

February 2014
Volume 74 No. 1

*Bi-monthly publication of the
Hudson-Mohawk
Bird Club, Inc.*

Feathers

2013: REVIEW OF BIRDS IN THE HUDSON-MOHAWK REGION

by Will Raup
Records Committee

I am both humbled and excited to be taking the reigns of the Records Committee for the bird club. With records dating back to the late 19th century, our region has had its share of rare and unusual species, along with some significant population shifts of others. In the future I hope to share the information on some of these birds and keep the stories of some of our more famous visitors going for the future!

2013 weather wise was near normal. The average temperature at Albany was 48.6 F, a mere .3 above normal. Temperatures ranged from a high of 96 F at Albany on July 19, to a low of -5 F on December 17. Some other interesting weather notes, Albany had 150 days (total of 5 months!) in which the temperature reached 32 degrees or lower for a low temperature, which was about 15 more days than normal. Albany also had 15 days of 90 or higher temperatures, about double more than normal.

Precipitation totaled 43.83 inches in Albany, 4.48 inches above normal, the wettest period was in late April and Early May, which may have impacted the nesting success of some ground nesting species. Snowfall totaled 60.1 inches, very close to the average of 59.1 inches. (National Weather Service at Albany)

Most of the reports and information below was gathered using E bird (www.ebird.org). If you are not yet using e-bird, you should be! Not only is it a great way to keep track of and share your local sightings with other Hudson-Mohawk birders, but your sightings will also help researchers at the Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology and other institutions track and study bird populations and ranges in real time. E-bird is free, fast and easy to use. If you have a smart phone, you can use the bird log app (you do have purchase it) and directly send your sightings in the field direct to e-bird

(continued on p 10)

Inside This Issue ...

President's Corner.....	2
Field Trip Reports.....	4
Upcoming HMBC Programs	5
On Nature	7
Youth Committee	9
Upcoming Field Trips	12

HMBC BOARD

Officers

President:

Jory Langner
46 Tamarack Dr
Delmar, NY 12054
439-0604

Jory.Langner@gmail.com

Vice-President:

Carol Blackwell
110 Elmhurst Ave
Rensselaer, NY 12144

238-3086 cblackwell@nycap.rr.com

Secretary:

John Hershey
15 Carriage Road
Clifton Park, NY 12065

371-3114 hersheyj@nycap.rr.com

Treasurer:

Ellen Pemrick
117 Western Ave
West Charlton, NY 12010

882-9163 lnmp@nycap.rr.com

Directors

Don Gresens 370-3923

dgresens@nycap.rr.com

Gregg Recer 899-2678

greg_recer@alum.rpi.edu

Jim Ries 792-4497

jimries@roadrunner.com

George Steele 842-9305

silphidae@aol.com

Scott Stoner 785-6760

programs@hmbc.net

Committee Chairs

Birdline: Phil Whitney

birdline@hmbc.net

Conservation: Patti Packer

399-4843 pattiac@nycap.rr.com

Field Trips: Don Gresens

370-3923 dgresens@nycap.rr.com

Youth: George Steele

842-9305 silphidae@aol.com

Membership: Gregg Recer

899-2678 gregg_recer@alum.rpi.edu

Programs: Scott Stoner

785-6760 programs@hmbc.net

Publications: Chris Grossman

399-9159 publications@hmbc.net

Publicity: Ann B'Rells

355-5615 ann9br-hmbc@yahoo.com

Raptor Migration: Gary Goodness

862-9260 Goodness@nycap.rr.com

Records: (vacant)

Reist Sanctuary: Michael Gann

377-2560 mgann@nycap.rr.com

Social: Peggy Rudis

371-5051 peggyrudis@msn.com

President's Corner

A few items from my desk this month:

First, our Annual Meeting is coming up soon. Mark your calendars for April 16. We will be holding the event at the Century House again this year. Watch for notices coming your way. A great way to catch up with other members, eat some good food, watch an excellent presenter (thank you Scott Stoner, our Programs Committee chair). Best of all, you get to vote for officers and board members.

