

The Fledgling

Vol. 18, No. 4, June - August, 2001

From the President

Joseph Kern

Since I took on the responsibility of chapter President, every article I have written has been an attempt to recruit new members to the board, and volunteers to work on chapter projects. We simply cannot expect the same people to do all the work year after year. All that I have written has generated not one volunteer. Our editor has repeatedly asked that members send her a birding question or experience, environmental information, ideas, or somehow INTERACT with the Fledgling to help grow a healthy Audubon chapter. Again, Ewa has not gotten a single response.

There are many issues which we have for years been working hard on, in order to contribute to the community and to make a better world for ourselves and our children. Our efforts are diminishing for lack of help.

National Audubon has charged us with many new and global activities. We cannot do them. We don't have the people power. When I was elected president, I had several new and innovative ideas for SAAS. They could have made us a unique and more functional chapter. Because of lack of help, we were unable to implement them.

Without your help and commitment we may not even be able to continue at all. I intend to finish out my term. If you, our membership remains on the sidelines and does not become a more active and interactive membership I will not continue, "unproductive efforts." That would be a waste of energy. I suspect that I am not the only board member to think along these lines. Clearly, paying your dues and reading the Audubon magazine is not enough. We need more of your time, energy and skills. Please contact us to find out how you can help.

SAAS Calendar

Marion Cole

Monthly chapter meetings are held at the Grandall Library, on the fourth Wednesday of the month, except as noted below. For bi/monthly changes and updates, please check this column in each issue. Mark your calendar and join us for some exciting presentations by guest speakers featured below. Guests are welcome. Bring one with you!

THE MEETINGS WILL START PROMPTLY AT 7PM.
PLEASE BE ON TIME.

June 27	Linda Theiss Review of Maine's Environmental Camp
September 26	Bob Budliger Raptor Identification
October 24	Scott Stoner The Everglades
November 28	Bill Gorman Wading Birds



Good News - Claire Hunter

In the past few years, concern for the diminishing numbers of Scarlet Tanagers prompted a special Feeder Watch by Cornell. This week, I was delighted to from a friend who lives on West Mountain, that there are Tanagers feeding in his yard. He also has Bluebirds nesting. Argyle friends also report nesting Bluebirds. The New York State bird, the Bluebird, graces the special license plates on many cars. The drawing for the license plate was done by Roger Tory Peterson.

Barb Putnam

This colorful member of the thrush family happens to be our state bird. As I write this on May 13th, we have five bluebird eggs in one of our nest boxes. Our blue eggs are color coordinated with the parents, but I understand the eggs are sometimes white. It takes about two weeks for the eggs to hatch and another two and a half weeks for the young to fledge. We usually have another batch of eggs after the first babies hatch.

For a while, Bluebird numbers in our state were drastically down. This decline was attributed to the loss of habitat containing natural nesting sites as well as the introduction of House Sparrows and Starlings that competed for nest cavities. Thanks to numerous bird boxes placed in yards and along appropriate stretches of habitat, the Eastern Bluebird has made a good recovery.

Many of our local Bluebirds migrate south for the winter. They seem to stay in a family group through the cold months. We have been lucky enough to have Bluebirds in our yard year round. The birds that winter in our area are always looking for berries. Occasionally, they come to our feeders for hullless sunflower seeds. I have read that several will roost in a nest box in the winter but I have not seen this myself.

Both the male and female will sing, but the male's song is more exuberant. One description of the song is: "cheer, cheerful charmer". It is a rich melodious warble. You can hear the song, or a shorter version of it, year round.

If you haven't had the pleasure of seeing an Eastern Bluebird, try driving slowly along any road in our area that has farms. Look for property with several bird boxes about four feet high. No doubt, Tree Swallows will have taken over most of them, but there may very well be a pair of Bluebirds nesting there, too. May, June and early July would be good times to check. Good luck!



