



Cayuga Bird Club NEWSLETTER

ESTABLISHED 1914

OCTOBER 2011

CLUB OFFICERS NOMINATED FOR OCTOBER ELECTION

BY BOB MCGUIRE

At our October meeting, we will be voting on a new slate of officers, as we do every year. As per the club's by-laws, the Nominating Committee (Susan Danskin, Laura Stenzler, and Bob McGuire) is presenting the slate of officer nominees as it stands right now. Be prepared to vote at our October meeting.

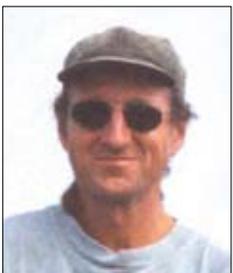
Please give some serious thought to volunteering yourself. If you wish to know more about the duties associated with these positions or are interested in placing your name on the slate, please get in touch with Bob McGuire by September 15. Nominations also will be accepted from the floor at the October meeting. If you plan to nominate someone, you must be sure that person wishes to be nominated!

SLATE OF OFFICER NOMINEES



PRESIDENT: LINDA ORKIN

Linda has been active in the birding community for many years. She is a docent for the outreach program at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and has led and coordinated the weekend bird walks at Sapsucker Woods for the past four years. She has coordinated the Ithaca Christmas Bird Count for the last two years. She looks forward to continuing the great work of past presidents with your help and input.



VICE-PRESIDENT: BOB MCGUIRE

Bob, the current president, has been an avid birder for many years and has been active in the club, leading numerous field trips, as well as serving on the Field Trip and Speaker Committee.



TREASURER: SUSAN DANSKIN

Susan has been club treasurer for the past two years and is looking forward to continuing her work. She has been a club member for a number of years, serving as a past club president and leading field trips.



**RECORDING SECRETARY:
SUZANNE HENDERSON**

Suzanne has agreed to continue as recording secretary, taking minutes at the monthly meetings for publication in this newsletter. If elected, this will be Suzanne's sixth year as recording secretary!



**CORRESPONDING SECRETARY:
COLLEEN RICHARDS**

Colleen is willing to continue as corresponding secretary, working closely with our club president and treasurer to assure that all donations and volunteer activities are properly acknowledged.

DIRECTOR (2011-2014): LAURA STENZLER



Laura has agreed to serve as a club director, a three-year term, as Marty Schlabach moves out of that position. Laura is the current vice-president, a position that she has held a number of times in the past. She also is chair of the Field Trip and Speaker Committee. 

WATCHING BIRDS IN THE ITHACA AREA FOR NEARLY 100 YEARS

CAYUGA BIRD CLUB

Officers and Contacts

Bob McGuire, *President*

bmcguire@clarityconnect.com • 256-0460

Laura Stenzler, *Vice President and*

Trips and Programs Committee Chair

lms9@cornell.edu • 539-6893

Susan Danskin, *Treasurer*

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Suzanne Henderson, *Recording Secretary*

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Colleen Richards, *Corresponding Secretary and*

Speaker Dinner Coordinator

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Directors (term expiration dates)

Marty Schlabach (2011)

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Jane Graves (2012)

jgraves@skidmore.edu • 342-6096

Marie Read (2013)

mpr5@cornell.edu • 539-6608

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

I would like to welcome everyone back.



It has been a busy summer for me, with recording trips to the Catskills, Adirondacks, Vermont, and up into Ontario and Quebec. I found a few Bicknell's Thrushes on the high peaks and managed to get some spectacular early season Common Loon duets right after ice-out in Algonquin Provincial Park. Since then I've kept busy tending the orchard and pressing cider, and of course, birding.

Fall migration is getting underway, with new shorebirds and wading birds turning up almost every day. Failed breeders and birds that did not make it all the way north have been around all summer. But now, in mid-August, the adults are appearing. Some are still in full breeding plumage, some are molting. Identification can be challenging, like "which dowitcher is that?" or "Stilt Sandpiper or Yellowlegs?" or "is that peep really long enough to be a Baird's?" But there is never a better time to get up to Montezuma and experience Towpath Road. Maybe you will spot the first Buff-breasted Sandpiper of the year!

Speaking of fall migration, this year's Montezuma Muckrace, the 24-hour birdathon, takes place on September 9-10. See friendsofmontezuma.org/muck_race.html for more details. The goal this year is to raise \$13,000 to purchase a new water control structure for Puddler Marsh (Towpath Road) that will allow the refuge to better manage the water level for shorebirds, marsh birds, and waterfowl. Note that there is a category of "Recreational Team," meaning that you can do it for fun, don't have to stay up all night, don't have to exhaust yourself. The Cayuga Bird Club, as usual, will be sponsoring a couple of teams.

