

# Feathers

## **Viet Nam Birding**

by **Bruce Sowalski and Lorraine Ferguson**

Recently on a two-week tour of Vietnam we added some birding to our itinerary. Vietnam has become a tourism destination and is a great, and safe, place to travel. It also has some outstanding birding. We did ½ day at Bach Ma National Park in the Central Highlands, and the next morning in the wetlands outside Hoi An. Our guide was Luc Nguyen, of Vietnam Eco Tours. ( <http://ecoguidevietnam.com/> )

We got to see over 60 birds – including the Asian Palm Swift, Black Drongo, Green Bee-eater, Ashy Minivet, the Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker, and a lot of Chinese Pond Herons. Luc is a great guide, and he added a side trip to Son Tra Nature Preserve outside of Da Nang (known to US Vets as Monkey Mountain) to see the Red-shanked Douc, a colorful and rare Langur monkey.

We booked our tour through Travel Vietnam, [www.travelvietnam.com](http://www.travelvietnam.com), which handled the complete itinerary – guides, drivers, hotels, and travel to Hanoi, Hue, Hoi An, Dalat, Saigon, and Can Tho in the Mekong Delta.

### **Inside This Issue...**

Viet Nam Birding.....	25
President's Corner.....	26
HMBC Birding Guide.....	27
Announcements.....	28
Field Trip Reports.....	29
Upcoming HMBC Programs .....	34
Upcoming ASCR Programs.....	37
Writers' Page.....	38
Artists' Page.....	39
On Nature.....	40
Upcoming Field Trips.....	43

**HMBC BOARD**  
Officers

**President:**

Gregg Recer  
23 Scotch Mist Way  
Malta, NY 12020  
518-899-2678  
[gregg\\_recer@alum.rpi.edu](mailto:gregg_recer@alum.rpi.edu)

**Vice-President::**

Vacant

**Secretary:**

Debra Ferguson  
3 Castle Point Rd  
Athens, NY 12015  
518-221-3857 [zray.zreee@gmail.com](mailto:zray.zreee@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:**

Ellen Pemrick  
117 Western Ave  
West Charlton, NY 12010  
518-882-9163 [lnmp@nycap.rr.com](mailto:lnmp@nycap.rr.com)

**Directors**

Angelika Beckman  
607-220-8070 [angelika.beckman@yahoo.com](mailto:angelika.beckman@yahoo.com)

Bruce Dudek  
518-452-4938 [bdudek2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:bdudek2@nycap.rr.com)

Eric Molho  
518-439-6592 [mohorising@aol.com](mailto:mohorising@aol.com)

Patti Fuller

Tristan Lowery [tristanlowery@gmail.com](mailto:tristanlowery@gmail.com)

**Committee Chairs**

**Audit:** vacant

**Conservation:** Kathy Schneider  
[fallline@nycap.rr.com](mailto:fallline@nycap.rr.com)

**Field Trips:** Tom Williams  
[trwdsd@yahoo.com](mailto:trwdsd@yahoo.com)

**Membership:** Gregg Recer  
899-2678 [gregg\\_recer@alum.rpi.edu](mailto:gregg_recer@alum.rpi.edu)

**Outreach:** Vacant

**Programs:** Scott Stoner  
785-6760 [programs@hmhc.net](mailto:programs@hmhc.net)

**Publications:** Denise Hackert-Stoner  
[denisehstoner@aol.com](mailto:denisehstoner@aol.com)

**Records:** Will Raup  
944-8711 [hoaryredpoll@hotmail.com](mailto:hoaryredpoll@hotmail.com)

**Reist Sanctuary:** Philip Johnson  
[soomee4@earthlink.net](mailto:soomee4@earthlink.net)

**Social:** vacant

**Technology:** John Kent  
424-2234 [jwkent@fastmail.fm](mailto:jwkent@fastmail.fm)

**Youth:** Vacant

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Happy Spring! This month marks the end of my third consecutive (and final) term as HMBC President. During that time a lot of good things have happened with the Club -- the credit for which goes to a lot of other people besides me -- starting with hosting a very successful 2015 Annual Meeting of the New York State Ornithological Association; that was a collective effort of many Club members who all did a great job. We've had a lot of success with a re-invigorated Conservation Committee program led by Kathy Schneider. Similarly, we've continued to develop closer coordination on issues of common interest related to the Reist Sanctuary with Union College and the Kelly Adirondack Center through the work of both Mike Gann and Phil Johnson. Unfortunately, Phil will be leaving the area later this year, so there will be a need for someone to step into the Sanctuary Chair role to continue those good efforts.

Our web and social media presence continues to improve thanks to David Martin and Tristan Lowery, with enhancements including online membership registration and a more active Facebook page. We've also engaged with a variety of other local organizations such as the Pine Bush Discovery Center, students from 2 local schools, the New York State Museum, the Fort Edward Friends of the IBA, Five Rivers, the Town of Clifton Park and the Mohawk Towpath Byway in various ways to help promote appreciation of birding, nature, and the outdoors.

Throughout this whole period the Club continues to do a great job with its core activities -- monthly programs (Scott Stoner), field trips (led by Bernie Grossman, and now Tom Williams, and with a long list of other volunteers who help develop the annual field trip schedule and actually lead trips all over the local area and beyond), publications (Chris Grossman and now Denise Hackert-Stoner), our Web site and HMBirds (John Kent, David Martin), and the more mundane but no less important jobs of Club management and oversight (many board members during my 3 years, but I want to especially thank Treasurer Ellen Pemrick and Secretary Deb Ferguson for their tireless efforts on what are otherwise thankless tasks). I continue to be impressed with the energy, enthusiasm, and creative thinking of a great group of people who keep this organization going. Thanks to all of you for all your help during my tenure.

