



Cayuga Bird Club

April 2017

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Apr.1 Stewart Park Bird Walk,
9am- 10:30am

Leader: Jody Enck

Meet near Stewart Park
boathouse

[Cayuga Bird Club Meeting, April 10](#)

Kiwis and Kokakos: Wildlife Conservation in New Zealand



Speakers:

**Bruce P.
Smith and Kit
Muma, Biology
Dept., Ithaca
College**

New Zealand is a
world leader in
conservation, and

has brought a number of their species back from the brink of extinction. Join us for an evening of video and still photography of birds of New Zealand, and a discussion of the challenges they face.

New Zealand bird species evolved in isolation, remote from any other significant land masses and virtually without terrestrial mammals. Consequently, the bird fauna was poorly adapted for the onslaught of mammalian predators that came with human settlement, first with the Maori people and later with European colonists. A significant proportion of the woodland species went extinct and many of the remaining ones are few in number and isolated on offshore islands or remote patches of native forest.

Bruce Smith and Katherine (Kit) Muma are ecologists who came from Canada in 1990 and settled in Ithaca, taking faculty positions in the Biology Dept., Ithaca College. Bruce retired in 2014, whereas Kit is continuing for the time being. Bruce's courses included Animal Behavior, Aquatic Ecology, and Parasites and Vectors of Disease; among Kit's courses taught are Field Ornithology, and Bird

Apr. 3 CLO Monday Night Seminar, 7:30pm
Speaker: Dr. Juan Pablo Culasso
A World of Sound
Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Apr. 8 Field Trip to Dryden Lake, 7am - noon
Leader: Ann Mitchell
Meet at Cornell Lab of O. north parking area

Apr. 10 Cayuga Bird Club Meeting and Seminar, 7:30pm
Speakers: Bruce P. Smith and Kit Muma, Biology Dept., Ithaca College
Kiwis and Kokakos: Wildlife Conservation in New Zealand

Apr. 15 Stewart Park Bird Walk, 9am - 10:30am
Leader: Jody Enck
Meet near Stewart Park boathouse

Apr. 22 Earth Day Waterfront Cleanup at Stewart Park, 10am

Apr. 23 Field Trip to Derby Hill, 7am - 4pm
Leader: Gladys Birdsall
Meet at Cornell Lab of O. north parking area

Apr. 29 Field Trip to Park Preserve, 7:30am - noon
Leader: Paul Anderson
Meet at Cornell Lab of Ornithology parking lot

Apr. 29 Stewart Park Bird Walk, 9am- 10:30am
Leader: Jody Enck
Meet near Stewart Park boathouse

May 1 CLO Monday Night Seminar, 7:30pm
Speaker: Dr. Christine Sheppard
Bird Mortality From Collisions With Glass: What we've learned, what we need to know, what you can do

May 8 Cayuga Bird Club Meeting and Seminar, 7:30pm
Speaker: Dr. Dan Ardia
From PA to Africa: Chickadees in forest fragments & house

Brains and Mind Games: Animal Consciousness. While Bruce's research focus is ecology and behavior of water mites, he has a strong interest in wildlife photography, especially video of bird species. Kit has conducted research on a diversity of different organisms, including plumage variation and sexual selection in red-winged blackbirds. Kit and Bruce spent parts of their last two sabbatical leaves in New Zealand.

The meeting will be held at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Doors open at 7:00 pm and there will be cookies and conversation starting at 7:15. Bird club business begins at 7:30 pm followed by the presentation. All are welcome.

From the President

Jody Enck



Spring is here!

Sunny and 70F in February. Heavy snow in March. Flooding in April. Late winter and early spring can be a mess in the Finger Lakes region of New

York! It's a good thing that the birds know what they are doing and will migrate just like they always do. That is not to say that birds migrate without extra challenges from all that weather mess. Kudos to those of you who went out during and after the big snow storm in March to find distressed birds like Woodcock, Robins, and Owls to lend a helping hand. I know my feeders were overwhelmed with a wide variety of birds, and even the local multiflora roses were festooned with dozens of Robins and Eastern Bluebirds scarfing down the left-over rose hips.