Ewa Hammer

I am happy to report some great news. Mona Bearer has agreed to assist me at The Fledgling. She can be contacted at: jessie@netheaven.com, with ideas or stories. Nanci Vineyard, a freelance writer and teacher, has offered to send some articles, and volunteer some time as well. Bob Kirker, who has an impressive lifetime list of 754 birds (all the species seen through one's life in the contiguous 48 states), and who has had thrilling escapades in the process of acquiring it, has promised us an exciting series entitled: Adventures on the 700 Trail. Bob has also lined up a list of presentations for this fall. Welcome aboard, Bob, Nanci and Mona. I look forward eagerly to your contributions. I hope that this is the beginning of greater involvement on the part of our membership, and that more volunteers will follow your example and come forth to help our beleaguered president with the work of the Chapter.

The May 23rd. general meeting featured an important lecture on the Breeding Bird Atlas, by Bob Budliger. For information or to volunteer, contact the Hudson-Mohawk Regional coordinators Jane Graves: jgraves@skidmore.edu or Mark Fitzsimmons: 518-439-8403.

There are exciting presentations in store. This month Linda Theis will be talking about the Maine Environmental Camp. A former president of SAAS, Linda continues to serve on the Board of Directors and has been actively involved in the Chapter for many years. She is an avid birder. Bob Budliger of National Audubon, will lecture on raptor identification in September. Bob is a longtime member of Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club (HMBC), where he has held many offices. He is presently the VP of the Audubon Society of the Capital Region. Retired from the DEC, Bob has held many leadership positions in National Audubon. Scott Stoner will be doing a slide presentation on the Everglades. Scott is the president of the Audubon Society of the Capital Region. He has held many offices in the HMBC, and is currently on the board of directors. Scott works for DEC. Bill Gorman's lecture and show will be on the subject of wading birds. He is a long-time member of the HMBC and has been actively birding Canada and the US (including quite a bit in Hawaii). He loves to take motion pictures of the birds and has been adding to his collection for many years.

This is an impressive list of speakers and topics. I look forward to seeing you all there. Have a great summer, and happy birding.

Adventures on the 700 Trail

Bob Kirker

1:00pm: Barb Putnam calls: "Spotted Redshank at Wellfleet." God bless Barbara! Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary on Cape Cod, is a long trip, but that has never stopped me in my hunt for another new bird to add to my list.

1:10pm: Call Bill Gorman - yes, he can go.

2:00pm: Pick up Bill and drive to Wellfleet, arriving 7:30pm. Radio warns of big storm moving in. Sky beginning to darken as we pull in. Tide coming in. Looking ominous.

7:30pm: Go to Manager's house. Bob Prescott is having dinner with wife. Interrupt to ask direction to bird (good thing Bob is a friend of mine). "At end of spit."

7:45 - 8:00pm: Walk/run with scopes 1 1/2 miles to spit. Getting dark. Tide coming in fast.

8:10 - 8:20pm: Can't find damn bird. shoes getting wet as tide comes in. Wind getting stronger, as storm picks up momentum.

8:30pm: Feet wet again - move up to higher ground. Light fading fast only 10-15 minutes of usable light left.

8:40pm: Suddenly, as the light is about to fail, Bill spots movement at back edge of heavy grass. There is just enough light to see red on bird. We confirm Redshank. Yes! Bird number 712 for me, Number 707 for Bill..

8:40 - 9:00pm: Walk/run 1 1/2 miles to car in the dark. It's very dark.

9:25pm: Pull into Orleans Circle for supper at Friendly's. As we get out of car monsoon opens up.

10:15pm - 3:45am: Drive home, very tired. Heavy rain but both of us with big smiles. Another successful chase. Remember to thank Barbara.

Note: From time to time I will write up stories of my bird experiences: being shot at, arrested in two counties, losing shoes on mud flats. See future editions. Current number in lower 48: 754 species.

Audubons Maine Workshops

If you're looking for a way to make this summer a special one, you might want to consider spending an engaging week at Audubon's camp in Maine. Located at Hog Island in beautiful Muscongus Bay, the Audubon camp offers a summer-long schedule of workshops designed especially for adults who want to expand their knowledge and appreciation of nature.

