



Cayuga Bird Club

Established in 1913

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Someday you might see this fellow again

2 Monday Night Seminar

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Seeing them and maybe one of your own

11 Bicknell's Thrush

An Endangered Species



© Larry Master

Editors' Note: As we put this issue to bed, outside it is a glorious day. On the birdline, David Nicosia, our Monday Night Seminar speaker this month predicts that the weather patterns for this coming week are favorable for migration. Today, we saw our first robin in our yard.

Candace Cornell continues her series on threats to birds, which contains a large number of resources that you can use as you work to provide a safe environment for birds.

In this issue we also get better acquainted with Donna Scott, we see that Bicknell's Thrush is in danger, and Jane Graves continues with more of the early days of our club.

We would like to hear from you about what you like and what can be improved (cbceditor1@gmail.com).

Cheers,
Cyndy and Richard

From the President

A new season of Spring Field Ornithology started this past week; and for the second year, the bird club had a significant presence there. Kevin McGowan, Bob McGuire, and Marie Read all spoke to the new group about our Guide to Birding book. Kevin summarized his introduction to the book, which highlights all of the reasons that our area experiences such a diversity of bird species; Bob talked about how this new edition of the guide was conceived and then implemented as an all-volunteer effort by the bird club; and then, Marie discussed how photographs were solicited and selected, how a photo for each site was chosen for its relevance to season and reflection of habitat. This was followed by book purchases and signing. What a great way for people to be introduced to the bird club and its significant endeavors! Also, for the second year, the audience was very enthusiastic.



I also got up and spoke briefly about the Cayuga Bird Club itself and welcomed the group to the world of birding. I highlighted our meetings, speakers, and field trips and provided a sheet to fill out for a complimentary four-month membership if an attached survey would be completed. I am very passionate about making sure that people know how serious we are about attracting members. The vibrancy of the club depends on new, enthusiastic people.

I don't have too much time left as president, and I am anxious to make sure that planning is in the works for some of our 100-year anniversary celebrations, starting in November 2013. I brought this all up at the meeting, but it bears repeating here on the front page.

We are already well into planning for our hosting of the 2014 New York State Ornithological Association's annual meeting, and this will be a great culmination to our year. When we get down to planning the details, I am anticipating that events and memorabilia for the weekend will revolve around this anniversary and continually emphasize the celebratory aspect of it all.

NYSOA's Young Birders' Club is always looking for member clubs to organize field trips on their home turf for these young members, and it would seem a perfect opportunity for us to take this on in 2013/2014. Bob McGuire is currently our club's Young Birder liaison and has agreed that this sounds like a great idea in principle and we should all be thinking about this and working on a plan to make it happen.

As a return to our roots, I would like to see the Renwick Wildwood taken under our care in a serious way again. In some old newsletters, Karl David, former club president, was reflecting that during his tenure the trails had been improved, bamboo had been obliterated (for a minute), and the woods were looking good. Since then, some clean-ups have occurred, some mulch has been laid on

the trails; but the woods are in need of a good bit of TLC. Given the club's historical origins at Renwick, it feels important to again take this area under our wing and schedule several clean-ups. We are planning signs for Renwick and these are being designed to include historical details of the club's involvement, along with trail maps, and, of course, all the great birds you can see there. It would be great to plan at least one family field trip there to celebrate and reconnect.

Perhaps one meeting in this year could focus on past club presidents, some of our lifetime members, and an open session of sharing experiences, highlights, and learning opportunities during years of club participation.

Please be thinking about all of these suggestions. Pick out one or two that appeal to you and let me know that you are interested in helping. Come up with some suggestions of your own. A few people have agreed to get together in the next month or two to brainstorm. Let me know if you would like to be part of this process.

In closing, I'd like to send you to ebird to help with a conservation project. It happily just asks you to locate and report Rusty Blackbirds.

<http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/unlocking-the-rusty-blackbird-mystery>

This is another chance for you to input data and help find some answers.

Happy Spring!

Cayuga Bird Club Meeting

Monday, March 11, 2013, 7:30 PM – 9 PM

Highways in the Sky - Wind and Weather Patterns for Bird Migration. David Nicosia, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, NOAA/National Weather Service, Binghamton, NY. David will talk first about basic weather patterns conducive to migration. From there he will focus on some very preliminary results of Birdcast and how birds are postulated to use wind patterns for migration. He will wrap up with a look at the unusual vagrants associated with Hurricane Sandy, radar evidence of a large flock of vagrants in the eye of Sandy, and the tools being used to explain vagrants and migration.



