



Fall 2007
Issue 305

On the Wing

News from Saw Mill River Audubon

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Support Audubon

Get Out this Fall!
Outdoors, that is.
We have a great lineup
of field trips this fall!
See page 3 for details

Join us for
ARIZONA IN APRIL
April 28 to May 3, 2008
space limited to 14
www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/Arizona

Got Seed? We do!
See page 2



FALL EVENTS

Join us! For more information call 914.666.6503 or visit
www.sawmillriveraudubon.org.

Sunday, September 23 ♦ 1:30 pm to 5:00 pm ♦ Pruyn Sanctuary, Chappaqua **2007 Pruyn Celebration**

Come celebrate the first day of fall with us and enjoy a fun afternoon outdoors at Pruyn Sanctuary! All events are free and open to the public. Our special guest at 2:45 pm will be a live wolf, Atka, from the Wolf Conservation Center in South Salem! Events will also include garden and arboretum tours, guided sanctuary walks, children's scavenger hunt, a geocaching lesson and adventure, free refreshments and music. Event parking will be on Joan Drive and Woodmill Road where shuttle vans will run all afternoon to the main sanctuary entrance on Route 133, Millwood Road. Visit our web site for more details and directions. Raindate for all events except Atka the wolf will be Sunday, September 30.



Meet Atka the wolf at this year's Pruyn Celebration!

Thursday, October 4 ♦ 7:30 pm ♦ Chappaqua Public Library **Natural History of Costa Rica**

Don't miss this informative, well-illustrated presentation by Robbin Moran, PhD, Curator of Ferns at the New York Botanical Garden. Dr. Moran will discuss the rich natural history of Costa Rica with a special emphasis on tropical plant communities and ferns.

Saturday & Sunday, October 13 & 14 ♦ 9:00 am - 2:00 pm ♦ New Castle Town Hall **2007 Annual Audubon Bird Seed Sale**

Our annual bird seed sale offers you high-quality bird seed at bulk prices and supports our work to protect local habitats and wildlife. We renew our inventory each fall and then offer convenient pickup at the parking lot behind New Castle Town Hall on our sale weekend. **Be sure to check our web site for our seed inventory list.** You are also invited to come join us as a volunteer for our sale weekend. Let us know if you can give a couple of hours on either day. Come, join with us to support local conservation. **Contact our office, 914.666.6503, to volunteer at the sale. Also contact us if you would like us to send you a flyer and you have not received one by September 7th.**

Friday, November 9 ♦ 7:30 pm ♦ Chappaqua Public Library **Global Warming—What Can I Do?**

Join us as Allen Hershkowitz, PhD, of NRDC, discusses global climate change. Dr. Hershkowitz focuses on what we, as individuals, can do to address the challenges that we are facing. Learn how you can be a part of the solution rather than contributing to the problem. This should be a powerful, thought-provoking evening.

Protecting Brinton Brook

On July 17, 2007 SMRA Executive Director Anne Swaim and Sanctuary Chair Michael Madias Jr. led representatives from the Village of Croton on a damage inspection of the Arrowcrest easement adjacent to Brinton Brook Sanctuary.



(L to R) Anne Swaim, Village Code Enforcement Officer Joe Sperber and Planning Board member Fran Allen view the damage to the Arrowcrest easement. Also present was Village Trustee Charlie Kane. **Photo:** Michael Madias, Jr

This easement was established by the Village as a forested buffer between Brinton Brook Sanctuary and adjacent residences before the developer was given permission to build close to our protected sanctuary land. In August 2006, SMRA first notified the Village that a portion of this easement, on land owned by the Village, had been cleared and a play area built by an adjacent property owner. Over the last

year, we have repeatedly asked the Village to enforce their easement agreement. Meanwhile, another neighbor built a second structure in the easement earlier this year. As this newsletter goes to print in late August 2007, we just received confirmation that the Village of Croton has sent letters to the parties involved in these easement violations. We will keep our members informed in the coming weeks about what next steps may be necessary to protect Brinton Brook Sanctuary. -- Anne Swaim

41st Annual BIRD SEED SALE!

