



The Fledgling

Vol. 19, No. 2 Dec 2001- Feb 2002

From your Outgoing President:

If you think about it, you may recognize that every article in this column was an attempt to convey to our membership that the current board has been doing all the work for many years. It has been a struggle just to keep going. But through all that we have been able to present to you many wonderful speakers and slide shows, including Beth and Brad Bidwell's program with the breathtaking presence of beautiful live birds. On the other hand, there were many other important ongoing activities that we almost had to abandon for lack of people power, the lack of support from you, our MEMBERSHIP.

On the up side, not seven nor five nor one volunteer joined with our board, but two winners for you and us. They are Ewa, pronounced "Eva", Hammer, Editor of *The Fledgling* and a powerful generator of ideas; and Mona Bearor, who works with Eva and will in addition be taking on the demanding task of Publicity. This bodes very well for SAAS's immediate future, but in the long run it is only a beginning. Out of 400+ members there must be more that can spare a little time and energy. Please think about it and then call us to talk about how it would work best for you.

It has been a great honor to be the President of SAAS for 2 years and I thank you, both the Board and the membership. Did I mention that over the last year our Board meetings have actually become a fun evening to which we all look forward?

Peace and Success To You All - Joseph Kern

The SAAS Board and members wish Joe health and happiness in the future and welcome our new President, Linda Hoyt. We look forward to working with you, Linda.

SAAS Calendar

Monthly chapter meetings are held at the Crandall Library, on the fourth Wednesday of the month, except as may be noted below. For changes and updates, please check this column in each issue. Meetings are also published in the Post Star and Chronicle, on the SAAS website and on the Post Star online Events Calendar. Mark your calendar and join us for some exciting presentations by guest speakers featured below. The meetings start promptly at 7pm. Please be on time. Guests are welcomed - please bring one with you!

December	no meeting	"Happy Holidays"
January 23	Molly Gallagher and Colleen Kimball	"Wildlife Rehabilitation"
February 27	Gregg Recer	"Atlantic Canada"

Wildlife rehabilitators **Molly Gallagher and Colleen Kimball** have a not-for-profit wildlife rehabilitation service, North Country Wild Care. Molly is the environmental analyst for the Lake George Park Commission and Colleen is animal control officer for the Town of Queensbury. They will present an interesting account of their services and experiences as volunteers that save wildlife.

The area of southeastern Canada surrounding the Gulf of St. Lawrence is a land of boreal forests, rocky coasts and headlands and fog. Summer birding here focuses on seabirds, warblers and boreal specialties. **Gregg Recer** will present a slide program featuring birds and scenery of Atlantic Canada including parts of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec. and Newfoundland.

Please plan on joining us for these special programs.

Membership Survey: Birding Haunts

Mona Bearor

The Fort Edward grassland area is a favorite birding haunt of many members. Fort Edward is an exceptional bird breeding area, supporting Northern Harriers, American Kestrels, Upland Sandpipers, Grasshopper Sparrows, Henslow's Sparrows, Vesper Sparrows, Savannah Sparrows, Bobolinks, Eastern Kingbirds, and Eastern Meadowlarks. It is also an important raptor wintering area with large numbers of Short-eared Owls and Northern Harriers. In winter the area may also reveal Juncos, Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs, Red-tailed Hawks, Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Shrikes and Barb Putnam says if you are lucky you might see a Snowy Owl! Both the National Audubon Society and the American Bird Conservancy have declared this an IBA - Important Bird Area. Several good roads in this area are Cary, Blackhouse, Fitzpatrick, Durkeetown, Plum, Swamp, Mahaffy, Town Line, Hinds, and St James.

Nancy Vineyard's favorite birding area is new to me and I anxiously look forward to when I can visit there. It is called **Ferd's Bog** and is near the town of Inlet. Take Rt. 28 through Inlet to Eagle Bay, then 4 1/2 miles up Uncas Rd. to the trailhead. This 100 acrea area has a boardwalk and sighted birds include Spruce Grouse, Three-toed Woodpecker, Black-backed Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, and Lincoln's Sparrows. There is an active Osprey nest in the bog. This is a unique natural area with all the normal bog plants and several orchids as well for those who enjoy plants as well as birds.

