



Cayuga Bird Club

June 2017

In This Issue:

[Cayuga Bird Club Picnic, June 12](#)

[From the President](#)

Jody Enck

[Calendar](#)

[June CBC Field Trips](#)

[Cayuga Basin First Records](#)

[CLO Seminar June 5](#)

[WEWA. Not!](#)

Wes Blauvelt

[Hawthorn Orchard Field Trip Report](#)

Ken Kemphues

[McIlroy Preserve Field Trip Report](#)

Gladys Birdsall

[Spring Bird Quest 2017 Recap](#)

Mark Chao

[2017 Montezuma Muckrace - save the date](#)

Calendar

June 3 Field Trip to Shindagin Hollow, 7am - noon

Leader: Laura Stenzler

Meet at Cornell Lab of O. parking lot

June 4 Field Trip to Connecticut Hill, 7:30 am - noon

Leaders: Suan Yong and Dave Gislason

Meet at 7:30 am at the Wegman's parking lot or at 8:00 am at the intersection of Connecticut Hill Rd., Boylan Rd., and Lloyd Starks Rd.

Cayuga Bird Club Picnic, June 12



Our end-of-year Cayuga Bird Club **dish-to-pass picnic** will once again be held at Myers Point Park (off Route 34B in the town of Lansing) on **June 12 at 6:00 pm**.

Come meet and socialize with your fellow bird club members! Bring a generous dish-to-share, your own place setting, beverage, and binoculars, and join us at the pavilion close to the spit at Myers Point. We will have a short walk to look for birds in the park after dinner.

From the President

Jody Enck



Getting to know birds

Happy June! I hope you all have been getting out and enjoying birds in your area in spite of the rainy and often cool spring migration period. I've been collecting data for the Sapsucker

Woods Acoustic Monitoring Project (SWAMP) this spring. It involves conducting point counts for 5-60 minutes at any of up to 10 sites in Sapsucker Woods that are near some of the acoustic monitoring recorders researchers have placed in the woods. You, too, can participate in this project at least through July (see information [here](#):

<http://ebird.org/content/ebird/avicaching/swamp/>). Please send me an email at president@cayugabirdclub.org if you are not sure where the point counts are located and you want some help.

June 5 CLO Seminar, 7:30 pm
Speaker: Ann Prum, Producer and
Cinematographer, Coneflower Productions
*Birds Through the Lens: Using video
technology to reveal the lives of birds*

June 12 Annual Cayuga Bird Club Dish-to-
Pass Picnic, 6:00pm
Myers Park, Pavilion A, Lansing

Sept. 11 Cayuga Bird Club Meeting, 7:30
pm, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Sept. 15-16 Montezuma Muckrace,
Montezuma Wetlands Complex

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

June Field Trips

There are two field trips scheduled for the
first weekend of June, 2017.

Laura Stenzler will lead a half day trip to
Shindagin Hollow on Saturday, **June 3,**
7am - noon. Shindagin Hollow is south of
Ithaca and consists of mature and young
woods, gorges and a cedar swamp. We will
see and hear a large variety of warblers
including Black-throated blue, Black-
throated Green, Hooded, Canada and
American Redstart, all of which nest there.
In addition, we'll see Yellow-throated, Blue-
headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Rose-
breasted Grosbeak, Winter Wren and many
more birds. We will mostly be driving,
getting out and listening and then driving
some more.

Meet at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at
7am for carpooling to Shindagin Hollow. If
you have questions, email Laura at
lms9@cornell.edu.

On Sunday, **June 4**, Suan Yong and Dave
Gislason will lead a Cayuga Bird Club field
trip to **Connecticut Hill**. Meet at **7:30 am**
at the Wegman's parking lot (away from the
store, by the inlet) or at **8:00 am** at the
intersection of Connecticut Hill Rd., Boylan
Rd., and Lloyd Starks Rd. We'll plan to
finish by noon. Bring water and a snack.
Insect repellent may also be helpful. If you

This time I've been spending in the field at specific
points not far from where I live has given me the
opportunity to get to know better some local breeding
birds and migrants passing through. Since about the
beginning of April, I've identified 99 species at these
sites (and left a few Empidonax flycatchers and other
birds unidentified!). But, for me, the fun part is less about
the number of species and more about what individual
birds are doing. Just this morning, I watched a male
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker approach a nest cavity that
(mostly) he had excavated. He mewed softly, and a
female poked her head out of the cavity. After a few
seconds, she flew off, probably to eat and "stretch her
wings" a bit (she did defecate as soon as she
flew). Then the male disappeared inside, presumably to
take his turn incubating eggs. A bit later I returned to do
another count there and he was sitting quietly in the
cavity with just his head visible in the hole.

