



Fall 2017



Broad-winged Hawk in flight. Photo: www.stevesachsphotography.com

Upcoming Events

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 to get additional details, and early notice of new trips and events, including “pop-up” trips that we may add a few days before the trip. Visit www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/list to subscribe.

Recurring Events

Every Monday, 7:30 am or 8:30 am, Free Bird Walks

September walks start at 7:30 am and October through April walks start at 8:30 am. See page 4 for weekly locations or check our website.

Every Second Saturday, 9:00 am, Brinton Brook Sanctuary Guided Hike. Monthly, Young Birder Walks. See event listings on pages 3 and 4.

Fall Public Programs — See Pages 3 & 4 for Fall Field Trips

Thursday, September 28, 7:00 pm at the Croton Free Library
What Can Wood Thrushes Tell Us About Forest Health?

Many of us are familiar with the haunting flute-like song of the Wood Thrush. Do numbers of breeding birds tell the whole story? How successful are Wood Thrush nests? Dr. Elijah Goodwin will present preliminary results from his three-year study of Wood Thrush nests at Rockefeller State Park Preserve. What have we learned so far from Wood Thrushes?

Thursday, October 26, 7:00 pm at the Chappaqua Library
Bird Migration Through Urban Landscapes: Dr. J. Alan Clark

How are birds affected by our urban landscapes in their annual journeys across the continent? Most birds migrate at night. Light, noise, and buildings pose particular challenges for these birds. In his research, Dr. J. Alan Clark uses recordings of the short vocalizations that most birds use during migratory flight as well as small- and large-scale radar to examine these urban challenges to bird migration. Dr. Clark is an Associate Professor of Biology at Fordham University and coordinator of the school’s conservation biology program.

Thursday, November 30, 7:00 pm at the Croton Free Library
The Mysteries of Sparrow ID: Joe Giunta

Come learn how to sort out the challenging LBJs (Little Brown Jobs) with this presentation by an experienced New York birder. Joe Giunta is the birding instructor for the Brooklyn Botanical Garden and leads bird walks for the Nature Conservancy, Brooklyn Bird Club, South Fork Natural History Society and New York City Audubon. He is a captain in the Brooklyn Christmas Bird Count and has participated in state breeding bird surveys.



Ospreys successfully nested again this year on the cell tower at the Croton-Harmon Station. A view of young Ospreys in July. Photo: Steve Kowalczyk.



Croton Point Birders in June. Photo: Anne Swaim.



The new Purple Martin nesting tower installed by Saw Mill River Audubon at Croton Point successfully attracted Purple Martins! We are encouraged to have Martins arrive this first year. Photo: Rob Armanini, owner of Feed the Birds store in Croton, a project sponsor.

2017-2018 Bird Seed Sale — Flyer enclosed in this newsletter!

Saw Mill River Audubon’s annual bird seed sale supports our local conservation and education work. Once a year in the early fall, we order bulk quantities of high-quality bird seed for sale to the members and friends of Saw Mill River Audubon.

At our sale kick-off day, Saturday October 14, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, we offer pick up of pre-orders as well as walk-in orders at our one-day location behind New Castle Town Hall, across from Chappaqua Library.

We also offer seed pickup through the winter into spring during office hours at Pruyin Sanctuary (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10:30 am to 3:30 pm) and also on 3rd Saturday mornings at Pruyin Sanctuary from November to April.

Online ordering is available at our website at:

www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/seed

Want to help at our sale kick-off day or at our 3rd Saturday sale days?

Contact our office to join up with a friendly crew of people supporting Audubon.

SMRA Larry Light Youth Scholarships

Saw Mill River Audubon offers students age 13-17 the opportunity to attend an environmental class, camp or study trip with funding support from our Larry Light Youth Scholarship Fund, established by family and friends of Chappaqua resident Larry Light. Award deadline can be adjusted to match payment deadlines as needed. Applications: sawmillriveraudubon.org/scholarships

Saw Mill River Audubon

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Explore Birding Online

All About Birds www.allaboutbirds.org

This is the website from Cornell Lab of Ornithology to which we send people for information about North American birds. Identify birds, listen to bird sounds, find out more about community science projects as well as feeding birds and building nest boxes for birds.

eBird www.ebird.org

Dip into the world’s largest community science effort with bird sighting reports from around the world and close to home. You can discover which birds people are seeing here in northern Westchester and explore birding hotspots around the world to visit when you travel. All SMRA birding trips contribute to eBird!

