



# On the Wing

Winter 2012– 2013

News from Saw Mill River Audubon

Issue 331

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Photo: Christine McCuskey

American kestrel photographed during last year's Christmas Bird Count. See December 8<sup>th</sup> event at right for details on how to participate in the upcoming 2012 count in our area.

## SPECIAL EVENT: Hudson River EagleFest 2013

Saturday, February 9, 9:00 am–4:00 pm

The annual **Hudson River EagleFest<sup>sm</sup>**, organized by the Teatown Lake Reservation, brings together a broad coalition of organizations united in their goal to promote appreciation of an environmentally healthy and vibrant lower Hudson Valley. Saw Mill River Audubon is pleased to support this exciting, all-day event that brings thousands of people to be awed and inspired by the natural world close to home. This year, eagle spotting locations will be found along the Hudson from Yonkers to Garrison. The **main exhibition tent in Croton Point County Park** will have lectures, special exhibits for children and grownups, and theatrical presentations. Two-hour bus tours hosted by environmental educators will leave from the main tent. Visit [www.teatown.org/eaglefest](http://www.teatown.org/eaglefest) for more information and for theater and tour reservations. This year, Saw Mill River Audubon will sponsor warming tents at the **boat ramp south of the Croton-Harmon train station parking lot** and at **George's Island County Park**. Volunteers with binoculars and scopes will staff all the eagle spotting locations.



## MORE WINTER EVENTS

Join us! For more information call 914.666.6503 or visit [www.sawmillriveraudubon.org](http://www.sawmillriveraudubon.org)



## Christmas Bird Count Pre-Count Birding

Saturday, December 8 ♦ 8:00 am ♦ Teatown Lake Reservation, Ossining

Meet leader Charlie Roberto in the Teatown parking lot and help survey area birds in preparation for the 2012 Peekskill Christmas Bird Count the following weekend. Bring binoculars. Sites to be surveyed to be determined. No pre-registration needed. See page 3 for details on participating in the actual Peekskill Christmas Bird Count and other Christmas Bird Count circles in the area.

## Members' Best Night

Thursday, December 13 ♦ 7:00 pm ♦ Ossining Community Center

Saw Mill River Audubon will celebrate the holidays with a fun evening of our members' best photography! Bring holiday cookies to share (if you wish) and enjoy those prepared by others. If you want to be part of the Members' Best Night program, email us three or four of your digital photographs of birds, other wildlife or local habitats, which we will project on the large screen for all to enjoy. Contact our office by phone or email for directions and if you are able to share holiday cookies or share photos.

## Need More Seed?

## Winter Seed Sales

9:30 am–12:30 pm

On the following Saturdays:

Sat. Dec. 15 Sat. Jan. 19

Sat. Feb. 16

## At Pruyn Sanctuary

Weekday sales are available  
Mon/Wed/Fri 10:30 am to 3:30 pm.

Call 914.666.6503 for more info.

Holiday Gift Certificates Available

SEE PAGE 3 FOR ADDITIONAL AUDUBON PROGRAMS & EVENTS

## Thank You Volunteers



Seed sale volunteers do the heavy lifting!

Our annual seed sale weekend held in Chappaqua in October was a great success. We'd like to extend our sincere thanks to the many volunteers whose hard work made it possible.

Proceeds from the sale further Saw Mill River Audubon's mission of environmental education and conservation. And here's a special shout-out to **Pizza Station** of Chappaqua and **Starbucks** of Mount Kisco for their generous donations of food and drink that kept everyone going—Thank you!

## Peter Burckmyer Honored in Somers

The Somers Land Trust honored the late Peter Burckmyer for Peter's key role in protecting the Angle Fly Preserve. The Land Trust named a trail in Angle Fly for Peter with a plaque noting his untiring efforts in the creation of the 654-acre preserve. Peter was also a valued board member and board president for SMRA in the 1980s. Peter's passion for conservation is well remembered with this fitting tribute from the Somers Land Trust.

## Hurricane Sandy

While we did not have the devastating impacts suffered by many, Hurricane Sandy caused significant tree damage in Saw Mill River Audubon's sanctuaries. We are grateful for the assistance of many volunteers who stepped forward to assess and repair storm damage.

We also note the severe impacts on many coastal wildlife refuges including Jamaica Bay in the New York harbor and extending south to Forsythe (Brigantine) in South Jersey. This historic storm seems to have brought more public attention to the ongoing questions of climate change and shoreline development. How this might translate into public policy changes remains to be seen.

## Join the Celebration!

A potluck winter warm-up. A summer evening featuring wine and wildlife. A cruise along the Hudson River to enjoy the beauty of our area's fall foliage. These are just a few of the events we're planning during our 60th anniversary year.



Morgan Pruyn clearing trails at Pruyn Sanctuary in the 70s.

We'll also offer an exciting selection of day and weekend field trips, guided tours of our sanctuaries, and special community presentations on everything from native plants of Westchester to a multimedia look at our sanctuaries through the seasons.

We invite all our members and friends to join the celebration! Come enjoy these special anniversary events and help us celebrate our 60 years of service.

To help you plan, we'll mail you a card in early February that will list some of the highlights of our anniversary year events. And as always, you'll be able to find details on our website and in our newsletter, both of which will be getting a facelift in 2013.

It's a great time to be a member of Saw Mill River Audubon. Thank you for helping us thrive and grow!

