



Cayuga Bird Club

NEWSLETTER

ESTABLISHED 1914

NOVEMBER 2011

STATE ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION MEETING

CLUB DELEGATE REPORT

BY BOB MCGUIRE

I attended the 64th annual meeting of the New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA) as a delegate from our club. The September meeting was sponsored by the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club and held at the rustic Circle Lodge on Sylvan Lake in the hills northeast of Poughkeepsie. It was a full weekend of birding, speakers, and good food.

I came away impressed, once again, by the strength of the organization and the dedication of its active members. NYSOA acts as an advocate for bird and land conservation issues on behalf of its member clubs (44) and individual members (550, up 5% this year after a 10-year decline). It sponsors numerous educational initiatives, including publications (breeding bird atlases, *The Kingbird* journal, newsletter), field trips, and workshops (Kevin McGowan recently led a NYSOA-sponsored shorebird workshop at the Montezuma Audubon Center). NYSOA also sponsors the New York State Avian Records Committee and the New York State Young Birders Club. It maintains a website and archives, and it is working to make all back issues of *The Kingbird* available online.

NYSOA presents annual awards: the Elliott Award for the best article in *The Kingbird* each year and the Lillian Stoner Award to encourage young birders. This year club member John Confer was awarded the Elliott Award for his article about his Golden-winged Warbler work, and Cornell student Sarah MacLean, nominated by the Cayuga Bird Club, was one of three folks to receive the Lillian Stoner Award.

About 150 people attended this year's meeting. While most of them headed to the hills for Saturday morning field trips, 30 delegates from member clubs attended



Bob McGuire

John Confer with the Elliott Award he received for his article in *The Kingbird* about his Golden-winged Warbler research.

a business meeting. We heard reports from various committees and voted on minor bylaw changes and a new slate of officers. Carena Pooth, long active in promoting youth birding, stepped down as president and was replaced by Gail Kirch. The Conservation Committee reported on initiatives from the past year: letters to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation opposing staff cuts and gas drilling on state lands, monitoring the revision process of the Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement for gas drilling, and participating in coalitions to preserve habitat in the Long Island area.

Saturday afternoon featured eight paper presentations. Several people gave reports about ongoing research. I was particularly struck by the work (and public speaking skills) of several young people, including a college freshman and a high school senior!

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CAYUGA BIRD CLUB

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The Cayuga Bird Club meets on the second Monday of each month, September through June, at 7:30 P.M. in the Auditorium of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Johnson Center on Sapsucker Woods Road. All programs and field trips are free and open to the public. Membership costs \$15 per year, \$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 the Cayuga Bird Club Newsletter monthly from September through June. Send newsletter submissions to Anne Marie Johnson, 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.BIRDS.CORNELL.EDU/CAYUGABIRDCLUB

From the President

It is a melancholy time of the year, when the light is trickling away and the trees are dark bones against a lowering sky. It is hard to tear oneself off of the couch, but we are among the lucky ones. The promise of birds, always birds, lures us outdoors. Yes, the wind may scour our cheeks raw, and the cold may penetrate our many layers of high-tech winter wear, but out there, a Brown Creeper is still scurrying around a trunk toward the heavens, a chickadee is still hanging precariously upside down on a slender twig, a Pileated Woodpecker is still calling in staccato, wild tones. The challenges and rewards ignite a spark that makes us feel alive. It is the birds who challenge us as we receive their gifts: the golden crest of a kinglet is an ember in winter gloom, the ruddy breast of an overwintering robin glows in the scrubby brush like a mini sun, a bluebird flashes by like a puzzle piece of the summer sky. Birds ground us, make us soar, inspire us, grow our compassion, and cement our connections with the turning of the clock, of the day, and of the year. Lucky? Yes we are. And almost before we know it, titmice will be doing their "Peter Peter" song on a bright frigid morning.