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

I wish to donate. Enclosed is:

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Basic Chapter Membership:

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OR join/renew/donate online
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September Events

**Saturday, September 2,
7:00 am–2:00 pm
Black Dirt Birding**

Join us on an exploration of the rich "Black Dirt" region of Orange County for grassland birds and more. We will be on the lookout for special sandpipers and other migrants moving south. Call or email our office to register and to connect with carpool or to find out about our first stop to meet us.

**Saturday, September 9,
9:00 am
Second Saturday Walk
Brinton Brook**

No registration needed. Rain or shine. Meet in main parking area. Good for adults and young people age 8 and up.

**Saturday, September 16,
8:00 am** *NOTE NEW TIME*
**Young Birders Walk
Croton Point County Park**
Our Young Birders Walks are for young people age 8 to 16 with accompanying adult. Meet in the ballfield parking area. No registration needed. Binocular loans available with advance notice to our office.

**Saturday, September 23,
9:00 am–12 noon
Work Day at Graff**

Come help us improve the trails and habitats at Graff Sanctuary in Croton. We'll be cutting invasive vines and moving debris off the trails. Bring clippers and work gloves if you have them. (We have extras.) Dress for the weather. Check our website if the weather is uncertain. Young people age 10 and up are welcome with accompanying adults. Please email or call our office to register.

**Sunday, September 24,
2:00–4:00pm
Canoeing Constitution
Marsh**

Join us for a unique opportunity to bird by canoe. Cost is \$40/person including canoe rental. Space is limited. Registration required. Payment required before the trip by check, cash, or credit card. Email or call to register. Carpooling is strongly encouraged since parking is limited at this location.

**Saturday, September 30,
9:00 am–12:00 noon
Hook Mountain Hawks**

Meet 9:00 am at Rockland Lake State Park at the Executive Golf Course parking lot by the clubhouse. Hook Mountain, just north of Nyack in Rockland County, offers eye-level views of migrating hawks and falcons and a spectacular 360 degree panorama of the lower Hudson Valley. Moderate 30 minute hike to the hawk watching station at the summit of Hook Mountain. Wear sturdy shoes and bring binoculars and water. Call or email to register.

**Saturday, September 30,
9:00 am–12 noon
Tree & Shrub Planting at
Brinton Brook**

Help us add native plants to the sanctuary. Meet in main parking area. Bring gloves and shovels. For adults and young people age 10 and up.

**Thursday, September 28,
7:00 pm
SMRA Public Program:
What are Wood Thrushes
Telling Us?**

Croton Free Library
See page one for details.

October Events

**Tuesday October 3,
7:00 pm
Saw Mill River Audubon
Nature Book Club
Mount Pleasant Library,
Pleasantville**

Come be part of the start of our new Nature Book Club as we discuss Carl Safina's *Eye of the Albatross*. Registration by email or phone to SMRA.

**Saturday, October 7,
7:00 am–2:00 pm
Basha Kill Birding**

We're heading over to Basha Kill Marsh Wildlife Management Area in Sullivan County, about an hour's drive from Millwood. Carpooling may be possible from Pruyn Sanctuary. For more information and to register for this trip, please call or email us. Some may choose to arrive Friday night for an earlier start Saturday and/or stay over Saturday night on this holiday weekend to extend this trip. Ask us about the overnight options.

**Saturday, October 14,
9:00 am**

**Second Saturday Walk
Brinton Brook**

See description for Saturday, September 9.

**Saturday, October 14
9:00 am–5:00 pm
Seed Sale Kick-off**

Our annual bird seed sale begins on this date with opportunity to pick up orders or buy seed as a walk-in customer at the Town of New Castle parking lot across from Chappaqua Library. **A seed sale flyer is enclosed in this newsletter.** Online ordering is also available on our website, just click on the picture of the bird seed!