Even with all that, I want to put in yet another pitch for more of you to look for ways to contribute to what is, ultimately, your organization. Anybody can contribute, regardless of birding ability or Club experience. The main prerequisites are interest and enthusiasm. I'm happy to report that the 2018 nominations committee has been able to recruit a number of new people into Club leadership positions. But, there's always a need for more help and more fresh ideas.

With that, I'll say thank you for the opportunity to help move HMBC forward the last 3 years. Enjoy the spring time, and I hope to see you soon at a Club program or field trip.

Gregg Recer

**You, too, can contribute to Feathers!**

- Do you have a birding story or photos that might be of interest to other birders?
- Have you led a field trip for HMBC?
- Have you written short prose or poetry on the subject of birds? We're starting a Writers' Page!
- Did you take a birding vacation?
- Do you have a favorite birding spot?

SHARE them with HMBC members by submitting them to:

*HMBC Contact Information*  
**BIRDLINE of EASTERN NEW YORK:**  
**E-mail:** [contact@hmbc.net](mailto:contact@hmbc.net)  
**HMBC website:** <http://hmbc.net>

Please send all **electronic submissions for Feathers** via e-mail to:  
 Denise Hackert-Stoner at [DeniseHStoner@aol.com](mailto:DeniseHStoner@aol.com).

Send all paper submissions to:  
**Denise Hackert-Stoner**  
**6 Knob Hill Road.**  
 Loudonville,  
 NY  
 12211

**New printing of *Birding New York's Hudson Mohawk Region* is now available**

***Birding New York's Hudson Mohawk Region***, a new printing of HMBC's classic book, is now available. A copy is \$20 for HMBC members and \$25 for non-members. An additional charge of \$5 for postage and handling will be added to the price per book. Contact Gregg Recer [gregg\\_recer@alum.rpi.edu](mailto:gregg_recer@alum.rpi.edu) or (518) 899-2678 if you are interested in purchasing a copy. Checks should be made out to **Hudson Mohawk Bird Club** and should be sent to:

Gregg Recer  
 23 Scotch Mist Way  
 Malta, NY 12020

## Announcements

### **NEW PAGE FOR FEATHERS!**

The April 2018 issue of Feathers features the debut of our Artists' Page. Any visual art that depicts birds or birding is welcome, and we hope to include one in each edition. To submit your drawings, paintings, photographs, or other bird-related art, email them to [denisehstoner@aol.com](mailto:denisehstoner@aol.com) .

### **Call for Speakers!**

Hi everyone, as HMBC Program Chair, I am always seeking speakers for our monthly programs as well as our annual banquet. If you have a program you might present, or know of someone who is a prospective speaker, please contact me at [scottjstoner@aol.com](mailto:scottjstoner@aol.com) . Thanks so very much! Scott Stoner, Program Chair

## Field Trip Reports

### Fort Edward Grasslands – February 3, 2018

This afternoon about a dozen birders checked a variety of key sites in the Washington county grasslands (Fort Edward Grasslands) IBA. In chilly winds we found snowy owls (photographed by several of us), about 5 Northern Harriers, a half dozen Rough legged Hawks and an American Kestrel. A quick detour to the Hudson River produced a Bald Eagle and about 20 Common Mergansers. Passerines were nearly absent. Thanks to all who braved the cold to join us on this fun afternoon! P.S. after the trip had formally ended, Naomi L. stayed and added one short-eared owl!

Scott Stoner and Denise Hackert-Stoner  
Loudonville



Snowy Owl, Fort Edward Grasslands

## Field Trip Reports *(continued.....)*

### Cape Ann & Newburyport, MA -- Feb 17-19, 2018

The annual winter-birding extravaganza that is a long February weekend in Cape Ann and Newburyport lived up to the hype this year. We had a big group (8 - 12 depending on who joined on different days). We started things off quickly with great close-in views of purple sandpipers at Stage Fort Park in Gloucester, plus a good cross-section of the widespread sea ducks including common eider, black and white-winged scoters, red-breasted merganser, and long-tailed duck. We added glaucous gull and red-throated loon at the Jodrey State Fish Pier, and then headed to Bass Rocks where we got our start on what turned out to be an incredible weekend for alcids. A staked-out thick-billed murre gave everyone great scope views there. Although the king eider reported at Pebble Beach in Rockport did not materialize, we added our first of many groups of harlequin duck there, as well as great cormorant. We capped the first day off with red-necked grebe at Andrew's Pt, and sustained scope effort that produced our first dovekie at Cathedral Ledge.

Day 2 began with a dumping of a good 6 - 8 inches of snow overnight, resulting in something of mis-fire at Plum Island as the Parker River refuge road was not open because of the snow. Nevertheless, we worked the north end of the island, and then across the river at Salisbury Beach, turning up a good variety of birds including northern gannet, northern harrier, bald eagle, iceland gull, horned lark, and savannah sparrow. We then returned to Cape Ann working from the opposite direction and had a nice group of brant at Plum Cove, and our third alcid species of the trip with a common murre -- along with another dovekie and dozens of harlequin ducks -- at Halibut Pt State Park. We ended the day with a fantastic seafood dinner right on the harbor in Gloucester.

The last day started with bright sunshine; we headed straight back to Gloucester in search of more alcids. Working the entire stretch along Atlantic Ave, we had long looks at another dovekie hanging out fairly close to shore in the surf line. Despairing of the lack of black guillemots, we were nearly at the end of the open shore viewing when first a very pale winter-plumaged guillemot was located, followed by a full breeding-plumaged adult, and at least 2 others in basic or something intermediate between basic and alternate. The water was quite choppy and we worked a long time, but eventually everyone had good looks at some or all of them. With 4 alcids for the weekend (there had also been a few puffins reported around the cape, but we did not get quite that lucky), anything else to be added before the group broke up to head home was gravy. After a stop at East Pt Preserve where nothing new turned up, some of the group went their various ways.