Second, our Youth Committee is just starting our "Adopt-A-School" program. George Steele, the chairman of the committee, brought together a number of educators a few weeks ago to brainstorm how to reach out effectively to kids throughout the region. We decided on this approach, of members adopting a local school and bringing birds and birding to the students and faculty there. We have selected our first school, The Bethlehem Children's School in Slingerlands, and have started planning our first program with them. As this pilot program matures, we'll be reaching out to you looking to expand the program to other schools ... schools in your area. Stay tuned.

And third, I have a quiz for you ...

QUESTION: What do the following locations have in common? Albany, Ballston, Charlton, Clermont, Cobleskill, Colonie, Coxsackie, Ft. Edward, Germantown, Gourdon Rd -Montgomery County, Paris Rd - Montgomery County, Saratoga, Troy, Warrensburg, Watervliet

ANSWER:

These 15 locations are a great reason to go out and bird during the winter. Of course there are many other locations to lure you outside, but these 15 have been just wonderful this winter.

These locations have had at least one SNOWY OWL reported this winter. In some cases, multiple birds have been reported from a single location. For example, the Albany Airport has had THREE Snowy Owls being seen there at one time.

These birds, visitors from our north, have attracted a lot of attention throughout the US this winter. The owls have shown up in many states and have been reported as far south as Jacksonville, Florida and all the way out to Bermuda in the mid-Atlantic. This irruption has been reported extensively in newspapers and TV around the US.

(Thanks to Will Raup, our local e-bird administrator and club Records Committee chair for the list of locations.)

Jory Langner

president@hmbc.net

Newsletter Contributions Desired

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

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

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: Chris Grossman at bgrossman@nycap.rr.com.

Send all paper submissions to:

Chris Grossman
7 Nott Rd.
Rexford, NY 12148

Save the date

The HMBC Annual Meeting will be Wednesday, April 16, 5:30 pm – 9:00 pm at the Century House.

Field Trip Reports

Vischer Ferry

Sunday, November 17, 2013

We had a group of 14 congenial birders for the HMBC Vischer Ferry Field Trip November 17. This includes at least one new member-to-be and one member who arrived around noon as we were completing the bird checklist!

The sky was overcast the whole morning and most of the time there was a light drizzle. It was pretty quiet birdwise. Still, it was an enjoyable time. One highlight for me was getting some dazzling, up-close views of several MALLARDS. Some of us also got some extended views of a cooperative GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET, and a BROWN CREEPER. We concentrated mostly on waterfowl along the towpath. Highlights here include WOOD DUCK (1), AMERICAN WIGEON (6), NORTHERN PINTAIL (4), GREEN-WINGED TEAL (3), COMMON GOLDENEYE (1), and PIED-BILLED GREBE (2). There were several very vocal WINTER WRENS calling along the towpath. At one point one of them was answered by an even more vocal CAROLINA WREN. The coordinator also saw a MARSH WREN earlier before the group arrived.

One photo of a drake MALLARD taken last week in the same spot as on the trip date is posted.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/hmbirds/photos/album/77752785/pic/2138010647/view?picmode=large&mode=tn&order=ordinal&start=501&dir=asc>

- John Hershey

Cape Ann

Saturday, January 18 – Monday, January 20, 2014

Ten HMBC members traveled to Cape Ann, MA, area for the biannual trip to find wintering seabirds along the coast. We awoke Saturday morning to a weather forecast of rain and then snow moving in. The leaders chose to concentrate on areas most likely to be productive quickly. On the drive to Halibut Point State Park near Rockport in an attempt to see as many seabirds before the weather deteriorated, CANADA GOOSE, AMERICAN CROW, and RED-TAILED HAWK were seen. A TURKEY was spotted by some as we drove into the parking lot, and a CAROLINA WREN was calling nearby.

We walked to the park's cliff overlook and quickly saw HARLEQUIN DUCK, RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS, BLACK, WHITE-WINGED and SURF SCOTERS, COMMON EIDER, COMMON LOON, GREAT CORMORANT, and winter plumage HORNED GREBES.