**Sunday, October 15,
4:00 pm
Young Birders Walk
Croton Point County Park**
Our Young Birders Walks are for young people age 8 to 16 with accompanying adult. Meet in ballfield parking on the left as you enter the park. No registration needed.

**Thursday, October 19 to
Sunday, October 22
Audubon Council of New
York State Fall Meeting**

The Audubon Council of New York gathers chapters from across our state twice a year. The fall meeting will be in Seneca Falls and include some great pre-meeting birding on Thursday and Friday. SMRA people are attending and if you want to come along, contact our office.

**Thursday, October 26,
7:00 pm
SMRA Public Program:
Bird Migration Through
Urban Landscapes
Chappaqua Library**

See page one for details.

**Saturday, October 28,
9:00 am–12:00 noon
Hook Mountain Hawks**

See description of trip on Saturday September 30. Call or email to register.

**Sunday, October 29,
8:00–11:00 am
Croton Point Birding**
Meet in the ballfield parking on the left as you enter Croton Point Park. Come look for fall migrants and new winter arrivals. No registration needed. Expect three hours of walking with the option to turn back earlier as desired. For adults and young people age 8 and up.

November Events

**Saturday, November 4,
7:00–9:00 pm**
**Owl Talk & Prowl/
Young Birders Walk
Muscoot Farm**

Join Anne Swaim for a short multimedia introduction to the owls of New York followed by a night walk on the farm roads to listen and look for owls. Space limited. Intended for adults and young people age 6 and up. Registration required through Muscoot Farm by calling 914-864-7282.

**Saturday, November 11,
9:00 am**
**Second Saturday Walk
Brinton Brook**
See description for 9/9.

**Saturday & Sunday,
November 11 & 12,
9:00–11:00 am**
**Project FeederWatch
Croton Point Nature Cntr**
Count birds at the bird feeders viewing from inside the nature center. Beginners encouraged. Great opportunity for photography too. Continues weekly until April 8, 2018. To learn more, visit www.projectfeederwatch.org

**Friday, November 24,
9:00–11:00 am**
Turkey Mountain Hike
Walk off your Thanksgiving feast with a walk up Turkey Mountain in Yorktown. No registration needed. Good for adults and young people age 8 and up.

**Sunday, November 26,
8:00–11:00 am**
Croton Point Birding
Meet us in the ballfield parking lot on the left as you enter Croton Point Park. No registration needed. See 10/29.

**Thursday, November 30,
7:00 pm**
**SMRA Public Program:
The Mysteries of Sparrow
Identification
Croton Free Library**
See page one for details.

Weekly Monday Morning Bird Walk Locations

7:30 am start in Sep. 8:30 am start Oct-Apr.
Rain or shine. Check website first if severe weather.

1st Mondays: Muscoot Farm

Meet in in main parking lot

2nd Monday: Rockefeller State Park Preserve

Meet in main parking lot

3rd Mondays: Rockefeller State Park Preserve

Meet at Sleepy Hollow Road trail entrance

4th Mondays: Croton Point Park

Meet in main parking by Nature Center

5th Mondays: Location varies. Check website.

December Events

**Saturdays & Sundays,
9:00–11:00 am**
Project FeederWatch
Continues to April 6, 2018.
See details to the left on November 11.

**Saturday, December 2,
7:00 am–12 noon**
Ducking in Westchester
Join us for a morning of waterfowl watching at various sites in Westchester County. Call or email us to register, for possible carpooling info, and for location of our first stop.

**Saturday, December 9,
9:00 am**
**Second Saturday Walk
at Brinton Brook**
See listing on 9/9.

Christmas Bird Counts
During Christmas Bird Counts, birders census birds in 15-mile diameter count circles. See local count dates listed below. If you want to help, contact us to be connected with count organizers.