Events Calendar

Date	Event	Details
<p>Please note that details of field trips may change at short notice. Please check the calendar on the web site (http://cayugabirdclub.org/calendar) for the latest updates.</p>		
<p>April 7 Sunday 7:30 PM – 12:00 PM</p>	<p>CBC Field Trip: Cayuga Lake Leader: Paul Anderson</p>	<p>Paul will lead a half day trip to wherever the birds are being seen.</p>
<p>April 8 Monday 7:30 PM – 9:00 PM</p>	<p>Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Speaker: David Nicosia</p>	<p>Highways in the Sky - Wind and Weather Patterns for Bird Migration. David Nicosia, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, NOAA/National Weather Service, Bingh- amton, NY. David will talk first about basic weather pat- terns conducive to migration. From there he will focus on some very preliminary results of Birdcast and how birds are postulated to use wind patterns for migration. He will wrap up with a look at the unusual vagrants associated with Hurricane Sandy, radar evidence of a large flock of vagrants in the eye of Sandy, and the tools being used to explain vagrants and migration.</p>
<p>April 21 Sunday 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM</p>	<p>CBC Field Trip: Cayuga Lake Leader: John Confer</p>	<p>We will first pick up interested students in the Peterson Lot on the corner of Tower Road and Judd Falls Road, across from where the Dairy Bar used to be. Then meet at the Lab parking lot and LEAVE there at 8:00 with our first stop at the duck pond at Stewart Park at 8:20. Migration is well underway by the this time, so this should be an exciting trip, stopping at many places along the lakeshore and taking in as many habitats as time will allow. This trip will travel to Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, the Mucklands, and possibly further north. Bring food, drink, scopes, binoculars, and appropriate clothes. We will carpool, sharing gas expenses as we go. Contact John at confer@ithaca.edu or at 607.539.6308.</p>
<p>April 22 Monday 7:30 PM – 9:00 PM</p>	<p>CLO Seminar Speaker: Dr. George Divoky</p>	<p>Forty Years of Change: a Seabird Responds to a Melting Arctic. Dr. George Divoky, director, Friends of Cooper Island. George Divoky's four decades of seabird research in the Alaskan Arctic have given him a front row seat for observing how increasing atmospheric temperatures are affecting the species intimately associated with the region's melting snow and sea ice habitats. Since 1972, he has monitored a colony of Black Guillemots breeding in man-made debris on remote Cooper Island, 25 miles east of Point Barrow. What started as a study of seabird breeding biology became a chronicle of the pace of change in a melting Arctic. Warming temperatures first benefited the guillemots by allowing increased access to snow-covered nest sites. However, major reductions in summer sea ice since the turn of the century have restricted the availability of the guillemots' ice-associated prey during the nestling period while also causing range shifts in nest competitors and predators. Ice extent in the arctic summer is now half of that in the last century, with a record low extent set in September 2012. The observations of the Cooper Island Black Guillemots provide one of the few examples of the ecological consequences of this unprecedented loss of habitat.</p>

Date	Event	Details
April 27 Sunday 7:00 AM – 12:00 PM	CBC Field Trip: South Hill Birding Leader: Stuart Krasnoff	Meet at the Juniper Dr. entrance to the South Hill Recreation Way. We will explore the main trail and possibly some of the less-travelled side trails. Besides hoped for songbirds, prepare for seasonal hazards (mud, ticks, blackflies). If time permits, we can drive to some other good birding locations on South Hill. Call Stuart at 607.351.0621 for further information.
April 29 Monday 7:30 PM – 9:00 PM	CLO Seminar Speaker: Tim Gallagher	Tim Gallagher, author and magazine editor, shares adventures and photographs from his journeys in search of the Imperial Woodpecker in the vast mountain forests of Mexico's Sierra Madre Occidental. Large as a raven, with the deepest black plumage and brilliant, snow-white flight feathers that showed as a white shield on its lower back while perched, the Imperial Woodpecker is the closest relative of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. But is there any chance that this spectacular bird still exists? Join Tim for a fascinating evening detailing his recent work in Mexico.
May 4 Saturday 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM	CBC Field Trip: Hamond Hill and thereabouts Leader: Suan Yong	Suan will lead a trip to Hammond Hill. This is a good spot for Mourning Warblers. Note the 8:30 AM start time. Meet at CLO parking lot.
May 11 Saturday 7:30 AM – 1:00 PM	CBC Field Trip: Park Preserve Leader: Laura Stenzler	Laura will lead a trip to this 300-acre preserve, which offers a mix of habitats from conifer plantations to hardwoods and ravines. Magnolia Warblers, Indigo Buntings, Prairie Warblers, and Louisiana Waterthrush are just a few of the birds that breed here. Bring insect repellent for those deer ticks! Contact Laura at 607.539.6893 or lms9@cornell.edu if you have questions.
May 13 Monday 7:30 PM – 9:00 PM	Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Speakers: Cyndy and Richard Tkachuck	Volunteering - Getting Your Feet Wet. The Tkachucks will present a recap of the volunteer work they have done in support of research projects and bird conservation and bird census. They will talk about how they find opportunities to work with birds in places throughout the world, as well as the U.S.

DeExtinction

Recently, Stewart Brand gave a TED lecture about bringing back extinct species, starting with the Passenger Pigeon. In the video he spoke of various groups who are developing methods for taking DNA from extinct museum specimens and through genetic manipulation attempt to bring back to life species that are no longer with us. It is a fascinating concept, and Brand describes the progress already made.

TED lectures are about 15 minutes long and describe advances in all aspects of knowledge. This one is well worth watching. Perhaps we may yet see the Passenger Pigeon. Or maybe a moa or a dodo. The April 2013 issue of the *National Geographic* has an article on this subject also.

[TED: http://bit.ly/YmLW0d](http://bit.ly/YmLW0d)



Bird Cams—Another Way to Watch

By Linda Orkin

They are our own bird form of March madness; and maybe in some near future, efficiency experts will estimate lost productivity in the workplace as a result of them. I am talking, of course, about Bird Cams. We all had a chance to observe the near-addiction of many people to the streaming of Red-tailed Hawk and Great Blue Heron family life. There was hardly an office in town that did not have their computer screens dominated by live images of Ezra and Big Red busily parenting white fluffy hawk nestlings or Mom and Dad Great Blue Heron defending the nest against Great Horned Owl attacks and bringing multitudes of fish, large and small to their gangly, comical chicks. When I asked Charles Eldermire, Project Leader of Bird Cams, and Victoria Campbell, newly hired project assistant, to estimate the impact of these live feeds as they reveal the tiniest details of bird family lives, I was amazed at the numbers. Charles told me that last year they had over 5 million unique views on both web cams, spanning 176 countries. Compare these figures to the approximately 40,000 members of the Lab of O and that will give you some idea of the wide swath of interest generated by these intimate insights into nests. All of the people that watch are drawn to the Cornell Laboratory website where they can be led in many wonderful and interesting directions.