A first year ICELAND GULL flew past us several times as did RING-BILLED, HERRING and GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULLS. We walked down a path to get closer to the rocks at the surf line and located a flock of PURPLE SANDPIPER.

By this time, it had started to rain lightly, so we decided to cherry pick locations where rarer seabirds had been recently seen. We were unable to locate the reported THICK-BILLED MURRE, DOVEKIE, AND KING EIDER. The stop at the Jodrey fishing pier in Gloucester for the murre did give us an excellent look at a GLAUCOUS GULL. We were now quite wet and cold and

Field Trip Reports *(continued)*

so headed back to the hotel in Amesbury. As we drove inland, the rain turned to snow with about 5" ultimately collecting overnight.

Sunday morning we drove to Salisbury Point Park at the mouth of the Merrimack River near Newburyport. Two close SNOWY OWLS were seen. We then spent some time on the water's edge in a cold, wind-blown snow looking for more seabirds. This turned up LONG-TAILED DUCK and COMMON GOLDENEYE. We backtracked to Plum Island near Newburyport to look for a reported NORTHERN SHRIKE. This, too, was fruitless, but we did see HARRIER, an immature BALD EAGLE and many AMERICAN ROBINS. The rest of the afternoon was spent along the south shore of the Merrimack River where we spotted SHARP-SHINNED and ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS, an ADULT BALD EAGLE, HORNED LARK and a COMMON MERGANSER.

Some of the participants departed Sunday evening, but the remaining ones headed back to Gloucester Monday morning to stop at some of the places missed Saturday. Near Fort Stage Park on the shore, we found of large flock of SNOW BUNTING that flew about the grassy field. We were surprised when the flock landed in a tree for a bit. From the park overlook, we saw GREATER and LESSER SCAUP and RUDDY DUCK. We returned to Jodrey Pier where another birder said that they had just seen an immature KING EIDER quite close to them. The bird was relocated for us to see after some searching. Finally we saw a PEREGRINE FALCON perched on the roof to the distant city hall.

The last stop was at the Gloucester City beach parking lot to scan a large HORNED LARK flock for a possible LAPLAND LONGSPUR. The flock was very active and at a distance, and we were not certain that it contained the longspur.

Forty one identified species plus one unidentified accipiter.

- Bernie Grossman and Bill Lee

Upcoming HMBC Programs

Birding the Mohawk River from Cohoes to Crescent

Speaker: John Hershey

February 3, 2014 - 7:00pm - 8:30pm

William K. Sanford Colonie Town Library

629 Albany-Shaker Road, Loudonville, NY 12211

This program will include a PowerPoint presentation on the history, habitat, and birds of the Mohawk River corridor between Cohoes and Crescent. The focus will be on rare, uncommon, and common birds found in this area. Among the many birds that have been photographed along this corridor and will be discussed in the program are: American White Pelican, Snowy Egret, Great Blue Heron, Willet, Short-billed Dowitcher, American Golden-Plover, White-rumped Sandpiper, Sanderling, Ruddy Turnstone, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Bald Eagle, Osprey; Iceland, Glaucous, Lesser Black-backed, Bonaparte's, and Little Gulls.

Upcoming HMBC Programs *(continued)*

John Hershey has been a past Director both of HMBC and the Audubon Society of the Capital Region. Currently he is serving as Secretary of the Bird Club. He has led field trips to Vischer Ferry Preserve, Peebles Island/Cohoes Flats, and Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge . He has traveled extensively on birding tours to Texas, California, Arizona, and Alaska. When he is not birding at Vischer Ferry, the Waterford/Cohoes area or elsewhere, he works as a clinical psychologist in private practice.