Now that the snow has mostly melted, birds and birders alike can get down to the business of spring. Lots of birds are looking for mates and nesting sites already. Lots of birders are looking for mates with whom to go birding and looking at all the avian sights! Your club is offering some great field

sparrows in Africa

May 13 Field Trip to Danby and Thatcher's Pinnacles,
7am - noon
Leader: Wes Blauvelt
Meet at Jennings Pond, Danby

May 14 Field Trip to Hawthorn Orchard,
7am - 11am
Leader: Ken Kempfues
Meet at Oxley Equestrian Center dirt parking lot (west side)

See our [Web Calendar](#) for more events and field trips.

First-of-Year Birds Reported during March for the Cayuga Lake Basin

Listed below are Cayuga Lake Basin first arrivals reported last month.

Mar. 5 Wilson's Snipe
Mar. 8 Blue-winged Teal
Mar. 8 Eastern Meadowlark
Mar. 13 Gray Catbird
Mar. 23 Tree Swallow
Mar. 25 Black Scoter
Mar. 26 Osprey
Mar. 26 Bonaparte's Gull
Mar. 28 Great Egret
Mar. 28 Vesper Sparrow
Mar. 30 Greater Yellowlegs
Mar. 30 Lesser Yellowlegs
Mar. 30 Barn Swallow

2017 total count to date: 142 species

Thanks to Dave Nutter for compiling these records for the club. Details are available on the [CBC website](#).

March Cayuga Bird Club Meeting

trips this month, so you have no excuses if you are looking for birding mates and sights. There also are beginner bird walks offered by Club members every Saturday and Sunday morning at the Lab of Ornithology. Yours Truly will be leading walks every other Saturday morning starting April 1st down at Stewart Park. Go out and see some birds!

As usual, we have a great presentation lined up for our April Club meeting on Monday the 10th. Come learn about birds and bird conservation in New Zealand. That country has been on the cutting-edge of wildlife conservation for a variety of reasons. If you want to hear about some challenges and successes that might be just as applicable here in New York as they are in New Zealand, join us that evening.

Finally, I just want to follow up from the presentation on the nascent Sister Bird Club Network about which I spoke at the March meeting. I truly appreciate all the great ideas and support offered by those of you who were at the presentation. In addition to about a dozen people who joined the presentation on Zoom, we had 432 people view the Facebook Live posting! Another Club from Honduras entered their information into the form on the Network website just this morning. I've also spoken by phone with several others from the U.S. and Canada just this week about the Network. Interest is growing by leaps and bounds. You can check out the Sister Bird Club website [here](#). Please help spread the word and support this project.

Happy birding!



Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds of Eastern North America, by Nathan Pieplow
Reviewed by Bob McGuire

I heard about Nathan Pieplow's project - an encyclopedia of bird sounds - years ago and have eagerly awaited the result. The book just came out,

Minutes
are available at the [CBC website](#).

Upcoming CBC Field Trips

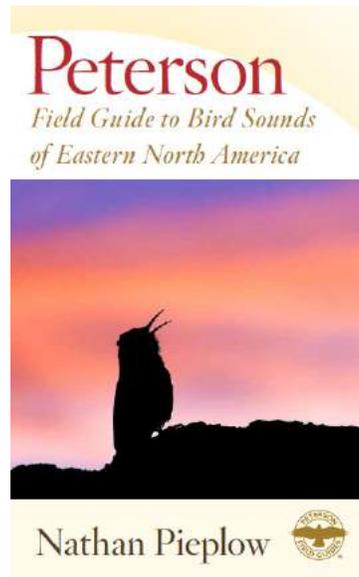
The Cayuga Bird Club has scheduled three field trips in April. These trips are open to all.