Some people last year wondered if this is good for birds and for human connection with nature. Charles and Victoria can both only answer with a resounding yes. Many who were drawn to watch had never really thought about birds before, had not known much about their lives and the difficulties, defenses, and the plain hard work it is to raise a bird family. It is hard to track how this access may change attitudes and inform; but, anecdotally, they both told me of emails from people who can now identify the sound of a Red-tail Hawk in their own environment or now easily recognize the silhouette of a Great Blue Heron flying overhead. We all know how the first bird that draws us in can be like a gateway drug, with a subsequent cascade of interest in all things ornithological and natural. Victoria was passionate in speaking of the value to people who may be housebound, or have physical limitations, or are depressed; and both Charles and Victoria listed all of the benefits of creating a bond with a bird: so that the public can be educated, can appreciate the life of a bird, can want them to be protected and not disappear from the world. The nest cams tell the story of the birds. They show us the

successes and can reveal scenarios very difficult to observe such as siblicide or nest predation. If you are interested in viewing, go to <http://cams.allaboutbirds.org/>

What's in the future for the Cornell Laboratory Bird Cam program? Fund raising, as always, and both gauging and communicating the scientific relevance as scientists become engaged and offer suggestions. Also, continue the process of altering the perceptions of people through enews, moderating the streaming chat that accompanies the live nest cam feed, and providing real time images of nest life, all focusing on drawing the world's focus to this one particular pinpoint site. A California Condor nest might be the next Bird Cam up and running in the not too distant future. Partnering with some countries in the tropics to increase the scope for North American experience and to further engage southern countries in their own ecology is in the planning stages.

Then you might ask, what about a nest cam in my own yard, in my bluebird box, or chickadee house, or kestrel box? There is a website that Charles recommends to all who inquire which provides much technical information, as well as costs and advice about setting up you own cameras. It can be found at <http://www.sialis.org/cam.htm>. Having your own nest cam and participating in NestWatch would be a good way to contribute to citizen science, along with garnering the joys of close observation. It would be a good thing to go to the NestWatch website <http://nestwatch.org/> and be fully informed about the protocols and even become certified for NestWatch before you begin installing a nest cam.

Bird Cams are here to stay. Our windowsill view into the lives of birds can only be expected to expand, adding new species; and each of us will have our favorites. The visual story of the birds' lives and our sense of participation, empathy, and sameness will be powerful tools for conservation and will bond people as they share concerns and interests and find ways to become involved. It is worthy of much celebration that this way of observing and understanding can be done with such non-invasive methods, increasing the value of all that we learn in this very natural setting. 



Cookies

Last month we enjoyed cookies offered by Meg Richardson and Marc Devokaitis. Thanks very much to both of them. Delicious!!

Support the club the next time the cookie signup sheet come around.

Keep up to date with the Bird Club Facebook Page



A Facebook group for the club: <http://facebook.com/groups/cayugabirdclub> has been created. The group is intended to foster casual communication between club members. There are no strict rules about what is appropriate other than that content should be of interest to other members. It is good for posting photos, announcing events, or sharing news articles. Paul Anderson manages the page and encourages everyone to join and contribute.

Threats We Pose to Birds Part II

By Candace E. Cornell
Conservation Action Committee

Note: The blue underlines are active links.

We've all read about anthropogenic hazards, which cause the deaths of billions of birds annually. Last month, we reviewed four of the leading [human-derived threats](#): habitat fragmentation, global warming, predation by cats, and collisions with power lines and communication towers. This month, let's look at five more leading causes of avian mortality to see what we can do to reduce these numbers.

6) Toxic Chemicals

Most [insecticides](#) and [pesticides](#) are poisonous to birds and, even when properly applied, kill critical food sources for insect-eating birds. [Pesticides](#) kill an estimated 72 million birds in the U.S. annually. Overuse of these chemicals creates poisonous runoff that contaminates waterways and [threatens](#) waterfowl and shorebirds.

[Rodenticides](#), used to kill rodents, may have far-reaching effects on birds as well. Improperly used rodenticide baits are often put where birds and other animals ingest them. Hawks, owls, and other predatory birds also come in contact with these pesticides by consuming poisoned rodents. In addition, parents ingesting poison can bring it back to feed their offspring.

Birds that breed or winter in or migrate through agricultural areas, such as American Crows, Dickcissels, and Bobolinks, are particularly at risk from direct contact with these toxins, whereas raptors accumulate high chemical concentrations in their bodies when feeding on contaminated prey. Ultimately, all birds in the U.S. are at risk of toxic chemical poisoning.



Bert Will

Take Action: Buy pesticide-free produce and [avoid toxic gardening](#) and landscaping techniques. Use bird-safe traps instead of poison for pest control. If poison is necessary, follow directions precisely, and do not treat areas near bird feeders, water supplies, or nesting areas. Take special care to dispose of the container properly. Farmers are encouraged to use [Integrated Pest Management](#) and other non-toxic means of pest control, such as weeding, tilling, mowing, and bio-control. Time necessary pesticide applications to target pest life cycles and favorable weather conditions.

7) Motor Vehicles+

Over [80 million birds](#) are [killed](#) annually on our nation's roadways. Motor vehicles indiscriminately strike birds in flight along highways. Others are struck while feeding and drinking along roadsides. Carrion eaters, such as vultures, crows, and ravens, are at particular risk of being hit on the road. Owls are especially vulnerable to collisions at night. Waterfowl and game birds are also prone to automobile accidents as they scurry their families across roads.

Take Action: Watch vigilantly for birds and wildlife along the roadsides when driving, especially those eating carrion in the road. After a snowfall, be on guard for small birds eating salt in the road. Reducing speed and scanning both sides of the road for [foraging](#) wildlife can improve safety at night. Heed warning signs and exhibit caution on marked roadways known as bird and wildlife crossings. If a family of birds or animals cross the road, stop safely and encourage other drivers to follow suit.