I've watched territorial squabbles between various
species, observed about 7-8 species copulating, and
noted nests under construction at nearly all 10 of the
count points. Perhaps the most unexpected sighting
while doing a point count was an American White
Pelican flying north fairly high one Sunday. Other
unexpected observations included seeing an Ovenbird
walking along on the ground and literally running into a
Veery as both birds hugged the ground on a very windy
day. I've watched both Gray Catbirds and Blue Jays
build nests and then not use them – some species are
known to build nests that may be "decoys" for predators,
or are otherwise "not quite right" for them to use. Of
course, I've enjoyed listening to bird song early in the
morning and late into the evening, along with a chorus of
frogs when it is warm enough.

If you want a great opportunity for you to get out and
"stretch your wings," please join us on Monday, June
12th, at Myers Point Park in Lansing for our annual dish-
to-pass picnic. The Club has reserved a pavilion in case
of rain or too much sunshine. Please come join us
starting at 6 pm. We'll start eating by 6:30 pm and then
go on a bird walk to see what we can see.

There still is time to get out and enjoy the tail end of
spring migration this month as a few birds like Blackpoll
and Tennessee Warblers still trickle north. Don't despair

have questions, email
Suan.Yong@gmail.com.

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

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

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

Apr. 29 Grasshopper Sparrow
Apr. 29 Bobolink
Apr. 30 Semipalmated Plover
Apr. 30 Semipalmated Sandpiper
Apr. 30 Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Apr. 30 Yellow-throated Vireo
May 1 Veery
May 1 Cerulean Warbler
May 1 Magnolia Warbler
May 2 Sanderling
May 2 Forster's Tern
May 2 Hooded Warbler
May 2 Indigo Bunting
May 3 Parasitic Jaeger
May 3 Cape May Warbler
May 4 Mourning Warbler
May 4 Black-throated Blue Warbler
May 4 Evening Grosbeak
May 6 Ruddy Turnstone
May 6 Blackpoll Warbler
May 7 Wilson's Warbler
May 9 Swainson's Thrush
May 10 White-rumped Sandpiper
May 10 Eastern Wood-Pewee
May 10 Willow Flycatcher
May 10 Prothonotary Warbler
May 10 Canada Warbler
May 11 Least Bittern
May 11 Black-billed Cuckoo
May 11 Tennessee Warbler
May 11 Bay-breasted Warbler
May 12 Clay-colored Sparrow
May 14 Philadelphia Vireo
May 16 Red-headed Woodpecker
May 16 Worm-eating Warbler

if you haven't had the chance to catch much of spring migration. Some shorebirds will start heading south already later this month!



Danby Field Trip Report, May 13

Wes Blauvelt

WEWA, Not!

Jae Sullivan joined me on a cool, wet Saturday morning to start an exploration of the back roads of Bald Hill and Michigan Hollow in the Town of Danby. Our plan included a hike to Thatcher's Pinnacle to pursue the expected arrival of the Worm-eating Warbler (WEWA). We started out at Jennings' Pond, where Bill Evans joined us for a brief pep talk about the weather and migration before heading out into the 40 degree mist and intermittent showers.

Our first stop was at a clearing on Bald Hill Road recently used as a landing for a logging operation. Here we found actively singing Veery, Chestnut-sided Warbler and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. A Scarlet Tanager joined the chorus along with contributions from a Gray Catbird and Eastern Towhee. A few days later at this same location, Anne Mitchell, Charla Boggs and I would have great looks at a Mourning Warbler and directly across the road two Hooded Warblers.

By the time we left this location the mist had turned into a steady shower and as we drove towards the trailhead to Thatcher's Pinnacle it became apparent that a hike up to the ridge was not in the cards. We continued along Bald Hill Road, listening for songs from the forest and were lucky to encounter trills from Wood Thrush and Veery along with the ever present Ovenbird. At one stop we could hear two Barred Owls counter calling in the early morning mist. Always a treat. American Redstart, Black-Throated Blue and Black-Throated Green Warblers were also present along the way.