The clock turns on the Cayuga Bird Club too. Bob McGuire, after a wonderful and productive two year term, moves on, and we thank him so much for his service. I assume the role of president with some nervousness, trepidation, and humility. So many wonderful people precede me, so many of you have done so much to insure the continuation of the club for what will be 100 years in 2014, and I send all of the club's gratitude to you. Challenges always confront a volunteer organization, and we will face some of these together in the next two years. But I choose to view this role as a personal inspiration: I am inspired to get to know you all better, inspired to get out on as many field trips as possible, inspired to continue to learn about the birds I love. I hope you will all feel inspired too, to be as active and interactive in our club as you possibly can.



Events Calendar

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
NOV. 7 Monday 7:30– 9:00 P.M.	Monday Night Seminar Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: Chris Linder	“Polar exploration is at once the cleanest and most isolated way of having a bad time,” wrote Apsley Cherry-Garrard about his time with the 1910 Scott expedition to the South Pole. That’s how most of us still imagine polar expeditions, but polar science has evolved over the past century. Using images from his recent book <i>Science on Ice</i> , author and photographer Chris Linder will present “Life on the Edge: Adélie Penguins.” Chris will explore how Adélie penguins—and the researchers that study them—survive and thrive at the southernmost penguin colonies in the world. Chris will sign books following the seminar.
NOV. 12 Saturday 8:00 A.M.– mid afternoon	Field Trip: Oswego Harbor Leader: John Confer Meet: Parking lot opposite the Cornell Dairy Bar, corner of Tower Road and Judd Falls Road, at 8:00 A.M. <i>or</i> visitor parking lot at the Cornell Lab’s John- son Center at 8:20 A.M.	The gulls near Fulton and Phoenix, along the two hour ride (each way) to Oswego Harbor on Lake Ontario, are often varied, and the water birds along the lake are often different from those we commonly see on Cayuga Lake. We can potentially find many species of gulls and sea ducks. Be warned: looking for gulls and ducks on windy shorelines can be very cold, so dress appropriately! Bring food, spotting scopes, etc. Call John at 539-6308 between 6:30–7:00 A.M. Saturday morning about cancellation if weather predictions are unfavorable.
NOV. 14 Monday 5:30 P.M.	Speaker Dinner Restaurant to be determined	Join club members and friends at a local restaurant for dinner with the evening’s speaker before the club meeting. Contact Colleen Richards at clr82@juno.com or at 347-4293 for the dinner location and to get on the reservation list.
NOV. 14 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: Ton Schat	Australia hosts an incredible diversity of birds as well as a wide range of habitats. Ton Schat and his wife, Laura Stenzler, have birded the four corners and center of the continent, taking photos that captured a bit of that diversity. In his presentation “A Bit of Birding Down Under—Australian Birds from West to East,” Ton Schat will share some images from those trips in a broad travelogue. See “Speaker Profile” on page 4 for more information.
NOV. 17 Thursday	Newsletter deadline	Send newsletter submissions to Anne Marie Johnson, contact information on page 2. <i>Note early deadline this month.</i>
NOV. 19 Saturday 7:30 A.M.	Field Trip: Cayuga Lake Leader: Jay McGowan Meet: Johnson Center visitor parking lot	Jay will lead a full-day trip around Cayuga Lake to find wintering gulls, ducks, and land birds. Dress warmly and bring lunch for this birding adventure. Contact Jay at jmcgowan57@gmail.com if you have questions.
DEC. 3 Saturday 6:00 A.M.– 10:00 P.M.	Field Trip: Niagara Falls Leader: Kevin McGowan Meet: Cornell Lab’s far parking lot, the one closest to Route 13 and across the street from the Johnson Center	Join Kevin on this all day trip to Niagara Falls, Ontario, to look for rare gulls and other species. The trip is open to club members only . The area around Niagara Falls in the winter is incredibly rich with birds, so reserve early! Bring lots of warm clothes, warm shoes or boots, shoe and hand warmers, and whatever else you need to keep warm. Don’t forget to bring your passport . Bring snacks and/or lunch. There will be stops on the way to and from Niagara Falls to purchase food. Meet at 6:00 A.M. sharp. Contact Kevin at kjm2@cornell.edu or at 342-2430 to reserve a spot.

