

Feathers

Normanskill Farm Site Report

By Tristan Lowery

Habitats: Deciduous woodland, fields, gardens

Specialties: Spring and fall migrants

Best seasons: Spring, fall

Directions: From New York State Route 443/Delaware Avenue heading west, turn left on Mill Road just before the Normans Kill overpass, after passing Graceland Cemetery. Follow Mill Road under the NY 443 overpass, and continue 750 feet to the parking lot on the left. Normanskill Farm is also accessible by public transportation by taking the CDTA 18 route to the Delaware Ave & Golder St stop and walking down Normanskill Drive to Mill Road (making sure to bird along the way).

Site Description

Normanskill Farm is a sprawling, city-owned public space in Albany featuring hiking trails, a large community garden, a dog park, and historic farm buildings. As one of the largest open spaces in the City of Albany, Normanskill Farm provides abundant and varied habitat for birding without a long drive out of the city. Its woodland trails, grassy fields, and gardens are ideal for finding orioles, flycatchers, vireos, thrushes, warblers, sparrows, and orioles, especially during spring migration.

The main geographic feature of the site is the Normans Kill, a major tributary of the Hudson River that cuts a ravine across the rolling landscape, and marks the southern border of the City of Albany with the Town of Bethlehem. ("Kill" – a commonly encountered place name in the Hudson-Mohawk area – is Dutch for "stream".) Aside from their role as a convenient natural and political boundary, the rapid waters of the Normans Kill supported a number textile and saw mills that once lined its banks, and – when frozen in winter – icehouses.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Happy Summer! I hope you have all had a chance to enjoy your Summer season. While each season has its own uniqueness and beauty, birding enthusiasts sometimes hang up the binoculars in Summer and focus on the extremely active migration seasons of Spring and Fall. However, Summer has a quiet beauty for birders. Summer is the season of nesting, fledging and molting for many birds. Consider engaging another person to see the wonder of birds by watching a bird's first, second or possibly even a third nesting attempt throughout the season. The chatter and trumpeting calls of Spring birding gives way to the quieter Summer nesting and molting activities. Given the extended daylight in Summer, we have extended opportunities to observe birds while they occupy their breeding area. Because feathers wear out from abrasion and sun bleaching, birds will systematically replace their feathers. While most birds retain the ability to fly during a molt, they typically become more secretive during this vulnerable timeframe. Some birds even temporarily lose the ability to fly during the molt. Perhaps you want to take on the challenge of spotting the birds who don't announce their location. Late Summer also marks the beginning of the migration season for some species. Field trips with our wonderful HMBC volunteer leaders continue into the Summer. Please feel free to make a birding field trip or two part of your summer plans. Before you know it, Fall Migration and HMBC meetings (September 10th) will have started up again. So even if it's not your favorite birding season, I hope you remember to enjoy the journey of the seasons.

During every season, I encourage you to consider the quote "Think Globally, Act Locally". As we consider the global health of our birding and human communities, we can take action here and now to help our neighborhoods, organizations and communities. Consider volunteering to help a local school, youth group, nature center, assisted-living community, etc. with a program to monitor bird feeders, create a butterfly garden, remove invasive species or some other project. . You could even consider helping the HMBC organization as a volunteer Field Trip leader, a volunteer Board member (beginning April 2019), a volunteer department chairperson or ambassador at public events.

Let us know if you wish to join the current list of fabulous volunteers! We all benefit when we improve the communities around us. As we move into the Fall, Winter and Spring seasons, this space in future Feathers editions will be used to introduce you to some of your HMBC Board members. So, be on the lookout for their observations and perspectives. Enjoy a variety of voices and songs as we change seasons! Please feel free to reach out to myself or the other Board members to discuss ideas regarding how we may all work together to Think Globally and Act Locally during all the seasons of our time.

Be well and good birding,
Patricia Fuller, President, HMBC

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

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

Please send all **electronic submissions for Feathers** via e-mail to:
Denise Hackert-Stoner at 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 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

2018 CENTURY RUN

by Larry Alden

The Club's 73rd running of the Guy Bartlett Century Run took place on the traditional 3rd Saturday of the month, May 19, 2018, as with last year, a somewhat late date for this count. The Albany International Airport reported a high of 58° just after midnight (12° below the normal high) and a low of 49° at 10:20 a.m., giving an average of 54°, five degrees below normal for the date. Notably, 0.58 inches of rain fell, all during daylight hours, making the birding quite a slog at times. Rivers and streams were running at normal levels. After a rather cool and late Spring, trees were mostly leafed out after a stretch of seasonable weather immediately preceding the count, although trees at higher elevations and northerly counties were less so.

Ten groups, comprised of 30 individuals, were in the field from 2:15 a.m. through 11:00 p.m. Areas covered included Albany, Fulton, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, and Washington counties, with six of the ten groups birding a single county (Albany was covered by three teams, Saratoga by two, and Warren by one).

A total of 167 species were identified, with six of the ten teams reporting 100 or more. This total is well above the average of totals for the previous ten years (152.9) and is the highest total since 1999, when 173 species were found. However, it is well below the maximum of 188 species found in 1986. The team covering only Warren County had the most species of any group, with 116, below the average of the single party high counts for the previous ten years (122.8), and still well below the record 156 species found by a single party in 1986.

Thirty-five species (approximately 21% of the total) were seen by all 10 field parties whereas 21 species (less than 13%) were seen by only 1 party. See frequency chart at end of this article.

The table following this article details all of this year's results. It is in the most current ABA checklist order, which mixes things up from what many of us are accustomed to. For example, the last species for our usual list of species around here is no longer House Sparrow but is now Indigo Bunting! Species marked with an asterisk (*) are species which have been found on all 73 Century Runs to date. There are 58 of them. There are some surprises in this list as well as some surprising omissions. Some of this can be chalked up to years which had only minimal effort (such as the earliest years), but there have also been some significant changes to the local bird list over the years. This may be the subject of a future Feathers article!

One new species was added for a new 73-year composite of 255 species and three hybrids, with a CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW heard in Warren County. The last new species added to the list before this was Clay-colored Sparrow, added last year.