Saturday & Sunday, October 13 & 14
9:00 am–2:00 pm ♦ New Castle Town Hall

Our annual bird seed sale offers you high-quality bird seed at bulk prices and supports our work to protect local habitats and wildlife.

We renew our inventory each fall and offer convenient pickup at the parking lot behind New Castle Town Hall in Chappaqua on our sale weekend.

Seed sale flyers are sent to members and past customers in early September. Visit our web site for more information and to order online. Seed sales continue throughout the year with pickup at our office at Pruyin Sanctuary.

Thank You Volunteers!

Special thanks are due to **Mitchell Vanderveer** for his generosity in giving his time and loaning his front-loader to help spread gravel at our Brinton Brook Sanctuary.

And thanks to **Isabel Calvo** for her work translating *On the Wing* into Spanish. The Spanish version will be available on our web site.

Saw Mill River Audubon depends on the hard work and dedication of all our volunteers.

Join us for ARIZONA IN APRIL April 28 to May 3, 2008

Visit key birding hotspots in southeastern Arizona. Space will be limited. A portion of the trip cost will benefit SMRA. More info: www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/Arizona

Welcome Members

Briarcliff Manor Charles Boyar, S. and P. Estroff, Eriko Yatabe-Waldock
Buchanan Winifred Pichardo
Chappaqua Lawrence Herman, David and Sandra Kellogg, Genesia Rogers
Cortlandt Manor Vincent Foulkes, Barbara Reingruber, Rudy Wolny
Croton-on-Hudson Ray Dalvia, Sandra Lifland, Nance Schatzkin
Granite Springs Julia Rellou
Millwood Richard and Brenda Albert, Lodena Solomon, Steve and Betsy Towl
Montrose Helen Browning, Michele Magnaldi, Douglas R. Mead
Ossining Lesley Chilcott
Peekskill Gretchen A. Ostrander, Sara L. Silver
Pleasantville Michael Clark, Johanna Cooper, George Gumina
Pound Ridge Ann Gastrich
Putnam Valley Sally F. Martini
Sleepy Hollow Dr. and Mrs. N. A. Disalvo, Terri Kerr, Margaret Lloyd
Valhalla E. Joy Cesari
White Plains Peckham Family Foundation

Volunteers Needed

Join us as a volunteer for our seed sale weekend. It's always a fun time working together for a great cause with jobs for every energy and skill level.

Interested? Call Ellen in the Audubon office, 914.666.6503

A U D U B O N A D V E N T U R E S

For more details: 914.666.6503 or www.sawmillriveraudubon.org.

S E P T E M B E R

Saturday, September 8 ♦ 9:00 am

**Field Trip:
Brinton Brook Through
the Seasons**

Our second Saturday walks will have a new twist in 2007–2008. Once a season we will walk in Brinton Brook, Pinecliff and Graff Sanctuaries. Our September walk will be in Brinton Brook. Dress for the weather. Rain or shine. Suitable for ages 4 and up. No pre-registration necessary. Free and open to the general public. Meet at the main entrance off Route 9A. **Leader:** Michael Madias, Jr.

Sunday, September 23

1:30 pm–5:00 pm

Pruyn Sanctuary Celebration

See description on page 1.



O C T O B E R

EVENING PROGRAM

Thursday, October 4 ♦ 7:30 pm

Natural History of Costa Rica

Don't miss this informative, well-illustrated presentation by Robbin Moran, Ph.D., Curator of Ferns at the New York Botanical Garden. Dr. Moran will discuss the rich natural history of Costa Rica with a special emphasis on tropical plant communities and ferns.

**TAKE A WALK
ON MONDAYS!**

Explore a local nature site each Monday morning (weather permitting).

