined the late-comers to the group, and began walking around the long, eastern perimeter toward the northern end where the most birding action seemed to be. During our walk, in addition TO GREAT BLUE HERON and GREAT EGRET, we found 3 heron species seldom seen in our own region: SNOWY EGRET, GLOSSY IBIS, and LITTLE BLUE HERON. Later on in the afternoon, some of the group also spotted a TRICOLORED HERON. Shorebirds were, of course, the main reason for coming to the East Pond, and altogether we were rewarded with sightings of 15 different species. Identifying shorebirds can be an advanced skill with many species differing in only subtle ways. With the help of some of our "experts" and other helpful New York City birders, we identified A BAIRD'S SANDPIPER, a few WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPERS, several STILT SANDPIPERS, many SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS, and a WILLET. BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS were fairly common. Other shorebirds included: SEMIPALMATED PLOVER, GREATER YELLOWLEGS, LESSER YELLOWLEGS, SPOTTED SANDPIPER, SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER, and LEAST SANDPIPER. As we worked our way closer to the north end of the East Pond we found a large number of birders focused on what I believe is the most elegant of all the shorebird species I have seen, an AMERICAN AVOCET. Some of us were surprised to see the AVOCET at times resting on his/her belly or knees.

The interesting thing about a shorebird's knees, some of us discovered, is that they bend the opposite way from our own knees. Another treat for myself and many others at the north end was a group of AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHERS, a large, distinctive shorebird that is easy to identify and very unlikely to be seen in the Capital Region. With so many shorebirds present, it was not surprising to find two birdwatchers of a different kind at the western side of the pond – a MERLIN and a PEREGRINE FALCON – perched in trees. Other highlights encountered at the East Pond were MANY FORSTER'S TERNS, a COMMON TERN, and A LAUGHING GULL. We also found a variety of dabbling ducks including NORTHERN SHOVELER, GADWALL, and BLUE-WINGED TEAL which were generally not present yet in the Capital Region but should be fairly common in the fall migration. In addition to some MUTE SWANS, perhaps I should also mention the magnificent Black Swan seen flying over the East Pond, though, it likely is an escaped, domestic bird and definitely not "countable". Although only seen by a few after lunch, a final noteworthy species was a Boat-tailed Grackle.

Most of us took a break around 1:15 pm and had lunch in the Visitors Center parking lot. In part to avoid possible thunderstorms in the afternoon, most of us headed home shortly after this. Although we had a negligible amount of light rain in the morning, we luckily encountered no thunderstorms for the day except while driving home on the Thruway just a few miles south of Albany. There were no serious difficulties with negotiating mud on the East Pond. No one got stuck or was left behind. And, surprisingly, after a day of rather "exotic" birding, many of us were able to make it home to the Albany area shortly after 5 pm and without any significant traffic jams. My total count at the Refuge was 65 species, which included 11 that are not mentioned on HMBC's local species checklist. I didn't count the number of different lifebirds for members of the group but am sure it was considerably higher than 11. Altogether, we were blessed with very good luck, and it was a successful and enjoyable trip.

— John Hershey

Upcoming HMBC Programs

Resource Exploitation, Finch Nesting Events and a Closer Look at Red Crossbill Vocal Types in New York

Matt Young

Monday, October 5, 2009

7:00 PM at the William K. Sanford (Colonie) Town Library

Matthew A. Young has lived in Central New York for the past 12 years and now resides in Scott, NY (Cortland County). Matt received his B.S. in Water Resources from SUNY-Oneonta and his M. S. in Environmental Forest Biology (concentration in Ornithology) from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in 2003. Matt did his masters research at The Great Swamp Conservancy near Canastota, which is now recognized as an Audubon Important Bird Area, and has helped the Cornell Plantations, Finger Lakes Land Trust, and Central New York Land Trust's acquire unique bird and plant habitat in CNY. He is a Kingbird Regional Editor, (The NYS Ornithological Journal) and he sits on the Board of Directors at Lime Hollow Nature Center and Central New York Land Trust. He recently was an Adjunct Professor in Environmental Studies at SUNY-Cortland before accepting a job in 2008 at the Macaulay Library of Natural Sounds as an Audio Production Engineer at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. He wrote the finch (i.e. siskin, grosbeak, crossbills) species accounts for the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas and his research interests involve the study of Red Crossbill vocal types in North America with a focus on the types that occur in the east.