There were seven species seen on this count that have been seen on 20 or fewer Century Runs: Long-tailed Duck (11th occurrence), Chuck-will's-widow (1st), Red-throated Loon (14th), Great Egret (13th), Black Vulture (8th), Merlin (8th), and Hooded Warbler (12th). Two species (Blue-winged Teal and American Coot) are making their reappearance to the after a six-year absence.

There were eight species which have been seen on 45 or more Century Runs but missed this year: Common Nighthawk (49 counts), Wilson's Snipe (56 counts), Black Tern (45 counts although seen infrequently lately), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (53 counts), Henslow's Sparrow (45 counts, last reported in 2001), White-crowned Sparrow (59 counts), Golden-winged Warbler (47, reported only once since 2000), and Cape May Warbler (47 counts). Personally, I was chagrined to spot a White-crowned Sparrow along the road in front of my house on Sunday morning after the count!

Other missed species of note: Brant (widely reported two days after the count), Gadwall (last missed in 2005), and Yellow-billed Cuckoo (several area reports after the count).

Listed below are the names of the participants, their times and places afield, and those species reported only by their group. Names marked with an asterisk represent each group's reporter.

Group A – Jim Suozzo* and Chris Suozzo. Albany County only. 0600-2030, 92 species. AMERICAN BLACK DUCK.

2018 CENTURY RUN *(continued.....)*

Group B – David DiSiena* and Mike Peluso. Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Washington counties. 0530-2030; 83 species.

Group C – Ron Harrower* and John Hershey. Saratoga County only. 0450-1715, 98 species.

Group D – Tristan Lowery* and Tom Williams. Albany County only. 0430-1845, 113 species. BUFFLEHEAD.

Group E – Larry Alden*, Jackie Bogardus, and Steve Chorvas. Albany County only. 0230-2125; 113 species. BLACK VULTURE, EASTERN SCREECH-OWL.

Group F – Cathy Graichen, Denise Hackert-Stoner, Gregg Recer*, and Scott Stoner. Saratoga County only. 0545-2053; 102 species.

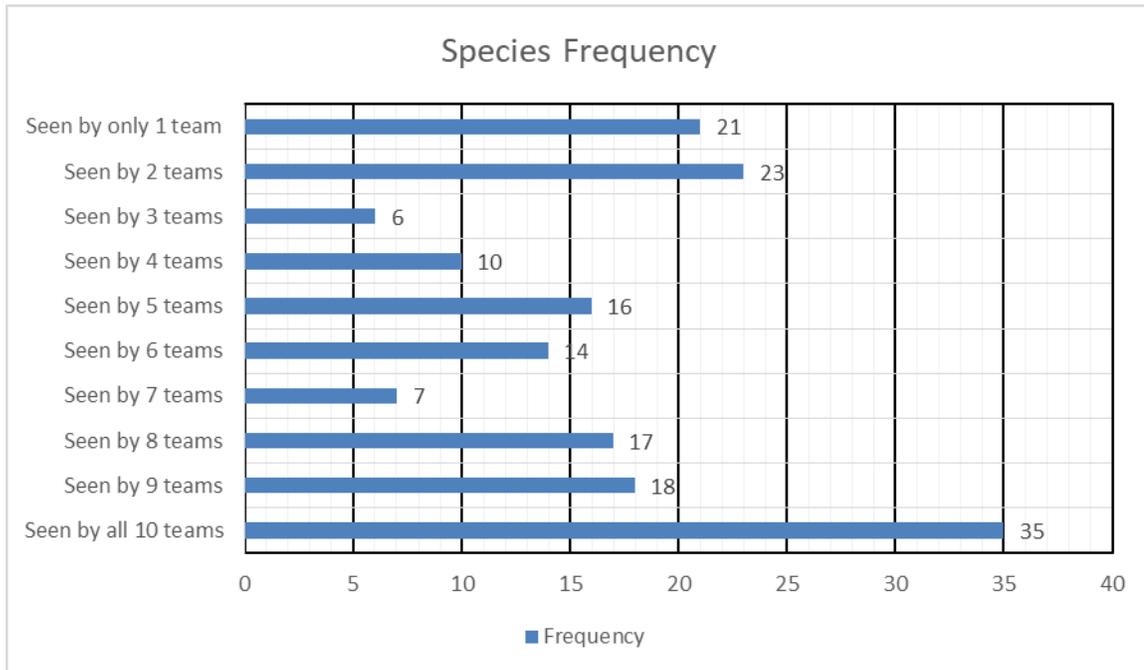
Group G – Tom Anderson, Chris Cameron, Carl George*, Bill Lee, and Hank Stebbins. Montgomery and Schenectady counties. 0700-1900, 65 species. RING-NECKED PHEASANT, AMERICAN COOT, GREATER YELLOWLEGS.

Group H – Dan Leonard, George Shaw, Nancy Slack*, and Kate Storms. Albany, Rensselaer, and Saratoga counties. 0545-2130, 102 species. LESSER YELLOWLEGS, PECTORAL SANDPIPER, GREAT HORNED OWL, WORM-EATING WARBLER.

Group I – David Harrison*, Ed Patten, and John Roosenberg. Warren County only. 0215-2200, 116 species. RING-NECKED DUCK, RED-THROATED LOON, PIED-BILLED GREBE, AMERICAN BITTERN, CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW, BROWN CREEPER, GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET, NORTHERN PARULA, PINE SISKIN.

Group J – Ted Keyel, Neil Reilly, and George Steele*. Fulton and Montgomery counties. 0230-2300; 102 species. UPLAND SANDPIPER.