Call Joan Coffey: 914.747.4763

O C T O B E R



EVENING WORKSHOP

Sunday, October 7 ♦ 7:00 pm–8:00 pm

Workshop: Raptors for Rookies

This one hour, multimedia workshop will help you identify New York birds of prey such as hawks, eagles and falcons. Good for beginners or for those wanting to brush up on their skills before our Hook Mountain field trip the following day. (See following entry.) Free but space will be limited. Pre-register by calling us at 914.666.6503 or sending email to office@sawmillriveraudubon.org with number of persons registering and a contact phone or email.

New to hawkwatching? Attend our free "Raptors for Rookies" workshop above, offered the evening before the below trip to view hawks migrating through our area.

Monday, October 8 ♦ 10:00 am

Field Trip: Hook Mtn. Hawks

Hook Mountain just north of Nyack offers eye-level views of migrating hawks and falcons and a spectacular 360° view of the lower Hudson Valley. Meet 10:00 am at Rockland Lake State Park, Nyack. Moderate thirty minute hike to the hawk watching station at the summit. Wear sturdy shoes and bring binoculars and water. You may also wish to bring lunch and stay longer. **Leaders:** Anne Swaim and Rik Kaufman. Please DO call our office, 914.666.6503, so we know whether to wait for you at the trail head OR meet us up top!

O C T O B E R

Saturday & Sunday, October 13 & 14

9:00 am to 2:00 pm each day

41st Annual Bird Seed Sale

See details on page 2

Saturday, October 13 ♦ 9:00 am

Field Trip:

Pinecliff Through the Seasons

Our October second Saturday walk will be in Pinecliff Sanctuary. Dress for the weather. Rain or shine. Suitable for ages 4 and up. No pre-registration necessary. Free and open to the general public. **Meet 9:00 am at the sanctuary entrance.** Parking is very limited; carpool if possible being careful to park at the end of Pinecliff Road in Chappaqua, not blocking our neighbors' driveways or the sanctuary entrance. **Leader:** Joan Coffey.

N O V E M B E R

EVENING PROGRAM

Friday, November 9 ♦ 7:30 pm

Global Warming: What Can I Do?

See description on page 1

Saturday, November 10 ♦ 9:00 am

Field Trip:

Graff Through the Seasons

Our November walk will be in Graff Sanctuary. **Meet us 9:00 am at the Furnace Dock Road sanctuary entrance.** Parking is very limited; carpool if possible to park on Furnace Dock Road by the sanctuary entrance. **Leaders:** Michael Madias, Jr. and George Shakespear.

Friday, November 23 ♦ 10:00 am

Field Trip: Turkey Mtn. Hike

Come walk off your Thanksgiving feast with a moderate 1.5 hr hike on the trails atop Turkey Mountain in Yorktown. **Leaders:** Anne Swaim & Ponie Sheehan

The Future of the Tappan Zee Bridge—Part II



View of Tappan Zee Bridge Photo: William Kellner

Last month's I-35W bridge collapse in Minneapolis has brought into sharp focus the problem of America's ageing transportation infrastructure. In our area, the massive Tappan Zee Bridge is approaching the end of its intended lifespan. As an article in the February/March 2007 edition of *On the Wing* described, various alternatives have been proposed to upgrade and modernize this vital crossing. Proposals range from modifying the current span to replacing it with a new bridge. If a new crossing is built, various proposals call for the addition of either dedicated bus lanes or commuter rail. What impact will these alternatives have on the ecology of the Hudson River estuary? What will the environmental impacts be in Westchester and Rockland Counties and the wider region? These are vital questions that will affect all of us.