The remaining contingent had some great surf-views of more brant at Brace Cove, and was then ready to hit the road. One final check of the local rare bird reports revealed that a slaty-backed gull had been reported at the State Fish Pier only about one hour earlier that morning. Those of us remaining high-tailed back there and were rewarded with spectacular looks at the bird swimming in calm water almost within arm's reach, and then eventually giving us good flight views of its interesting combination of features including: dark gray mantle, heavy streaking down the head and chest, light tips in the underside of the primaries, and dark-pink feet. This was a life-bird for everyone still present (sorry to those who left early and missed it!) -- most incredibly this included our most veteran trip member Bill Lee. Bill led this same HMBC trip itinerary for many years, and Cathy and I have learned practically everything we know about that area from him. Getting Bill a life bird on a local or regional field trip is an achievement we can't hope to duplicate anytime soon!

Thanks to all the participants who made the trip a lot of fun, as well as a great success.

Gregg Recer  
Cathy Graichen

## Field Trip Reports *(continued.....)*



Common Eider



Surf Scoter



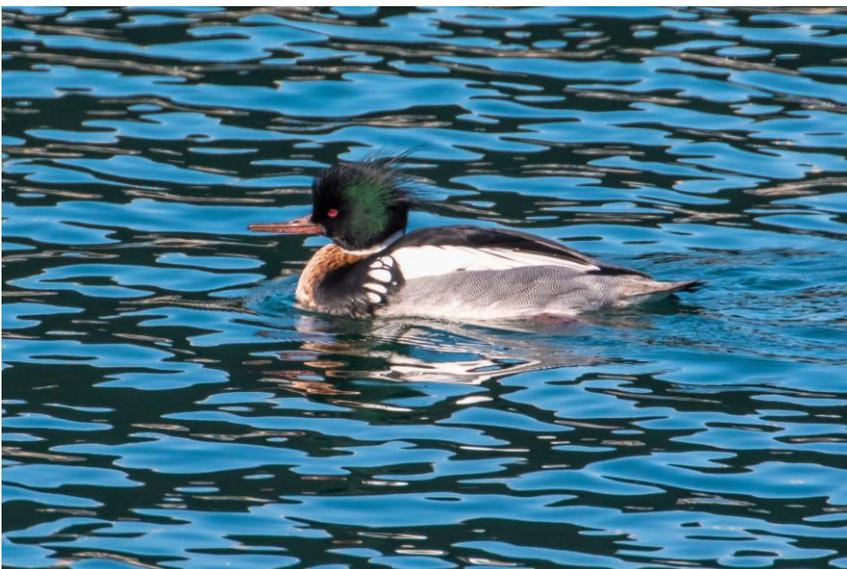
Slaty-backed Gull



**Purple Sandpiper**



**Harlequin Ducks**



**Red-breasted Merganser**

## Field Trip Reports *(continued.....)*

### **Ernest R Lasher Memorial Park, Germantown – March 31, 2018**

A beautiful early spring day greeted birders at Ernest R. Lasher Memorial Park in Germantown, Columbia County this morning. Under bright blue skies, we deployed our scopes at the boat launch to observe the comings and goings along the Hudson River. There were two Great Cormorants perched on the base of the navigation light marked "CB" (Upper Coal Beds Light), south of Germantown. Although they were quite a distance away, the white throat and bill could be seen when the birds turned their heads. One of them also revealed the characteristic white flank patch as well. Many Double-crested Cormorants were swimming and perched nearby, or flying upriver in small groups. Waterfowl were not particularly numerous, although many groups of migrating Canada Geese were observed flying north in formation. One or two Tree Swallows were noted flying upriver just above the water. At the parking area, two Eastern Phoebes were flitting among the trees and shrubs along the shoreline.

Our group split up after leaving Lasher Park. One group headed farther east into Columbia County, the second moved on to RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary(RHLS) in Catskill. At RHLS we walked south along the trail to the observation tower, and then down to RamsHorn Creek, which was near low tide. On the way we heard a Fox Sparrow singing a rich, whistled song. At the tower we observed a pair of Eastern Phoebes interacting. In past years they have constructed a nest under one of the observation decks. A Carolina Wren was singing loudly, along with numerous Song Sparrows. The marsh was quiet outside of Red-winged Blackbirds on territory. We could see the distant Bald Eagle nest, but could not see any activity on it. At the creek we flushed four Great Blue Herons farther upstream.

Many thanks to the group that turned out for the trip, it was a lot of fun. Special thanks to Bill Cook and the members of the Alan DeVoe Bird Club that joined us. We hope to see you all again on future outings!

Tom & Colleen Williams  
Colonie

## Upcoming HMBC Programs

### HMBC Annual Meeting, Dinner, and Program

**Speaker:**

Katerina Paleckova

**Location of Event:**

Century House, 997 New Loudon Road, Latham

**Date:**

April 11, 6-10pm

**Topic:** Albatross Up Close

Observe the beauty and life of Laysan Albatross and other bird species, which inhabit the islands of Midway Atoll, thousands of kilometers from any continent, in the middle of the northern Pacific Ocean. Laysan Albatross are large seabirds with a wingspan of nearly 7 feet. They are able to fly and soar large distances. This collection of photos and videos was collected during a volunteer trip to conduct an albatross nest census. Photographing a large and dense bird colony during breeding and nesting season is an experience unlike any other and the opportunity to be within few inches from these non-threatening birds is exhilarating.