Finally, a note on the book... The club is putting together an update of the basin bird guide. We have been working on it for about a year, and it is coming close to completion. All of the 76 site descriptions are written, all of the maps are done, and most of the photographs are in. We are working on some of the ancillary sections (introduction, specialty species, bibliography, index) and hope to have something that we can circulate for review this fall.

Bob McGuire

Events Calendar

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
SEPT. 9-10 Friday-Saturday	Montezuma Muckrace Montezuma Wetlands Complex	This 24-hour birding competition raises funds to support conservation projects within the Montezuma Wetlands Complex. Be sure to sponsor a team!
SEPT. 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 for the location and to get on the reservation list at clr82@juno.com or at 347-4293.
SEPT. 12 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: Petra Deane	Petra Deane, a Ph.D. candidate in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Cornell University, will present "Uncovering the Evolutionary Secrets of a Small, Nocturnal Seabird." See speaker profile on page 4 for more information.
SEPT. 16-18 Friday-Sunday	Field Trip: Cape May, NJ Leader: Ann Mitchell Meet: Lab of Ornithology*	<i>Only room for 6 participants; sign up by August 28.</i> This weekend trip will explore several birding areas around Cape May, New Jersey. The trip is limited to Cayuga Bird Club members. Contact Ann at annmitchell13@gmail.com or at 277-2926 to reserve a spot.
SEPT. 17 Saturday 7:30 A.M.-noon	Field Trip: Fall migrants Leader: Bill Baker Meet: Lab of Ornithology*	Migration is well underway by the middle of September, with birds moving every day and night. This local trip will search for those sometimes-elusive travelers. For further information contact Bill at 539-3203 or at bilbaker@pop.lightlink.com.
SEPT. 19 Monday	Newsletter deadline	Send newsletter submissions to Anne Marie Johnson, contact information on page 2.
SEPT. 23-25 Friday-Sunday	Ornithological Association Annual Meeting Circle Lodge, Hopewell Junction	The meeting will be held at Circle Lodge, a beautiful, 110-acre camp on Sylvan Lake, and will feature noted author Scott Weidensaul. See page 6 for more information.
SEPT. 25 Sunday 7:30 A.M.-noon	Field Trip: Local hotspots Leader: Bob McGuire Meet: Lab of Ornithology*	Bob will lead a half-day trip to locations determined by the weather, recent sightings, and the interests of the group. Contact Bob at 339-5360 or at bmcguire@clarityconnect.com for more information.
OCT. 9 Sunday 7:30 A.M.-noon	Field Trip: Local hotspots Leader: Laura Stenzler Meet: Lab of Ornithology*	The destination of this trip will be decided on the day, based upon where birds have been observed in recent days and suggestions from the group. Birds are still migrating, so there could be lots of surprises. Contact Laura at 539-6893 or at lms9@cornell.edu with any questions.
OCT. 10 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 for the location and to get on the reservation list at clr82@juno.com or at 347-4293.
OCT. 10 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: Sylvia Miloc	In her presentation, "Romania and Birding its Danube Delta," Silvia Miloc will give a brief overview of Romania and the formation of the Danube delta, and then she will share photographs of her July 2011 birding trip in that region. Silvia became interested in birding in 2006 when she moved to Painted Post from Colorado for her job. She is originally from Romania, but her July trip was the first time she visited the Danube delta.

*Meet for field trips in the visitor parking lot of the Cornell Lab's Johnson Center.

September Speaker Profile: Petra Deane

Petra Deane is a graduate student in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Cornell University, working in the Fuller Evolutionary Biology Program at the Lab of Ornithology. Her current research employs neurogenomic methods to understand how gene expression profiles in songbird brains define species-specific song traits. Her ultimate goal is to learn the mechanism by which natural selection acts on birdsong. Petra studied the evolutionary genetics of Band-rumped Storm-petrels for her master's degree at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, and is continuing her work with the species while at Cornell.

In the late 1990s, a student studying seabird eco-toxicology in the Azores discovered two distinct diet profiles among what was thought to be a single breeding population of Band-rumped (or

Madeiran) Storm-petrels. Closer inspection revealed two distinct, seasonally-adapted species (*Oceanodroma castro* and *Oceanodroma monteiroi*). These sister species coexist on the same island by negotiating a time-share agreement—breeding at different times of the year. 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.