Events Calendar continued

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
DEC. 10 Saturday 3:00 P.M.– dusk	Field Trip: Short-eared Owls Leader: Ann Mitchell Meet: Johnson Center visitor parking lot	This late-afternoon trip will search for Short-eared Owls and other owls, as well as other birds, until dusk. Dress warmly. Contact Ann at annmitchell13@gmail.com or at 277-2926 if you have questions.
DEC. 12 Monday 5:30 P.M.	Speaker Dinner Restaurant to be determined	Join club members and friends at a local restaurant for dinner with the evening's speaker before the club meeting. Contact Colleen Richards at clr82@juno.com or at 347-4293 for the dinner location and to get on the reservation list.
DEC. 12 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: Karen Allaben-Confer	Artist, naturalist, and writer Karen Allaben-Confer will present "Living with Relics of the Pleistocene – Adventures of an Artist-in-Residence for the California Condor Reintroduction Project at Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, Arizona, 2008–2010." Karen will summarize the two years she spent observing, handling, and drawing captive-bred California Condors in the wild. She will discuss the complex conservation issues surrounding this majestic species and share many stories, including her observations of interactions of condors with each other and with the public at the Grand Canyon and Kaibab plateau. Karen also plans to show some of her condor drawings, some finished works, and some pieces still in progress.

November Speaker Profile: Ton Schat

Ton has been a member of the Cayuga Bird Club since 1976. He started birding when he was 8 or 9 years of age while growing up in the urban environment of Zwolle, one of the larger cities in

northeastern Holland. Interested in the natural world, he joined the Dutch youth organization for nature study during his teens and then pursued a career as a veterinarian.



Papuan Frogmouth (Podargus papuensis) on the Cape York peninsula in northeast Australia.

After 4 years in Mexico, where he started studying viral diseases of chickens, he came to the U.S. in 1975 to pursue a Ph.D. in avian immunology. That led to a faculty position at Cornell, where he is now Professor of Avian Virology and Immunology at the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Over the years, Ton's work has taken him all over the world, affording many opportunities to pursue his life-long interest in birding. During the past 8 years, Ton has traveled almost annually to Australia to conduct research on Avian Influenza. His growing interest in photography combined with birding has resulted in a large portfolio of bird images from Australia, some of which he will share during his presentation. 🐦

Ton Schat

MINUTES: CAYUGA BIRD CLUB MEETING SEPTEMBER 12, 2011

BY SUZANNE HENDERSON

Cayuga Bird Club members and guests gathered in the Johnson Center Auditorium at 7:15 P.M. to enjoy refreshments and friendly conversation. President Bob McGuire brought the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. Thanks went to Bob for bringing cookies for the meeting. Linda Orkin volunteered to provide refreshments for the October meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The club sponsored two recreational teams in the 2011 Montezuma Muckrace. One team, with Ann Mitchell, Linda Orkin, Dave Nutter, Bob McGuire, and Gary Kohlenberg, found 89 species. Colleen Richards and Susan Barr made up the second team. The top recreational team found 120 species, and the winning competitive team found 118 species. Collectively, about 170 bird species were identified.
- Bob McGuire noted that club dues are due. Checks or cash were welcomed by Treasurer Susan Danskin. Dues and additional donations to the club are tax deductible. Bob reminded folks to specify whether they want to receive the newsletter as a PDF file by email (in color) or a hardcopy by U.S. mail (in black-and-white). The PDF version saves the club copying and postage fees.
- Bob pointed out several club trips scheduled for September and early October. He encouraged everyone to enjoy these outings to local birding hotspots as fall migration gets underway.
- The club will elect officers at the October meeting. The following members have agreed to be on the slate for election. Bob invited anyone who would like to volunteer for office to contact him.