Managing Grassland Birds at Saratoga Battlefield

Speaker: Linda White

March 3, 2014 - 7:00pm - 8:00pm

William K. Sanford Colonie Town Library

629 Albany-Shaker Road, Loudonville, NY 12211

Ranger Linda White will describe the work at the Battlefield on the park service's Inventory and Monitoring in conjunction with the Northeast Temperate Network and Management of park fields with a combination of prescribed fire, mowing, and herbicide application. She has worked as a National Park Service ranger in the natural resource division at the Saratoga Battlefield for many years.

Upcoming Audubon Programs

Kestrels! - The Littlest Falcon

Speaker: Mike Burger

March 20, 2014 : 7 PM - 8:30 PM

Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library, 475 Moe Road, Clifton Park, NY 12065.

Mike Burger, Director of Conservation and Science for Audubon New York at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, will talk about NY's smallest falcon, the American Kestrel. He will cover its biology, population status, and threats, as well as what Audubon and others are doing to conserve it across NY. Sprinkled throughout will be anecdotes from Mike's Master's thesis research on wintering kestrels.

Mike has been with Audubon New York since 1999, first as a forest ecologist conducting research in the Adirondacks, then as Director of Bird Conservation for seven years, and most recently as Director of Conservation and Science. Based at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca, Mike functions as Audubon New York's chief scientist, with a responsibility of providing a solid, science-based foundation for all of the organization's programs. Additionally, Mike oversees several of Audubon New York's conservation programs, including the Important Bird Areas, grassland bird conservation, and forest biodiversity programs. Prior to coming to Audubon, Mike earned M.S. and Ph.D. degrees at the University of Michigan where he studied climatic and physiological determinants of bird ranges and was supported by a Department of Energy Global Change Fellowship.

Upcoming Audubon Programs *(continued)*

NYS Golden Eagle Telemetry Tracking & Eagle Feeder Program

Speaker: Tom Salo

April 17, 2014 : 7 PM - 8:30 PM

William K. Sanford (Colonie Town) Library 629 Albany Shaker Road, Loudonville, N.Y.

Tom Salo, the NYS Coordinator for the Appalachian Eagle Project, will present a fascinating program on how our neighboring chapter, the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society is capturing and outfitting migrating Golden Eagles with telemetry devices to track this NYS Endangered Species.

He'll also show some of the best local photographs from the Golden Eagle Feeder traps from the past 4 seasons. Of fourteen sites that have operated in New York, nine are in our neighboring Chenango, Delaware and Otsego counties.

On Nature

The Year of the Owl (and the Harrier)

by Denise Hackert-Stoner and Scott Stoner

As many of us have heard (and seen!), this winter finds us in the midst of a major irruption of Snowy Owls! These great birds have been sighted from the coast of Maine to Jacksonville, Florida, and west all along and near the Great Lakes (see map on ebird.org). More locally, they have been seen in Fort Edward, on the RPI campus in Troy, and just 2 miles from our house, at the Albany International Airport. The birds range from nearly all white mature males to the much darker immature birds. A couple of hours away, Addison County, VT hosted close to a dozen owls in late December. ***Snowy Owl at RPI***

Why have so many Snowy Owls come south this year? While it is not known for certain, educated speculation on ebird suggests that it may not be a crash in the lemming population as often believed. It may in fact be that high breeding productivity (including multiple young fledged per nest) driven by a high number of lemmings. Whatever the reason, they are here this winter, and we are enjoying them!



Copyright Scott Stoner, 2013

On Nature *(continued)*

A group of us took a “lunch break” on one of the local Christmas Bird Counts to deviate from our territory to see the bird at RPI in a snowstorm; we returned the next day after the storm to get better photos.

Birders and photographers have been out in droves, with the owls attracting considerable media (and social media) attention as well. Some of this has not been all positive, as arguments have waxed and waned on Facebook over whether birders, or photographers, have approached the birds too closely.

Nowhere did the fate of the owls reach a higher pitch than the outcry over the Port Authority’s approach at JFK Airport in New York to shoot them in the interest of flight safety. The risk of engine failure from ingesting a large bird is a legitimate concern, but other airports address the issue through nonlethal means. At Boston’s Logan airport, owls are trapped and moved; at Albany they are chased away from the runways through firework-like noisemakers. So far, birds, birders, photographers, and airplanes seem to be peacefully coexisting in our area!