On **Saturday, April 8**, Ann Mitchell will lead a half day trip (**7:00 am - noon**) to Dryden Lake. Because Spring Ornithology will be underway, we will **meet at the far (north) parking lot at the Lab or Ornithology** for a morning trip to Dryden Lake. We might be lucky and see Swamp, Field, and/or Savannah Sparrows, not to mention one or two swallow species. It should be a fun trip. Please call or email Ann with questions - 607-220-8448 or annmitchell13@gmail.com.

On **Sunday, April 23**, Gladys Birdsall will lead a trip to Derby Hill, Oswego, to look for migrating hawks. Lots of Broadwings, accipiters, ospreys and eagles will be on move. The trip is weather-dependent as hawks are. So check with Gladys at gjb5@cornell.edu or call 227-3970 or the [Cayuga Bird Club calendar](#) for any changes. Dress in layers and carry warm gloves and hat. Carry enough drinks and food as there are very few places to eat nearby.

We will meet at the **north parking lot of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at 7:00 am** and expect to return about 4:00 pm.

On **Saturday, April 29**, Paul Anderson will lead a half-day trip to the Park Preserve. This 300



and I couldn't be more pleased!

In the format of a field guide (you can carry the book in a *large* pocket), the author presents the full repertoire of 520 birds regularly found in the eastern US. A second volume covering the western birds (with lots of overlap) is due in a couple of years. One

of the things that makes the project exciting is that there is an accompanying website with recordings of all of the songs and calls described in the book. With over 5,500 recordings, labeled for easy identification, this collection is more valuable than anything else currently available, whether it be the popular sound apps or the Macaulay Library Master Set. His goal was to provide three examples of each sound and while with some birds it proved difficult to find that many recordings, he did come close.

For someone trying to improve their ID skills by learning bird sounds, it is often (for me, at least) an arduous process of relying on mnemonic devices (like "who-cooks-for-you") and trying to improve one's auditory memory; in other words, strictly an auditory process. Nathan's guide brings in sonograms - pictures of each vocalization - to add a second, visual dimension to the process of identifying, and learning, bird sounds. His 30 page introduction is a tutorial in how to listen to sounds and how to read the sonograms. He is trained in linguistics and uses that background to describe the sounds based on what you actually hear (for example: "SREET" rather than "night flight call"). He talks about songs vs calls, about the bird's process of learning sounds (subsong - plastic song - crystallization), and about dialects and repertoires.

That is a lot to take in all at once! What you can easily do is go to the Visual Index at the back of the book to look up a sound that you've just heard and

acre preserve 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 Paul at 607 216-5389 or fishoak@gmail.com if you have questions. We will meet at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology Parking lot at 7:30 am and plan to return at noon.

Please check the [Cayuga Bird Club calendar](#) for updates in case there are date changes for these or any other field trips.

The Cayuga Bird Club and Stewart Park

The Cayuga Bird Club has had a wonderful connection with Stewart Park going back to the very beginning of our Club around 1915. If you hike in Renwick Woods, you still can find the cement archway with the inscription of the Cayuga Bird Club on it. The “Swan Pen,” or more formally, “Fuentes Bird Sanctuary”, also has a plaque calling out the connection to our Club. We still have a deep connection to Stewart Park, and here are some of the things going on there of which you can be a part.



Starting **April 1st** and continuing **every other Saturday morning** from **9:00 am** to about 10:30 am,

cannot identify. You would first go to the 2 page chart on the inside back cover: “What Did You Hear”? It is organized by “a single note”, “the same note repeated”, “a phrase of 2-3 syllables”, “the same phrase repeated”, and so on. That refers you to a series of pages at the back of the book that breaks the sound down further and gives you several possible birds. In many cases, the ID becomes obvious because only one of those birds fits your location. Then, in order to compare what you just heard with actual recordings of that bird, you need access to the web. Have a smart phone? Just go to <https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/peterson-field-guide-to-bird-sounds/> and type in the name of the bird.