Linda Orkin	President
Bob McGuire	Vice-president
Susan Danskin	Treasurer
Colleen Richards	Corresponding Secretary
Suzanne Henderson	Recording Secretary
Laura Stenzler	Director 2011–2014
- The guest speaker for the October meeting will be Sylvia Mioc. She will talk about a birding trip to the Danube Delta in Romania.
- Linda Orkin appealed to members to consider reading the Cayuga Lake Basin bird list at Monday Night Seminars. She passed around a list of upcoming seminars so that folks could sign up.
- Bob discussed the local birding email list (cayugabirds-l@cornell.edu). Lots of local birding

information is shared on the site. It is easy to subscribe and stay current with local sightings.

OLD BUSINESS

The revised Cayuga Lake Basin birding guide is still in progress. Bob presented a mock up of the cover for the 6"x10" spiral bound guide. Anne Marie Johnson has been doing an amazing job of layout for the colorful and detailed publication.

BASIN LIST

Bob McGuire read the Cayuga Lake Basin bird list and recorded the birds identified in the basin in the previous week, including a lengthy list of Muckrace observations.

EVENING PROGRAM

Bob introduced guest speaker Petra Deane, a Ph.D. candidate in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Cornell. Her presentation, "Uncovering the Evolutionary Secrets of a Small Nocturnal Seabird," was a fascinating description of the Band-rumped Storm Petrel, a species Petra studied in the Cape Verde archipelago in the Azores.

Petra gave a brief description of the different ecosystems present in the Azores: volcanic, desert and high walls topped with an arid vegetationless plateau, and cloud/alpine forests. Until the late 1990s it was believed that there was one breeding population of Band-rumped Storm Petrel on the Cape Verde islands. Now researchers believe there are two distinct species in a "time-sharing" arrangement: *Oceanodroma monteirol*, which breeds during the hot season, and *Oceanodroma castro*, which breeds during the cool season.

The birds have different diet profiles and different calls. There are also some distinguishing physical features. The cool-season birds have rectangular tails and blunt wings, and the hot-season birds have a forked/notched tail and pointier wings. Petra said, "The Band-rumped Storm-petrel system has become a rich testing ground for hypotheses about how species are able to adaptively diverge from one another without the benefit of geographical isolation." It is believed Band-rumped Storm Petrels live for 35–40 years, but it is extremely difficult for humans to access the nesting sites, situated high in rock crevices. The birds remain in the nests by day and leave at night to feed, so investigations of these birds require a great deal of time and patience. 🐦

MINUTES: CAYUGA BIRD CLUB MEETING OCTOBER 10, 2011

BY SUZANNE HENDERSON

Members and guests of the Cayuga Bird Club gathered at the Johnson Center Auditorium at 7:15 P.M. to enjoy cookies and friendly conversation and to admire the "Birds in Stitches" art exhibition hanging on the walls of the room. President Bob McGuire brought the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. A thank you was extended to Linda Orkin for providing the evening's refreshments. Jill Vaughan and Carolyn van Leer volunteered to bring cookies for the November meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bob welcomed folks in attendance. He gently reminded everyone that club dues are currently due. Susan Danskin was present and glad to receive payments for the new membership year.

NEW BUSINESS

- Laura Stenzler spoke about the Cornell Student Bird Club, a campus group that usually has a few active members. This year the group has grown in number to about 100 participants. Laura is interested in ideas that our members might have for bringing these students together with the Cayuga Bird Club for some joint trips or other combined ventures. Laura felt one of the biggest obstacles for students in the group is the need for transportation to meetings or field trips. A sponsor/mentor for the student group wants to pay for each of the students to have a copy of the Cayuga Lake Basin birding guide when it is published and ready for sale.
- Susan Danskin (who is a teacher at Dewitt Middle School) announced that she is running a school Bird Club and has quite a few enthusiastic young birders. She is also wondering if folks have some more ideas to engage young people in birding activities.
- Linda Orkin reported that the Cornell Lab of Ornithology has decided to discontinue the long-standing tradition of reading the Cayuga Lake Basin bird list before each Monday Night Seminar. Bob polled the audience regarding their desire to maintain the list reading during bird club meetings. Those present voted unanimously to continue the tradition at club meetings for many reasons, especially for sharing current, local bird activity. Someone asked where past lists from Monday Night Seminars are kept, if the club could access them, and if the lists could be retained for

future reference. The club decided to continue reading the bird list at club meetings and to try to secure the historical data, as well as to explore how to store the data in a useful way. Any ideas for this project should be brought to the next meeting.