Katerina's curiosity about animals and nature was instilled in her in her grandparents' backyard in the Czech Republic, where she grew up playing with domestic animals while helping tend to the orchard and vegetable patch. She also hiked the nearby mountains since she was 5 and vividly remembers when her father threatened to leave her to the wolves if she didn't keep walking when she got stuck in high snow. She enjoys extreme weather like snowstorms and loves exploring and photographing birds and other wildlife near and far. Katerina hopes to inspire love for nature in others. As a professional she is a graphic design/art director in the brand and package design field. She also frequently works with nature organizations to create logos or signage and enjoys volunteering for bird conservation.



## Upcoming HMBC Programs ..... (continued)

**Speaker:**

Scott Stoner and Denise Hackert-Stoner

**Location of Event:**

Five Rivers EEC

**Date:**

May 7, 2018 - 7:00pm - 8:30pm

**Topic:** How to Photograph Birds

In this fast-paced one hour workshop we will cover the key elements of bird photography including light, composition, and focus. We'll discuss equipment, ways to approach and attract birds, how to get the best angles and composition in the field, and simple editing techniques.

Scott and Denise are professional nature photographers based in Albany. Their award-winning photography has been exhibited widely across New York's Capital Region and published in National Wildlife Magazine, five times on the cover of The Kingbird, in the New York State Conservationist, and in several books including the New York Wildlife Viewing Guide. Many of their photos are featured in the permanent exhibits at the new Visitor Center at the Five Rivers Environmental Education Center in Delmar, NY. They have taught numerous nature photography workshops throughout the Capital Region, from Dyken Pond to Cobleskill, and have served as the judges for the Albany Pine Bush photo contest for the past 3 years. They are long-time members and past officers of the HMBC. For more information or to view some of their work, please visit [www.naturelogues.com](http://www.naturelogues.com) or find Naturelogues on Facebook.



## Upcoming HMBC Programs ..... (continued)

**Speaker:**

Don Morton

**Location of Event:**

Five Rivers EEC

**Date:**

June 4, 2018 - 7:00pm - 8:30pm

**Topic:** The Galapagos

This trip was the inspiration for a hobby to photograph birds which I have enjoyed for many years as the birds on the Galapagos Islands are so friendly one does not need any fancy equipment or long telephoto lenses in order to obtain interesting photographs.

**Speaker:**

Tom Lake

**Location:**

TBA

**Date:**

Sept. 10, 2018 – 7:00 – 8:30

**Topic:** The Rainforests of South America

## UPCOMING ASCR PROGRAMS



April 12- May 3, 2018  
at the Kelly Adirondack Center of Union College  
897 St. David's Lane, Niskayuna

Above: Gentoo Penguins  
Photograph by Deborah  
Albert, 2017 Grand Prize  
Winner

### **National Audubon Photography Awards Traveling Exhibit - April 12, 2018 : 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM**

Photo exhibit at the Kelly Adirondack Center, & ALL events are FREE & Open to the Public!

**Location:** Kelly ADK Center, 897 St. David's Lane, Niskayuna, NY

Additional programming will compliment this three-week exhibition with additional opportunities to see the 12 hand-picked prints from the top winners of the 2017 National Audubon Society Photography Awards.

**Thursday April 12th 5:30 to 7:30pm** - Opening Reception - Enjoy 'gandering' at the 12 photography awards prints while enjoying light refreshments and 'Live Birds of Prey' in the grassy back courtyard of the Kelly Adirondack Center.

**Saturday April 14th - 8:00am** - Beginners Bird Walk at Reist Sanctuary (adjacent to Kelly Adirondack Center). The Kelly Adirondack Center will be open for special Saturday hours.

**Thursday April 26th** - Speaker's Reception, 5:30pm - Enjoy light refreshments and viewing the photography awards exhibit prior to the special 7:00pm program at the Old Chapel at the end of Liberty Lane on the Union College Campus.

**Thursday May 2nd** - Photo Exhibition closes

### **Other ASCR Events:**

**Schodack Island S.P. Raptor Fest!** - May 19, 2018 : 10 AM - 4 PM

**Landis Arboretum Native Plant Sale Day Su** - May 20, 2018  
"ASCR tabling". Fred Breglia on behalf of ASCR

**WRITERS' PAGE**

Little Wren at Oak Grove RV Park  
by Marilyn Hamecher

There's a high trill coming from over there.  
It is so compelling, it cuts through the air.

Waking the stillness of my curiosity and wonder.  
Where and what can it be, it's louder than thunder.

I caught a glimpse of this little brown bird.  
It's a Wren, singing a song I've never heard.

He's giving these Snow Birds a taste of his spark.  
And flew into a window of a coach that was parked.

The owner awoke to a cheery, melodic sound.  
Curious of its closeness, he looked all around.

The warbling grew louder than the day before.  
Patiently waiting for someone to open the door.

He was perched on the steering wheel of Mike's RV.  
Unruffled, he stayed the night just waiting to be free.