## Welcome Members

**Briarcliff Manor** Lois Kroll **Chappaqua** Victoria Alzapiedi, David Bickler, Robert G. Coulombe, Grace C. Gibbons  
**Cortlandt Manor** Janet Gillespie, Jonathan Peter  
**Croton-on-Hudson** Joshua and Ryan Rynn  
**Ossining** Minu Chaudhuri, Fay Chazin-Seidelman, Irene Herz  
**Peekskill** George Dubinsky, Mary T. Marino, Mary Watson  
**Pleasantville** Dianne Altman, Thomas Rippstein  
**Tarrytown** Irene Dillon, Ute Hershman, Frank Kaiman  
**Valhalla** George Kondos

## Leadership Camp

This past August I had the great fortune to attend the **Audubon Leadership Camp** in Maine after receiving a generous adult scholarship from SMRA. The camp was established in 1936 on the



333-acre Hog Island, which is now Todd Wildlife Sanctuary, and is designed to introduce adults to the ecology of the Maine coast and encourage wildlife conservation values. About 30 participants from various Audubon chapters along the east coast came together for an inspiring week of educational programs, exciting field work, challenging brainstorming sessions, supportive camaraderie, and just plain fun.

Led by some of the premier naturalists and ornithologists in the country, I learned a great deal about the importance of the Atlantic Flyway Initiative that is the top priority of National Audubon's strategic plan for 2012-2015. This plan emphasizes how Audubon chapters like SMRA can work at the local level to support the work of the Audubon network. By working together, we can make a real impact on bird conservation throughout the western hemisphere. I look forward to offering photographs and video at the SMRA Annual Dinner in April. Look for more information about the Atlantic Flyway Initiative and our related plans and programs upcoming in 2013 on our website and in future newsletters!

--Christine McCluskey

See story on this page for more information on SMRA Adult and Youth Scholarships

## DECEMBER

Saturday, December 8 ♦ 9:00 am

### Second Saturday Walk at Brinton Brook Sanctuary

Our monthly walks continue year-round at our largest sanctuary: Brinton Brook in Croton-on-Hudson. Come walk with us and experience the changing seasons. No pre-registration needed. Good for all ages. Held regardless of weather except in cases of severe weather or road closures. **Also on Saturday, January 12.**

Saturday, December 15 ♦ All Day

### Peekskill Christmas Bird Count

The Christmas Bird Count is a citizen science project with a long tradition. This year marks the 113th annual count! New and experienced birders are welcome to go with established teams to take part in the census of birds in the Peekskill count circle. Contact the SMRA office for specific places and times of this day-long event. Other Christmas Bird Count circles include Bronx-Westchester on Sunday, December 23 and Putnam County on Saturday, December 29. Email our office for additional details. To find out more, visit [birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count](http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count).

### December 31st Deadline: Adult & Youth Scholarships for Summer Study

Saw Mill River Audubon offers summer environmental study scholarships for both adults and youth 13-17. The scholarship offer financial assistance in attending an environmental class or camp. The Larry Light Youth Scholarship was established by the Light family and friends in memory of Larry Light, a Chappaqua student. For more information and applications, visit [www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/scholarships](http://www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/scholarships). Deadline for applications for summer 2013 is December 31, 2012.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE Information for All Field Trips

Suggested donation of \$5/person  
(Youth & children under 18 free)

We ask you to call 914.666.6503 OR email [office@sawmillriveraudubon.org](mailto:office@sawmillriveraudubon.org) before the trip so we know to expect you. Most trips run rain or shine. If we do need to cancel a trip we will call or email (your preference) to all who are registered. We will also put a notice on our website and Facebook page and update our office voice mail message.

## Special Event: Amazing Adaptations

Thursday, January 10 ♦ 7:00 pm ♦ Ossining Community Center

Join us for this very special live animal program by **Animal Ambassadors** and **Animal Embassy**. In this interactive, educational and entertaining presentation, participants will meet a variety of animals from around the world reflecting the amazing diversity of life on earth. We will learn how habitats provide animals with all that they need to survive and how they have adapted to environmental challenges in their own unique ways. Meet tortoises, lizards, snakes and sugar gliders! Doors open 7:00 pm for refreshments. No admission after 7:30 pm. Program ends 8:30 pm. Suitable for adults as well as children age 4 and up.



Space is limited! Reserve your FREE seats now by emailing contact name, telephone and number in group to [office@sawmillriveraudubon.org](mailto:office@sawmillriveraudubon.org)

**Saw Mill River Audubon**  
275 Millwood Road  
Chappaqua, New York 10514

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Deadline for Next Newsletter: **Jan. 2**

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**ON THE WING** is published five (5) times a year (Sept/Oct/Nov, Dec/Jan, Feb/Mar, Apr/May, and June/July/Aug) for \$7.50 a year by Saw Mill River Audubon, 275 Millwood Road, Chappaqua, NY 10514. **Periodical Postage #013281** at Chappaqua, NY 10514. **ISSN: 1545-5254** at Chappaqua, NY and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Address changes to: **Saw Mill River Audubon**, 275 Millwood Road, Chappaqua, NY 10514

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

“I never had a policy; I have just tried to do my very best each and every day.” *Abraham Lincoln*

Your gift to Saw Mill River Audubon helps us encourage more people to enjoy the natural world and care about its protection.

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



## I WISH TO DONATE

Enclosed is:

- \$500    \$250    \$100  
 \$50    \$30    \$\_\_\_\_\_

My employer will match my gift.

## I'D LIKE TO JOIN Saw Mill River Audubon!

Basic Chapter Membership:

- Enclosed is \$30  
 Please send me planned giving info

Name(s)

Address

City/State/Zip

Please make checks payable to:

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