While Snowy Owls have captured most of the media attention, it has been a good year for other owls (and hawks) as well. In northern Vermont, a Northern Hawk-Owl has been seen in Waterbury Center, since December, and photographed by many (we still hope to make it over there).

Short Eared Owl at Shawangunk Grasslands



Short-eared Owls have been seen in their usual haunts up in Fort Edward, Washington County, and even reported several times from the Albany Airport. People wonder if they would have been found had it not been for the Snowy Owls there, harkening to the “Patagonia Picnic Table Effect” (where discovery of one rare bird results in increased birder visits leading to the discovery of other sought-after species; name originated after the discovery of nesting Rose-throated Becards at a highway rest area in Patagonia, AZ).

As for bird photography, we’ve have had the best luck this year down at the Shawangunk Grasslands National Wildlife Refuge in Ulster County, NY. This former Galeville airport property has had grasslands restored where the runway used to be, and is a great place to see owls this winter. Earlier in the winter they tended to come out by mid-afternoon (photo) when the light is still fairly good.

Most recently, we headed down for a third time to try for more photos but the owls did not appear until nearly dark. However, the day shift of field-hunting raptors was busy, as several Northern Harriers coursed back and forth over the grasslands in search of food. Using one of the photo blinds there at the Refuge as much to block the wind as to conceal ourselves, Denise and I were treated to some close views of these birds in fabulous late afternoon light.

On Nature *(continued)*



Copyright Denise Hackert-Stoner, 2013

Northern Harrier at Shawangunk Grasslands

We wish all of you a very Happy New Year and
good birding in 2014!
Denise and Scott

The Youth Committee Wants You!

By George Steele

The club's Youth Committee has met and discussed a wide range of ideas on how to bring birds, birding and bird conservation in to the classroom. A focus on birds can bring science, social studies, math, reading and other classrooms disciplines to life. Some teachers grasp this. You visit their classroom and you'll see bird posters, books on birds, maybe even a bird feeder outside their classroom window. Many teachers though have not experienced birds as a birder has.

Our committee is hoping to develop programs that can be brought to the classroom, not adding to the teachers' duties but supplementing them with a focus on birds. Perhaps leading a class of students on a schoolyard bird survey complete with binoculars for each young ornithologist. Maybe setting up a bird feeder area and providing guidance on how to maintain it along with information on identifying feeder birds, or establishing a system of nest boxes, maintaining them and showing students the successful results.

The committee is just starting to discuss the possibilities and what needs to happen to get something in place. Jory Langner and Alan Mapes have offered to work with a school that has expressed an interest in using birds in the classroom. They will be meeting with that school's teachers and administrators to discuss what might be done. In essence they starting the R & D for what will become a club program to bring birds in to the classroom.

Where is it that you come in? Why does the committee want YOU! Of course, if you would like to be involved at the ground floor with developing what we do you are welcome to join us. More importantly though, think about a school connection you have, perhaps your child or grandchild's school, or a friend that is a teacher. Would you be willing to adopt that school, be the club's connection that might help open the door to birds in the learning environment. Once we get something together it will be contacts like this that will help us get in to the schools.

Think about it. Let us know how you can help today's students become the ornithologists and birders of tomorrow, all while they're learning their 3 R's and meeting Common Core Standards.

2013: REVIEW OF BIRDS IN THE HUDSON-MOHAWK REGION

(continued)

though your phone! It's an exciting time for bird watching and those interested in listing! Other sources include Birdline and the HM Birds list-serv.