Another favored birding area is the **Carter Pond Wildlife Management Area** located along County Route 338 in the Town of Greenwich. It is a 446 acre site maintained by the DEC and consists of three parking areas, canoe and rowboat access, a mile-long nature trail, and a pond and marsh overlook structure. The diverse habitat provides for a variety of wildlife species. According to New York State there may be as many as 51 mammals, 174 birds, 6 reptiles, 8 amphibians, and 11 fish in this one area. The extensive marshes support Pied-billed Grebes, Least Bitterns, Virginia Rails, Soras, and Common Moorhens. Duck nesting boxes around the marsh are used by Wood Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, Screech and Saw-whet owls, and Tree swallows. During migration flocks of Canada geese, Mallards, and Black Ducks can be seen. In summer a Kingfisher usually hunts near the outlet of the pond and nests in the bank

of the stream. Two other favorite birding haunts are the **Feeder canal** path which has a diverse birding habitat along its length and the **Hudson River** south from Ft. Edward to Schuylerville, especially at Ft. Miller, where ducks and geese abound and occasionally a Bald eagle may be sighted. Use Rt. 4 and River Rd. on the east side or the West River Rd.

Unfortunately, due to the small show of interest, we will not be continuing this column in future issues. I have enjoyed talking to and working with those who participated and I'd like to especially thank Paul Safford, Nanci Vineyard and Barb Putnam for their input for this issue.

Dark-eyed Junco

Barb Putnam

This smart-looking bird is fairly common at feeders in our area during the winter. They particularly like to pick up seeds off the ground underneath feeders. One of their nicknames is the "Snowbird".



The mostly slate-gray Dark-eyed Junco can be recognized by its sparrow size, pink bill, dark eye, and whitish belly. When it flies you should note the white outer feathers of the dark tail. The females and young birds are a little browner and sometimes have buffy flanks.

The birds we see used to be called the "Slate-colored Junco". Ornithologists lumped the Slate-colored, Oregon, White-winged, Gray-headed, and Guadalupe Junco together some years ago and called them all "Dark-eyed".

In spring and summer we can hear their song, a musical trill that varies in pitch. Often they place their nest right on the ground. Juncos at times can be found in feeding flocks with chickadees and nuthatches. During the winter they generally are found in small flocks. Watch along the road edges for them to fly up; they often return to the same or almost the same spot after the cars pass.

IBA - Fort Edward Grasslands

Bob Kirker

State Audubon has asked me to help coordinate an updated boundary on the Fort Edward Grasslands. Thanks to Brad Bidwell and Barb Putnam for all their field work and to Bob Budliger for help with the boundaries. The area was enlarged to both include more grasslands, particularly in the northern fringes and to provide ample buffer zones. The area is now about 13, 500 acres. The new boundaries are:

Starting at the Route 4/Patterson Rd. intersection proceeding counterclockwise easterly along Patterson Rd. to County Route 46 - thence proceeding northerly along County Route 46, Durkeetown Rd, east on State Route 197, north on Hines Rd. to State Route 196 - thence westerly along State Route 197 to the canal - thence southerly along the canal to State Route 4 - thence southerly along State Route 4 to the point of beginning.

Winter Treat for the Birds

3 Parts Lard
1 Part Peanut Butter

Any - or all! - of the following:

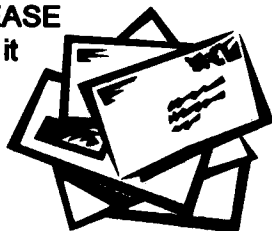
Cornmeal ; Oatmeal
Breadcrumbs ; Raisins
Dried Cranberries
Nuts ; Cracked Corn
Mixed seed

Melt the lard and peanut butter together over low heat. When slightly cool, add any combination of the other ingredients until it starts to get thick. Spread into pans and put in refrigerator to set, then cut into squares for suet feeders. May also be immediately spread on pine cones or directly on to the bark of a tree.

From the Membership Chair

Claire Hunter

New Memberships: PLEASE go through our chapter - it makes a huge difference to our treasury. I'll be glad to help with renewals, also.



For your Holiday Gift Memberships: SAAS membership includes the

national *Audubon* magazine as well as our local newsletter *The Fledgling*. Our chapter will send a gift card on request. Bonus - we have attractive ceramic cardinals ready for mailing either to you or directly to your gift recipient.

Fledgling: Please let us know that you would like to continue receiving *The Fledgling* - I enjoy communicating with you all.

Missing Birds from My Backyard

Joan Robertson

The article by Nanci Vineyard in the last *Fledgling* struck a familiar chord with me. I have not done much exploring on the Internet due to lack of skill and practice so it is very helpful to have this mini-tutorial. Thanks, Nanci.