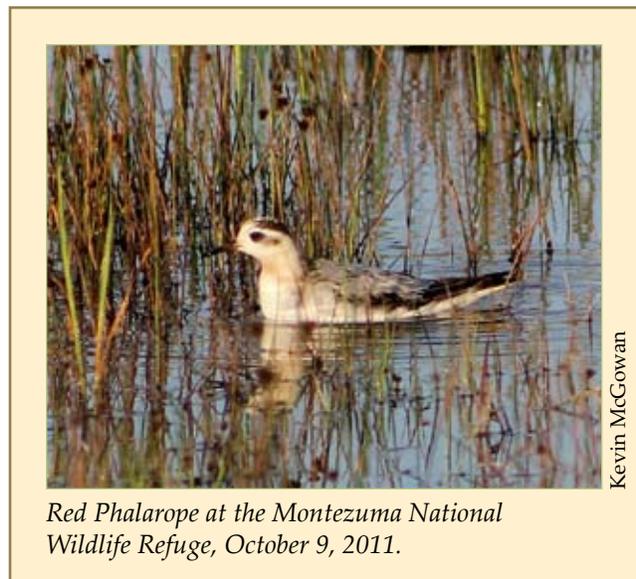
RECENT SIGHTINGS

Lots of migrants are on the move, and there have been some interesting stopover visitors. A Dickcissel was observed at the Freese Road gardens, and a Nelson's Sparrow (formerly called Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow) was found in Hog Hole area of the Treman State Marine Park and four Brant were seen in the marina there. Many shorebirds, including American Avocet, Hudsonian Godwit, Red Phalarope, and Common Gallinule (recently split from the Common Moorhen) have been seen in the Montezuma Wetlands Complex. John Confer has been recording Saw-whet Owls.

TRIP REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Ann Mitchell and Laura Stenzler provided highlights from trips they led. Bob encouraged people to consider upcoming trips: a half-day trip led by Bob to local hotspots and a full day trip led by Susan Danskin around Cayuga Lake. Bob hopes that the club can continue to host at least one short, local field trip and one longer field trip each month. The club is always interested in recruiting trip leaders.

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Red Phalarope at the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, October 9, 2011.

MINUTES: OCTOBER

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- The November club meeting will feature Ton Schat, a familiar person to many club members. He will share some of the Australian birds that he and Laura have come to know and love.

OLD BUSINESS

Bob presented the officer slate for the 2011–2012 club year and asked for a motion to approve the slate. Ton Schat made the motion and Carl Steckler seconded it. The slate was approved with a unanimous vote from the members present. Ton Schat made a motion to accept the results of the election and Carl Steckler seconded the motion. The following officers were elected:

Linda Orkin	President
Bob McGuire	Vice-president
Susan Danskin	Treasurer
Colleen Richards	Corresponding Secretary
Suzanne Henderson	Recording Secretary
Laura Stenzler	Director 2011–2014

BASIN LIST

Bob McGuire read the Cayuga Lake Basin bird list and recorded birds identified in the previous week.

EVENING PROGRAM

Bob introduced Silvia Mioc, the speaker for the evening. Silvia is a scientist by training, with a Ph.D. in physics. She knew very little about birds until she participated in the Cornell Lab's Spring Field Ornithology course last year. She said the course transformed the way she heard and saw birds, and she became so excited about her new interest in birding that she not only wanted to see as many bird species as possible in the U.S. but also in her native country of Romania.