Top 5 Hudson-Mohawk Birds for 2013

1. **Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*)**: Found by John Hershey and photographed on July 20 at the Cohoes flats. This represents the first record for this species in the Hudson-Mohawk Region.
2. **Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*)**: What has been the start of one of the largest irruptions of this species into the Northeast in possibly decades, got off to a slow start locally. With birds first reported from Ft. Edward, Washington County and Charlton, Saratoga County in late November. A bird spent about a week near RPI in Troy in mid December and was seen by many. The first bird was reported at the Albany Airport on December 1st, and would swell to as many as perhaps 5 birds by the end of the month. The Albany Airport birds were visible from roads adjacent to the airport and seen by many birders, airport staff and other curious people. Only Schenectady and Fulton Counties did not have reports of Snowy Owls through December.
3. **Common Redpoll (*Acanthis flammea*)**: The first few months of 2013, the Region was inundated with a Redpoll invasion. Many people enjoyed these arctic visitors at their feeders and some weedy fields hosted flocks numbering up to 600 birds! As is always the case with a Redpoll invasion, there were a few scattered reports of **Hoary Redpolls** across the region. Birds lingered in some northern counties until early May, with the vast majority of birds leaving by mid April.
4. **Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*)**: Region birders were treated a pair of Sandhill Cranes that spent much of January near a small hole of open water on the Mohawk River near the Klamsteam Tavern in Crescent, Saratoga County. The birds arrived and left the roosting spot like clockwork. They were later found to be feeding in a corn field adjacent to the Crossings Park in Colonie, Albany County. The birds remained regular into February before disappearing, only to return again in December, although much less regular than previously. For many Hudson-Mohawk birders this was their first sighting of the species locally.
5. **Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*)**: Discovered by Albany Pine Bush staff inspecting a tract of City of Albany land adjacent to the Rapp Road dump, the birds were seen by many birders over the next couple of weeks. The two adult birds appeared to be a pair and there was some hope that they may have attempted to nest. However, after many observations of the birds, no nesting activities were noted. The birds were last reported August 26.

Other notable reports include: Northern Hawk-Owl (at a restricted site), Western Kingbird (Coxsackie), Bohemian Waxwing and Pine Grosbeak (Queensbury), Black Tern (Stanton Pond and Mohawk River), Bullock's

2013: REVIEW OF BIRDS IN THE HUDSON-MOHAWK REGION

(continued)

Oriole (Schenectady County), Clay-colored Sparrow (Montgomery County), Connecticut and Orange-Crowned Warblers, Sanderling, Baird's Sandpiper, Black-bellied Plover, American Golden-Plover, American White Pelican, Great Cormorant, Barrow's Goldeneye, Cackling Goose and Greater White Fronted Goose.

2013 Hudson-Mohawk E-Bird Summary

E-bird was launched by Cornell University in 2002, but didn't catch on locally until about 2007. 2008 was the first year in which all counties in the area were covered sufficiently to compare data, hence for HMBC purposes, 2008 is our e-bird start year. In the future I hope to compare e-bird to historical data for comparison.

The 5 year average used reports submitted 2008-2012, and the 3 year average used data between 2010-2012. The number in parenthesis shows the departure in 2013 from those averages. All 11 Counties, were above their 5 year averages in 2013, while 4 counties showed declines off their 3 year averages. 5 Counties set record highs for species reported in e-bird.

In all, 251 species were reported to e-bird in the 11 county (Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schohaire, Washington and Warren) Hudson-Mohawk region. This is slightly below the 3 year average of 254 species, but slightly above the 5 year average of 248 species. This is the exact number of species reported in 2012. The highest reported number of species was 259 in 2011.

County	2013	3 year Avg	5 year Avg	
Albany	229*	216 (+13)	207 (+22)	
Columbia	176	180 (-4)	170 (+6)	Record: 185 species 2011
Fulton	167*	141 (+26)	135 (+32)	
Greene	201	202 (-1)	199 (+2)	Record: 204 species 2011
Montgomery	149*	133 (+16)	121 (+28)	
Rensselaer	192	198 (-6)	187 (+5)	Record: 207 species 2011
Saratoga	212*	207 (+5)	201 (+11)	
Schenectady	185*	141 (+44)	138 (+47)	

2013: REVIEW OF BIRDS IN THE HUDSON-MOHAWK REGION

(continued)

Schoharie	124	140 (-16)	112 (+12)	Record: 150 species 2012
Warren	140	132 (+8)	120 (+20)	Record: 145 species 2012
Washington	168	154 (+14)	140 (+28)	Record: 170 species 2012

2014 is already off to a strong start, with plenty of white-winged Gulls, Snowy Owls, raptors and waterfowl being reported across the region!. Here is to a good year of birding and remember to share your reports to e-bird (www.ebird.org) and birdline (birdline@hmbc.net)!