In her presentation, Petra will present an introduction to the system, a summary of the fresh evolutionary lessons learned to date, and a brief review of the research she conducted on the Cape Verde archipelago. Petra also will share a few other bird stories from Cape Verde, which is an ecologically unusual landscape with fascinating island endemism. 🐦

Listening for Night Flight Calls

Bill Evans, the guru of night flight calls, will host an evening of listening on Mount Pleasant sometime during the first couple of weeks in September. Migrating birds pass low over the observatory, and it is a thrill to put on headphones and listen to them calling as they fly. The event is weather-dependent and will be scheduled at the last minute; we hope to provide at least 24 hours notice. If you are interested, please send a message to Bob McGuire at bmcguire@clarityconnect.com. When the date and time have been determined, Bob will send email to all who expressed interest. 🐦

State Young Birders Club Team Wins the Youth Division of the World Series of Birding

BY CARENA POOTH, PHOTOS BY MARY BATCHELLER

On May 14, 2011, a New York State Young Birders Club (NYSYBC) team, the Razorbills, captained by Brent Bomkamp, scoured the entire state of New Jersey and found 193 species, enough to win the Youth Division of the World Series of Birding (WSB) and third place overall! Congratulations to all four amazing team members: Brent Bomkamp, Brendan Fogarty, Amanda Spears, and Benjamin Van Doren! Special thanks to dads Brent Bomkamp and Dan Van Doren for driving the team for the entire 24-hour period!

Another NYSYBC team, the Vagrants, led by Eamon Corbett, spent 24 hours searching Cape May County. I spent about 19 of the 24 hours with these fine young birders. (Herb Thompson and I cheated and slept for 5 hours while Mary Batcheller explored the night with the Vagrants. Mary, along with the team, did the entire 24 hours in a non-sleeping state.) The Vagrants tallied 134 species, a great showing for this team's first WSB! Congratulations to all



Young Birders Club team, the Razorbills, accepting their youth division award.

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FIELD TRIP REPORT: LINDSAY-PARSONS, MAY 14

BY ANN MITCHELL

On Saturday, May 14, nine people met me at Wegmans parking lot at 7:30 A.M. We arrived at Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve around 7:50 A.M. At the entrance to the trail, we heard our first warblers of the day singing: Yellow Warblers and Common Yellowthroats. During the walk, we had great looks at many more warblers: Chestnut-sided, Prairie, Blue-winged, Blackpoll, Hooded, Magnolia, and Ovenbird, and we heard Black-and-white Warblers. Some of the warblers were “life birds” for a couple folks. We were lucky to have a gentleman from Ireland with us, and he thoroughly enjoyed the birds.

Most of us saw an Indigo Bunting. We saw and heard Brown Thrashers, Scarlet Tanagers (two males

in one binocular view—a feast for the eyes), and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. Although we never saw one, we heard a Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

Kingbirds were everywhere along the walk, and there were also numerous Great Crested Flycatchers. We heard a Least Flycatcher and saw Red-eyed and Philadelphia vireos. Field Sparrows and Bobolinks were in the field. We saw Barn, Tree, and Rough-winged swallows, as well as Chimney Swifts over the ponds.

All in all, we had a super trip. Everyone enjoyed themselves. Thanks to all who joined me and helped make it a great day. 🐦

FIELD TRIP REPORT: GRIGGS GULF STATE FOREST, MAY 22

BY TONY LOMBARDINO

We enjoyed a stimulating and extensive birding trip on Sunday, May 22, with 22 people joining me to explore Griggs Gulf State Forest (in the towns of Harford and Richford). The weather was perfect: cool temperatures and partly cloudy skies. With the total distance covered topping eight miles and a fairly hilly terrain, the walk of just under five hours was demanding at times. But the songbirds did not disappoint, and the entire group made it to the waterfall deep within the forest.

Highlights of the birds we saw and heard included many warblers: Mourning, Canada, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Common Yellowthroat, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, and seemingly limitless Ovenbirds. We also saw Red-eyed Vireo, Brown Creeper, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Wood-Pewee, and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. Birds we heard but didn't see included Yellow-billed and Black-billed cuckoos, Northern Waterthrush, Hooded Warbler, Rose-breasted

Grosbeak, Yellow-throated Vireo, American Redstart, and Hermit Thrush. Many of these birds seemed to be on territory, based on their consistent singing and location (compared to observations I made the previous few days).

The consensus among the group was that this relatively unmanaged land, with its large, unbroken tracts of second growth forest, was a fine example of how bird-friendly habitats can emerge from nature left to itself. 🐦

Wing-tagged Egrets and Herons

BY CHIP WESELOH

Researchers have marked 50 young Great Blue Herons and more than 100 young Great Egrets from three sites in Lake Huron with green or orange wing-tags this summer. Each tag carries a unique number-letter combination. Please watch for these birds and send details of any sightings (date, time, location, observer, color of tag, and number-letter combination) to me at chip.weseloh@ec.gc.ca. Also, please report any evening roosting sites and feeding aggregations with six or more of these birds. 🐦



Photo provided by Chip Weseloh

ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION MEETING IN SEPTEMBER

The 2011 New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA) Annual Meeting will be held the weekend of September 23–25 at Circle Lodge in Dutchess County (335 Sylvan Lake Road, Hopewell Junction). The meeting will be hosted by the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club and will feature Scott Weidensaul as the Saturday evening banquet's keynote speaker. The meeting will begin Friday evening with a barbecue dinner and bonfire on the lake shore, followed by workshops and poster displays. On Saturday morning, a variety of guided field trips will be offered, and NYSOA's annual meeting of delegates will be

held from 9 A.M. to lunchtime. In the afternoon, a scientific paper session will feature a broad range of ornithological studies and topics. Several field trips are planned for Sunday morning.