She had to overcome some daunting hurdles to arrange her trip to the Danube Delta, but she was indeed successful in securing a very experienced guide on an incredible floating hotel. In an extraordinary three day trip, Silvia saw 64 species. She had quite a task identifying and labeling the birds for her presentation, especially for an English-speaking audience. Most of the birds she saw do not appear in any Peterson guides. It was a wonderful challenge, and the audience really appreciated her great collection and her infectious enthusiasm. In closing Silvia discussed booking a return trip to the Danube Delta next summer. She invited club members who might be interested in joining her to meet with her later. 🐦

Red and gold

By Inta Ezergailis

We walk on red and gold
we two old majesties –
woman and dog;
small brown mushrooms –
cutouts from a child's picture book –
line our path. Overhead –
thousands of starlings
in flocks shaped by some
internal sense of beauty –
some look like dark delicate shawls
twisting in the gray,
sweeping back and forth,
some shoot up like round clouds
of sparks in fireworks,
then float down gently
in all directions –
Fourth of July in October;
some fall in flurries like leaves,
but these fluttering dark ones
rise up again, the whole cloud –
a resurrection of speckled breasts.

Among the migrants
blown in by the wind,
they feel excited,
but have nowhere to go.
We're staying too, but they
scatter our gray,
jumble our monotone steps
as we weave along the path,
looking up.

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ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION MEETING CLUB DELEGATE REPORT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Topics included, "Why do adult songbirds add new brain cells to their brain?" That paper was an eye-opener. According to the speaker, songbirds have been placed at the forefront of research on the basic biology of vocal learning. Another presentation was about Black Vultures nesting on the cliffs above New Paltz since 1997. Their numbers continue to increase. Other topics included studies of stopover habitats for migrating songbirds in the Lake Ontario basin and a massive assessment of the Great Lakes coastal wetland health, with the goal of assuring greater protection of valuable habitat.

Scott Weidensaul, the dinner speaker, led us through an engaging review of his work as bird bander and educator. He has done extensive work with out-of-range hummingbirds, raptors (many years at Hawk Mountain), and Saw-whet Owls. He currently directs a major study of the movements of Saw-whets from the Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art in south-central Pennsylvania. His talk alone was worth the trip to the conference.

STONER AWARD RECIPIENT REPORT

BY SARAH MACLEAN

The NYSOA meeting was the first of its kind that I have been able to attend, and I am pleased to report that I greatly enjoyed the experience. I departed Cornell on Friday afternoon with Hope Batcheller, another undergraduate at Cornell who is active in the newly revived Student Birding Club. We arrived at the Circle Lodge just after the BBQ (what a shame), but just in time for a fascinating workshop on gull identification.

On Saturday morning we

headed to north Dutchess County for the field trip led by Rodney Johnson. Our group was an impressive mix of ages and experience levels, and we managed to find a pretty good representation of fall warblers. About halfway through the morning, we heard that Chris Wood and Jessie Barry had discovered a Dickcissel and a Clay-colored Sparrow in Stonykill. Part of our group elected to make the hour-long trek back the way we had come, and we were rewarded by finding multiple birds of each species.

The afternoon poster sessions were an absolute delight. It was especially interesting to hear about the research being done by young birders, who gave a number of impressive presentations.

And finally, the banquet: Scott Weidensaul gave an excellent keynote speech, clearly expressing his passion for the birds he has worked with. It must be difficult to tie together decades of work with species ranging from raptors to hummingbirds, but the message came together in an insightful way. I definitely will have to read some of his books in the near future!

Overall, it was a lovely weekend. Of course the activities were all engaging, but the people were a delight as well. I never knew other birders my age before entering college, so meeting the members of the rather well-represented New York State Young Birders Club was a great pleasure. I hope our paths will cross again, if not while out birding somewhere then at next year's meeting. 🐦

Gray-cheeked Thrush Thrills Visitors to Sapsucker Woods

This fall Gray-cheeked and Swainson's thrushes feasted on a bumper crop of

Spicebush berries in Sapsucker Woods. Swainson's Thrushes are seen fairly regularly in Sapsucker Woods during migration, but Gray-cheeked Thrushes are much harder to find. This individual spent several days mostly in one area very close to the Podell Boardwalk, providing great views for delighted onlookers. 🐦



Gray-cheeked Thrush in Sapsucker Woods, October 3 (right) and October 5 (above).