A brief stop at the Hillview Road swamp failed to produce any grunts from the resident Virginia Rails. I

May 17 Common Nighthawk
May 17 Olive-sided Flycatcher
May 17 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
May 17 Alder Flycatcher
May 17 Gray-cheeked Thrush
May 17 Yellow-breasted Chat
May 18 Yellow-billed Cuckoo
May 19 Acadian Flycatcher
May 21 Snowy Egret
May 21 Red-necked Phalarope
May 22 Sabine's Gull
May 22 Whimbrel
May 23 Wilson's Phalarope
May 30 Mississippi Kite

2017 total count through May: 258 species

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

May Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Minutes
are available at the [CBC website](#).

[June 5 CLO Seminar- Using video technology to reveal the lives of birds](#)

June 5, 7:30 p.m.

Where: Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road

Speaker: Ann Prum, Founder, Producer, and Cinematographer, Coneflower Productions

Title: *Birds Through the Lens: Using video technology to reveal the lives of birds*

As the Founder, Producer & Cinematographer of Coneflower Studios, Ann Johnson Prum has spent the last two decades creating nonfiction programs using a combination of beautiful imagery,

guess they decided to sleep-in due to the weather and I was beginning to doubt my own judgement at this point.

Our final stops were along Michigan Hollow Road in hopes of finding a flycatcher or two. As we crept along the road in my truck in an attempt to protect ourselves from the weather, we encountered a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-eyed Vireo, Ovenbirds and several American Redstart. And at one stop near a stream that flows next to the road a pair of Least Flycatchers provided us with a “che-BECK” duet.

While birding was “dampened” by the weather, our enjoyment for the natural beauty of the area was not. Spring flowers were in bloom everywhere, with Fringed Polygala and Pink Azaleas found along the trail adding their brilliance of rose and pink colors to a damp and gray day.

photos by Wes Blauvelt



[Hawthorn Orchard, May 14](#)

Ken Kempfues

Eight eager birders joined me searching for migrants through the Hawthorn Orchard on Sunday, May 14. Improving weather made for active birds and comfortable participants. Overall, warblers were scarce but we saw or heard a good number of species including both year-round residents and migratory songbirds. Early arriving participants saw Chimney Swifts and Barn Swallows over the fields and heard an Eastern Meadowlark. Entering the woods at the Northeast corner we found Nashville and Wilson's Warbler singing. All participants got good looks at the Wilson's, but the

fascinating science and great storytelling. Garnering 10 Emmy nominations and an Emmy win for Best Nature Documentary (An Original Duckumentary), Coneflower Productions pushes the use of new technology, science and creative storytelling to bring the world of wildlife to viewers. Hear from Ann about life in the field and production studio and learn what it takes to create ground-breaking multimedia.

Admission is free to CLO seminars. This seminar will be live-streamed. [Bookmark this web page](#) to watch online.



photo by Donna Scott

Spring Bird Quest, 2017

Mark Chao

Many Cayuga Bird Club members and other community members joined me over Memorial Day weekend for five bird walks on local lands protected by the Finger Lakes Land Trust, as part of an event we call the Spring Bird Quest (SBQ).

We began the weekend at the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve in West Danby, with a record-breaking turnout of 35 people. One might think that a group of this size would defeat the purpose at some level, making it prohibitively difficult to see birds or enjoy the setting. But I think that we affirmed the opposite. In fact, we all found and even saw essentially the same variety of birds that I found here alone on the previous weekend.

Highlights include long scope views of a singing Prairie Warbler, a couple of

Nashville was only seen by a few. Along the trail above the ravine we heard multiple Least Flycatchers (or one that followed us), but they remained hidden from view. The resident Wood Thrushes did not grace us with their melodies, but one announced its presence through calls. A dead tree adjacent to the trail housed a pair of nesting Red-bellied Woodpeckers and below them in the ravine were a singing American Redstart and a Yellow-rumped Warbler. The northwest corner as we approached the East Ithaca Recreation way gave us a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Eastern Phoebe and Great-crested Flycatchers. Overall we found 38 species; the ebird report is available [here](#).

Although we seem to have missed the big push of migrants, all participants had a pleasant morning and most planned to visit the Hawthorn Orchard again that week.