Manisha Patel

8) Wind Turbines

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that almost [a half million birds](#) are killed each year in the U.S. by wind turbines. Many wind farms are sited in prominent [migration flyways](#) and routes for millions of birds. Night-migrating songbirds and bats frequently collide with wind turbines in high numbers, as do raptors and waterbirds.

Take Action: Attend public meetings to encourage extensive environmental impact studies before wind farms are built in your area. Volunteer for migrations studies to determine local flyways and migration routes. Promote the siting of turbines

away from these sensitive areas.



Joshua Winchell FWS

9) Fishing Line and Other Trash

Monofilament fishing line, though it may look harmless, is **deadly to birds**. It is designed to be invisible to fish, but it is also invisible to birds. Entanglements with fishing line have led to the **deaths of thousands** of gulls, waterfowl, birds of prey, and other species. Shorebirds and waterfowl frequently steal the catch from fishermen and end up ensnared in the fishing line or caught by fish hooks.

Plastic six-pack rings from beverage cans, plastic bags, **Styrofoam**, and other **garbage** thrown in our lakes and streams also pose **serious risks to birds** and other wildlife. Some garbage, once swallowed, becomes deadly choking hazards, while plastic six-pack rings commonly entangle and strangle waterfowl. **Kite string** poses these same risks as fishing line to birds and other animals.



R. Compton

Take Action: Look for fishing line tangles whenever you are birding along streams or lakes. Carry small scissors at all times to cut fishing line free, if possible. Collect discarded fishing line when found, if possible. Retrieve the discarded fishing line, seal it in a plastic bag (to prevent the birds from getting it out of the landfill), and dispose of it in the garbage. It is not recyclable yet in our area. Report any fishing line tangles in bushes, trees, and telephone wires in the Cayuga Basin to the Conservation Action Committee at cec222@gmail.com. Cut up six-pack holders and plastic bags to prevent injury to birds and other wildlife. Get into the habit of picking up trash found in the field or along

roads. (Wear gloves or some other hand protection.)

10) Lead Poisoning

Despite the **1991 Federal ban** on lead shot for waterfowl hunting, **lead poisoning** from lead is still a **serious problem** for birds. Hunters deposit hundreds of tons of lead in the environment annually. The most significant hazard to birds and other wildlife is through **direct ingestion** of spent lead shot and bullets, lost fishing sinkers, tackle, and related fragments, or through consumption of wounded or dead prey containing lead shot, bullets, or fragments. Lead poisoning is a lengthy, debilitating illness that causes much suffering for affected birds. Raptors, including Bald and Golden Eagles, Mourning Doves, and waterfowl including Trumpeter Swans, loons, ducks, and geese are particularly susceptible to this form of poisoning.

Take Action: Use newer **lead-free alternatives** to toxic lead bullets and fishing sinkers and tackle when hunting and fishing. Promote the use of lead-free alternatives at your local fish and game club. **Encourage lawmakers** to ban all lead bullets.

Congressional District 22
Rep. Richard Hanna
Binghamton Office
49 Court St., Suite 230
Binghamton, NY 13901
607-723-0212 (phone)
607-723-0215 (fax)

Congressional District 24
Rep. Dan Maffei
Syracuse Office
100 North Salina Street
1 Clinton Square
Syracuse, NY 13202
315-423-5657(phone)



Salt Point Osprey Platform Built

A nesting platform for ospreys was built at Salt Point recently. Because of a recent fire on a utility pole resulting from nesting material of an existing nest falling on wires, NYSEG employees constructed a 65-foot tall utility pole with a platform on it in the hopes that when ospreys return in the spring they will find an attractive place to build a nest. The complete story can be read in an article in the *Lansing Star*. <http://www.lansingstar.com/around-town/9379-salt-point-platform-to-attract-osprey>



Photo: Paul Paradine

The Twitch

By Corey Finger

A rare bird is reported, genuine, assured.
Your skin starts to twitch. How can you be cured?
Grab your equipment and run to the car -
It's time for a twitch, let's hope it's not far.

Whether a shorebird, a falcon, a sparrow,
You feel the need deep down in your marrow.
You must chase! You must go! You must see!
You must make haste in your quest for rarity.

Arrival. See the hordes of seekers.
Scopes all akimbo, your knees go weaker.
"Seen the bird?" The universal question.
"Five minutes ago. It flew off in that direction."

Those words that twitchers most hate to hear!
Five minutes might as well be a year!
Too late is too late and that is a fact.
It's horrible when a view of the bird is lacked.

So you wait. And you wait. And you wait. And you wait.
Long time birders start to pontificate
About that rare bird way back in aught-eight.
You missed that one too and you are starting to hate

Birds, birders, and birding. This damned waste of time!
You could toss out your bins and you would be just fine.
"Who needs this dumb hobby?!?!!" you yell to the sky
And in so doing you see a speck up there, real high.

Your bins that you did not cast aside
Are ever-so-quickly brought to your eyes
Which quickly widen in shock and surprise.
"I have the bird!" you yell to the gals and the guys.

Huzzah! You're the hero, you refound the bird!
And folks turn to smartphones to get out the word.
The view is enjoyed though you'd prefer more
But a tick beats a dip, that is for sure.

The bird's out of sight and folks start to leave.
You remain because a better look you hope to achieve.
Left alone you still search and you still seek
But you see neither a feather, a foot, nor a beak

Of your quarry. You're about to give up.
Out of nowhere the bird appears. This time it lives up
To the field guide pictures ingrained in your brain.
And you feel quite the rush, like you'd snorted cocaine.

It poses, it preens, it stays in good light.
This bird is amazing! A total delight!
A full ten minutes you share with the bird.
A look so good that it borders absurd.

