



SMRA

SAW MILL RIVER AUDUBON

April/May 2015



Great Blue Heron on the wing. Photo: Jeff Seneca



Stellar SMRA volunteer Rudy Fasciani with invasive barberry at Brinton Brook Sanctuary. Photo: Joe Larese/The Journal News



Visitor to our "Celebrate New York Birds" board during the 2015 Teatown Hudson River EagleFest



Hardy birders at Croton Point in late February viewing eagles and more in single digit temps!

Upcoming Events

Visit our **Google calendar** at www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/calendar for event details or call our office at (914) 666-6503 or email us at office@sawmillriveraudubon.org. Be sure to subscribe to our free, private email list to get additional details and early notice of new trips and events. Visit www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/list to subscribe.

Every Monday, Starts 8:30 a.m in April, 7:30 a.m. in May.

Free guided bird walks at area hotspots.

1st Mon: Muscoot Farm,

2nd Mon: Rockefeller State Park Preserve,

3rd Mon: Tarrytown Lakes,

4th Mon: Croton Point County Park,

5th Mon: Location varies, see Google calendar.

Every Second Saturday, 9:00 a.m., Guided Hike at Brinton Brook Sanctuary.

Check our Google calendar for additional spring field trips!

April

Saturday, April 11: Second Saturday Walk at Brinton Brook

Sunday, April 12: Welcome to Spring Program & Potluck Supper

Speaker: Carol Gracie presenting *A Natural History of Wildflowers*

Saturday, April 18: Third Saturday Seed Sale, Prun Sanctuary

Friday, April 24: (Re-scheduled) Birders U: Birding by Ear

Saturday, April 25: Croton Earth Day & County "Pitch in for Parks" Day

Tuesday, April 28: Central Park Birding with Charlie Roberto

May

Saturday, May 2: Early Morning Birding: Prospect Park

Thursday, May 7: Central Park Birding with Charlie Roberto

Saturday, May 9: Second Saturday Walk at Brinton Brook, Croton

Saturday, May 16: Early Morning Birding: Doodletown

Wednesday, May 20: Early Morning Birding: Rockefeller State Park

Wednesday, May 20: Public Program: Birding in Cuba

Saturday, May 23: Early Morning Birding: Rockefeller State Park

Check our Google calendar for additional events & weather-related changes.



Sanctuaries

vine's presence at Brinton Brook Sanctuary. Karalyn then connected us with this grant possibility through the Lower Hudson Partnership for Invasive Species Management (LHPRISM). LHPRISM administers this grant program funded by NYS DEC's Environmental Protection Fund. The project will be completed by Tom Lewis of Trillium Invasive Species Management with help from Karalyn. Our thanks to Karalyn Lamb!

Invasive Species Grant

We are pleased to report that Brinton Brook Sanctuary will benefit from a \$9550 grant to control invasive Hardy Kiwi Vine. SMRA Board Member Karalyn Lamb with Rudy Fasciani first identified the

Feeder Frenzy

Found my way downstairs and drank a cup, looking up, I noticed I was late (Lennon-McCartney, 1967)

January 2015. 7:00 am... and my bird feeder was already empty !

I just refilled it yesterday, I thought. Yet all of the seed was gone, and the suet, once the size of Iowa, now resembled Rhode Island.

It certainly had been a winter to remember—or to forget—but this year I really felt an obligation to my “flock.”

My morning ritual was to don my YakTrax and proudly walk, like Saint Francis, to the feeder. It became a responsibility that I would not trade for anything.

This particular morning I sensed an increased activity, perhaps due to the impending snowstorm. The Black-capped Chickadees were circling. I climbed up the snowdrift to the feeder and stood silently among the frenzy.

I then put some seed in my gloved hand, closed my eyes, and realized that being still allowed me to enter their world at another level.

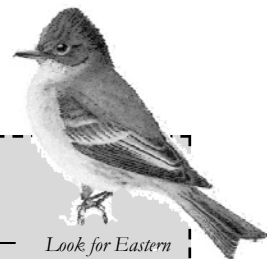
The warning signal... *chickadee dee dee...* slowly diminished. I could hear the gentle flutter of tiny wings, and a distant Northern Cardinal calling out... *cheer cheer cheer.* From the corner of my eye, I spied a Downy Woodpecker alight on the suet.

None gathered the seed proffered from my open palm. I slowly retreated to allow them to resume their feeding, uninterrupted by a human who was just too close.

My moment of Zen... amidst the Feeder Frenzy!

I then walked inside my cozy home and finished my cup, which actually tasted better than before.

Jan Bass



Look for Eastern Phoebes in our area in early April. Listen for their raspy morning song from which they get their name: "Phoebe! Phoebe!"