Calling this a “field guide” does not do justice to the scope of this book. It is truly an encyclopedia. Nathan has done extensive research on each bird and presents here its FULL REPERTOIRE. For each species he talks about different song types (if any), all of the different calls, when they might be given, and what their function might be (if known). And once again, most remarkably, all of those vocalizations are given as recordings on the website. This work should now give us a rational, standardized way to talk about bird sounds. It is an invaluable tool for beginning birders all the way out to field researchers. Just in time for spring migration here in the northeast!

Oswego River Field Trip Report, March 10

Meena Haribal



We were gathering at Sapsucker Woods at 8.00 am to car pool to Oswego River, when one of the

Jody Enck will be leading bird walks in Stewart Park and Renwick Woods. We'll especially be looking for migrants and local breeding birds. No birding experience necessary- just come and have fun! Meet at the west end of the park near the boathouse.

On Earth Day, **April 22nd**, there will be an **Earth Day Waterfront Cleanup at Stewart Park** from **10:00 am** to about 1:00 pm. The Club has been heavily involved in this effort in past years, and we want to continue the tradition. Contact Jody Enck or see the website of the [Friends of Stewart Park](#) for more information.

On **May 9th**, there will be a fundraiser at Cinemapolis similar to the benefit for Stewart Park held last spring. Cayuga Bird Club members Marie Read and Sarah Blodgett will be joined by Dede Hatch in showing some of their amazing bird-related photos. These artists will be joined by several musicians, including The Falling Waters Trio and Djug Django and Tenzin Chopak for an unforgettable evening of music and birds. This benefit will contribute financial support for some of the various infrastructure projects underway in Stewart Park. More information coming soon.

CLO Monday Night Seminars

April 3, 7:30 p.m.

Where: Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road

participants called to say she might be a little late. While waiting for her, we watched a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers move around the parking lot trees. We were pleased to listen to the morning chorus of early spring birds that included Common Grackles, Red-winged Blackbirds and Song sparrows.

Six of us (Jae, Suzanne, Becky, Leigh, Tracy and I) regrouped ourselves into two cars and headed via Route 34 to Oswego Harbor. On the way we saw several groups of blackbirds flitting around in the open patches in the snow.

Our first stop was serendipitous (partly because I was lost), in a parking lot to the west of the power plant. From here we watched a few close Buffleheads, Red-breasted Mergansers, Long-tailed Ducks and a flight of a group of White-winged Scoters. From there we headed to a parking lot overlooking the Oswego Harbor. The view was beautiful with beautiful blue sky and blue lake covered with ice and floating chunks of ice. We scanned through a big flock of gulls on the ice for any less common ones and to our surprise most of them were Ring-billed Gulls. We also found a first year Iceland Gull and a few Herring Gulls. A beautiful adult Bald Eagle put on a great show for us. Then we headed to Maritime Park.

Here there were many diving ducks busy going back and forth, mostly males trying to follow females. They moved with quite a speed. There were lots of Greater Scaups, with a couple of Lesser Scaups, Buffleheads, Long-tailed Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, Ring-necked Ducks etc. At one point we watched four male Long-tailed Ducks chasing a female. She ran ahead and promptly climbed on to a piece of ice and surveyed her pursuers while one male tried to climb the ice, but failed. It was funny to watch them. On the channel side there were more

birds as there was more open water. There were lots of Long-



Speaker: Juan Pablo Culasso

Title: *A World of Sound*

Description: A blind birdwatcher from Uruguay proves you don't need sight to see. Through the sounds of nature he is able to envision the world that surrounds him. Juan Pablo Culasso is one of the best birdwatchers in the Americas by using his ears, not his eyes. He was born blind and as a child learned to identify the feathered creatures by their voices. As an adult, his career is recording the sounds of nature. Last year, he had the opportunity, as a guest of the Uruguayan government, to travel to Antarctica to learn the landscape of the world's last wilderness through its sounds. Join us to hear from Juan Pablo about his travels to this remote place and what he discovered there.