I hope to find out more about the escalating increase in the use of pesticides and herbicides in the quest of weed free lawns. Equally alarming, but with perhaps more devastating effects, is the practice of spraying right-of-ways for power lines, fence lines, roadsides. The primary final depository for these poisons is in the water table and as runoff into lakes and streams. This simply does not make sense from any standpoint!



Here in Cleverdale we are missing several species of birds from the general area of lake, field and swamp. I have been keeping records for thirty years and know which species were historically present. The long time resident pair of Green Herons were last seen and heard in 1999. The ungainly flight and outrageous squawks are a thing of the past, it seems and I do miss them. I have heard from several birders from various areas about the lack of Kingbirds. When I mentioned the fact from my experience, the comment was "You're right! We did not see many either." Is it bug zappers, spraying for mosquitoes, or an environmental problem in the winter habitat? I miss the darting flights of the Kingbirds, the Swallows and other Flycatchers, which were also in greatly diminished numbers. This is the tip of the iceberg for missing species. I don't even want to think about the warblers I no longer see.

I would be interested in hearing from other birders, via the *Fledgling*, about which avian friends they no longer observe.

Helderberg Hawk Watch

Bob Kirker



I wish to sincerely thank all those Southern Adirondack Audubon hawkwatchers who helped me throughout the years. I especially want to thank: Beth Bidwell, Brad Bidwell, Monty Calvert, Barb Putnam, Burt Seeholzer, Linda Theis, and Linda White. Their long ride to the site allowed us to establish the following records:

In 1996, our watch was run on 90 days and we ranked 8th out of 65-70 sites. In 1997 and 1998 we had 119 and 126 days for a 1st place ranking in both years. In 1999 and 2000 we had 95 and 93 days for a 2nd place ranking. In addition, in 1997 we established the northeast record of 869 hours besting the previous mark of 779 hours.

Again, my most heartfelt appreciation to all of the above.

Wandering the Web

Mona Bearor



For this issue of *The Fledgling* I have chosen to review the website "Nutty Birdwatcher" found at the url: www.birdnature.com. I was intrigued by the name of this site so I thought I'd look around and report to you. I found this to be a very informative site and one that has the information presented in an organized and logical manner as well as being artistically presented with beautiful graphics. This website is arranged in eight sections; I will attempt to give you an overview of each section and what it has to offer.

The **Introduction** is comprised of a welcome message, an explanation of the purpose of each section and a bibliography of the materials used to gather the information for the site.

The **Survival Needs** section offers material on water, food and cover requirements. Of particular interest in this section is the food chart. Not only is there a chart of approximately 40 common Eastern backyard birds showing which feeds they prefer at the feeder, but each bird name on that chart is a link to an encyclopedia type page about that bird complete with excellent pictures. In this section there is also a chart

listing of the natural foods that different birds prefer, suet facts and recipes, and nesting material and nestbox dimensions.

The **Bird Identifications** section is where I initially stumbled into this site. I was searching the web for an explanation of the hierarchy of Taxonomy - that Latin nomenclature that we all find so confusing! There is an excellent explanation of that in this section and also a table of Eastern US birds with their scientific and common names. A very nice glossary of anatomy terms that aid in identifying, a super chart that has Eastern US songbirds birds arranged by color, and a page which helps identify birds by their habitat or behavior can all be found here. Last in this section are downloadable checklists of birds to be used in the field. Although New York birds are not listed separately, these lists could be put to great use to any birder.

The **Gallery** contains photos and some of John James Audubon's paintings. Each is a link to a page profiling that bird.

The **Habitats of Birds** section describes the many varied bird habitats and lists the birds that frequent each of them. Covered are Atlantic and Gulf shores, Eastern forests, grasslands, and wetlands. Each of these in turn is subdivided into several more specific habitats. A table listing the trees used by wild birds is also available here.

The **Bird Migration** section covers the general concept of flyways and has further information including maps of the four major North American flyways: Atlantic, Mississippi, Central and Pacific. Also here is a Spring and Fall Migration table.

The **Odds & Ends** section is just that - a collection of interesting facts that just won't fit in any other category. I particularly enjoyed the "Birder's Checklist" and the articles from antique *Birds and Nature* magazine.

The **Resources** area has a large but well organized listing of links to follow for further study on many birding topics. As evidenced by the "What's New" page, this site is constantly growing.

