



On the Wing

News from Saw Mill River Audubon

Summer 2008
Issue 309

INSIDE:

- 1 Keyes Receive Service Award
Summer Events
- 2 New Board Members ♦ Arizona Trip
Haas Grant Received ♦ Green Tip
- 3 Scholarships Awarded
Cats and Birds ♦ Book Review
- 4 **Contact Us!**
People ♦ Memberships & Donations

SAVE THESE DATES! UPCOMING FALL EVENTS

Sat & Sun, October 4 & 5
Bird Seed Sale Weekend

Sun, October 19
2008 Pruyin Celebration



FGC Photo/Joe Kosack

Wildlife Tip

Ruby-throated hummingbirds are the only hummingbirds seen in our area. Worldwide, there are 319 species of hummingbirds.

Visit the butterfly/hummingbird garden at Pruyin Sanctuary this summer to see native plants that you can add to your property to attract both butterflies and hummingbirds. (Check out the August 2 field trip to the right.)

**Want to help in our garden?
Call our office at 914.666.6503**



Photo/William Kallner

Sophie Keyes displays picture of a Northern cardinal that she received with her Distinguished Service Award at the 2008 Annual Dinner.

Keyes Honored at Annual Dinner

The highlight of this year's Annual Meeting and Dinner, held on April 6, was the awarding of the Saw Mill River Audubon Distinguished Service Award to Sophie and Bob Keyes. During an evening of celebration at Travelers Rest in Millwood, Sophie and Bob were honored for their many years of dedication to SMRA. They have both served on the Board of Directors and have volunteered at countless events and functions. Sophie was Editor of *On the Wing* for many years, turning it into an award-winning publication. She is still involved with the newsletter overseeing the bulk mail preparation for each issue. SMRA members and guests who attended the dinner were also treated to a multimedia presentation by Anne Swaim: *Sanctuaries Through the Seasons*. The many beautiful photographs of our local sanctuaries brought home SMRA's critical mission of habitat protection. Larry Trachtenberg also presented a multimedia presentation about the 2007 trip to Trinidad. The date of our next Annual Dinner will be Sunday, April 5, 2009. We are planning a potluck dinner, free and available to everyone.

SUMMER EVENTS

Second Saturday Sanctuary Walks

Saturday, June 14 ♦ 9:00 am to 11:00 am ♦ Brinton Brook Sanctuary, Croton

Saturday, July 12 ♦ 9:00 am to 11:00 am ♦ Pinecliff Sanctuary, Chappaqua

Saturday, August 9 ♦ 9:00 am to 11:00 am ♦ Graff Sanctuary, Croton

Come explore the sanctuaries of Saw Mill River Audubon in summer. Each walk will start at the main entrance of these sanctuaries. See our web site for directions or call our office for more information. No charge. No pre-registration needed.

Butterflies at Pruyin

Saturday, August 2 ♦ 10:00 am to 12:00 noon ♦ Pruyin Sanctuary, Chappaqua
Trudy Battaly will lead this exploration of the garden and meadow at Pruyin Sanctuary at the height of the butterfly season. You may see hummingbirds too! No charge. No pre-registration needed. Meet at the office/garden entrance of Pruyin Sanctuary.

Welcome New Board Members

We are pleased to announce that on April 6, 2008, three members of Saw Mill River Audubon were elected to the board of directors: Joanne McAuley, Leen Provost, and Nick Fischer. Leaving the board are Ed Bezursik, Margo Peters and Sophie Keyes. We extend our thanks to each of them for their service. During the past year, our board also noted, with sadness, the passing of SMRA board member Stanley Rosenthal.

New Board Member Profiles



When **Joanne McAuley** moved from the Bronx to Ossining in 1985, the only birds she could identify were sparrows, robins, starlings and pigeons. A friend gave her the *Peterson Field Guide to Eastern Birds* and she had a new hobby. She joined Saw Mill River Audubon and became an active member.

Joanne participated in the 2007 SMRA birding trip to Trinidad and this year's visit to southern Arizona. Now that she has retired after working for 35 years in New York State government, we are delighted that Joanne has chosen to devote more time to SMRA by joining the board of directors. Her administrative skills will be put to good use. An avid gardener, Joanne is also looking forward to working in the Butterfly and Hummingbird Garden at Pruyt Sanctuary.