Finally the bird goes in the blink of an eye.
Five minutes later up rushes a guy,
"The bird, have you seen it? This is my fifth try!"
You can't make yourself do it. You can't give him the lie.

"Five minutes ago," you say to the birder,
Whose gaze seems as if he contemplates murder.
"Check out this great picture," you say cheerily.
His eyes come stay unfocused, he stares blearily.

"Good luck with the twitch," you walk away,
"I'm sure the bird will be back today."
You walk to your car and you start to head home
Leaving the birder behind, birdless, alone.

The Renwick Wildwood: 1916-1917

By Jane Graves, Historian

During the spring of 1916, the CBC continued its custom of taking weekly field trips to the Wildwood. An article in the Cornell Daily Sun (May 11, 1916) states "On Saturday morning, meeting at the east gate of Percy Field at 6 a.m., the club will go through Renwick woods. Meetings and trips have been formerly open to the public, but are now restricted to members only. From 50 to 100 members usually participate in the weekly excursions...The classes are divided into sections, such as boys, girls, and adults, and each section is conducted by a competent leader.... The object of the trips is to learn the names, songs, and calls of the local birds, and how to identify them, as well as to become familiar with the habits of the various species." [NOTE: in pre-Stewart Park days, the entrance to the Wildwood was from the east. Percy Field, where Ithaca High School now stands, was where many of Cornell's athletic teams trained.]

As early as 1915, the desirability of creating a concrete arch to mark the approach to the Renwick Wildwood had been discussed by the CBC Executive Committee. The Report of the Secretary of the Cayuga Bird Club on the Activities of the Club from Jan 12, 1915 to Jan 15, 1916, states: "A plan for the building of a permanent and distinctive gateway to the Renwick sanctuary has been developed, a design made by Mr. Fuertes, and a fund started for its construction." An article in the Ithaca Journal



Louis Agassiz Fuertes at the Fuertes Arch entrance to Renwick Wildwood. Photograph by A. A. Allen (Reprinted from Bird Lore, v. 20, Feb. 1918)

(May 4, 1915) outlined Fuertes' plans for the arch: "The arch, if it can be financed, will be 11½ feet in height and the clearway will be 8 feet high and 6 feet in width. The club is of the opinion that the arch will be a great convenience, especially to those who do not know the exact location of the park. It is probable that a popular subscription will be taken up for the arch, which will entail a cost of \$120. A suitable inscription will be placed on the arch."

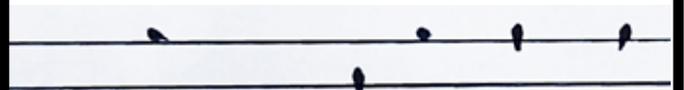
A year later, on May 5, 1916, the club had its annual field day. As reported in the May 6 Ithaca Journal: "More than 500 school children attended Field Day at the Renwick Wildwood yesterday afternoon when the cement arch which is to serve an entrance to the bird park was staked out, a permanent feeding station for birds was put in place, bird houses were put up, violets were planted about the site of the arch, dead branches were pruned off, and in general the appearance of the woods was improved through the work of the children who showed much enthusiasm. It is the aim of the Cayuga Bird Club which is in charge of the proposed arch to have it erected early this summer but so far the funds have not been forthcoming.....A city official, who was at the park yesterday, declared that he had no idea of the magnitude of the importance of such a bird sanctuary to a community until he saw the children yesterday engrossed in the work of beautifying the woods and eagerly signing their names to be placed in a box which will be put in the cornerstone of the arch."

The arch was finally constructed in late spring 1917. The Executive Committee minutes of May 14 state that "Fuertes reports Contractor Nelson ready to start concrete arch at a cost not to exceed \$87.50." The dedication took place on June 10. The Ithaca Journal reported in its June 11 edition headlined: "Renwick Woods Arch Formally Dedicated; Handsome Entrance to Bird Park Is Turned Over to the City," and that "The beautiful arch built by voluntary contributions of Ithacans who are interested in the bird sanctuary was veiled with large American flags early in the afternoon... Prof. J. G. Needham who acted as master of ceremonies described the bird park as containing more than 40 acres...which ...provided a home for hundreds of birds. Professor Needham said that the preserve has already been fittingly dedicated by the school children who have spent many hours planting and putting the park in condition....L. A. Fuertes....told the audiences how much the birds appreciate the sanctuary...More than 200 species of birds, four-fifths of the total number listed for the Cayuga basin, have been found in the bird park.... Mr. Fuertes made the formal presentation to the city and Boy Scouts drew up the flags revealing the arch. Mayor F. E. Bates said that he accepted the arch in behalf of the city with a great deal of pleasure..."

Also, during the spring of 1917, "Seven morning trips for the study of birds completed the fourth successful year of the Cayuga Bird Club. These trips were held in the Bird Club Sanctuary Saturday mornings, from April

to June, and were well attended, requiring three or four sections each morning. L.A. Fuertes, A.A. Allen, Mrs. A.A. Allen, and C.W. Leister acted as leaders, and, owing to the retarded vegetation, unusual numbers of birds were seen." (Bird Lore, v.20, Feb. 1918)

On the Bird Lines:



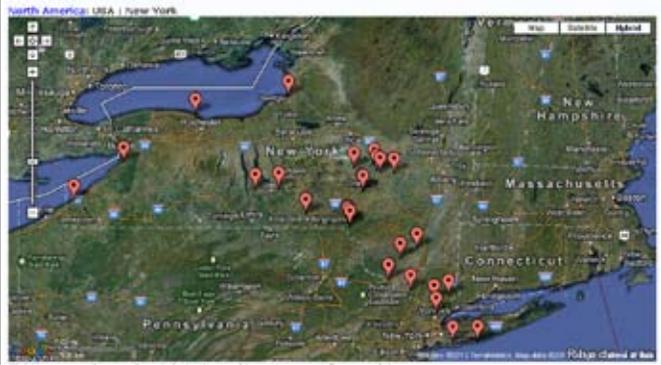
Wish they were this easy to find. Ross's Goose photo by Jay McGowan.