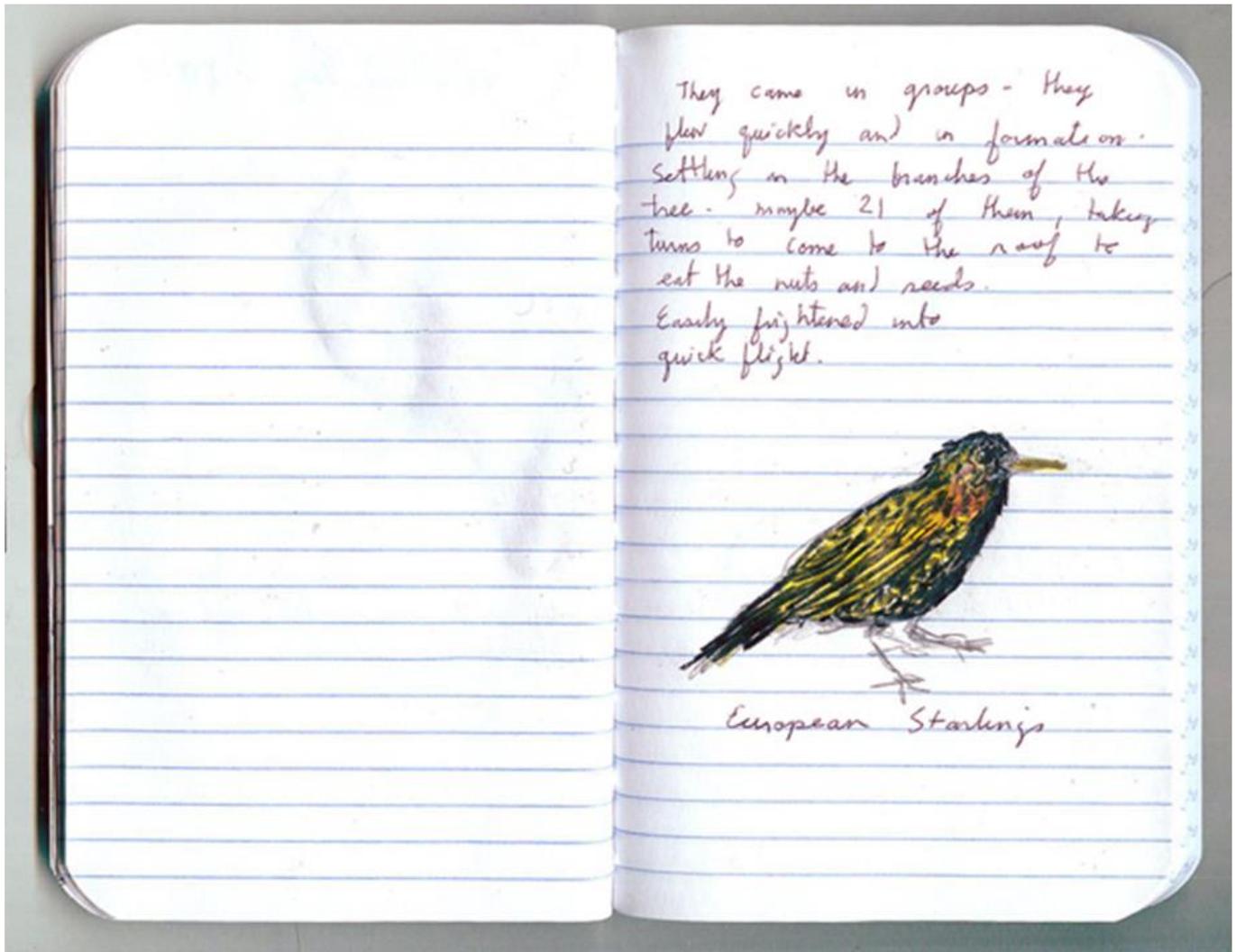
Was he bringing a message of the arrival of Spring.  
Or keeping a promise to come to Oak Park and sing.

Perhaps his song is a message of what is to be..  
Or a warning of bad weather coming in from the sea.

## ARTISTS' PAGE

Thank you to Dagmar Frinta, for contributing her nature journal page including her drawing of a European Starling!

We encourage anyone with paintings or drawings to send them in. One will be featured in each edition of Feathers' new Artists' Page! Send to [denisehstoner@aol.com](mailto:denisehstoner@aol.com).



## ON NATURE

### In Search of the (Northern) Light(s)

by Scott Stoner

After leaving Albany in the pre-dawn darkness, getting the plane deiced, and barely making connections in Chicago and Seattle, we landed at a snow-covered airport in the middle of Alaska's great interior. From one winter place in March to another? As we stared out the window of the plane at the great snow clearing machines and piles of snow, we wondered, what were we doing? Why did we even come here?

The answer was in the heavens. Not in a religious sense, but in the skies themselves, as the energy ejected from the sun, carried to earth via the solar wind and drawn in by the earth's magnetic field causes the oxygen and other elements in our upper atmosphere to emit the most beautiful green and other colors! The northern lights, or aurora borealis, often are found in an oval ring around the magnetic north pole. This ring often passes over Fairbanks Alaska, and the spring equinox is the best time to observe it. For our purposes, Fairbanks is the capital of the world. And we were there in search of the Northern Lights!

I'd seen the northern lights twice. Once, very distant, from the northern reaches of here in the Capital District, and once from a train heading to Churchill, Manitoba. On that trip, the leader banged on my cabin door in the wee hour of the morning, urgently telling me to look out the window! While that certainly was a thrill, it was just a fleeting glance through a window.

We were there for a week, most of which was an aurora viewing tour. Arriving early in case of winter weather related travel delays and to get over the four hour jet lag, we woke up about 2 AM the first night, and headed out to the hotel parking lot for an initial search. No luck. We learned that we really needed to get out of the city, far from other light sources, to really see them. The next night was better, and we were able to join the group for some pre-tour viewing. We took the bus up the Steese Expressway about 15 miles north of Fairbanks. Excitement grew as we began glimpsing the lights along the way. After driving up a snow-covered side road to a high point, we were out in near total darkness save a bit of reflection in the sky from Fairbanks to the south. The lower part of the skies was filled with the most amazing green lights. It was like nothing we had seen before; it was the sole reason we were there and despite people all around, we are alone with the lights. Setting up our tripods on the road and using the settings we had researched and techniques we had prepared for, and ignoring the cold, we photographed until our hands were numb and everyone else had long returned to the bus. Heading back to Fairbanks, we felt that our mission was already accomplished; almost like we could go home!