Note: Group I has concentrated on a different county in each of the last six years. So far they have birded Schenectady, Fulton, Schoharie, Montgomery, Washington, and now Warren Counties. This effort always provides some interesting data and tends to point out the different habit

2018 CENTURY RUN (continued.....)

Blue Jay*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
American Crow*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Fish Crow	X		X	X	X	X			X		6
Common Raven	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	8
Horned Lark			X			X					2
Purple Martin			X			X					2
Tree Swallow*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
No. Rough-winged Swallow*	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
Bank Swallow*			X	X		X			X	X	5
Cliff Swallow				X	X			X	X	X	5
Barn Swallow*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Black-capped Chickadee*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Tufted Titmouse	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	9
Red-breasted Nuthatch			X	X	X	X			X		5
White-breasted Nuthatch*	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	8
Brown Creeper									X		1
House Wren*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Winter Wren						X			X	X	3
Marsh Wren	X		X	X	X			X			5
Carolina Wren	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		8
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	X	X		X		X		X		X	6
Golden-crowned Kinglet									X		1
Eastern Bluebird*	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	9
Veery*		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	8
Swainson's Thrush									X	X	2
Hermit Thrush*			X	X			X		X		4
Wood Thrush*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
American Robin*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Gray Catbird*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Brown Thrasher*				X	X		X		X		4
Northern Mockingbird	X	X		X	X	X		X	X		7
European Starling*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Cedar Waxwing	X	X		X	X			X			5
House Sparrow*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
House Finch	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
Purple Finch*	X		X		X			X	X	X	6
Pine Siskin									X		1
American Goldfinch*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Eastern Towhee*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	9
Chipping Sparrow*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Field Sparrow*	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	9
Vesper Sparrow						X		X			2
Savannah Sparrow*		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
Grasshopper Sparrow				X	X	X		X	X		5

Song Sparrow*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Swamp Sparrow*	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	8
White-throated Sparrow*			X		X		X		X	X	5
Dark-eyed Junco*	X		X	X	X				X	X	6
Bobolink*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Eastern Meadowlark*			X	X	X	X	X			X	6
Orchard Oriole		X		X	X	X					4
Baltimore Oriole*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Red-winged Blackbird*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Brown-headed Cowbird*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Common Grackle*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Ovenbird*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Worm-eating Warbler								X			1
Louisiana Waterthrush			X	X	X	X				X	5
Northern Waterthrush				X	X	X				X	4
Blue-winged Warbler	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	8
Black-and-White Warbler*	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	8
Tennessee Warbler				X	X	X			X		4
Nashville Warbler				X		X					2
Mourning Warbler			X						X		2
Common Yellowthroat*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Hooded Warbler				X				X			2
American Redstart*	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	9
Northern Parula									X		1
Magnolia Warbler*			X	X	X	X			X		5
Bay-breasted Warbler				X		X			X	X	4
Blackburnian Warbler		X		X	X	X			X	X	6
Yellow Warbler*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Chestnut-sided Warbler		X	X	X	X				X	X	6
Blackpoll Warbler	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	8
Black-throated Blue Warbler									X	X	2
Pine Warbler			X	X					X		3
Yellow-rumped Warbler*	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	9
Prairie Warbler	X		X	X	X			X		X	6
Black-throated Green Warbler*	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	8
Canada Warbler		X	X						X		3
Wilson's Warbler	X								X		2
Scarlet Tanager			X	X	X	X	X		X	X	7
Northern Cardinal	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	9
Indigo Bunting	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		7

CENTURY RUN ONE HIT WONDERS

The following species have been found on only one of the 73 Century Runs:

Tundra Swan – May 20, 1995

Chuck-will's-widow – May 19, 2018

Franklin's Gull – May 19, 1990

Glaucous Gull – May 20, 1972

Little Blue Heron – May 17, 1980

Cattle Egret – May 18, 1963

Golden Eagle – May 14, 1977

Short-eared Owl – May 12, 1951

Black-backed Woodpecker – May 13, 1961

Pine Grosbeak – May 15, 1971

Clay-colored Sparrow – May 20, 2017

Prothonotary Warbler – May 10, 1947

Kentucky Warbler – May 21, 1988

Yellow-throated Warbler – May 17, 1986

Editor's Note: Many thanks to Larry Alden for putting together this fine summary of this year's Century Run! (DH-S)

Field Trip Reports

Galway Nature Preserve – April 17, 2018

Ten of us visited Galway Nature Preserve Sunday morning for an HMBC field trip. The first birds of the day were right in the preserve parking lot: an Eastern Phoebe with a large insect in its bill, a swooping Tree Swallow, and a vocal Red-Bellied Woodpecker. Oddly enough, the Red-Bellied Woodpecker and a Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker seen by some members of the group were the only woodpeckers we encountered all day.

Warbler species were rather sparse. We heard several Ovenbirds, Common Yellowthroats, and Chestnut-Sided Warblers, and enjoyed nice views of the one of the Ovenbirds on a snag. We heard but did not see Indigo Bunting, and most of the group observed a singing Scarlet Tanager.

For the second year in a row, an Eastern Wood-Pewee's nest was found, albeit in a different location from last year.

Other highlights included a Broad-Winged Hawk flying over a pond; singing Veery and Wood Thrush; and a Bobolink in the adjacent farm fields.

Ellen Pemrick

Normanskill Farm – May 26, 2018

For a third straight year, the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club May field trip to Normanskill Farm tallied an official count of 47 species - and we had thirteen participants, the same number we had in 2016 (last year we had fourteen). I'm nothing if not consistent.

As usual, through-migrants were scarce on this end-of-May trip that I've come to view as the very last gasp of spring before the summer doldrums set in. Nevertheless, we heard several Blackpoll Warblers and a Swainson's Thrush sang near the parking lot at the very start of the trip at 0730. A flyover flock of five Double-crested Cormorants was also a bit of a surprise. Otherwise, we had success - mostly - with resident breeders on the farm, including good looks at singing Yellow Warblers, Great Crested Flycatchers, Willow Flycatchers, Eastern Kingbirds, Baltimore Orioles, and Bobolinks. But Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Scarlet Tanagers were oddly quiet or otherwise undetected, and we weren't able to locate any of the Orchard Orioles I've seen there earlier this month.

Thanks to all who participated!

Tristan Lowery
Albany

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

Rensselaer State Forest and Partridge Run-May 28, 2018

Seven birders traveled up to southwestern Albany County's high elevation habitat this morning, tallying approximately 52 species between Rensselaerville State Forest and Partridge Run WMA. We started off the morning at RSF, where almost immediately a Pine Siskin flew over the group. It was soon joined by a couple others, and then by a large flock of red crossbills feeding in the spruce cone crops along the CCC road north of the clearing. Another highlight, besides ubiquitous Blackburnian Warblers, was a Yellow-Bellied Flycatcher that was hanging out and calling by the spot where the Acadian Flycatcher had been seen in previous years. Purple Finch, Golden-Crowned Kinglet, and Magnolia Warbler were other local breeding species.