Trip to Dorothy McIlroy Bird Sanctuary, May 20

Gladys Birdsall

On Saturday, May 20th, I was joined by seven others for a fine outing (weather and bird-wise) of birding at the Dorothy McIlroy Preserve and Summerhill area. Susan Soboroff, Jae Sullivan, Diane Traina, Judith Saul and I first stopped at the pull-off on Lake Como Rd. Here we saw two Cedar Waxwings, and listened to a Green Heron vocalizing in the wetland right in front of us. We never did see it, and it continued to vocalize almost the whole time we were there. There was a singing Warbling Vireo, Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Swamp Sparrow, American Goldfinch, Black-capped Chickadee, and American Crows calling from a distance. A Willow Flycatcher called from a field across the road.

Continuing to the Preserve further down the road to Fire Lane A, we met up with Donna Scott, Bob Horn and Ann Mitchell at the parking lot. Before entering the forest, birds seen or heard right from the parking lot included two Eastern Kingbirds, Baltimore Orioles, Song and Chipping Sparrows, Tree Swallows, Canada Goose, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow Warbler



Chestnut-sided Warblers often singing their smooth alternate songs, male and female Indigo Buntings, Cedar Waxwings passing a berry between them to seal a pair bond, and a male Ruby-throated Hummingbird, plus a flock of 15+ Wood Ducks streaming by. Twice our big group heard the guttural “kewp” calls of a cuckoo – I believe Black-billed Cuckoo, as indeed a subset of the group confirmed by sight later.

The SBQ is also a per-species fundraiser for the Land Trust, so I felt unusually grateful for encounters with common species that have proven difficult to find on past SBQs – Spotted Sandpiper, Hooded Merganser, House Wren, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Rough-winged Swallows, and even Red-tailed Hawk and Turkey Vulture. Chimney Swifts, another species prized on the SBQ, provided fine learning moments for our novice birders, alternating with Tree Swallows in passes through an overhead gap.

Sodden but still spirited after three hours, about a third of our throng took me up on a bonus run to a section of the preserve across Routes 34 and 96, along Sylvan Drive near the West Danby Fire Station. Here we saw at least eight active Great Blue Heron nests, with parents standing over chicks of various sizes, with stubby wings and half-length bills. Here, Donna Scott, Paul Anderson, and I lingered to see a Brown Thrasher and a male Canada Warbler after everyone else had left.

We had very strong attendance again for the next two SBQ walks -- 25 people at the Bock-Harvey Forest Preserve and 19 people at the Stevenson Forest Preserve. Barely more than a mile apart near the

and Ovenbird, and Ann had heard a Yellow-throated Vireo singing before we arrived. The Hemlock-hardwood forest seemed pretty quiet when we first started out, but we eventually had a lot of good birds throughout. It was also much cooler than the previous couple days. We heard numerous Northern Waterthrushes all along our walk and just before we reached the overlook one was spotted on some dead trees out on the shrub swamp, and we all got good looks. An exciting find was a Winter Wren that suddenly started singing and continued for quite some time. We never did see it, as it stayed well hidden, but we all enjoyed the beautiful song, a real treat. We also enjoyed the Hermit Thrush song. Other birds we heard were Black-throated Green Warbler, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue-headed Vireo, Veery, Swamp Sparrow, Alder Flycatcher, Scarlet Tanager, numerous Ovenbirds, and Great-crested Flycatcher. A couple times we spotted Veeries as they flew around low, landing on lower branches where we could observe them. We had nice looks at a Broad-winged Hawk that circled overhead, and as we were walking along, a Coopers Hawk flew from a tree just ahead of us. Towards the end of the loop we saw a Great Blue Heron out over the water, and watched a female Yellow-bellied Sapsucker on a dead stump. A female Purple Finch was vocalizing from the top of a tree. A mystery song we heard while we were on the overlook was recorded by Ann Mitchell. After she later checked with Jay McGowan, it was thought to be a possible House or Purple Finch. It certainly was a different call we couldn't place. It was a very pleasant walk for everyone. Before moving on, two Turkey Vultures were spotted soaring near the parking lot.

We drove down Sprouls Road where a short stop yielded a Savannah Sparrow and a field with several Bobolinks. Driving along Creel Road we stopped at the bottom of a hill where there was a small stream and a swampy-brushy area on both sides of the road. Here we observed Eastern Kingbirds, American Robins, Yellow Warblers, Common Yellowthroat and Black-capped Chickadees and heard or saw Alder Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Song Sparrow and Gray Catbirds. From nearby fields we heard and saw more Bobolinks, Red-winged Blackbirds, Tree Swallows and another Savannah Sparrow.



Enfield/Newfield border close to Robert Treman State Park, these preserves have spectacular old-growth deciduous and hemlock trees, respectively. They also have a lot of great birds. But I think that these were the first visits to either preserve for almost all of us.