May 1, 7:30 pm

Speaker: Dr. Christine Sheppard

Bird Collisions Campaign
Manager, American Bird
Conservancy

Title: *Bird Mortality From Collisions With Glass: What we've learned, what we need to know, what you can do*

You probably think that you can see glass – but long ago, you learned a concept – glass is an invisible barrier or reflective illusion – that birds never understand. As many as a billion birds die each year in the U.S., nearly half of them on home windows. In the last decade, many scientists have contributed pieces to the puzzle of how birds really

tailed, a few Common Mergansers, scoters and many more birds. Then we headed upstream of the river near the lock past Utica Bridge. But the river was in full spate and we saw hardly anything but three Mallards. As we came back to the car I saw largish falcon flyover the river past some trees-- to me it looked like a Merlin. By this time we were all hungry so we tried to find if we could get any lunch in a nearby popular diner, but because of the long wait time we satisfied ourselves with a piece of pizza and a pit stop.

We then headed to Phoenix Dam via Rte. 481. Here we spent a lot of time trying to locate white-winged gulls and trying to separate their sizes and bill colors to get species identification. I sure have become a little rusty in my gull identifications. So we referred to Sibley several times. We finally came up with five or six Iceland Gulls and one possible first-year Lesser Black-backed Gull and other usual birds. Here one of the local ladies told us about the Bald Eagle nest nearby, so we were planning to go there. A little later we met another man who told us about the huge flock of Snow Geese close to Baldwinsville. Everyone wanted to see snow geese so we decided to head there. We did find the location but the snow geese were not easily visible from the road as they were on the other side of the slope, but we could hear them. We saw quite a few cars parked and some people on the top of the cars photographing the birds. We went a little ahead and in a cattail marsh we found a huge flock of blackbirds-- about 2000+ birds twittering enthusiastically and doing their maneuvering flights. We enjoyed watching them. By then it was 3:10 pm and time to head home. Overall, the beautiful weather made it a great day and trip. The time flew faster than birds. I hope the participants enjoyed the day as I much I did.

Owling, March 26

John Confer

About eleven of us tried to get an owl to respond Sunday, 26 March. The company while birding is always good. The effort to find birds is fun. Our

see the world. This has established a basis for developing new solutions for existing glass, as well as materials and design strategies for creating new, bird-friendly buildings. Most architects, urban planners – most people – don't understand why birds are important and how big the collisions problem is. Virtually everyone has seen or heard a bird hit glass, but think of it as a rare occurrence. Dr. Christine Sheppard will discuss the tools we have to solve the problem and the big job ahead getting those solutions implemented. However, this is one conservation issue where individuals can take immediate action and see immediate results.

Admission is free to these CLO seminars.

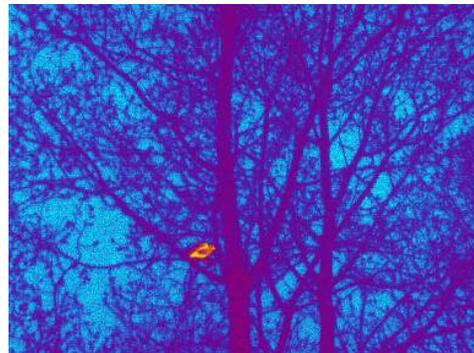
[New Online Course on Warblers](#)



Each Thursday evening from **April 6 through May 18**, the newest addition to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's "Be A Better Birder" webinars will focus on Warbler Identification. Each session is approximately one hour long and will be available at 7:00 pm and again at 9:00 pm Eastern Time. Instructor and ornithologist Kevin McGowan will offer techniques for classifying, recognizing, and identifying 50 species of warblers found north of Mexico. The series is \$69 for Cornell Lab members. [Learn more and sign up.](#)