Immediately upon pulling onto Fawn Lake road at Partridge Run WMA, we heard a close Barred Owl hooting, and several more on the other side of the Newt Ponds, countercalling. A Ruffed Grouse drummed continuously by the south side of the Newt ponds, and a Northern Waterthrush was heard singing in the same area. Least and Alder Flycatchers, Chestnut-Sided and Yellow Warblers, Baltimore Orioles, Cedar Waxwings, and Veeries were all plentiful. A yellow-billed cuckoo was heard calling from the far side of Fawn Lake, and a Ruby-Throated Hummingbird perched on a snag for us to admire it. Thanks to all who came out.

Zach Schwartz-Weinstein

Cherry Plain State Park - June 3, 2018

On a beautiful morning six birders toured Cherry Plain SP. The breeze kept bugs to an endurable level and we tallied about 60 species (depending on who's counting). This included 11 warbler species with Canada and Magnolia among the heard-only, but we had a few excellent views of Black-throated Green and Blackburnian.

We saw one Red-shouldered Hawk, unusual for the park, and three extremely ragged Broad-wings flying together. Several species were on or near nests including a Least Flycatcher, and we caught two Chipping Sparrows "in the act". Juncos, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Purple Finches were settled in to their summer residence. In the marsh east of the park proper we had killer looks at a male Indigo Bunting.

In addition to birdlife, Cherry Plain also hosts a variety of plants, some threatened or endangered. While walking today we found 12 fern species, 5 club mosses, and a number of wildflowers including wild calla, pink ladyslipper, trillium, and wild azalea or pinxter.

Thanks to all who attended!

Naomi Lloyd
West Sand Lake

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

Amy's Park - June 9, 2018

Seven birders spent about three-and-one-half hours exploring this Lake George Land Conservancy property this morning. We spent most of our time in the northern section of the park, on various trails in the forested areas surrounding the North Pond. It was quieter than we expected for that time of day, in fine weather, and many more birds were heard-only than seen well. After much positioning and perseverance, we were able to get nice views of a singing Canada Warbler on his territory. A Northern Parula was singing higher in the canopy in the same area. Black-throated Blue Warbler was the most common warbler we encountered, with at least four heard singing in separate locations.

Thanks to everyone who turned out for the trip and especially to Steve and Bob for getting us on the Canada Warbler. We hope to see you all on future trips!

Tom and Colleen Williams
Colonie

Desolation Lake/Fox Hill Road – June 10, 2018

The HMBC field trip to Desolation Lake/Fox Hill Rd. began this morning at Saratoga County Airport with 8 participants altogether. The weather for the day was warm and sunny. Besides being a convenient place to meet, the airport is a birding destination in itself. Before heading for Fox Hill Rd. we found Vesper Sparrow singing loudly near the driveway fence and at least one Grasshopper Sparrow perched on the blue lights on the runway. Other birds seen here include Killdeer, Barn Swallow, and Eastern Bluebird.

The first stop on Lake Desolation Road was Archer Vly. The highlight here was getting good looks at a Blackburnian Warbler (thanks to Steve), an Eastern Wood-Pewee, and maybe the Pink Lady Slipper. We also heard our first sounds from Least Flycatcher (“che-bek”), Ovenbird (“teacher, teacher, teacher”), Hermit Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, and Black-throated Blue Warbler (“beer, beer, bee”). Although we heard these songs many times over the morning we never managed to actually see these birds in the thick foliage. Next stop was the bog at West Vly Creek. In addition to lots of shotgun shells and a bowling pin for target practice, we got good looks at a Black-throated Green Warbler and a Purple Finch. At this point we had begun to hear Alder Flycatchers singing something like “free beer”. We were unsuccessful in spotting the American Bittern that Bruce found earlier in the morning.

(continued next page)

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

The last stop was the Mulleyville Trail on Fox Hill Rd. where we took a longer walk up the hill. Among the highlights here that we saw include: Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-and-White Warbler, 2 or more Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, and a Wild Turkey. The big miss here was the 2 Mourning Warblers that had been singing loudly and clearly just 2 days ago. Two of us did manage to spot a Canada Warbler and others heard it. Getting close to noon we called it quits and started back to the airport. Near Rt. 29 one of the cars (not mine) unexpectedly spotted a singing Prairie Warbler near the road. Upon returning to the airport we were able to add Savannah Sparrow for our airport sparrow trifecta (along with Grasshopper and Vesper). Thanks to Naomi we also spotted a soaring Red-shouldered Hawk as a last minute bonus. Other highlights that I failed to mention yet for the morning include Broad-winged Hawk, Eastern Kingbird, Veery, Northern Mockingbird, Common Raven, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Dark-eyed Junco, and 2 gliders soaring over the airport. The final count was 53 species. Thanks to all the participants.

John Hershey, trip coordinator



Proposed HMBC Ecuador Trip

By Kevin McGrath

10-14 Days to ECUADOR

Jan-Feb 2020

My wife, Karen, and I are planning a bucket list trip to Ecuador in the winter of 2020 with Tropical Birding Tours. We could go on our own on one their standard excursions, but with the consent of the club, we decided to try and organize it into a custom club trip for 8-12 persons. If there are others who may want to go, I am planning to arrange a special (off-schedule) program in the fall for one of TP's professional guides to come pitch us on the benefits and value of using their company, in-country lodges and services, and local expert field guides (TP is actually HQ'd in Quito Ecuador).

Before going to far down the road, I wanted to see if there was any interest among club-members for a custom guided tour for our members. So I am putting it out there, does anyone want to go to Ecuador????

WHY ECUADOR???

I started birding in Boston when I was 9 years old with the Brookline Bird Club. Looking back on those early years, it still gives me an anxious anticipation and a shudder of excitement at the possibility of seeing something new. I recall a nostalgic mix of fondness and sadness the memory of seeing new birds and sadness for how hard it is to find them today.

I remember the thrill of trekking through the Arnold Arboretum or Sargent's Estates on a fine morning in May 1969 and coming across mixed flocks of warblers, finches, orioles, tanagers, blackbirds, woodpeckers, and thrushes with hundreds of individuals and dozens of individuals of 50-60+ species foraging in waves through the grass, brush, bush, and canopies. Then the sadness for how rare it is to find those flocks today.