The next night had clear skies but the aurora was barely visible and very low in the sky. We photographed the stars and headed back to the hotel. Unfortunately, I began getting sick, and we would miss the next several days of the trip because of that. Finally able to rejoin the group, we were plagued by clouds and snow and canceled viewing. We repeatedly checked the weather forecasts and the auroral forecasts from the University of Alaska's Geophysical Institute, on phone apps, and Spaceweather.com. We learned to get excited as the aurora forecast "Kp number" (a global geomagnetic storm index) rose to 3 or even higher, to see photos from other parts of the world, and to see how bright the oval was and whether it was close to Fairbanks. We were impressed with how knowledgeable the waiter and the hotel desk staff were, how they all had aurora forecasts on their phones, and how the taxi driver offered aurora tours. We also learned that high Kp forecasts did not necessarily bring great viewing, and the aurora was not visible through thick clouds, and that seeing and photographing a great aurora is a really difficult thing to do!

## On Nature ..... (continued)

But despite the many factors that can work against the aurora viewer, Fairbanks is touted to be the best place in the world to see the Northern Lights. It is typically under the intense aurora band, and has readily accessible dark areas to view from, and typically has enough clear skies to make a great experience a strong possibility if one can stay for several nights. There were many aurora tours underway while we were there, and hordes of people who flew there from many thousands of miles for the chance to see the lights in the sky. Despite snow, clouds, sickness and low auroral activity, we had two nights of unforgettable viewing!

Finally, on the night before we were to leave, the skies aligned, the KP index was high and the skies were clear up the hill outside of town, so we headed out. With a strong auroral display, we stopped at the Alaska Pipeline visitor area about 10 miles north of Fairbanks, where the dancing green lights above the pipeline made for a unique and iconic Alaska scene! Finally pulling ourselves away from there, we continued north to a pullout near our stop at the beginning of the tour. The lights were incredible, reaching high into the sky and moving rapidly across it, mostly green once again. Although we were unable to reach the more remote area with the larger bus, and were plagued by lights from vehicles and flash photographers, we were still able to get a number of shots to record an experience that will remain in our memories forever.

Scott Stoner





## Upcoming Field Trips

### April

**Saturday, April 7, VOSBURGH MARSH** (Greene County; morning)

Coordinator/Leader: Al Mapes 518-817-1512 [alanmapes@gmail.com](mailto:alanmapes@gmail.com)

On this morning trip, we will hike to the marsh for waterfowl and migrant land birds. We will also check the Hudson River for waterfowl and Bald Eagles.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Coxsackie boat launch. From the intersection of Rt. 9W and Rt. 385 in Coxsackie, go east on Rt. 385 (Mansion St.) to the bottom of the long hill. Turn left onto Reed Street, then left again on S. River Street and into the State boat launch parking lot.

**Saturday, April 14, EARLY MIGRANTS AT FIVE RIVERS EEC** (Albany County; morning)

Coordinators/Leaders: Tom and Colleen Williams 518-857-2176 [trwdsd@yahoo.com](mailto:trwdsd@yahoo.com)

Join us for a three mile walk throughout the Five Rivers property. We will explore fields, ponds and marshes, portions of the service road, the Vlomankill corridor, and finish with a loop around the Beaver Pond. More than forty bird species can be observed on a favorable day in mid-April.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot at Five Rivers EEC in Delmar. Note new parking arrangement and follow signs.

**Sunday, April 15, VISCHER FERRY NATURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVE (VFNHP)** (Saratoga County; morning)

Coordinator: John Hershey 518-371-3114 [hersheyj@nycap.rr.com](mailto:hersheyj@nycap.rr.com)

We will start out on this trip looking for spring waterfowl such as American Wigeon, Green and Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Wood Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, and Pied-billed Grebe. Other possibilities include Virginia Rail, American Bittern, Palm Warbler and Rusty Blackbird.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the VFNHP main entrance, at the intersection of Riverview and Van Vranken Rds. in Clifton Park.

**Saturday, April 28, PEBBLES ISLAND STATE PARK** (Saratoga County; morning)

Coordinator: Gary Goodness 518-862-9260 [goodness@nycap.rr.com](mailto:goodness@nycap.rr.com)

Peebles Island is an ideal environment to watch spring migration. Expect to see songbirds, sandpipers, waterfowl and the rest of an early mix of migrants.

Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot of Peebles Island SP. There may be a State Park parking fee, so carpool if you can.

**Sunday, April 29, POWELL SANCTUARY** (Columbia County; morning)

Coordinator: Kathy Schneider 518-248-8665 [fallline@nycap.rr.com](mailto:fallline@nycap.rr.com) (Joint trip with the Alan DeVoe Bird Club.)

This 145-acre preserve has been owned and managed by the Alan Devoe Bird Club since 1959. It features a beaver pond with an observation blind, neighboring farm fields, and Dorson's Rock, a sandstone ledge that offers good hawk watching and a panoramic view of the Hudson Valley. There are 3 miles of moderate, well-marked trails throughout the sanctuary, which is mostly woods. The club's list for this site has more than 200 species, including 20 species of warblers.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Wilson M. Powell Wildlife Sanctuary, 75 Hunt Club Road, Old Chatham. From the junction of County Route 13 and Albany Turnpike in the hamlet of Old Chatham, travel southwest on County Route 13 for 0.9 miles to Pitt Hall Road on the left, where two signs mark the road to Powell House and the sanctuary. Follow Pitt Hall Road 0.25 miles, then bear left (east) onto Hunt Club Road and continue 0.25 miles to the main parking lot.

## UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS..... (continued)

### May

**Saturday, May 5, 2018 - 7:30am - 12:00pm, STILLWATER SCHOOL NATURE TRAIL** (Saratoga County, Morning)

Coordinator: Naomi Lloyd 518-596-5964 [naomi\\_kestrel@yahoo.com](mailto:naomi_kestrel@yahoo.com)

The Stillwater Schools Nature Trail has an expansive open marsh on the north side, with Least Bittern, Green Heron, and Virginia Rail present. The wetland continues along the south side, but it is not as open. The wide trail continues to the Hudson where it then turns left and follows the river through a deciduous forest.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the trail entrance. Turn off Rt. 4 in Stillwater at the road to the school complex, and drive to the end. The trail starts at a chain link gate.

**Sunday, May 6, HARLEM VALLEY RAIL TRAIL** (Columbia County; morning)

Coordinator: Marian Sole 203-710-9096 [mrnsole7@gmail.com](mailto:mrnsole7@gmail.com) (Joint trip with the Alan DeVoe Bird Club.)

This former railroad bed has been turned into a paved public trail, running north to south through extreme southeastern Columbia County. We'll walk a mile or so on a portion of the trail that is home to many woodland species. Cerulean Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, and Hooded Warbler have all been observed in the area in recent years.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Under Mountain Road parking area. From the north: Taconic Parkway south to Route 23. Take Rt. 23 east to Hillsdale and pick up Route 22 south at the stop light. Take Route 22 south from Hillsdale 8.6 miles to Under Mountain Road. Under Mountain Road is on your left, five-tenths of a mile past the Citgo gas station located at the intersection of Route 22 and Columbia County Route 3. There is a bright blue sign just before Under Mountain Road directing motorists to the trail. Turn left on to Under Mountain Road (if you pass the scenic pull-off along Route 22, you've missed the turn for Under Mountain Road). Proceed three-tenths of a mile to the trail parking lot on your left.

**Saturday, May 12, BIRDS & BREAKFAST AT FIVE RIVERS EEC** (Albany County; morning)

Coordinators: Scott Stoner and Denise Hackert-Stoner 518-785-6760 [scottjstoner@aol.com](mailto:scottjstoner@aol.com)

Our annual celebration of the arrival of spring will be held at Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, located along Game Farm Rd. in Delmar. The center has an excellent trail system through a variety of habitats. You can expect to see and hear many resident and migrant species, including warblers, thrushes, vireos, and orioles, along with a few waterfowl and herons. A typical year results in about 70 species; a good year for migrants can top 80!

An early group will meet in the parking lot at 6:00 a.m. Additional groups will leave at 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. You may join one of these groups or go out on your own as we try to find as many species as possible. We'll rally at the new Visitors Center at 10:30 a.m. for coffee, doughnuts, bagels, fresh fruit and a list compilation. The breakfast is free, but donations are welcome!

**Sunday, May 13, VISCHER FERRY NATURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVE (VFNHP) MIGRANTS** (Saratoga County; morning)

Coordinators: Gregg Recer and Cathy Graichen 518-899-2678 [gregg.recer@gmail.com](mailto:gregg.recer@gmail.com)

This is one of the club's most popular spring trips. We will explore this varied site for warblers and other songbirds as well as marsh species including herons and rails.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the VFNHP main entrance, at the intersection of Riverview and Van Vranken Rds. in Clifton Park.

## UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS..... (continued)

### **Saturday, May 19, CENTURY RUN** (NYS Region 8; all day)

Compiler: Larry Alden 518-861-6087 [overlook@nycap.rr.com](mailto:overlook@nycap.rr.com)

This is the Club's 73rd Guy Bartlett Century Run, where teams of birders try to find as many species of birds as they possibly can in a single day within the eleven county NYS Region 8. Each group must stay together and jointly identify species reported.

The Century Run is not so much a field trip, but a challenge where you or your group tries to identify as many birds as possible in a 24-hour period. Groups informally compete for bragging rights, but the results do provide a good snapshot of what birds are out there in a single day. A good Century Run (so named for the goal of reaching a "century", or at least 100 species) calls for proper planning to hit a wide variety of habitats at the right time. Some groups try to cover the whole HMBC area; others limit themselves to a smaller geographic area – a single county, town, etc. Also, there is nothing that says you can't go out on your own, where you want and at your own pace, to see what you can find.

Reports should be emailed to the compiler by May 28th, in order to be counted and published in "Feathers", the Club newsletter. Reports should include species, hours afield, team members, and geographical areas (counties) covered. Also, please send an e-mail to the HMBirds group ([hmbirds@yahogroups.com](mailto:hmbirds@yahogroups.com)) with the total number of species observed, and highlights for your group.

### **Sunday, May 20, SCHODACK ISLAND STATE PARK** (Rensselaer County; morning)

Coordinator: Naomi Lloyd 518-596-5964 [naomi\\_kestrel@yahoo.com](mailto:naomi_kestrel@yahoo.com)

Schodack Island State Park sits along the eastern shore of the Hudson River just south of Castleton-on-Hudson. Approximately seven miles of Hudson River and Schodack Creek shoreline bound the 1,052-acre site. A portion of the park shelters a Bird Conservation Area (BCA) that is home to Cerulean Warblers, and a Great Blue Heron rookery. Resident songbirds are plentiful.

Previous Club trips have seen about 50 species, including a dozen or more warbler species. Keep your windows open as you drive the park entrance road- it is a very "birdy" stretch. Depending upon where the Cerulean Warblers are nesting, we will walk about 3-4 miles along level paths.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Schodack Island State Park main parking lot at its south end. There is no admission fee before 8:00 a.m.