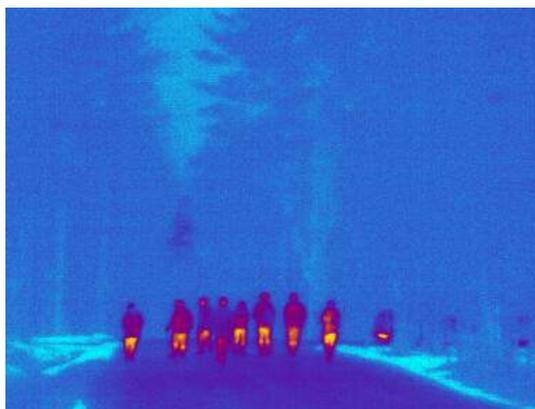
success rate in finding owls was nearly zero. I thought we got a saw-whet to respond with a single vocalization at the intersection of Hammond Hill/Star Stanton Rds. The call was a brief chittering sound with rapid syllables. As my memory serves me, I have heard the same, or a very similar call, from saw-whets while being banded about a half dozen times during the last six years of banding of several hundred owls. Bob said he got a saw-whet to respond with a single "whine" at this location a few weeks ago. I interpreted the chittering call as a distress call, which doesn't fit very well with a spontaneous call of a free flying bird in response to a playback. Unfortunately, we didn't get any response at Park Preserve, even though a saw-whet responded there on consecutive weekends a few weeks ago. As Bob McGuire posted, "Suan pulled out his infrared camera and began scanning the woods for 'warm bodies'. What he picked up was amazing! A

RUFFED GROUSE perched high in a tree (probably poplar - probably feeding on



the new buds or the catkins). We then listened to several woodcocks peenting and then followed one of them (on the camera screen) as it took off, flew its loops, then settled to the ground again. What an asset that camera is for night-time birding!"

We did see a Great Blue Heron and 12 deer. You can't have great trips every time and the law of averages says that if you had a night with few birds, the next time you should get a lot – right?



Infrared photos by Suan Yong

Cayuga Bird Club

***Educating and inspiring the birding community of
the Cayuga Lake Basin and Central New York since
1914***

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. Payment may be made via Paypal at cayugabirdclub.org or by mailing a check to Cayuga Bird Club, c/o Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca NY 14850.

Please include your email address (or addresses for family memberships) with your membership application to receive the club newsletter.

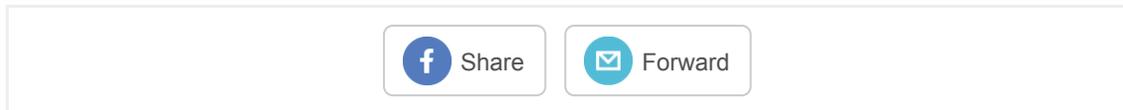
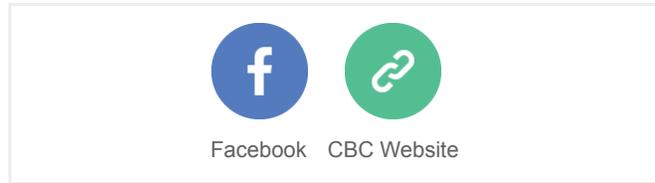
Members receive via email the monthly Cayuga Bird Club Newsletter, from September through June. Newsletter submissions may be sent to Diane Morton, cbceditor1@gmail.com. Of particular interest are articles about local bird sightings, bird behavior, birding hot spots, book reviews, and original poetry, art, and photos.

Cayuga Bird Club Officer Contact Information is available on the Cayuga Bird Club website.

Chickadee illustration in masthead by Karen Allaben-Confer

Don't miss an issue of the newsletter: add newsletter@cayugabirdclub.org to your email contacts.

Stay in touch with the Cayuga Bird Club through our [Facebook](#) page and [Cayuga Bird Club Website](#).



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