Over the last 50+ years have I tromped and stomped my way up and through fields, forests, marshes, swamps, grasslands, prairies, and mountain tops from Maine to Washington to the Mexican border, to Florida and back home and have seen most (but not all) of the species in North America. If there is a birding hotspot in North America, I have been there. But nothing compares to the memories of those early years in Boston when everything was new and wherever you went or looked there was something new to see.

Then I met Karen. One fine morning I was sitting on her back deck, enjoying my coffee, and watching some Titmice play around the pond when she asked me "whatchya doin?". In a short time, seeing them through her eyes made everything everywhere suddenly new again. Acadia, Plum Island, Newport, the Housatonic Estuary, Jamaica Bay, Brigantine, Topsail and Merritt Island, the Dry Tortugas, Anahauc NWR, High Island, Sonoita Creek, Madera Canyon and countless places near home and far afield all became new and exciting again because I had someone with me who has that same giddy excitement about seeing that next new bird.

SO WHY ECUADOR?

There are one thousand, five hundred and eighty-eight endemic species in Ecuador with nine distinct ecological zones. That's roughly 6 times the number of known breeding species in New York or a bit less than twice as many as in all of the Continental US. That's a lot of birds packed into an area slightly less than twice the size of New York in a country with only half as many people as NY. The relatively limited impacts of human activity on the ecosystem over much of Ecuador has left large area almost untouched, and the bird populations are still abundant.

Now take the feeling of seeing a life bird and multiply it to 50 times A DAY!. Come see life birds in mixed flocks/groups of hundreds of individuals. In 10-12 days in Ecuador, you can expect to easily see and identify over 400 new species, and will probably shrug off 200+ more that you saw but didn't quite get enough of to count (good luck with females and juvies).

In the next issue of Feathers, I will announce the time and place for an interest/organizational meeting in the fall. No need to commit or respond now, and all are welcome to the meeting to see the presentation from TP's professional guide. The slide show itself should be awesome. After that, we will start the planning phase. Maybe this trip won't be the right trip or time for you, but I assure you, Ecuador will end up in your list of "must see" places to go.

Happy Birding

Upcoming HMBC Programs

Leader or Speaker:

Tom Lake

Location of Event:

Five Rivers EEC

Date:

September 10, 2018 - 7:00pm - 8:30pm

Topic: The Rainforests of South America

UPCOMING ASCR PROGRAMS

“Audubon: The Film” (2015) FREE Documentary Screening!

Come out to the Guilderland Public Library at 2pm for a Saturday afternoon matinee! Celebrate John James Audubon's birthday (April 26th, 1785) by learning about his life and undeniable impact on our nations natural history through his love of birds. He was one of the most remarkable men in early America. A self-taught painter and ornithologist, he pursued a dream that made him famous in his lifetime and left a legacy in art and science that endures to this day. His portrait hangs in the White House and his statue stands over the entrance to the American Museum of Natural History. Yet the story of John James Audubon has never been told on movie screens - until now. Read more about the film by clicking here: <http://www.audubonthefilm.com/>

The Audubon Society of the Capital Region (ASCR) is proudly partnering with the [Guilderland Public Library](#) to bring this film to the Capital Region! Program is free, but seating is on a first come first serve basis! The Guilderland Public Library is located at 2228 Western Avenue, Guilderland, New York 12084.

Bird Walk, Albany Rural Cemetary

Don't miss the mating and migration rites of Spring in the bucolic and historic setting of the Albany Rural Cemetery! Join us in the Chapel with Michael Radlick from the Albany Rural Cemetery as he will give a quick intro to the history and design of this historic cemetery's landscape. This 467 acre National Historic Landmark is an exemplar of the rural or garden [cemetery](#) movement of the 1800's with its winding roads, wooded hills and beautiful burial monuments, featuring the resting places of John Boyd Thacher (Thacher State Park) and President Chester Arthur among many other notables.

The bird walk will commence soon after with our ASCR bird walk leader. We will listen for and find spring migrators and avian denizens as we walk the cemetery's rolling terrain of various paved surfaces. Make sure to bring binoculars and wear comfortable shoes and clothing.

*Space is limited and Registration is required! Please call the [Albany Rural Cemetery](#) Office at 518- 463-7017 to reserve your spot!

The Albany Rural Cemetery is located at [Cemetery Ave, Albany, NY 12204](#), however the main entrance is off of [route 378 in Menands](#).

WRITERS' PAGE

Haiku

By Mona Bearor

Spring

White cloud canopy

Warm breezes brush my face

A welcome return.

Warblers

Songs sweet on the air

Feathers brushed by the rainbow

A gift from God's hand.

The Woods

Wet stones whispering

A spiderweb's soft caress

All senses at peace.

Birdsong

A flute plays at dawn

Silence makes way for beauty

Wood Thrush awakens.

ARTISTS' PAGE**Pileated Woodpecker**
Dagmar Frinta

ON NATURE

The Jersey Shore

by Scott Stoner

The “Jersey Shore” is well known as a weekend and summer vacation spot, with its boardwalks, rides, and beautiful beaches, but it is also home to some great habitat for beach nesting birds. On an early July visit, Denise and I were able to visit a great natural area at Belmar, just a few miles south of Asbury Park. We met up with Kat Paleckova, who was the speaker at the Club’s annual meeting in April, for some local guidance. There we visited a colony largely of Least Terns, an endangered species in NJ, along with several Piping Plovers and Black Skimmers (both also NJ state endangered) and even some American Oystercatchers! Fortunately, the nesting colony was well-cordoned off to protect the birds.

The terns had young of various sizes, and were actively feeding them. One chick was struggling to swallow a fish that looked almost as big as it was! Although we did not bring our biggest lens on this largely family vacation, we were able to get a number of good shots of the highly active terns. There were also some wooden boxes placed within the protected area, which terns seemed to be using for shelter, or perhaps just shade from the brutally hot sun on the beach!



The Black Skimmers were farthest from the barricade, but would occasionally fly around, often as a small group, offering chances to practice our flight shots.



On Nature (continued)

The Piping Plovers were a wonderful treat, and in fact sometimes walked voluntarily outside of the designated area, and close enough to be easily observed and photographed. There were at least two adults and two very small chicks.