This article focuses on one of these alternatives—the proposal to build a new bridge and add commuter rail tracks. This will allow the expansion of Metro-North rail service to Rockland and Orange Counties. These areas currently have only limited rail service, operated by New Jersey Transit. Trains that run from Port Jervis through Suffern and into Bergen County, New Jersey, terminate in Hoboken. Getting to Manhattan requires a transfer to another NJ Transit train at Secaucus Junction or the PATH service from Hoboken. The addition of a rail line across Rockland County and over the new Tappan Zee Bridge will allow a no-transfer-needed ride to Westchester and Manhattan for commuters from Rockland and Orange Counties. The proposed new rail line over the bridge would connect with Metro North's Hudson Line just south of Tarrytown for the trip to Grand Central Terminal in Manhattan.

This proposal also includes three sub-proposals for adding rail or bus service to Westchester County in addition to connecting the new trans-Rockland rail line to Metro North's Hudson Line. The first sub-proposal would extend the new commuter rail line across the I-287 corridor in Westchester, with transfers available at White Plains to Metro North's Harlem Line. At Port Chester, the new line would connect to Metro North's New Haven Line.

A second, and somewhat less costly, sub-proposal would add a light rail or trolley-type system for the I-287 corridor in Westchester. The trans-Hudson commuter rail line would connect to the light rail line at the new Tappan Zee Station in Tarrytown. The light rail line would continue on to White Plains and Port Chester. Finally, and least costly, is a sub-proposal to link the Tappan Zee Station to White Plains and Port Chester by a bus rapid transit (BRT) system. BRT uses dedicated rights-of-way and stations with platforms for bus passengers. Both the light rail and BRT options would allow transfers to Metro North's Harlem and New Haven Lines as well as several intermediate stations.

The selection of the alternative described in this article for the Tappan Zee Bridge replacement will have profound implications for the lower Hudson Valley. This would be the beginnings of a truly regional mass transportation system. Commuters and others would be able to travel easily and conveniently to business centers like White Plains and the office complexes along I-287 in Westchester from both sides of the Hudson River. Thousands of people who currently drive to their destinations would be able to leave their cars at home or at parking areas much closer to home. This would result in a significant reduction in fossil fuel consumption and would mean cleaner air and water for all of us.

On the other hand, improved road and rail transportation might mean increased development pressure in the outer reaches of our region. An increase in suburban sprawl is not a foregone conclusion, however. New transportation options might make development in the older, populated parts of the area more attractive. Decreasing our region's almost total dependence on the private automobile could have positive effects on our communities and environment.

The public will have an important say in deciding what happens to the Tappan Zee Bridge and the I-287 corridor. A decision may be made as early as the end of 2007. For this reason it is vital that those who live in the lower Hudson Valley stay informed about this issue and participate in the process. --William Kellner

On the Wing (Al Vuelo)
is now available in Spanish
on our web site:
www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/alvuelo

Issues and Advocacy

Leave Your Car at Home...

...and visit a Saw Mill River Audubon sanctuary. That's right – two SMRA sanctuaries are accessible by public transportation. So, if you don't have a car or would rather cut down on your driving, you can still have an excellent outdoor experience.

Our largest sanctuary, **Brinton Brook**, is located in the north end of the Village of Croton-on-Hudson. A three-mile trail network allows the walker to visit the interesting variety of habitats found in this 156 acre preserve. Brinton Brook can be reached by Westchester Beeline Bus No. 14. Get out at the Warren Road/ Scenic Drive West stop. Walk south on the left side of Route 9A (North Riverside Avenue) for a little less than one-quarter mile until you see the Saw Mill River Audubon sign that marks the entrance road for the Brinton Brook Sanctuary. Follow the entrance road for about 300 yards to a small parking area. You'll see another sign here that marks the main entrance to the sanctuary and the beginning of the trail network.

The No. 14 Beeline Bus will also get you to Saw Mill River Audubon's **Graff Sanctuary**. This 30 acre preserve protects a wooded ridge overlooking the Hudson River. Again, exit the bus at the Warren Road/Scenic Drive West stop in Croton-on-Hudson. Walk on Warren Road over the highway and turn right onto Briggs Lane. Follow Briggs Lane for about one-quarter mile. As you approach the dead-end, walk up the last driveway on the left. Follow the trail that branches off the left side of the driveway. You'll come upon a sign that marks the entrance to the sanctuary. A trail network of almost one-mile provides for a pleasant walk with glimpses of the Hudson below.