Sat, Dec 16:

Peekskill Area

Sun, Dec 17:

Greenwich-Stamford

Sat, Dec 23:

Bronx-Westchester

Sat, Dec 30:

Putnam

Learn more at:

[www.audubon.org/
christmas-bird-count](http://www.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count)

**Thursday,
December 21, 7:00 pm**
**Members' Best Photos
& Holiday Gathering
Croton Free Library**
Join us for this fun and informal event where members and friends of Saw Mill River Audubon share photographic highlights of the past year of birding and nature exploration and enjoy holiday desserts. **Let us know if you would like to share 2-5 of your best photographs by emailing our office by December 13.** Bring holiday cookies and other treats to share and exchange. (It is also very okay to come without photos or desserts!)

**SAVE THE DATE!
Sunday, April 8, 2018**

**Saw Mill River
Audubon Dinner
Crabtree's Kittle House**
Special guest speaker to be announced soon.

Saw Mill River Audubon Southeast Arizona Birding Trip

We have just three spaces left on our April 2018 birding trip to southeast Arizona, April 23–29, 2018 with optional trip extension April 29 to May 1. This trip is a go but we'd love to include you! If you are interested in receiving the detailed day-by-day itinerary, pricing and other details, please contact our office immediately. Solo travelers especially enjoy our friendly travel groups. Our extended birding trips benefit our conservation and education programs. For advance notice of future trips, be sure to subscribe to our "Big Trips" email notice list here: www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/list



Elegant Trogan. Photo: Tom Dove

Education



Know Some Teachers? We need your help!

We need your help this school year to help connect teachers and students with FREE field trips to Rockefeller State Park Preserve, guided by Saw Mill River Audubon educators and funded by the New York State Connect Kids to Parks program.

This state grant program can fully fund not only the program costs for classroom field trips but also bus transportation costs.

Download a flyer to share from our website here:

www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/CKTP

Sanctuaries



Brinton Brook Photo Collection

Edward Mertz has been photographing Brinton Brook through the seasons. Ed has an eye for natural beauty. His pictures feature both birds and other wildlife as well as the habitats and landscapes that make this sanctuary a favorite for many visitors. Thanks, Ed!

Visit our Brinton Brook Facebook page to view Ed's photographs: www.facebook.com/BrintonBrook. You don't need to join Facebook to view the photos.

And, if you enjoy nature photography, consider sharing your pictures with Saw Mill River Audubon at our Members' Best program on December 21. See details on Page 4 and on our website calendar. (No need to be a SMRA member for us to show your pictures but we do hope you join!)

Advocacy



Concerns with Border Wall Impacts

This summer, without advance notice to property owners, the Trump administration began survey work and, in some cases, clearing work on private and public lands along the US and Mexico border in preparation for expanding the border wall. Instead of open disclosure of plans, these have been stealth actions.

Affected properties include the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge and the National Butterfly Center in Mission, Texas.

These actions have been poorly executed and have angered local and state officials across party lines.

National Wildlife Refuges are owned by the people of the United States and, therefore, merit careful review and public comment before any actions are taken.

For a nonpartisan look at this issue and to add your voice in support of National Wildlife Refuges, visit the National Wildlife Refuge Association website here: www.refugeassociation.org



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Belted Kingfisher. Photo: Jeff Seneca.

Connecting People and Nature since 1953

Explore Nature with Saw Mill River Audubon this Fall!

We have more than 30 events scheduled between September and November to connect you with local habitats, birds and other wildlife!

Our Monday morning bird walks happen every week, now average 20 people, and are always a friendly and welcoming gathering especially for beginning birders. (And we have binoculars to loan you for all our field trips.)

Our weekend day trips near and far offer you opportunities to discover some of the best wild places in our region.

Our free monthly evening programs feature regional environmental experts to connect you with ongoing issues and expand your natural horizons.

Visit the Google calendar at our website for event listings: www.sawmillriveraudubon.org



Birding Rockefeller State Park Preserve. Photo: William Kellner

Bird Seed Sale Flyer enclosed in this newsletter!

Our annual bird seed sale offers you high-quality seed at good prices and supports our local conservation and education work.