Suan Hsi Yong captures a Coopers Hawk taking a Ring-billed Gull. Note the size of each bird.



Soon the northern migration of raptors will begin. The Hawk Migration Association of North America has a website which shows where there are hawk watch sites. Check out the site. Below is a map of the sites in New York. Go to: <http://www.hmana.org/sitesel.php>



Club Member Profile: Donna Scott

By Cyndy Tkachuck

It's often been said that when you need a good volunteer, ask a busy person. Over the years, Donna Scott has been involved with a plethora of community, church, and civic projects. In 2000, she and several other dedicated people started a new library in Lansing, NY, and she has been active in several volunteer positions at the library since its inception. She is a past member and past President of the Board of Trustees at First Unitarian Church of Ithaca and held the same offices at the little-known Cayuga and Seneca Lakes water level issues group, Finger Lakes Ecology Association (now defunct). In April, she will become the President of the local chapter of the Funeral Consumers Alliance, an educational group that serves the public. She also is a member of the Tompkins County SPCA and is a member of the Finger Lakes Land Trust.



An active member of the Cayuga Bird Club, Donna is cochair, with Linda Orkin, of the CBC committee that is planning to host the New York State Ornithological Association's Annual Meeting in fall 2014—an event that concludes a year-long celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Cayuga Bird Club. "I think we should host the event because we have one of the best birding areas in the state, the famous Lab of Ornithology is here; and as an active bird club with many members, I think we should take our turn hosting the conference," she said. "If we spread around the work, it will not be much burden on anybody." When asked what club members can do to assist, Donna noted: "Volunteer for one of the many small jobs that the conference requires, when the time comes. Most work will be done in 2014 in the months leading up to the conference itself, in September. All the work will be organized; members just need to be responsible for the job for which they volunteer. The jobs will be finite. Most work ends at the end of the conference." She added, "We have a great Steering Committee for this; the Keynote Speaker is engaged, and we have reserved the main hotel for the conference activities."

Donna has been watching birds for more than 40 years, "I gradually spent more and more time birding and identifying birds using a guide. I took Spring Field Ornithology (SFO) for the first time in 2012." Although she had been going to Lab of Ornithology seminars for years and knew about the club, Donna joined the club just four years ago. "I finally had enough time to be more leisurely, after years of volunteer work starting and growing the Lansing Library and volunteering at the SPCA," she said. "I wanted to meet more people who love birding. For a while I didn't think I was a good enough birder to join! Now I see that was silly!" She has participated in the CBC's Christmas count for about 10 years. "I first started by helping Gladys Birdsall and Ann Mitchell in Region I," she noted.

Donna's birding ventures include field trips with SFO and the Cayuga Bird Club, "I also use the new basin guide

book and go to various sites, including Montezuma," she said. "Where I go depends on where I am traveling (often with my sister): Rochester areas; Algonquin and Bon Echo Provincial Parks, Ontario; many locations in Florida, where we have family, as well as a timeshare condo on the Gulf of Mexico; Cape Cod; Maine. I used to bird when I went on business trips out west and would take a few days vacation at various places, after the work was done. I pretty much bird wherever I go." Donna maintains a life list that enables her to keep track of what she's seen and where. "I am pretty casual about my list, even though I always record birds I see. I do eBird sometimes," she said.

There are many bird feeders in Donna's front and back yards, and she also spreads seed on the ground and on her back deck railing, thus feeding squirrels, as well as birds. "I've seen about 37 species at my feeders, depending on the season. I fondly remember Evening Grosbeaks, but have not seen them here in years. This year, a female Pileated Woodpecker has come regularly to suet. I love all the feeder birds, but I especially like the Carolina Wrens and the Orioles. I've had a lot of redpolls and siskins this year." Because she lives on the east shore of Cayuga Lake, she sees a lot of water fowl (ducks, loons, geese, cormorants, grebes, gulls) and birds that live around the water, like kingfishers, Bald Eagles, Ospreys, Spotted Sandpipers, swallows, and Great Blue Herons.

She added: "My road is still fairly wooded and shrubby on the east side of the road, so I see lots of other species when I walk in there: Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkeys, hawks, kestrels, warblers, Catbirds, Brown Thrashers, and I hear Screech Owls all summer; even Sandhill Cranes fly over occasionally. It isn't a great woods for many species, but the whole area taken together is pretty birdy!" Moreover, her yard being a National Wildlife Federation "Certified Wildlife Habitat," Donna feeds and shelters a lot of birds outside, along with some opportunistic squirrels, opossums, skunks, and White-tailed Deer.



Donna with Great Black Backed Gull chick on Hog Island, Maine

When asked about ways to involve more young people in bird watching, Donna offered some thoughts, "I suppose we will have to connect children to nature by using various tech stuff and screens (phones, computers, tablets, TV, etc.) and then keep showing them the out of doors! The kids I know who have interesting past-times are ones who were exposed to activities like birding, hiking, kayaking, painting, making and building neat things, etc. by the adults and older siblings in their lives." She added: "I don't have children, just a grand nephew who is almost five. I send him books, games and magazines with bird, animal and nature themes. The few times we visit him in Florida, his grandfather (my brother), my sister and I take him for walks in nearby nature preserves (Flagler Beach, FL, on the Atlantic Ocean, is surrounded by an amazing amount of natural areas considering how over-

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Bicknell's Thrush: An Endangered Species

By Joan Collins

NYSOA Conservation Committee

Bicknell's Thrush, the only endemic bird species in the northeastern United States, is facing a whole series of threats to its short-term and long-term survival. This species, which breeds on restricted "sky-island" habitat at the tops of mountains in New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine, in addition to a few locations in Canada, will likely be listed under the Endangered Species Act this year.