Finally, the Oystercatchers offered perhaps the best photo opportunities, walking practically up to us as we stayed outside the barricades. Sadly, we noticed that one of the immatures was having difficulty walking, and discovered that it was because both legs were tangled up in plastic fishing line. Kat contacted people she knew at NJ fish and wildlife, which sent a team of folks but were unable to catch it that day. Just another sad reminder of the effects that discarded plastic is having on the ecosystem.



We kind of lost track of time in the sweltering sun that morning, but eventually had to get out of the sun after nearly four hours out there without water! We said goodbye to Kat and headed back to our Asbury Park rental to cool off, rehydrate, and sit on the porch to go through the 3,500 images we collectively took that morning!

Normanskill Farm..... (continued)

Normanskill Farm was home to a large dairy operation for much of the twentieth century, and it has also been the site of several important stream crossings, particularly for the Albany and Delaware Turnpike. Local history buffs should also take note of the Whipple Cast and Wrought Iron Bowstring Truss Bridge that spans a small, unnamed tributary of the Normans Kill on the property. Constructed in 1867 and moved to its present location in 1899, the bridge was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1971 and is one of the oldest surviving iron bridges in the country.

Extensive human use of the property continues, more visibly than at birding sites where wildlife conservation is prioritized. The Stevens family continues to run an active farm on the northern bounds of the property (mostly hay and livestock) and the Albany Police Department mounted unit stables and trains their horses here, so parts of Normanskill Farm remain inaccessible to the public, but off-limits areas are clearly marked and easily avoided by birders.

Finally, Normanskill Farm is becoming increasingly popular as a destination for dog-walkers. Dogs are permitted on the property, but dogs are only allowed off-leash within the fenced dog park, per city ordinance posted on several signs across the property. However, this ban is roundly ignored by the public and never enforced by the City, and, as a result, encounters with off-leash dogs and their scofflaw owners are common. The best way to avoid these situations is to visit Normanskill Farm early in the morning, when the birding is generally better anyway.

Birding Highlights

Spring – Spring is the best season for birding Normanskill Farm, when the stream serves as a busy conduit for northbound songbird migrants, and the mix of woodlands and fields here provides ample food and habitat. 27 species of wood-warblers have been recorded here in recent years, including a regionally-rare Yellow-throated Warbler in 2013 and 2014.

The waters of the Normans Kill can swell dramatically during early spring freshets. Canada Geese and Mallards are the only abundant waterfowl, but Wood Ducks and Common Mergansers can be found here occasionally in small numbers. Later in spring, as the water levels subside, check the exposed rocky flats below the Old Normans Kill Bridge for Spotted, Solitary – and occasionally – Least Sandpipers and other shorebirds. Great Blue Herons are common around the farm in all warmer months, while early May is the best time to look for migrating Green Herons.

Migrating songbirds headed for points north can be found anywhere on the farm, beginning in early to mid-April with the arrival of Blue-headed Vireos, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Hermit Thrushes, and Pine and Palm Warblers. Details for finding these and later arriving migrants and breeders are outlined in the “Suggested Birding Route” section below.

While looking for spring migrants at Normanskill Farm, remember to look up occasionally for surprise flyovers, including Double-crested Cormorants, Bald Eagles, Ospreys, and Great Egrets.

Normanskill Farm *(continued....)*

Summer – Following a late-May wave of Blackpoll Warblers that signals the end of spring migration, only Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, and Yellow Warbler remain into the summer months as breeding warblers. American Goldfinch activity picks up noticeably as their breeding season coincides with midsummer thistle blooms. Eastern Bluebirds are found year-round at Normanskill Farm, but summer is an especially good time to see this species as they raise their young.

By August, Cedar Waxwings can be seen in large numbers feeding and flycatching over the Normans Kill. Late summer is also the time to start checking the Normans Kill for migrating shorebirds, as well as stray Louisiana Waterthrushes that linger along the stream after dispersing from nearby breeding locations. The Old Normans Kill Bridge provides a convenient perch for these observations, and when the water is especially low, more ambitious birders can even walk the shoreline and streambed a significant distance downstream.

Fall – Sparrow migration peaks in October and the Normanskill Farm community garden is one of the best places in the area to get an up-close view. Its many vegetable beds, fences, and stakes are especially attractive to foraging s are possible here, including White-crowned, Fox, Vesper, Savannah, Lincoln's, and Swamp Sparrows. The fenced garden is typically locked when no gardeners are inside working, but if anyone is present, it doesn't hurt to ask to enter for a closer look at the birds.

Normanskill Farm can also be a good location for migrating fall raptors. The wide-open skies over much of the farm are ideal for looking overhead for Northern Harriers, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, American Kestrels, and Merlins, and these birds often take a break from their southbound travels to cruise over the farm's woods, fields, and gardens for prey.

Winter – Like many woodland sites in the region, bird activity at Normanskill ebbs in the winter, but the wide and level roads offer easier access on foot than most. In addition to common year-round residents like Blue Jays, Tufted Titmice, Black-capped Chickadees, White-breasted Nuthatches, and Northern Cardinals, wintering American Tree Sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos, and White-throated Sparrows can be found here in good numbers, especially along road edges near the hayfield and community garden.

Great Horned Owls can be heard calling here in winter to set up their breeding territories. Normanskill Farm is under-birded during the colder months of the year, but because of its size and convenient location, it could be worthwhile to search for owls and other winter visitors here from time to time.

Suggested Birding Route (spring and summer):

From the Mill Road parking lot, birders can choose to bird in three different directions: two short excursions north and east of the lot, before continuing west onto the rest of the property.

A short, log-lined path winds uphill from the parking lot to the police department horse farm, where Wild Turkey flocks can often be seen feeding with blackbirds and starlings in the paddocks and the fields beyond. Listen here

Normanskill Farm *(continued....)*

for singing Field Sparrows and Northern Mockingbirds, making sure to scan for perched Red-tailed Hawks and American Kestrels as well. Immediately to the right is the historic whipple truss bridge, which crosses a deep ravine. Cross the bridge, watching for songbird activity in the streamside thickets below, and keep straight to continue onto Normanskill Drive once you reach the other side. To the north, Normanskill Drive overlooks a wide gully, which is an excellent place to find migrating warblers in spring, either feeding high in the treetops above, flitting around at eye-level in foliage along the fenced roadside, or heard but unseen in the brushy gully below. On May mornings, the chorus of breeding Eastern Wood-Pewees, Red-eyed Vireos, Gray Catbirds, and Wood Thrushes is almost constant as you walk uphill toward Delaware Avenue, but careful listeners may also detect the songs of migrating Mourning, Canada, and Hooded Warblers in the undergrowth.