Kevin McGowan (2)

FIELD TRIP REPORT: LOCAL HOTSPOTS, SEPTEMBER 25

BY ANN MITCHELL

Six people joined me for this trip: the Padulka family, Lisa Mobley, Harry Ellsworth, and Stuart Krasnoff. Because of recent sparrow observations on Freese Road, we went there first. Shortly after we arrived, Dave Nutter joined us. We found one or two Lincoln's Sparrows in the north end of the garden. We also found a Field Sparrow, a Common Yellowthroat, and numerous Song Sparrows, as well as an Indigo Bunting, many American Goldfinches, and Cedar Waxwings.

Lisa Padulka found a Cooper's Hawk in a bare tree on the other side of Freese Road. A Red-tailed Hawk landed in a tree nearby. The Cooper's Hawk eventually moved to the tree that the Red-tailed Hawk was in. We discussed whether or not any of us had ever seen the two species in the same tree before. It was a first for most of the group.

Nate Senner and friends showed up looking for the Dickcissel that Nate had found the day before.



Carl Seckler

Dickcissel seen by field trip participants in the community gardens on Freese Road.

Woods. It was a quiet time of the day, and the only warbler seen was by me—a Blackburnian Warbler. All in all, it was a really fun day. Thanks to everyone. 🐦

We headed to the south part of the garden, where we found at least two more Lincoln's Sparrows, which everyone got to see. We also saw a Swamp Sparrow.

When we arrived back at the parking lot, Dave Nutter pointed out that Gary Kohlenberg was staring at something for a long time. We immediately joined him. He was pretty sure he was looking at the Dickcissel, but he didn't have great views. After we arrived, the bird flew onto a stem where we had great looks, thanks to Dave's scope. It was a life bird for many people. Yes!

Four people in my group decided to head to Montezuma while three of us headed to Sapsucker

FIELD TRIP REPORT: LOCAL HOTSPOTS, OCTOBER 22

BY BOB MCGUIRE

We had a great turnout for this trip! Eight folks joined me to check a couple of the local hotspots. And the only reason I can think of for that many people is that we did not start until 8 A.M. (It was still dark at 7:30!) We first drove to Stewart Park to take advantage of the warmer temperatures at the south end of the lake. Waterfowl had begun to arrive, and we turned up quite a variety: 2 Surf Scoters, 8 Lesser Scaup, a pair of Gadwall, a female Wigeon, a male Pintail, one black Duck, both Common and Hooded mergansers, over 20

Ruddy Ducks, and at least that many Pied-billed Grebes. A late Spotted Sandpiper flew by along the shore. And then, perhaps the best sighting of the day, a glistening dark-brown mink ambled up out of the accumulated flotsam along the shoreline and slowly devoured a crayfish. Because of all the excitement along the shore, we never got to the Swan Pen. But we did see several Yellow-rumped Warblers pass through the willows.

Our next stop was back at Sapsucker Woods where we walked

the Wilson Trail. The variety of birds was small, but we did come across two different feeding flocks of some 15 Golden-crowned Kinglets and a couple of Ruby-crowned Kinglets. In addition to them, Red-bellied Woodpeckers seemed to be everywhere.

Finally, we headed over to the Freese Road gardens to look for sparrows. Time was short, but we were able to get good looks at Savannah, Field, and White-crowned sparrows. And while it wasn't much of a look, we got a glimpse of a fleeing Vesper Sparrow. 🐦

*Savannah Sparrow, Freese Road
gardens, September 26, 2011.*



Jay McGowan

CAYUGA BIRD CLUB
c/o Cornell Lab of Ornithology
159 Sapsucker Woods Rd.
Ithaca, NY 14850



Laura Stenzler

NEXT MEETING NOVEMBER 14

TON SCHAT, FEATURED SPEAKER

“A BIT OF BIRDING DOWN UNDER—
AUSTRALIAN BIRDS FROM WEST TO EAST”

SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS

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MEETING REPORTS

EVENTS CALENDAR

MINUTES: SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER

FIELD TRIP REPORTS