Shortly after moving to Croton-on-Hudson a few years ago, **Leen Provost** spotted a pileated woodpecker in her yard. This rekindled her interest in birding. Leen's real passion has become photographing birds. Attendees at the 2007 SMRA Annual Meeting and Dinner were treated to an exhibition of her beautiful photographs. Leen enjoys the outdoors, going hiking and camping whenever she can. An active volunteer with SMRA, she looks forward to the greater involvement that membership on the board of directors will bring. Natives of Belgium, Leen and her husband moved to Brazil before coming to the U.S. They have three daughters and own a business involved in importing home textile items like towels and bathrobes.

Nick Fischer's interest in joining the board of Saw Mill River Audubon stems from a lifelong love of nature and preserving the environment. An Audubon member for many years, Nick is looking forward to becoming more active with an organization committed to "maintaining environmental quality for all living things." As a Board member, he will be working on SMRA's core missions, including the development and conservation of our sanctuaries, environmental action, and education. Nick and his wife, Cathy, are residents of Mohegan Lake. He has had a career in commercial printing sales for over 30 years.



Audubon Trip to Arizona



Elf owl

Twelve people traveled with Saw Mill River Audubon for a week-long birding trip to south-eastern Arizona from April 28 to May 3, 2008. The trip list of over 170 species of birds included ten different species of hummingbird and several specialties of the region such as the Vermilion flycatcher, Elegant trogon and Elf owl. Highlights included a Flame-colored tanager seen at Madera Canyon, a view of a hummingbird building a nest, and a thrilling roadside view of a bobcat drinking from a pond. A portion of the trip cost was a donation to support Saw Mill River Audubon.

We anticipate that our 2009 trip will be to Costa Rica. We invite you to travel with us and join us in supporting the habitats we visit with our ecotourism. Please contact our office if you would like to learn more.

Green Tip

Every year, Americans receive over 19 billion mail order catalogs. It takes 53 million trees to produce these catalogs. There is a direct tie-in to global warming because a byproduct of this catalog production and distribution is the addition of 5.2 million tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. This is equivalent to the annual greenhouse gas emissions of 2 million cars. By eliminating duplicate or unwanted catalogs, you can make a difference for the earth. A website, catalogchoice.org, makes it easy to do this. Once you have registered, you simply select the catalogs you wish to decline. Catalogchoice.org contacts the catalog company to have your name removed from their mailing list.



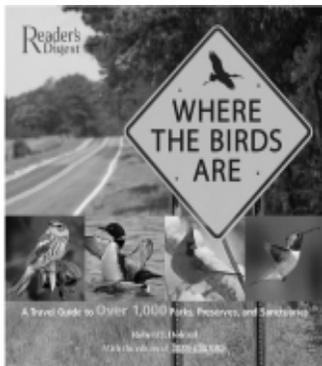
Haas Sanctuary Grant Received

At the end of 2007, the Betts family, formerly of Chappaqua, transferred ownership of two parcels of land to Saw Mill River Audubon, expanding Haas Sanctuary by 7 acres. This April, we received a major grant from the New York City Environmental Fund that will enable us to embark on several enhancements to the sanctuary this summer. Check our fall newsletter for further updates!

Welcome Members!

Armonk J. Alan Clark and Daniel Jackson **Buchanan** Nick Colombo **Chappaqua** Margaret Byard, Megan Gladstone **Cortlandt Manor** Maxine Trinkoff, Gabe Wolosky and Jodi Porter **Croton-on-Hudson** Mary Charbonneau, Catherine Gilmore-Barnes, Marianne McCormack, Susan Salzberg **Mohegan Lake** Terence Ducey **Mount Kisco** William O'Reilly **Ossining** David Epstein, Catherine Trocheck **Peekskill** Ruth A. Wells **Pleasantville** Nancy Mayers, Leigh and Nancy Mesh, Charles Titterton, Jen Mary Yanek **Sleepy Hollow** Walter Glass **Tarrytown** Ana Leroy, Christopher Pais **Valhalla** Elizabeth Duboff

Book Review



Where the Birds Are: A Travel Guide to Over 1,000 Parks, Preserves, and Sanctuaries by Robert J. Dolezal with the editors of *Birds and Blooms*. 2007, Pleasantville NY, Readers Digest, \$28.95, 288 pp.

Where the Birds Are is a lavishly illustrated, large-format volume. It

features 35 birding tours in the U.S. and Canada. Most of the tours are centered around a major urban area. Urban birding is prominently featured with descriptions of numerous big city parks and preserves. For example, there is a wealth of detail about birding hotspots in Manhattan's Central Park. Automobile routes to sanctuaries and wildlife refuges in the surrounding countryside are also included as are detailed directions to the best birding spots in these places. Each tour has a key map marked with numbered birding destinations. A number of Audubon centers and sanctuaries are described as are state and National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges.