I will visit often to explore at length some of the pages I have not yet seen in their entirety and hope that your first visit to this important site will only entice you to return again and again.

Annual Christmas Bird Count

The Christmas Bird Count will be held this year on
Saturday, December 29.

Please contact Linda White at 792-4446 if you are
interested in taking part in this important birding
event.

Home Landscaping for the Birds

Mona Bearor

Shrubs are one of the most important families of plants when considering value to birds and adding them to your property is a great way to attract new birds. Shrubs help close the gap between the tree canopy, smaller understory trees and groundcovers and flowers and because shrubs reach maturity relatively quickly, they will be of benefit to wildlife sooner than slower-growing trees. Shrubs can supply many bird requirements; many produce wildlife-attracting fruit and offer it at varying times of the year. Shrubs are also valuable for cover and nesting sites; they provide shelter for birds which need protection from the wind, rain, and cold. In addition, shrubs offer cover in which small birds can hide from predators. Shrubs for shelter should have dense branching and lots of leaves. Evergreens are especially valuable for year round shelter. Deciduous shrubs are also important because they provide both food and cover. Finally, many shrubs have a branching structure that can provide fine nest sites.

One of the better times to get shrubs is fall; this is the season when many nurseries put their shrubs on sale, which will enable you to buy larger quantities of each species for less money, providing a greater mass of shrubbery for the birds. A handful of berries from one plant might be a treat for bird or two but won't be much of a meal for a migrating flock. When planting fruit producing shrubs, a planting of 5 or more will insure a substantial crop. Fall is also one of the best times to plant shrubs. They are ready to go dormant for the winter so they transplant better; they have time to get acclimated to the soil through the winter; and in spring they will put out vigorous new growth.

Viburnums are invaluable native shrubs for our



area of the Northeast. Most varieties have good looking, dense foliage. They are attractive in the spring landscape with their flat topped clusters of white flowers followed in either summer or fall with red, blue or black fruit dependant on variety. They thrive on a wide variety of soils conditions - if you have very dry soil try Mapleleaf - *Viburnum acerifolium*, whose fruit attracts Bluebirds, Waxwings, Robins, Starlings, Towhees; for moist areas, Arrowwood - *Viburnum acerifolium* will do well. All viburnums are border and woodland plants and tolerate shade quite well, especially the Arrowwood and Mapleleaf varieties. The dense undergrowth of Mapleleaf forms dense thickets and provides good nesting and escape cover for numerous species of birds. The fruit of the Nannyberry - *Viburnum lentago* and Cranberry - *Viburnum trilobum* persists into the winter. In hard winters this can be a significant source of food for overwintering birds or very early migrants. All varieties mentioned here are hardy in our area.

Keep adding shrubs every year; they are a wonderful way to enrich your property and you will be rewarded with increased numbers and new varieties of birds.

Important!

**Everyone Please Read
This!**

Because of dues disbursement restructuring by the National Audubon Society, our Southern Adirondack Chapter has lost a major portion of it's funding. Until we are able to find other means of income we must be increasingly aware of expenses. We are asking only those who wish to continue to receive *The Fledgling* to return this form to us as an indication of your choice.

Please mail it to: B. Putnam 190 Palmer Ridge Rd, Gansevoort, NY 2831

If you wish to email your response, you may send your name and address as it appears on your mailing label to:

SAdrAudubon@netheaven.com

and indicate that you are responding to the Fledgling survey. In this way we can eliminate costs that are incurred sending our newsletter to those who would rather not receive it. If you mail this form in please be sure that your mailing label is on the reverse as we will use that to compile our new mailing list.

Thank you for your co-operation,

SAAS Board of Directors

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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the National Audubon Society and Southern Adirondack Audubon includes the bimonthly magazine *Audubon* and SAAS newsletter, *The Fledgling*. The cost is \$20 for regular memberships and \$15 for seniors. Make check payable to "National Audubon Society" and send with Name, Address, and Phone number to:

Claire Hunter, 3 Edgewood Dr., PO Box 1382, South Glens Falls, NY 12803-1382

Newsletter Submission Policy

We welcome all submissions to The Fledgling and will utilize them as space permits. Please include your name and contact number, e-mail preferred. All submissions must be e-mailed to the editor no later than the 15th of the month preceding publication and will be edited as needed. If you cannot e-mail, please submit to Barb Putnam at 190 Palmer Ridge Rd., Gansevoort, NY 12831, at least a week before deadline. Please be sure to include your phone number and call her before sending material.

The Fledgling



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