Climate change is the leading threat facing Bicknell's Thrush. Warming is projected to change the distribution of trees in their montane-forest breeding habitat. Ninety-eight percent of this balsam-fir dominated habitat is projected to disappear with a warm-up of only 3 degrees Celsius. Extirpations of Bicknell's Thrush at low elevations and along the southern edge of their breeding range are already occurring. Other climate related changes include: frequency and severity of natural disturbances; availability of invertebrate prey; timing of breeding and migration; competition from Swainson's Thrush (which may be physiologically restricted from cool summits); and possible infestation of northern balsam-fir from the Balsam Woolly Adelgid.

Swainson's Thrush has already taken advantage of the warmer springs to move upslope over the past decade. During a Mountain Birdwatch survey on the summit of Whiteface Mountain in 2012, I tallied twice as many Swainson's Thrushes as Bicknell's Thrushes – something that would have been inconceivable just a decade ago. Swainson's Thrushes appear to have taken over the prominent singing perches occupied, in prior years, by Bicknell's Thrush. What effect this change may have on Bicknell's Thrush is not fully known.

Climate change is not the only threat to Bicknell's Thrush. Other threats include: acidic precipitation; mercury deposition (high levels have been found in Bicknell's Thrush



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and in many other species); logging; habitat destruction on the breeding grounds for ski resorts, other recreational development, communications infrastructure, and wind farms; and forested habitat loss on their even more restricted winter grounds on four islands in the Greater Antilles – 98% of which has been destroyed by logging and clear-cutting for subsistence agriculture.

Primarily due to the threat of global warming, the Center for Biological Diversity petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list Bicknell's Thrush under the Endangered Species Act in 2010. In August 2012, in response to the 2010 petition and a 2011 landmark agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that compelled the Service to move forward with the protection process for 757 species including Bicknell's Thrush, the Fish and Wildlife Service announced a "90-day finding" that Bicknell's Thrush, a northeastern songbird threatened by climate change, may warrant protection as an endangered species. A protection decision is due in 2013.

The Endangered Species Act turns 40 this year. It is a powerful and successful legal tool for protecting species at risk of extinction. It provides a legal means for citizens and public interest groups to petition or sue the government to make sure the Act protects species as it was intended to do, and it provides a way to legally protect lands and waters that species need to survive and recover.

While winter grounds for Bicknell's Thrush have been severely lost or degraded, most of its breeding grounds in the United States are already conserved. New York has 24% of Bicknell's Thrush U.S. breeding habitat, and 93% is conserved. Numbers for the other three states: New Hampshire has 45% of the U.S. breeding habitat, with



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94% conserved; Vermont has 8%, with 83% conserved; and Maine has 23%, with 41% conserved. The major threat to Bicknell's Thrush breeding habitat, which is mostly conserved, is **climate change**. The question that remains is whether the Endangered Species Act can be used to force the government to address climate change? Can the Act be used to stop CO₂ from being spewed into the atmosphere? (Major sources of human produced atmospheric CO₂ include: electricity generation, transport [cars, buses, planes, trains, & trucks], home heating, agriculture, and the cement industry.) Most feel it is unlikely. For much of the past 40 years, federal agencies have been defending the Endangered Species Act against changes that would weaken it and certainly not strengthen it.

Listing Bicknell's Thrush under the Endangered Species Act will draw attention and possibly provide more research dollars, but will it actually help keep the species from going extinct? Climate change is the most serious threat facing life on our planet. By 2014, the carbon dioxide level in our atmosphere will reach 400 parts per million (up from 275 parts per million 200 years ago). Many scientists believe the disastrous "tipping point" is 350 parts per million (which was reached in 1988). We cannot readily undo the amount of carbon dioxide already added to the atmosphere and the dangerous domino effects taking place in our environment as a result. Humans *can* control future CO₂ emissions, but there needs to be a political will to do so. Unless we give up our need for electricity, grocery stores, flying, driving, heating our homes, and go back to travel by horse, we are all culpable in the demise of species due to human-caused climate change, which may even eventually include ourselves.

The future for Bicknell's Thrush, the mysterious bird of sky-islands with a lovely voice, is most certainly imperiled. 🐦

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for a fun-filled event celebrating spring!
Migration Celebration at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Saturday, May 11!
 Join our team of volunteers from **9:30 am - 3:30 pm** (event hours 10am-3pm) to help with:

- * Guided bird walks
- * "Migration Mobile Adventure" outdoor stations
- * Children's games and activities
- * Interactive research exhibits
- * Overall event support

Volunteers receive lunch and an appreciation packet. Be part of a fun community connecting people with nature and conservation work here at the Cornell Lab! **To sign up, fill in [this online form](#) by April 19th.** You can find the link to the online form and more information on our website at www.birds.cornell.edu/birdday. For questions, contact Anne Rosenberg (baj3@cornell.edu) or 254-2109.

This guy in a station wagon is riding down the road with the back full of penguins. A cop sees him and pulls him over and says, "I want you to take those penguins to the zoo right now!" The guy says, "O.K." Next day the cop sees this same guy going down the road with the penguins in the back. This time the penguins are wearing sunglasses. He pulls the guy over again and says, "I thought I told you to take those penguins to the zoo." The guy answers, "Yeah, that's right, we went and had a helluva time. We're going to the beach today!"

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developed Florida is). We show him the birds and animals there. Later, I will get him binoculars and a good bird guide."

Donna occasionally does presentations about the history of the development of the bicycle in the 19th Century. She maintains a small, but representative collection of antique bicycles from the 1800s, some of which she used to ride (including a high wheel bicycle). Other interests include gardening, sailing, hiking, kayaking, and house projects.