Saw Mill River Audubon

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2015 Larry Light Youth Scholarship Awards

Saw Mill River Audubon is pleased to announce our 2015 Larry Light Youth Scholarships.

Education

Eamon Freiburger, a 9th grader from La-Grangeville, will be attending the Audubon Youth Birding Camp in Maine this summer. Eamon has been active in the New York State Youth Birders Club and the Waterman Bird Club. One of his recommendations said: “I believe the...Audubon Summer

Program is a fantastic opportunity for this driven young man to continue to practice real science and fuel his curiosity for future work on his academic and professional path.”

Josiah Wiedenheft, a 9th grader from Ossining, will be attending NYS DEC’s Wildlife Camp this summer. Josiah is an active boy scout interested in

learning more about wildlife and the outdoors. One of his recommendations said, “Josiah would greatly benefit from participating in Pack Forest Camp...to further propel him to be a leader in his community.”

Come to our April 12th Spring Program to hear from our 2014 scholarship winner Alex Chin!



Hudson to Housatonic

SMRA’s activities with the Hudson-to-Housatonic (H2H) Conservation Initiative continue. We have participated in four workshops over the last three months.

Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies led the most recent workshop, at Audubon Greenwich on February 28–March 1. Titled “Tools for Engaging Landowners Effectively,” (TELE) it focused on identifying key landowners who may be open to discussions about maintaining

Advocacy

and improving the conservation values of their land.

In the coming months we will be meeting with the Westchester Land Trust team and others to plan for those landowner conversations.

H2H is a collaboration of regional conservation organizations and municipal partners focused on land use and stewardship of forested lands and waterways in Westchester and Putnam counties and southwestern Connecticut.

H2H is led in our area by the Westchester Land Trust. Other local partners include our sister chapter, Bedford Audubon, and the Mianus River Gorge.

Tom Ruth

Audubon New York (ANY), the umbrella organization for 27 chapters statewide, has outlined a new legislative priorities program. A recent visit by SMRA Board Chair Richard Saravay to Albany was shepherded by ANY leaders Eric Crotty, Sean Mahar and Laura McCarthy to underscore these goals.

“Where birds thrive, people prosper,” drives the six legislative priorities.

- Increase conservation funding, benefiting the environment and the economy.

- Stimulate responsible stewardship of habitats, because the majority of these are in private hands.

- Improve infrastructure and water quality along New York’s vast shoreline. (Long Island Sound is one of the earth’s richest areas of biodiversity.)

- Monitor Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and state-designated Bird Conservation Areas (BCAs), of which there are 54.

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- Create “bird friendly communities,” by building parks, nature centers, controlling invasive species, and involving families in such activities.

ANY has identified specific goals at Atlantic Flyway, state, and Federal levels. We’re 50,000 members strong. Let’s make our voices heard.

Richard Saravay



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Tree Swallows and Eastern Bluebirds are looking for nesting cavities now. Consider adding a bird box!
Photo: Sue O'Rourke

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Bloodroot blooming on the spring forest floor. Photo: USDA

REMINDERS FOR APRIL

For all members of Saw Mill River Audubon, please vote your proxy ballot online: sawmillriveraudubon.org/proxy

LAST CALL: Sunday, April 12 — Welcome to Spring Program & Community Potluck Join us for this fun community gathering with special guest speaker Carol Gracie. RSVP online at: sawmillriveraudubon.org/dinner

MAY PUBLIC PROGRAM

Wednesday, May 20: Arturo Kirkconnell, Bird Curator, Cuba National Museum of Natural History.

SMRA Celebrates Spring!

Sunday, April 12, 2015

Saw Mill River Audubon invites you to our annual dinner, **Sunday, April 12, starting 6:00 p.m. at the New Castle Community Center, 10 Senter Street, Chappaqua.** Open to all, this is a relaxed and fun evening to mingle with fellow birders and outdoor lovers and celebrate the arrival of spring. This dinner is one of our favorite events of the calendar year. We hope you will join us!

Following our potluck supper, we'll enjoy our evening program. First we'll hear from our 2014 Larry Light Scholarship winner, Alex Chin, about his experiences at New York State's DEC Wildlife Camps last year.

Our featured speaker is Carol Gracie presenting *A Natural History of Wildflowers*, content from her recent and upcoming books. Carol Gracie's books will be available for purchase and signing including her most recent book: *Spring Wildflowers of the Northeast: A Natural History*, a book detailing 35 wildflowers in a botanical, cultural, literary and medicinal context—perfect inspiration for your next walk in the woods!

Come join us! Please note that space may be limited. For more details and for free online reservations, visit www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/dinner