The birding tours in *Where the Birds Are* are complemented by gorgeous photographs of the birds to be seen in the various destinations. There are also enticing photos of the parks and sanctuaries themselves to help motivate the traveler. Additional information about selected species is given in "Fowl in Focus" blurbs. These feature identification tips and habitat descriptions along with a photo. While anyone interested in birds should find *Where the Birds Are* a useful addition to their libraries, beginners will find this book most helpful.

While *Where the Birds Are* provides information about which species may be seen in different seasons, it would have been helpful to have this information in tabular form instead of having to hunt through the text for it. A table in the form of a species check list for all the destinations would be useful to the birder interested in viewing specific birds. This would be especially helpful if data about the best season or seasons to view particular species were included.

What is so appealing about *Where the Birds Are* is that it makes it clear that there are almost limitless opportunities for viewing birds and other wildlife. Some of these may be quite close to home or adjacent to the downtowns of our largest cities. The book brings home the message of the importance of habitat protection whether in rural areas or urban centers. It's impossible to read it and not come up with dozens of places that you'll want to visit.

--Reviewed by William Kellner



Scholarships Awarded

Saw Mill River Audubon has awarded four environmental study scholarships this year for adults and students to attend environmental camps and workshops. Two student scholarships were funded by the Larry Light Scholarship Fund. With the support of Saw Mill River Audubon, **Dylan Hastings**, a sophomore at Mahopac High School will attend the Acadia Institute of Oceanography in Maine and **Andrew Park**, a freshman at Horace Greeley High School, will participate in Westchester County Park's Conservationist-in-Training program at Cranberry Lake. **Sandra Nuffer** of Briarcliff Manor, a seventh grade science teacher at Eastchester Middle School, received an adult scholarship to attend Audubon Maine's Educator Workshop at Hog Island, Maine. In addition, Saw Mill River Audubon has offered a scholarship to **Mary Charbonneau**, one of our two part-time educators, to attend the same workshop in Maine.

The Larry Light Scholarship Fund was established by the Light Family and friends in the 1980s in memory of Larry Light, a student at Greeley High School. Further support in recent years has come from private donations from Audubon members. The adult scholarship funding is supported by the members and friends of Saw Mill River Audubon.

Birds, Cats and You

With the coming of the warmer weather, we're all eager to get out of the house and enjoy the outdoors. The family cat is no exception. But before giving Fluffy free reign to come



and go as she pleases, consider the ramifications. While they may be gentle members of the household, when cats are let out, they revert to being highly efficient hunters. In fact, it is estimated that domestic cats kill hundreds of millions of birds every year and even greater numbers of small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. This predation can put serious pressure on species that are facing other population challenges.

Cats that are kept indoors live longer and healthier lives. They are much less likely to be exposed to diseases like feline leukemia or the tick-borne illnesses that are common in our area. And predators like dogs, coyotes, foxes and great horned owls are all additional risk factors for free ranging cats in our area (not to mention automobiles). So, do your pet and wildlife a favor—keep kitty indoors.

To find out more, visit the National Audubon Society's Safe Cats page at:
www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/SafeCats.html

Another excellent resource is the American Bird Conservancy's Cat Indoors! program. Their logo is reproduced above. For details visit:
www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/cats/

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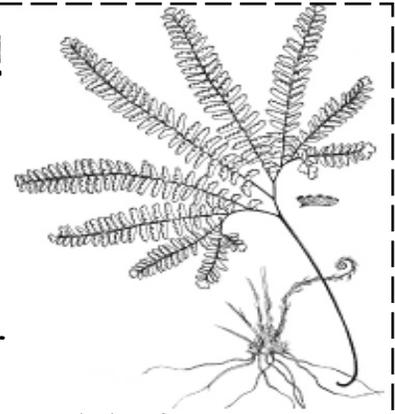
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HELP US GROW!

Just as a plant needs sunlight, water, and soil to thrive, Saw Mill River Audubon needs your support to maintain and expand our programs.

When you give to our annual appeal, you can be confident that 100% of your donation supports our local education and conservation efforts.



Maidenhair fern

I WISH TO DONATE

Enclosed is:

- \$500 \$250 \$100
 \$50 \$25 \$____
 My employer will match my gift.

I'D LIKE TO JOIN
Saw Mill River Audubon!
Basic Chapter Membership:

- Enclosed is \$20
 Please send me information about planned giving opportunities

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You can also join or donate at our web site!

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