For more information about Brinton Brook, Graff and the other Saw Mill River Audubon sanctuaries, visit our web site at sawmillriveraudubon.org and click on "Habitats." You'll find road directions, hours, descriptions of the types of habitat, and trail maps for each sanctuary.

For information about the Westchester Beeline Bus system, visit beelinebus.westchestergov.com. There are detailed maps and timetables for each bus line. A map of the entire county-wide system is also available on the Web site. Using public transportation is a great way to save energy and keep our air and water cleaner by reducing pollutants like ozone and greenhouse gases.

--William Kellner

This Westchester County BeeLine Orion VII diesel-electric hybrid bus greatly reduces emissions with up to 90 percent less particulate matter, 40 percent less NOx and 25 percent less greenhouse gas emissions.



Exploring Pruyn Sanctuary



Photo: Drew Panko

Our August 18 public field trip at Pruyn Sanctuary delighted visitors of all ages with great views of the butterflies in the Pruyn meadow as well as a visit to Pruyn Swamp with a photo stop at the swamp teaching station.

Our thanks to Trudy Battaly and Drew Panko for leading this field trip.

Drew and Trudy also offered us excellent photos of the butterflies seen during the trip including the one to the right of a spicebush swallowtail spotted on the cardinal flowers in the Pruyn garden.

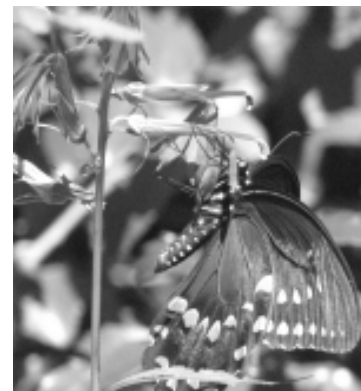
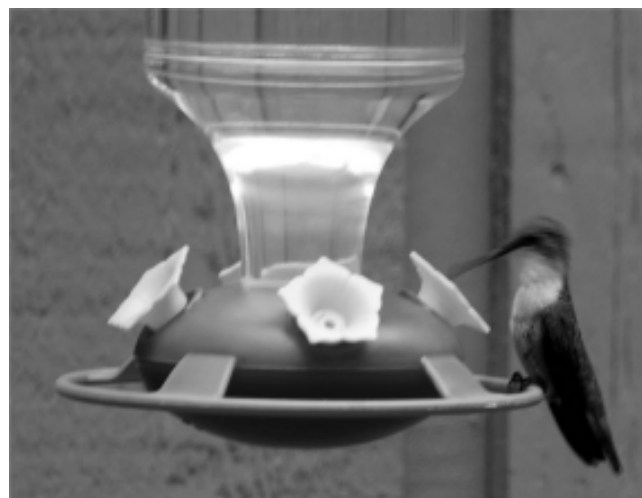


Photo: Trudy Battaly



Featured Bird Photograph



Richard Salz took this photograph of a ruby-throated hummingbird (female) visiting a feeder in his backyard this summer. **We love getting bird photos!**

Have pictures to share? Send them to us via email at office@sawmillriveraudubon.org or by US mail to our office: 275 Millwood Road, Chappaqua, NY 10514.

Saw Mill River Audubon

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CELEBRATE NATURE!

Our sanctuaries provide important habitat for migrating birds. Your gift to Saw Mill River Audubon helps us to encourage people to celebrate and protect natural places!

You may also join, give a membership gift, create a special tribute gift or a memorial donation online!

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

Juncos come from the north to overwinter here. Look for their return to our sanctuaries this fall.



Name(s)

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone/Email

You can also join or donate at our web site!

Please make checks payable to
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Deadline for Next Newsletter: November 1

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