Upcoming Field Trips

FEBRUARY

Saturday, February 8, BIRDING BY SNOWSHOE AT FIVE RIVERS (Albany County, morning)

Coordinator: Ray Perry 475-0291 rwperry@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Joint trip with the Audubon Society of the Capital District

Join Ray for a special outing of birding by snowshoe. Meet at the Visitor Center at 9 a.m. for a brief introduction to snowshoeing, then strap on the waffle stompers and go over the meadow and through the woods in search of winter specialties. The program, geared for the birding/snowshoeing novice, is open to the public free of charge, but space is limited. Please call Five Rivers at 518-475-0291 by Wednesday, February 5th to register. Snowshoes provided. If there is insufficient snow, we will go on foot. In the event of severe weather, this program may be cancelled.

Saturday, February 15, MOHAWK RIVER/COHOES TO CRESCENT (Albany County; morning)

Coordinator: Bill Lee 374-3426 bileeje@hotmail.com

This area, including Cohoes Falls and Simmons Island, offers a great opportunity to study gulls and waterfowl that winter along the Mohawk River. We will look for Glaucous, Iceland and Lesser Black-backed Gulls often present in small numbers in the winter. This trip will be a good introduction to the many fine vantage points along the Mohawk. Wintering Bald Eagles are likely.

Meet at the NY State Dam Recreation area behind the U-Haul Rental in Cohoes at 8:30 a.m. From I-787 going north, turn right onto Route 470 (Ontario Street) in Cohoes. Then turn left onto Clark Ave. and proceed to the end. In case of snow, trip will be held on Sunday, February 16th.

Upcoming Field Trips *(continued)*

Sunday, February 23, FORT EDWARD GRASSLANDS (Washington County; afternoon through dusk)

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

Short-eared Owls are seen most winters in the Fort Edward Grasslands, an Important Bird Area in Washington County. This area is also known for other wintering raptors such as Rough-legged Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks, and Northern Harriers. Wintering field birds including Horned Lark, Snow Bunting, and Eastern Bluebird are good possibilities, while Lapland Longspur and Northern Shrike are less likely. If Snowy Owl has been reported, we will make a special effort to see it.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED; CONTACT THE COORDINATORS NO LATER THAN FEB.20 TO SIGN UP AND GET MEETING TIME AND PLACE. SPACE IS LIMITED AND CARPOOLING WILL BE NECESSARY.

MARCH

Sunday, March 9, WATERFOWL OF THE HUDSON RIVER SOUTH (Greene county; morning)

Coordinator: Bill Cook (518) 851-2678 cook@sunycgcc.edu

[This is a joint trip with the Alan DeVoe Bird club.](#)

[We will search the Hudson River from Coxsackie to Catskill where waterfowl usually congregate on their way north. There is a good chance of seeing Bald Eagles.](#)

[Meet at 8 am at the Coxsackie boat launch. From the intersection of 9W and 385 in Coxsackie go east on 385 \(Mansion St\) and continue straight to the Hudson River where the road bears left to the boat launch site.](#)

Friday, March 14, DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS, SACHUEST POINT NWR AND RHODE ISLAND COAST out-of-area trip Mar 28 – 30, 2014. See field trip description for particulars.

Sunday, March 16, WASHINGTON COUNTY WATERFOWL (morning)

Coordinators: Joyce Miller, justlookitup@yahoo.com

Lindsey Duval, eccentricvirgo@gmail.com

Register by 7 p.m. on March 15

Joint trip with Southern Adirondack Audubon

Join us as we search the Hudson for migrant waterfowl such as Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Ring-necked Ducks and Mergansers. In recent years, Horned Grebe, Canvasbacks and Tundra Swans have been lifebirds for many.