An Introduction to Birding and Bird-Feeding

Scott Stoner and Denise Hackert-Stoner

Monday, November 2, 2009

7:00 PM at the William K. Sanford (Colonie) Town Library

HMBC Open House and New Member Night

Learn why birds are interesting and why "birding" is such a fun and popular hobby - both across America and in our own backyards. In this program we'll cover some basics of identifying birds and how to attract them to our yards. Feeders, bird seed, plantings, and squirrels will be discussed! Come and learn why we enjoy birds so much!

Information about the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club will be available. New members and the public especially invited. Extra refreshments will be served.

Scott is a past president of the HMBC and Capital Region Audubon, and teaches birding classes for both North and South Colonie School Districts Denise is a trip leader and past Director of the bird club. Scott and Denise write a monthly nature column for the Chatham Courier and their work has been published in the Times Union's Life Stories section. They authored a feature story on Christmas Bird Counts in the New York State Conservationist magazine. Together they have birded and traveled across North America but especially enjoy sharing the joy of birding with beginners right here at home.

The Galapagos Islands

Richard Naylor

Monday, February 1, 2010

7:00 PM at the William K. Sanford (Colonie) Town Library

Library Director Richard Naylor will describe his trip to the Galapagos Islands in January of 2006, using photos and video he and his wife took during the trip. Trips to Galapagos differ according to the time of year and the general weather conditions, however each time provides its special interest.

The program will trace the islands, their flora, and fauna from the fresh lava of Isabella to the more developed and heavily populated (with birds) Genovesa. Some of the ravages of man will also be described from the massive taking of giant turtles to the introduction and eradication of goats and dogs.

Richard has been Director of the Library since June of 2008 but was Assistant Director from 1984 to 2008. He has an MLS from Indiana University and an MBA from UAlbany and especially enjoys travel, photography, and of course, reading. He lives with his wife, Edelgard, and two cats in Delmar.

The Recovery of the Bald Eagle in New York

Pete Nye, NYSDEC

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

7:00 PM at Five Rivers Environmental Education Center

Details coming soon.

Upcoming Field Trips

75

OCTOBER

DEAD CREEK WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA, ADDISON, VERMONT

Saturday, October 10 (all day)

Coordinator: Scott Stoner
785-6760
scottjstoner@aol.com

Leader: Bob Budliger

This premier waterfowl site in the Champlain Valley of Vermont can be teeming with Snow Geese around this time of year. There are often a few Ross' Geese mixed in with them. Area ponds have an assortment of puddle ducks and the open fields of the area attract raptors of a variety of species. Bald eagles have been hacked here, so are part of the avifauna now. We will spend the morning at Dead Creek, then travel to a couple of nearby spots offering a chance to bird Lake Champlain.

Meet at the Goose Viewing Area at Dead Creek at 10:00 am (on VT Rt 17, between the VT side of the Crown Point Bridge and Addison, VT). Persons wishing to carpool should contact Scott and meet at the Park & Ride at Exit 9 of the Northway at 7:15 am.

FIVE RIVERS ENVIROMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

Sunday, October 11 (morning)

Coordinator: John Kent
426-7919
jwkent@verizon.net

We'll walk about two miles over generally flat terrain with some small hills, passing through a variety of habitats. A walk on the same weekend in 2008 came up with 6 species of sparrows and 5 species of woodpeckers as well as both species of kinglets. There may still be a few vireos and warblers passing through, and on the ponds we may see Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Wood Duck, and perhaps some other waterfowl. Be prepared to walk in some wet grass and possibly some muddy spots if the weather has been wet. Meet at 8:00 am in the main parking lot by the Visitor Center.