### **Saturday, May 26, NORMANSKILL FARM** (Albany County; morning)

Coordinator: Tristan Lowery 646-323-8914 [tristanlowery@gmail.com](mailto:tristanlowery@gmail.com)

Normanskill Farm is a city-owned park and farm that offers a variety of habitat for birding within the City of Albany. During spring migration, the woodland trails, grassy fields, and gardens are ideal for finding flycatchers, vireos, thrushes, sparrows, and orioles. Two dozen species of warblers have been recorded here in recent years (including Hooded and Mourning). The Normanskill Creek occasionally attracts waterfowl, shorebirds, and large numbers of swifts and swallows.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Normanskill Farm parking lot on Mill Rd. From Delaware Avenue heading south, turn left on Mill Road just before the bridge over the Normanskill Creek. Parking lot is on the left ¼ mile along Mill Road.

## UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS..... (continued)

**Monday, May 28, PARTRIDGE RUN WMA** (Albany County; morning)

Coordinator: Zach Schwartz-Weinstein [zachsw@gmail.com](mailto:zachsw@gmail.com)

We will explore southwestern Albany County's higher elevation habitat for late and breeding migrants. Likely spots include Partridge Run Wildlife Management Area and Rensselaerville State Forest. In the past, this trip has turned up numerous breeding warblers and flycatchers, as well as rare and uncommon breeding species. Trails are rocky, hilly, and often muddy. Expect to walk some distance.

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the New Scotland Town Hall, located on State Route 85 in New Scotland. We will carpool to the destinations from there.

## June

**Saturday, JUNE 2, WEST MOUNTAIN NIGHTJARS** (Warren County; evening)

**\*\*\*This is a tentative trip, please see description below\*\*\***

Coordinator: TBA

For the last two years, Chuck-will's-widows have been observed near the West Mountain Ski Area near West Glens Falls. This species may be slowly expanding its range into the Northeastern part of the country, with additional reports in the Great Lakes, Southern New England, and even Ontario Province over the last ten years. The birds begin calling and foraging as darkness falls, and can even be seen perching and flying, albeit in poorly lit conditions. Other nightjar-family members, Eastern Whip-poor-will and Common Nighthawk, have been observed here concurrently with the Chuck-will's-widow. If they are detected again this coming May, we will organize an evening meet-up at the observation location, if feasible. The location, date, and time will be announced on the club website, and on the HMBirds yahoo group as well. Stay tuned!

**Sunday, June 3, CHERRY PLAIN** (Rensselaer County; morning)

Coordinator: Naomi Lloyd 518-596-5964 [naomi\\_kestrel@yahoo.com](mailto:naomi_kestrel@yahoo.com)

Cherry Plain State Park is situated on the Rensselaer Plateau of the Capital District. The relatively high elevation, cool climate and a variety of forested and wetland habitats make this a good area for northern species. Nesting species include Least Flycatcher, Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Common Raven, Broad-winged Hawk, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Black-and-White and Yellow-rumped Warblers. Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Veery, Hermit Thrush and Winter Wren also nest here.

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Hannaford parking lot on the right side of Route 43, just past the intersection of Route 150 in West Sand Lake, to carpool to the park.

## UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS..... (continued)

**Saturday, June 9, AMY'S PARK** (Warren County; morning)

Coordinators: Tom and Colleen Williams 518-857-2176 [trwdsd@yahoo.com](mailto:trwdsd@yahoo.com)

This Lake George Land Conservancy property, located north of Bolton Landing, includes the headwaters for Indian Brook and contains important wildlife habitat within its large, unfragmented forest and wetland complexes. LGLC has created four hiking trails for passive recreation, exploration and education, which include lookout areas to view the active beaver pond and its resident wildlife. Birders can expect wetland species, and the typical suite of higher-elevation breeders. Canada Warbler and Olive-sided Flycatcher have bred here.

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Warren County Municipal Center, 1340 Route 9, Lake George (Northway Exit 20, Queensbury), to carpool to the park.

**Sunday, June 10, FOX HILL RD** (Saratoga County; morning)

Coordinator: John Hershey 518-371-3114 [hersheyj@nycap.rr.com](mailto:hersheyj@nycap.rr.com)

On this trip we will travel through the remote forested and wetland areas along Desolation Lake Rd. and Fox Hill Rd. in Saratoga County. We will bird from the roadside, and explore areas recently acquired by New York State for conservation and recreation. Higher elevation breeders will be the main target. As many as 15 or more breeding warbler species are possible including Nashville, Canada, and Mourning Warbler. Other breeding species that have been seen in the past include American Bittern, Northern Goshawk, Broad-winged Hawk, and Swainson's Thrush.

Because we will be birding from the road, it will be necessary to share vehicles and to limit the number of participants to 16. Waterproof footwear is recommended. Contact the coordinator for reservations, and other information.

Meet at the Saratoga County Airport parking lot off Geysers Rd. at 7:30 a.m.

**Sunday, June 17, GALWAY NATURE PRESERVE** (Saratoga County; morning)

Coordinator: Ellen Pemrick 518-882-9163 [lnmp@nycap.rr.com](mailto:lnmp@nycap.rr.com)

Originally a Christmas Tree farm in the 1950s, Galway Nature Preserve is a property owned and managed by Saratoga PLAN. It contains about 2.5 miles of trails that meander through forest, marshland, and pond habitat. On this trip, we will walk the trails looking – and listening – for warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other woodland species. We'll also look for birds such as Northern Harrier and Barn Swallow in the farm fields adjacent to the preserve.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the preserve parking lot. Directions: <http://www.saratogaplan.org/explore/public-preserves-trails/galway-natur...>

*Feathers*

**Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club**

**c/o Five Rivers EEC**

**56 Game Farm Road**

**Delmar, NY 12054**