Find more information online at www.nybirds.org, or contact Susan Gilnack at (845) 758-5796 or at AnnMtg@nybirds.org.

CLUB NOMINEE WINS LILLIAN STONER AWARD

BY LAURA STENZLER

Every year NYSOA gives the Lillian Stoner Award to one or more high school or college students who have been nominated by NYSOA members (clubs or individuals). The award pays for the student to attend the annual meeting. The fund for the Stoner Award was established in 1974 with a gift from Lillian C. Stoner and has been maintained by further donations from individuals and member clubs/organizations.

This summer, on the recommendation of several people who have worked with her, the officers of the Cayuga Bird Club nominated Sarah MacLean, a Cornell University student, for this award. The NYSOA award committee agreed that Sarah deserved this award and granted her \$300 to cover her expenses and allow her to attend this year's meeting.

In her introductory letter to the award committee, written early this summer, Sarah wrote:

I am currently a rising junior studying natural resources at Cornell University. I became interested in birds many years ago when I first added a birdfeeder to our yard. I taught myself how to identify birds and became a contributor to Project FeederWatch, which helped me obtain a job at the Lab of Ornithology when I was accepted by Cornell. Essentially, I very much liked birds before coming to Cornell. After my first semester, I was certain that I wanted to make a career out of ornithology.

I have been working for Project FeederWatch for two years, which has given me the opportunity to become engaged in a research project since my very first days as an undergrad.... This summer, I am working on another research project at the Shoals Marine Lab on Appledore Island, Maine. I will be spending a total of eight weeks as one of the ornithology interns, working with the gulls that breed here.

Congratulations to Sarah! 🐦

State Young Birders Club Team Wins Youth Division of World Series of Birding

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three Vagrants: Eamon Corbett, Nathaniel Hernandez, and Lewis Lolya. And thanks also to parents Phil Corbett, Michele Hernandez, and Michael Lolya for their participation and support.

And by the way, the winning Cape May County team, the Cornell Redheads, included NYSYBC member (and originator) Hope Batcheller! Congratulations, Hope!

Most of all, we had fun! It was quite a challenge for us adults to keep our mouths shut and not call out species names, but the rules



The Vagrants search for birds during their first World Series of Birding as a Young Birders Club team.

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TIME TO RENEW

AUTUMN IS THE TIME TO REJOIN THE CAYUGA BIRD CLUB

Dues are \$15 per household, \$10 for students, and cover your subscription to this newsletter from September through June as well as other bird club activities. Keep informed about birding trips, meetings, and other bird-related happenings in and around Ithaca.

PLEASE JOIN US!

If your label is on the reverse side of this page and the address is correct, indicate below which type of newsletter you would like to receive, and mail this page along with a check made out to "Cayuga Bird Club." If there is no address label or if your address has changed, fill out the form below.

Name _____

Mailing address _____

Phone number _____ email address _____

Dues _____ Donation _____ Select receipt format: by email by mail

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MAIL TO: Cayuga Bird Club Treasurer
c/o Cornell Lab of Ornithology
159 Sapsucker Woods Road
Ithaca, NY 14850

State Young Birders Club Team Wins Youth Division of World Series of Birding

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state that we are not allowed to help with location or identification of birds.

Funds raised through NYSYBC's participation in the WSB are used primarily for the NYSYBC Education & Scholarship Fund. In 2010, when the club's scholarship program was first launched, six students were granted a total of \$1,870 in scholarships. These scholarships were used to help defray costs for attending birding camps and other birding and conservation-related programs. We look forward to giving similar scholarships this year, to help our young birders grow into tomorrow's birding and conservation leaders. If you would like to make a donation, please visit www.nysyoungbirders.org for a mail-in form or to donate online. 🐦

Intrepid Green Heron



Kevin McGowan

Green Heron foraging at Sapsucker Woods, August 12, 2011.

Visitors to Sapsucker Woods have been enjoying a Green Heron that has been foraging on and among the lily pads on the pond. The heron has been observed frequently this summer and often comes close to shore, even with people nearby. 🐦

See pages 3 and 4
for early September
events that need
action now!

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



Joshua See

NEXT MEETING SEPTEMBER 12

PETRA DEANE, FEATURED SPEAKER

“UNCOVERING THE EVOLUTIONARY SECRETS
OF A SMALL, NOCTURNAL SEABIRD”

SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS

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