Upcoming Field Trips *(continued)*

Meet at the Schuylerville Central School at Routes 29 and 4. The trip is limited to the first 12 who register. Contact one of the leaders before 7 p.m. on March 15 to register and for meeting time. Dress warmly and bring a beverage/snack, your binoculars and a scope if you have one. We will carpool. Trip will end late morning. You will be contacted if the trip is cancelled due to weather.

Friday-Sunday, March 28-30, RHODE ISLAND/SACHUEST POINT NWR

Coordinators: Gregg Recer and Cathy Graichen 899-2678 gregg_recer@alum.rpi.edu

This trip to the Rhode Island coast will focus on wintering loons, grebes, gulls, waterfowl and shorebirds, and any early spring migrants that might be present. Sachuest Point NWR generally hosts large numbers of wintering Harlequin Ducks, along with scoters, eider, goldeneye and long-tailed duck, and is usually a good spot for purple sandpiper and great cormorant. We'll also cover other coastal locales such as Pt. Judith, East Providence and Galilee searching for white-winged gulls, wintering hawks, open-field birds and alcids. We plan to leave Friday evening so as to have 2 full days birding. There will be a limit of 10 participants (including the coordinators) for this trip.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED: CONTACT THE COORDINATORS BY MARCH 14th FOR RESERVATIONS AND LOGISTICS DETAILS.

APRIL

Friday, April 11, DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS, DELMARVA PENINSULA out-of-area trip May 30-June 1, 2014. See field trip description for particulars.

Sunday, April 13, VISCHER FERRY (Saratoga County; evening)

Coordinator: John Hershey 371-3114 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. Rusty Blackbirds are also a possibility. We will linger until after dusk to listen for nocturnal bird sounds from rails, woodcocks and owls. With a little luck we may get to see an American Woodcock displaying at dusk.

Meet at the main entrance at 6:00 p.m. Bring a flashlight to aid in returning to the parking area.

Thursday, April 24, WOODCOCK AT FIVE RIVERS (Albany County, evening)

Coordinator: Ray Perry 475-0291 (Daytime only) rwperry@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Upcoming Field Trips *(continued)*

Meet at 7:00 PM at the Visitor Center for a brief talk about the American Woodcock and its management at Five Rivers. We'll then stroll out the Service Road through managed areas and feeding swales to arrive at the Bat Barn area at a time good for watching and hearing the Woodcock do its thing. Bring binoculars and a flashlight and dress appropriately for the weather.

Saturday, April 26, VOSBURGH MARSH (Greene County, morning)

Coordinator: Al Mapes 439-4086 aamapes@nycap.rr.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 am at the Coxsackie Boat Launch and car caravan to Four Mile Point Rd.

Sunday, April 27, RAMSHORN-LIVINGSTON SANCTUARY (Greene Co; morning)

Coordinator: Tom & Colleen Williams 857-2176 trwdsd@yahoo.com

RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary, located in the Village of Catskill, is 436 acres of tidal marsh and swamp, upland forests and fallow farm fields. Two miles of trails follow an old farm road to a 28-foot observation tower, then skirt RamsHorn Marsh and meander through a forested hillside. The early migrant residents will have returned by late April. We may encounter one of the first waves of neotropical migrants pushing northward. Ospreys, eagles and hawks are possible as well.

Meet promptly by 7:30AM, Colonie Center in Albany, Sears Auto Center at the intersection of Central Ave. and Wolf Rd. We will be on the Wolf Rd. side of Sears Auto Center. Alternatively, you can meet up with the group at the Park & Ride lot Exit 21 of the NYS Thruway (Catskill) by 8:15 a.m. Contact the trip leader if you plan on attending.

Feathers

Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club

c/o Five Rivers EEC

Game Farm Road

Delmar, NY 12054