Visit our Google calendar at www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/calendar for more events, event details, and any schedule changes. Be sure to subscribe to our free, private email list for more details, and early notice of new trips and events, including “pop-up” trips that we may add with a few days notice. Visit www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/list to subscribe.

Recurring Events

Every Monday, 8:30 am, free, guided bird walks at area hotspots. Meet in main parking at each location.

1st Monday
Muscoot Farm
2nd Monday
Rockefeller State Park Preserve
3rd Monday
Teatown Lake Reservation
4th Monday
Croton Point County Park
5th Monday
Location varies, see Google calendar on SMRA web site.

Every Second Saturday, 9:00 am, Guided Hike at Brinton Brook Sanctuary, Croton-on-Hudson
Free and open to the public. Good for adults and youth age 6 and older. Meet in main parking area of Brinton Brook Sanctuary. Held snow/rain/shine except if road conditions are unsafe. Check our web site!

Saturday & Sunday, 9:00-11:00 am
Project FeederWatch
Croton Point Nature Center
Join SMRA volunteers at the Croton Point Nature Center from now until early April as we identify and count birds visiting the bird feeders there. Beginners encouraged. Great opportunity for bird photography as well.

Public Programs

Monday, December 12, 7:00 pm
Birding in Manhattan & LI
Chappaqua Library Theatre
Join Authors Deborah Rivel and Kellye Rosenheim for a presentation about their new book, “Birdwatching in New York City and on Long Island” published earlier this year.

Thursday, January 19, 7:00 pm
Get into eBirding!
Teatown Lake Reservation
Join SMRA Executive Director Anne Swaim as she introduces and explores eBird, Cornell’s Lab of Ornithology bird sighting website and app.

Thursday, February 16, 7:00 pm
Exploring Gaspé Peninsula
Teatown Lake Reservation
Charlie Roberto will introduce us to the Gaspé Peninsula in Québec including images from our 2016 trip.

More winter events on page 6 and even more winter events & details at www.sawmillriveraudubon.org
Saw Mill River Audubon
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President’s Message
Saw Mill River Audubon members and volunteers had an active fall. In addition to our regularly scheduled walks, we had a full schedule of local and regional field trips, including new pop-up outings (visit our website to sign up for notifications). There was also an exciting 8-day trip to the Southwest canyons (see page 4) and a late November trip planned to Montezuma NWR in the Finger Lakes region. Public programs included the Spanish-language film Magia Salvaje about the birds and wildlife of Colombia.

We continue to make our voice heard on local, regional, and national issues of concern, such as the proposed Hudson River barge anchorage sites. We have joined National Audubon’s Plants for Birds initiative, offering our native plant garden at Pruyn Sanctuary and the knowledge of our staff and board members as resources for creating bird-friendly yards.

Our September Board Retreat sparked several exciting new projects in our key mission areas with discussions on advocacy, conservation and habitat, and education and outreach. With these projects, we hope to inspire even more members to get involved as volunteers or participants.

Along with all this good news, we are facing a few challenges. The most significant right now is one that most homeowners are familiar with: maintenance of our headquarters building, Pruyn House, in Millwood. With our dedicated and talented members, our generous donors, volunteers, and staff, I have no doubt that we will weather this and future challenges and continue to grow our mission.

Feel free to email me directly at president@sawmillriveraudubon.org

Valerie Lyle

Connecting with Nature: Your gift helps us connect people and nature.

I wish to donate. Enclosed is:
☐ $500 ☐ $250 ☐ $100
☐ $50 ☐ $35 ☐ $____
☐ My employer will match my gift.

I’d like to join Saw Mill River Audubon

Basic Chapter Membership:
☐ Enclosed is $35
☐ Please list my gift anonymously

Please make checks payable to:
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275 Millwood Road
Chappaqua, NY 10514

OR join/renew/donate online
www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/join
www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/renew
www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/donate
**Connect Kids to Parks!**

Saw Mill River Audubon is partnering with Rockefeller State Park Preserve through New York’s Connect Kids to Parks program. This new grant program funds field trips to New York State Parks for students in grades K-12, reimbursing school costs for transportation and program fees.

We hope this will be an exciting opportunity to connect more kids with nature.

The Connect Kids with Parks grant program is for Title 1 schools which have a higher percentage of economically challenged families. We are talking with eligible local schools to encourage bookings for the 2016-2017 school year.

The students will be using the 24 pairs of Vortex binoculars we were able to purchase through a generous gift from an anonymous donor with a 1-to-1 matching program from Eagle Optics.