There are six-day sessions on bird biology, coastal ecology, nature photography, field sketching, sea kayaking, and more from which to choose, all taught by nationally recognized experts in their fields. Accommodations are comfortably rustic, the food is superb, and the island scenery is spectacular. Scholarship funds are available.

For more info, contact: The Audubon Camp in Maine.

Maine Audubon Society

20 Gilstand Farm Road, Falmouth, ME 04015

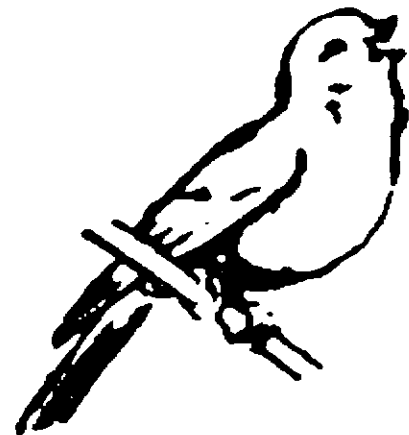
Toll free: 888-3255261

www.maineaudubon.org/programs/camps

Notice

(from time to time, space permitting, we will post notices that may be of interest to our members. This is a free service for members of our chapter only. Please limit content to birding or environmental topics)

For Sale: Swarovski Binoculars. 7X42, very little used. perfect condition. \$700. Call Leon at 518-648-5301.



News From Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Birds in Forested Landscapes Project Needs You

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Birds in Forested Landscapes project needs volunteer bird watchers across the United States and Canada to help gather information about the relationship between the size of a forest patch and the likelihood that a given species will occur there.

Understanding the relationship between birds and their habitat helps land managers develop the most effective ways to manage forests for the birds that depend on them. This is especially important for birds of high conservation concern. The Prothonotary Warbler of the southeastern United States, for example, has declined 32 percent over the last 30 years; Lewis's Woodpecker of the cool western mountains has dropped by 50 percent. BFL is gathering information about these and 46 other species representing all regions of North America, an expansion of the project's earlier focus on thrushes and Cooper's and Sharp-shinned hawks.

To find out more about BFL, visit <http://birds.cornell.edu/bfl>, e-mail forest_birds@cornell.edu, or write Cornell Lab of Ornithology/BFL, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, NY 14850.

To sign up, call the Lab at (800) 843-2473.

Calling All Birdhouse Landlords

The Birdhouse Network asks people of all ages and backgrounds to put up nest boxes ("birdhouses") and collect valuable information about each box location, habitat characteristics, and number of eggs and nestlings in the nest. They report this information over the Internet to Cornell Lab researchers, who analyze the data to help determine what if any environmental factors contribute to nesting success. TBN continues to collect data about Tree Swallows and Eastern Bluebirds but recently announced their "Most Wanted List" of cavity-nesting birds 16 species for which we have fewer than 50 records. These include Prothonotary Warbler, Mountain Chickadee, Eastern Screech-Owl, and American Kestrel all of which are also showing population declines. The TBN online data form also requests basic information about pesticide treatment near nest boxes.

To find out more about The Birdhouse Network, visit <http://birds.cornell.edu/birdhouse> (while there, visit TBN's popular Nest Box Cam for a peek into the secret lives of cavity-nesting birds via live video images taken from inside nest boxes across North America), or call the Lab.