SARATOGA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK & BATTLEFIELD

Monday, October 12 (morning)

Coordinators: Scott Stoner &
Denise Hackert-Stoner
785-6760
scottjstoner@aol.com

This popular mid-fall trip features beautiful foliage and a good chance of hawks, woodpeckers, sparrows, bluebirds and late migrants as we walk the woods and grasslands of the Saratoga Battlefield.

We'll walk about two miles along the popular Wilkinson Trail and perhaps some of the tour road; portions of the walk are hilly. Over the years these trips have found Fox Sparrow, Hermit Thrush, Pine Warbler, Common Raven and even Red-headed Woodpecker, so one never knows what will turn up. Meet at 9:00 am in the parking lot near the park's visitor center (off Rt 32). The National Park Service charges a fee to walk the Wilkinson Trail, payable at the visitor center. Bring lunch if you would like to join us to picnic in back of the visitor center at the end of the trip. Please wear bright clothing as there may be hunting on land adjacent to the park.

NOVEMBER

TOMHANNOCK RESERVOIR

Saturday, November 7 (morning)

Coordinator: Larry Alden
861-6087
overlook@nycap.rr.com

Join us for a morning that circum-navigates the Tomhannock Reservoir. We should find a good variety of waterfowl as well as migrant and resident passerines and possibly shorebirds. Rarities such as Ross' Goose and Gray Kingbird have turned up at the Tomhannock in the fall, and we often find a Bald Eagle or two. Meet at 8:30 am at the parking area at the intersection of Lake Shore Dr. & NY Rt 7 at the west end of the causeway. Bring a scope if you have one.

DECEMBER

CAMPFIRE & OWLING AT FIVE RIVERS (LATE FALL SOCIAL)

Saturday, December 12
(late afternoon - evening)

Coordinators: Scott Stoner &
Denise Hackert-Stoner
785-6760
scottjstoner@aol.com

Joint program with the Audubon Society of the Capital Region

Great Horned Owls are often heard calling around dusk at this time of year in the deep pine woods at Five Rivers. In this special joint program, we will meet at 4:00 pm at the visitor center at Five Rivers for a brief introduction, then walk about 1 mile out to a woods that has been productive for owls in the past. Along the way or on the way back, stop around our blazing campfire and enjoy a hot dog and a cup of hot chocolate. The owls are never guaranteed, but a good time is nearly a certainty in this popular event returning to the HMBC schedule. Reservations are needed in advance (so we know how much food to buy) by contacting Scott or Denise.

SCHENECTADY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Saturday, December 17

Coordinator: Bill Lee

SOUTHERN RENSSELAER CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Saturday, December 26

Coordinator: Philip Whitney

JANUARY 2010

TROY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2010

Saturday, January 2 2010

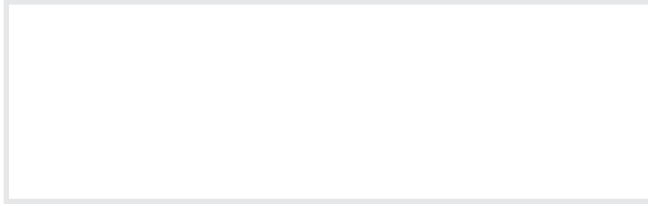
Coordinator: Larry Alden

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THANK YOU!

Please make check payable to: **Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, Inc.**
and mail with this form to:
HUDSON-MOHAWK BIRD CLUB, INC.
Dan Welch, Membership Chair
c/o TSV
700 Columbia Turnpike
East Greenbush, NY 12061

Any number of household
members may be included in a
single membership

Student \$ 6.00
Active (Household) \$ 20.00
Sustaining \$ 30.00
Life \$ 250.00 (payable in two annual payments of \$125.00 each)

**Membership
Category**

(Please circle one category)

We wish to apply for a membership in the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club Inc., as indicated below:

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Have you borrowed this copy of *Feathers* from someone else? Why not become a member? Or, are you a member who has overlooked your membership renewal?

Join HMBC/Renew Your Membership