**Perhaps you have a connection with an eligible local school to help us connect more kids with nature?** If so, please call us ASAP at 914-666-6503 or email office@sawmillriveraudubon.org

*Anne Swaim*

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**NY Audubon Council**

SMRA President Valerie Lyle and Board member Richard Saravay participated in the semi-annual meeting of the New York Audubon Council in October. At this gathering of New York Audubon chapters, two important issues, each with a specific relationship to climate change and carbon emissions, were discussed.

**Clean energy using offshore wind power** is in the early planning stage on a site proposed about 11 miles off the coast of southern Long Island. Producing energy with little carbon emission is clearly good, but the proposed development of about 175 rotating wind turbines more than 400 feet tall poses a threat to migrating birds as reported in earlier wind turbine projects on land. Audubon seeks to ensure that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), including public comments, be part of the initial steps, with a goal of highlighting bird migration pathways and, if required, seeking to relocate the development to sites which mitigate the threat.

**Hudson River anchorages** have been proposed to be built in the middle of the river at seven locations from Yonkers to Kingston. This proposal is intended to permit significant growth of oil transport both up and down the Hudson night and day. Locations near us would impact the Lower Hudson Important Bird Area, Bald Eagle breeding and roosting sites. Audubon New York and SMRA will provide public comments to the U.S. Coast Guard prior to the December 6th deadline highlighting the environmental threats in this proposal.

The Council’s legislative resolution passed at the fall meeting also noted the need for an EIS for the proposed anchorages.

*Richard Saravay*

For more about our shared advocacy efforts with Audubon New York, visit [ny.audubon.org/conservation](http://ny.audubon.org/conservation)
SMRA Explores Southwest Canyons & Birds

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of U.S. National Parks, Saw Mill River Audubon offered an eight-day exploration of five national parks in the Southwest in mid-October. The trip cost included a donation to SMRA benefitting our local conservation and education work.

Fourteen people joined SMRA Executive Director Anne Swaim in visiting Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef, Arches, Canyonlands and Grand Canyon National Parks as well as Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument and the Monument Valley Navajo Park with a dawn jeep tour.

While not the birdiest time of year for Utah and northern Arizona, we did enjoy several special bird highlights including: a Townsend’s Solitaire in Zion; Williamson’s Sapsucker, Cassin’s Finches and Pygmy Nuthatches in Bryce Canyon; singing Canyon Wrens in Capitol Reef; a beautiful Golden Eagle in Canyonlands; a Say’s Phoebe behind our hotel in Moab; and a very tame Woodhouse’s Scrub Jay at Grand Canyon, where we also caught a small part of the raptor migration through the Canyon.

Roger and Michele Garrison had the additional thrill of photographing a Northern Pygmy-Owl along Bright Angel Trail at Grand Canyon.

The main focus of our trip was taking in the spectacularly varied shapes and colors of the southwestern landscape across the Colorado Plateau as we followed the “Grand Circle” tour from park to park, and then seeing all these geologic layers and colors come together in the stunning finale of the Grand Canyon.

Anne Swaim

SMRA at the Movies

The SMRA board was fortunate to be invited to the recent Focus on Nature series at Jacob Burns Film Center in Pleasantville. The Eagle Huntress and Saving Jamaica Bay were both inspirational movies about small communities preserving a way of life in challenging land- and seascapes.

The Eagle Huntress showcased the rise of Aisholpan, a teenage girl growing up among Kazakh nomads who’ve settled in the harsh Mongolian Altai Mountains. She enters the male-dominated world of eagle hunting with surprising results. The images of the hunters at the annual eagle festival and on their winter hunting forays, in extreme enough weather to freeze the camera lenses, are stunning. For birders, the sight of the Golden Eagle homing in on its prey is worth the price of admission.

Conversely, Jamaica Bay is right in our backyard, and the documentary presents a father-son team of plainspoken firefighters with authentic New York accents who’ve made it their business to restore the Bay—10 times the size of Central Park—while fighting any number of government agencies, including the Port Authority and Kennedy Airport, from further despoiling it. Lots of great bird and wildlife footage here, too.

Kudos to Scenic Hudson, Groundwork Hudson Valley, the Hoch family and the van Hengel Family Fund for sponsoring this series. Brian Kluepfel
Revamped Cornell Site Takes Wing

Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s Birds of North America (BNA) is an extraordinary public resource, constantly updated for every bird species in North America, even accidentals. A redesign of the BNA website launched this September.

You can explore the site by searching for a species name or scanning the taxonomy list. Species introduction pages—available to those without a subscription—provide general information on subjects like distribution, behavior, breeding, and subspecies.