Help Golden-winged Warblers

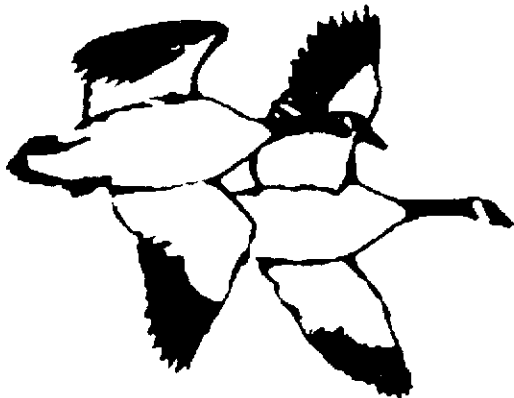
The beautiful little Golden-winged Warbler is a species of high conservation concern to biologists and birders alike. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Golden-winged Warbler Atlas Project (GOWAP) is designed to determine the population status and habitat and area requirements of the Golden-winged Warbler and the Blue-winged Warbler (a competitor to Golden-winged Warblers for breeding areas), as well as their hybrids. GOWAP engages birders and professional biologists to survey and conduct point counts at known and potential breeding sites of Golden-winged Warblers from May through June. Results will be used to develop two detailed atlases: a Distribution Map that shows boundaries for areas of high concentrations of Golden-winged Warblers in sufficient detail to indicate potential sites for preservation and management, and a Hybrid Index Map that will help locate key "safe haven" sites within the area of overlap where golden-wing and blue-wing hybridization is rare. For more information, visit <http://birds.cornell.edu/gowap>; to sign up, call the Lab.

May Birdathon

John and Nancy Eustance

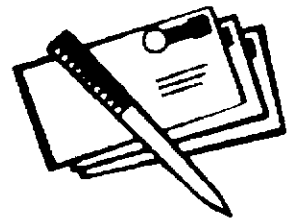
We took part in the May Birdathon with an hour's walk Sunday, May 20th, along the Hudson River at South Glens Falls (the Betar Byway). We observed the following 24 species, including a few in our own backyard.

American Robin
Common Grackle
Tree Swallow
Gray Catbird
Killdeer
White-crowned Sparrow
Mallard
Wood Thrush
Common Yellowthroat
Tufted Titmouse
Black-capped Chickadee
Hairy Woodpecker
Blue Jay
European Starling
American Crow
Song Sparrow
Yellow Warbler
Red-winged Blackbird
American Goldfinch
Northern Cardinal
Eastern Phoebe
Mourning Dove
Downy Woodpecker
House Finch



From the Membership Chair

Claire Hunter



New Members: National Audubon has enriched SAAS by 46 new members in the last three months. We hope to welcome you in person at a chapter monthly meeting. Please check schedule on the front page of The Fledgling.

Renewing Members: In recent months, 71 members have renewed, a cause of rejoicing to the membership chair. Your loyalty is the grassroots support of SAAS. I'm happy to receive calls about renewals as the notices can be confusing. If you plan to travel this summer, you may want to take your Audubon membership card, which entitles you to reduced rates at some sanctuaries. The card is attached to the first renewal notice only. You must peel it off the notice.

Gift Ideas: Graduation or birthday remembrance might well be a membership in Audubon. Student dues are only \$15. The chapter will send a gift card on request. Make check to National Audubon and mail it to me. Bonus: National has provided some attractive ceramic cardinal figurines, sun catchers and bird books as new member gifts.



Summer Reading Suggestion

Claire Hunter

"Red-tails in Love," by Marie Winn is a wonderful book. I've read the copy my friend provided on loan, twice. The author, writing for the Wall Street Journal, reports a wildlife drama in Central Park. Excitement runs high among birders when Red-tails decide to nest in the park - or on some of the balconies in the neighborhood. Woody Allen and Mary Tyler Moore assist in times of concern, when the Red-tail diet of mice is threatened by the building manager's pest control policy. The book impressed me with the interest and friendship of the dedicated birders that visit the park regularly. It is a lovely, enjoyable read and I recommend it highly.

SOUTHERN ADIRONDACK AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Linda Theis	793-4557

2000-2003

Marion A. Cole	743-9631
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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 checks payable to "National Audubon Society" and send with name/address/phone number to: Claire Hunter, 3 Edgewood Drive, PO Box 1382, South Glens Falls, NY 12803-1382. Please note: National Audubon does not recognize chapter only memberships.

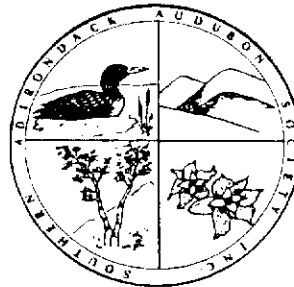
Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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. Be sure to include your phone number and call her at 792-7542 before sending material.

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