Please note that while Normanskill Drive is a public right-of-way, it's bounded by private property on both sides. The road is little traveled by local traffic, making it ideal for ear-birding, but be mindful of the occasional oncoming car – and observe all posted property signs. After ascending the entire length of Normanskill Drive, increasing traffic noise near its intersection with Delaware Avenue marks the turnaround point to backtrack down to the parking lot – though both Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoos have preferred calling from this end of the road in recent years.

Back at the parking lot, about 100 yards east of the parking lot on Mill Road is the Old Normans Kill Bridge, a concrete span built in 1905 that once carried the old Albany Delaware Turnpike across the Normans Kill. The bridge has been closed to cars since 1990, but it remains open to foot traffic. This is the best location to watch the dizzying flocks of swallows and Chimney Swifts that congregate over the Normans Kill in early May. All five locally-breeding swallows have been reported here, and breeding has been confirmed for all but Bank Swallow. Northern Rough-winged Swallows are particularly fond of resting on the utility lines that run over the bridge. In early May, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers perched on rocks midstream are a common, as is the rattling call of Belted Kingfishers. Crossing the bridge will bring you to the small Bethlehem hamlet of Normansville, which offers a pedestrian connection to further great birding on the Albany County Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail by way of a decommissioned but still-paved stretch of Rockefeller Road.

The bulk of Normanskill Farm is covered by traveling west from the Mill Road parking lot. Past the lot, Mill Road transitions to an unpaved service road leading out to the community garden and dog park about four tenths of a mile away. Additionally, the streamside Stevens Farm Trail – beginning immediately west of the lot in a small, shaded streamside wood grown over the ruined foundations of an old icehouse – runs roughly parallel to the service road, giving birders the choice of taking one way in and the other out, or rambling between the two routes as the birding takes you. A group of historic farm outbuildings – including a blacksmith shop – lines the service road on either side, while the Stevens Farm Trails hews closely to the northern banks of the Normans Kill. In spring, both tracks are busy with breeding Willow Flycatchers, Eastern Kingbirds, Eastern Phoebes, Warbling Vireos, House Wrens, and Baltimore Orioles. The fenced pasture north of the service road is off-limits to the public, but the brushy hillside is home to an abundance of Yellow Warblers, Song Sparrows, and other songbirds.

Normanskill Farm *(continued....)*

On the north side of the service road, beyond at the southwest corner of the pasture, is a National Grid natural gas gate station. Killdeer often nest in the gravel surrounding this facility and check for swallows alighting on the perimeter fencing for a brief rest from their frantic sorties, or Northern Mockingbirds keeping a watchful eye over their territories.

Beyond the gate station and powerline right-of-way lie the dog park and community garden, and the land widens, giving way to mowed fields and sparse copses. The community garden has nest boxes used by annually by Tree Swallows and Eastern Bluebirds. Many of the species encountered on the walk in continue along the banks of the Normans Kill, and the stands of trees at the stream meander south of the gardens have been favored by breeding Orchard Orioles in past years.

After the community garden, the service trail ends, but the Stevens Farm Trail continues north along the banks of the Normans Kill. An expansive hayfield on the right is left to grow all spring and summer, providing important habitat for Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, Bobolinks, and in some years, Eastern Meadowlarks. Check the electrical transmission lines and poles over the field for perched raptors and songbirds.

After heading north a short ways, the trail splits, turning sharply to the right to skirt a dense stand of broadleaf, or heading straight into the woods to continue along the stream. The streamside route is a good spot to look for migrating thrushes in spring and fall, while mixed flocks warblers of warblers often feed high in the canopy above. A cluster of informal trails run under the trees here, but the most well-worn rise steeply up the bluffs, past a stand of conifers that clings to the rocky slopes and plateau. The climb through the treetops can offer great views of birds but watch your step and be sure of your footing in the ascent, as the steep trail is littered with tree roots and loose gravel.

At the top of the bluffs, the trails reconnect, allowing for an optional descent under the power lines to the Capital Hills Golf Course. It's often worthwhile, as Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Brown Thrashers, Blue-winged Warblers, Common Yellowthroats, and Indigo Buntings can be found in the powerline cut below.

Returning uphill and continuing east along the northern edge of the hayfield will bring you to a junction with a gravel pipeline service road. Great Crested Flycatchers, Scarlet Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and Baltimore Orioles can often be seen singing from high up in the trees that line the sides of the hayfield. Continuing down the pipeline service road on the east side of the hayfield will bring you back to the natural gas station, from where you can backtrack to the parking lot.

Editor's Note: Thank you, Tristan, for providing our first new site report! (DH-S)

Upcoming Field Trips.

August

Sunday, August 19, PEBBLES ISLAND STATE PARK/COHOES FLATS (Saratoga/Albany Counties; morning)

Coordinator: John Hershey 518-371-3114 hersheyj@nycap.rr.com

The wooded areas of Peebles Island are good for seeing a variety of songbirds including early migrant warblers. The river area and rocky flats around the island are usually good for Peregrine Falcon, Osprey, Bald Eagle as well as shore birds, herons, egrets, Chimney Swifts and ducks. From the meeting place, we will check out the Cohoes Flats and then consolidate vehicles before proceeding to Peebles Island since there is a fee for each car entering.

Meet at the NY State Dam Recreation area behind the U-Haul Rental in Cohoes at 8:30 a.m. From 787 going north, turn right onto Route 470 (Ontario Street) in Cohoes. Then turn left onto Clark Ave. and proceed to the end.

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, August 27, 28, and 29, 2018, Counting Common Nighthawks (Albany County; evenings)

Coordinators: Tom and Colleen Williams 518-857-2176 trwdsd@yahoo.com

The Common Nighthawk is an aerial insectivore that feeds at dusk and dawn. It breeds throughout much of North America, although in decline as it is no longer observed during the summer in many urban and suburban areas. A long-distance migrant, Common Nighthawks travel in large flocks, on one of the longest migration routes of any North American bird. Most travel over land through Mexico and Central America to reach their wintering grounds in southern South America. Common Nighthawks are among the last migrants to return to their breeding grounds in spring. In the Capital Region, the bulk of southbound migration occurs from mid-August until early September with a peak around the end of August.