A native of Rochester, NY, Donna has lived in seven U.S. states. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Food & Nutrition at Michigan State University, and MS in Food Science & Nutrition, at Cornell University. She's worked at Joseph Harris Seed Co., Smith Kline & French Drug Co., and then Cornell University (33.5 years in six different departments) where she retired a few years ago. Donna shares her house with a dog and four indoor cats. She has provided these cats with a large outdoor pen and a screened porch for their enjoyment and has provided the Golden Retriever with a lake and woods for her entertainment! 🐦

St. Francis and the Animals

This past month the Catholic Church elected a new pope. One of the most famous traditions of the papal succession ritual is the appearance of smoke from the chimney of the conclave room, the Sistine Chapel. The Yellow-legged Gull alight on the smoke stack from the conclave, and taken before the white smoke appeared, may have been a sign of things to come.



Later, when asked about his choice of name, he spoke of St. Francis of Assisi's concern for the poor as well as the natural environment. On November 29, 1979, Pope John Paul II declared St. Francis to be the Patron of Ecology. One can only hope that the new Pope will be a strong advocate for protecting the earth.



Minutes of the Cayuga Bird Club Meeting, March 11, 2013

President Linda Orkin called the meeting to order just after 7:30 p.m. by welcoming members and newcomers alike. Meg Richardson and Marc Devokaitis provided the cookies, and the cookie sign-up sheet was passed around to solicit donors for the next meeting. Recent bird sightings included the massive gathering and migration of geese and the return of Red-winged Blackbirds and robins. Linda mentioned the lab's docent program, which offers bird walks in Sapsucker Woods, as one way to be involved in the birding community. Marc Devokaitis talked about the upcoming Spring Field Ornithology course. Richard and Cyndy Tkachuck again requested feedback for the newsletter and were told how much people enjoyed the bird quiz they had initiated. Kathy Strickland did the basin bird survey.

The next meeting will be on April 8 and will feature Dave Nicosia speaking about weather patterns and migration. Dr. Caren Cooper will talk at the next Monday night seminar on March 25 on how the large data sets provided by public participation can advance science.

Vice President Paul Anderson gave the field trip report. There have been three trips since the last meeting.

1. Ann Mitchell, Feb. 23, Around the Lake. The big highlight was Short-eared Owls at Morgan Rd.
2. Matt Young, March 2, Southern Highlands, joint trip with the Cortland club. This trip featured lots of Common Redpolls, Hoary Redpolls, Evening Grosbeaks, and a Northern Shrike.
3. Meena Haribal, March 9, Around the Lake. Thousands upon thousands of Snow Geese as well as lots of ducks, swans, and Canada Geese were seen.

The next field trip will be on March 23, led by Gladys Birdsal, looking for early Spring arrivals. We need a volunteer to lead a trip on April 7.

Linda brought up things the club might do to celebrate its 100th anniversary besides hosting the NYSOA meeting. Some ideas were to host a NYSOA young birders weekend and to organize a few special field trips to Renwick Wildwoods to celebrate our beginnings. She also brought up for discussion the Stewart Park sign project to determine interest. It would require a large effort in fund raising. The possibility of getting a grant was raised.

The speaker for the evening was Nick Mason, a PhD student in the Dept. of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. He gave a very interesting talk entitled "Complex color and simple songs? Exploring evolutionary relationships between plumage, vocalizations and habitat in tanagers."

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Hansen

Cayuga Bird Club Officers and Contacts

Linda Orkin, President
wingmagic16@gmail.com • 607.279.4253

Paul Anderson, Vice President
paul@grammatech.com • 607.257.9459

Susan Danskin, Treasurer
danskin@twcny.rr.com • 607.277.2622

Becky Hansen, Recording Secretary
rpxenakis@hotmail.com • 914.826.6055

**Colleen Richards, Corresponding Secretary and
Speaker Dinner Coordinator**
clr82@juno.com • 607.347.4293

Laura Stenzler, Programs Committee Chair
lms9@cornell.edu • 607.539.6893

Jane Graves, Historian
jgraves@skidmore.edu • 607.342.6096

Cyndy Tkachuck, Richard Tkachuck, Newsletter
cyndytkachuck@gmail.com • 607.591.1007
rictka@gmail.com • 607.591.1962

**Paul Anderson, Webmaster and Trips and
Committee Chair**
paul@grammatech.com • 607.257.9459

Carol Felton Schmitt, Publicity
cfschmitt@aol.com • 607.257.2382

Candace Cornell, Conservation Committee Chair
cec222@gmail.com • 607-257-6220

Directors (term expiration dates)

Marie Read (2013)
mpr5@cornell.edu • 607.539.6608

Laura Stenzler (2014)
lms9@cornell.edu • 607.539.6893

Bob McGuire (2015)
bmcguire@clarityconnect.com • 607.339.5260

The Cayuga Bird Club meets on the second Monday of each month, September through June, beginning with refreshments at 7:15 P.M. in the Auditorium of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Johnson Center on Sapsucker Woods Road. All meetings and most field trips are free and open to the public. Membership costs \$15 annually per household, \$10 for students, payable in September. To join, send a check (made out to "Cayuga Bird Club") to Cayuga Bird Club Treasurer, c/o Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, NY 14850.

Bird club members receive via email the Cayuga Bird Club Newsletter monthly from September through June. Send newsletter submissions to Richard and Cyndy Tkachuck, contact information above. Of particular interest are articles about local bird sightings, bird behavior, or birding hot spots, as well as original poetry, art, and photos.

Chickadee illustration in masthead by Karen Confer and duck silhouette by Lena Samsonenko.

Visit the Cayuga Bird Club website at:

www.cayugabirdclub.org