Subscribers can see beyond this introduction, which only scratches the surface of the wealth of information Cornell has put together. Are you interested in when a bird species starts singing, builds a nest, raises young, migrates or changes plumage? It’s all there.

Each species entry allows you to navigate to topics such as Distribution, Migration and Habitat; Diet and Foraging and each of these topics are further subdivided into sections like Locomotion, Self-Maintenance, Agonistic Behavior, and Predation.

Many Cornell Macaulay Library resources supplement the text, including photographs, videos, sound recordings, distribution maps, eBird range maps, molting cycle graphs, and spectrograms, graphic images of sounds.

The writing is not as lay-friendly as that from Cornell’s more simplified All About Birds web site. The concise language can be dry and jargony, yet still more readable than most science journals. Links are provided for all citations; you can view a full list of references, and, if you are using BNA for research, they’ve made citing BNA easy with “Recommended Citation” on each page footer.

BNA offers personal, institutional, and gift subscriptions from 30 days to three years.

Sarah Hansen

To find out more, visit Birds of North America online at www.birdsna.org

SMRA also recommends www.allaboutbirds.org

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Bird-Safe Buildings – What Can You Do?

On a recent walk around the New York Life Insurance Building in Sleepy Hollow, I found seven carcasses of birds.

This is no anomaly; bird strikes are a major factor in declining populations. Each year in the U.S. an estimated 365 million to 988 million birds die from collisions with glass (Audubon magazine). The birds most often affected include Wood Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Painted Bunting, and hummingbirds.

Birds hit commercial buildings, houses, sliding glass doors, and bay windows: any glass surface larger than a hand, under the right lighting conditions, because windows reflecting the surrounding habitat may look like a flight route to a bird.

What can be done about this problem?

- Buy bird-safe window materials. American Bird Conservancy rates certain products as “Effective” and “Highly Effective” in preventing collisions.
- Currently there are three commercial products rated as Highly Effective and six as Effective; all are intended for application on existing windows.
- If you work in companies that have large glass expanses, discuss with your building engineering department the value of installing bird-safe modifications to windows.
- Lobby for tax breaks for companies that are willing to install new bird-friendly windows or apply bird-friendly tape, especially if they have multiple large buildings.
- Apply household glue to outside windows and add sparkles in wavy lines less than 6 inches apart.

Valerie Heemstra

To find out more, visit www.abcbirds.org/program/glass-collisions
Selected Winter Events continued from page 1, more on our web site!

Third Saturday Bird Seed Sales: Sat 12/17, 1/21, 2/18. 9:30 am-12:30 pm
SMRA volunteers will be available at Pruyn Sanctuary, 275 Millwood Road, Chappaqua on these Saturdays to help load your car. Or visit our office at Pruyn during the week, M/W/F 10:30 am-3:30 pm, for bird seed purchases but please call or email first.
See Prices & selection online at www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/seed.

Saturday, December 17: Peekskill Christmas Bird Count
Friday, December 30: Putnam Christmas Bird Count
Teams of birders go out dawn to dusk to census birds in 15-mile diameter count circles. Email us at office@sawmillriveraudubon.org to find out how you can be part of the 117th Annual Christmas Bird Count.

Saturday, January 14, 9:00 am
Croton Point Eagles & More Walk with Charlie Roberto
Soup Gathering at Croton Point Nature Center, 12 noon
Now a wonderful annual tradition! Come birding with Charlie Roberto, starting 9:00 am at the Croton boat ramp and continuing on into the park. Eagles expected! Afterwards, join us for a soup gathering at the Nature Center at noon. Email us if you’d like to contribute soup, bread or beverages for the soup gathering: office@sawmillriveraudubon.org

Save the Date!
Saturday, February 11
Teatown Lake Reservation’s Hudson River EagleFest Returns!
Saw Mill River Audubon is honored to partner with Teatown in the annual EagleFest.
We plan to sponsor warming tents at the Croton boat ramp and George’s Island again, lead bird walks in the main event area inside Croton Point, and provide volunteer birders at the Croton boat ramp and George’s Island to help visitors spot eagles. Many other activities all day long! Snow date: Sunday February 12. You don’t want to miss this special winter event!
For EagleFest info, including reservations for some events, visit www.teatown.org/teatown-events/eaglefest.html

Warm thanks!
To Pizza Station in Chappaqua for providing pizzas for our bird seed sale volunteers in early October; and
To Chappaqua Starbucks Coffee for fueling and warming our seed sale volunteers with a generous coffee donation; and
To all of our hard-working seed sale volunteers who volunteered at the sale pickup and who moved bags of seed to Pruyn Sanctuary.