We will conduct our viewing from the parking lot at the Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center, located at 195 New Karner Rd. (Rt. 155) in Albany. Bring a chair and binoculars. We will begin each night at 6:00 p.m.

September

Saturday, September 1, Huyck Preserve/Myosotis Lake (Albany County; morning)

Coordinator: John Kent 518-424-2234 jwkent@fastmail.fm

We will walk the shore of Myosotis Lake looking for migrating warblers, vireos, kinglets, and flycatchers in the shrubby habitat of the Lake Trail. Bald Eagles, all three local falcon species, and several species of hawks have been seen on some of the past years' trips. Depending on the water level, the mudflats at the north end of the lake often host migrating shorebirds. It may be necessary to walk through some mud to get a view, so be prepared. From there we will continue through the woods to Lincoln Pond, where we will check for waterfowl and herons. The total walking distance is around 1.5 miles.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at New Scotland Town Hall on Route 85 for carpooling. Parking at Myosotis Lake is limited.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS..... (continued)

Saturday, September 15, Hawk Watching and Songbirds at Tacher State Park (Albany County; morning)

Coordinator: Gary Goodness 518-862-9260 goodness@nycap.rr.com

We will be looking for migrating Broad-winged Hawks that use the warming air thermals along the face of the escarpment to continue their migration south. Other raptors may be seen using the thermals for similar reasons. Osprey, Bald Eagles, Red-tailed Hawks, Sharp-shinned and Coopers Hawks are among those that can be seen soaring over the Helderbergs. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds also migrate over the escarpment very low and fast, sometimes making you feel like ducking down.

Meet at 8:30 a.m. in front of the Key Bank at the southwest corner of Routes 20 and 155 in Guilderland.

Sunday, September 16, Fall Migrants at Albany Pine Bush Preserve (Albany County; morning)

Coordinators: Tom and Colleen Williams 518-857-2176 trwdsd@yahoo.com

We will explore the Karner Barrens East unit, via the "yellow" perimeter trail, and "blue" dune overlook trail. We will be looking for warblers, vireos, and kinglets. The dune overlook trail has a moderate climb and descent. This is approximately a three mile loop. Take proper precautions to avoid ticks.

Map: <http://www.albanypinebush.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/1-KBarrensEW-2-...>

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center parking lot, located at 195 New Karner Rd. (Rt. 155) in Albany.

Saturday, September 22, Saratoga Spa State Park (Saratoga County; morning)

Coordinator: Ron Harrower 518-744-2637 rharrower@nycap.rr.com

Picnic table graveyard? Hardly! Explore this very productive area at the south end of Saratoga Spa Park. From weedy brush lot to capped landfill, and through woods, this spot has earned attention as a haven for migrants in its many edge habitats. Expect warblers, sparrows, flycatchers and vireos. The path is level and mostly gravel.

Meet at 8:00am at the Carlsbad parking area. From Rt. 50 or Rt. 9, take East-West Road through the south end of the Park. Carlsbad parking lot is just west of the Peerless Pool lot. Admission is charged after 8:30 so please be prompt.

Sunday, September 23, Saratoga Battlefield (Saratoga County; morning)

Coordinator: Marne Onderdonk marne37@icloud.com

This popular trip features beautiful foliage and a good chance to see hawks, woodpeckers, sparrows, bluebirds and late migrants as we walk the woods and grasslands of the battlefield. You never know what will turn up. There is no longer a fee for use of the trails.

Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot near the park's visitor center off SR 32.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS..... (continued)

Saturday, September 29, Nutten Hook (Columbia County, morning)

Coordinator: Kathy Schneider 518-248-8665 fallline@nycap.rr.com

Nutten Hook is part of Stockport Flats, a Hudson River Estuarine Research Reserve site in Columbia County. The area includes the remains of the largest ice house on the Hudson as well as a loop trail that borders the river for a quarter mile. The return path cuts inland through oak woods, abandoned farmland, and tidal marshes. Bald Eagles and early fall migrants are expected.

Meet at 8:00 AM in the parking area by the pavilion, which is west of the railroad tracks, and the buildings on Ice House Rd. Ice House Rd. is off Route 9J in Stuyvesant.

Sunday, September 30, Woodlawn Preserve (Schenectady County; morning)

Coordinator: Bill Lee 518-374-3426 bileej@hotmail.com

The Woodlawn Preserve is in the Southeast corner of Schenectady County abutting the western edge of the Pine Bush. The area contains a flood control pond, forested sand dunes and general wetland habitat. Trips in prior years have seen migrating warblers and sparrows. The pond may attract various waterfowl.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. in front of Petsmart in Mohawk Commons at the corner of State Street and Balltown Road (Balltown Rd. side). We will carpool the short distance to the Preserve.

October

Sunday, October 14, Five Rivers EEC (Albany County; morning)

Coordinator: John Kent 518-424-2234 jwkent@fastmail.fm

We'll walk about 2 miles over generally flat terrain with some small hills, passing through a variety of habitats. Migrating sparrows are often abundant at this time of the year, with a good chance of Lincoln's and White-crowned as well as more common species. Both species of kinglet may be present, as well as Yellow-rumped Warbler, Palm Warbler and Blue-headed Vireo. A late Nashville, Black-throated Green, Blackpoll or Magnolia Warbler might be found. Wood Duck and other waterfowl are possible, as well as Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks and Merlin. Wet grass and muddy spots may be encountered, so waterproof footwear is recommended.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot at Five Rivers EEC in Delmar. Note new parking arrangement and follow signs.

Saturday, October 27, Collins Lake (Schenectady County; morning)

Coordinator: Bill Lee 518-374-3426 bileej@hotmail.com

We will visit Collins Lake to view late migrating waterfowl from the beach and the east side of the lake. We will also take a walk east along the north side of the Mohawk River for fall sparrows. Fox Sparrows have been seen in previous years. Foliage will be off the trees to make finding LBJs (Little Brown Jobs) a bit easier.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. near the western end of the Gateway Bridge at Jumpin' Jacks in Scotia. Bring a scope if you have one.

Feathers

Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club

c/o Five Rivers EEC

56 Game Farm Road

Delmar, NY 12054