And again our sightings somehow defied any expectation that too many birders might spoil the birding. At Bock-Harvey, we all saw a female

Yellow Warbler by the road, pushing herself into her



nearly-completed nest to custom-shape it. Later, everyone eye-witnessed a most striking and dramatic moment, as two male Scarlet Tanagers silently sized up a raccoon, deeply asnooze with belly and chin resting on a branch, arms dangling, about 20 feet off the ground. Finally, as we tried to wait out a singing Hooded Warbler, we

got the surprise of the morning – a Black-billed Cuckoo making short flights and taking long pauses in a sunny patch in the otherwise shadowy woods. Several of our group even got views of the



bird's red orbital ring through Ken Kemphues's quickly aimed scope.

We stopped on Dresser Road and walked down a side road to a swampy area in hopes of finding an Olive-sided Flycatcher, but were disappointed. We did see a Broad-winged Hawk, soaring and carrying something in its talons. We also saw/heard many repeat species that we had encountered at the other stops.

It was well past noon but several of us quickly went to Hoag road in hopes of finding some more warblers. It was now the quiet time of the day but at one stop we saw two wonderful birds. Diane Traina got nice looks at a Magnolia Warbler but it quickly flew across the road and disappeared. About a minute later a gorgeous Canada Warbler popped up and sat in a small tree for us all to see.

Heading down Lick Street we made a quick stop where we added two more species - two Field Sparrows were singing in a brushy pasture area and a Wood Thrush sang from a nearby woodlot.

It was a beautiful day to be out with others enjoying the birds. Thanks to everyone who joined me!



Montezuma Muckrace
September 15-16, 2017

The 21th Annual Montezuma Muckrace will be on **September 15-16, 2017**. This Big Day competition begins at 7:00 PM Friday and runs for 24 hours. Teams will compete to see who can see the most species within the Montezuma Wetlands Complex in Cayuga, Wayne, and Seneca counties. The complex includes the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, the NYSDEC Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area and the Montezuma Audubon Center. The higher purpose behind the fun is raising funds for the Friends of the

It was harder to find birds at the other preserves – at Stevenson because of the sheer height and density of the canopy, and at the Goetchius Wetland Preserve and the Roy H. Park Preserve on Memorial Day because of rain and cold wind. But we did hear and occasionally see many of the specialties of these preserves, including Blackburnian Warblers and a Blue-headed Vireo at Stevenson, Bobolinks and both Willow and Alder Flycatcher at Goetchius, and singing Louisiana Waterthrush and Winter Wren at Park Preserve.

Throughout the weekend, we had regular exciting non-avian cameos not only from that raccoon, but also from showy butterflies (including ten Eastern Tiger Swallowtails jostling to collect mineral-rich moisture from a 50-square-inch patch of some mysterious mud at Stevenson) and herps (a turtle laying eggs at Lindsay-Parsons, adult Red-spotted Newts crossing the wet road at Goetchius, plus another newt still in its red eft stage in the woods at Park).

In the end, my SBQ bird species count reached 86, which will yield more than \$2000 in pledged donations to the Land Trust. Just as gratifying, the participant tally nearly touched 100 if you count repeat visitors each time. Thanks to all for your great company and support. What a privilege and pleasure it is to spend time in such great places, amid so many wonderful birds, with all of you!



*Photos of group at Bock-Harvey Preserve, Black-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Swallowtails by Suan Yong.
Photos of Prairie Warbler, Yellow Warbler by Mark Chao.*

Montezuma Wetlands Complex. Last year the total raised was \$10,819.

There will be six categories in which to compete:

- Competitive
- Collegiate
- Low-carbon (no cars used)
- Recreational
- Family/Mentor
- Photo (team with photos of the most species wins)

Come join the fun. Go to the website for more information about the 2016 event and watch for updates. http://friendsofmontezuma.org/muck_race.html.

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.

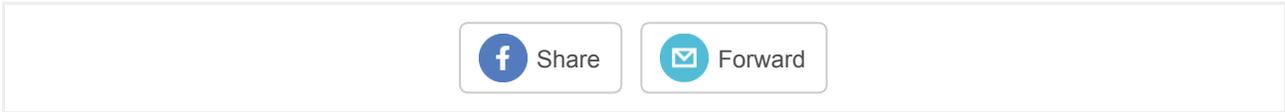
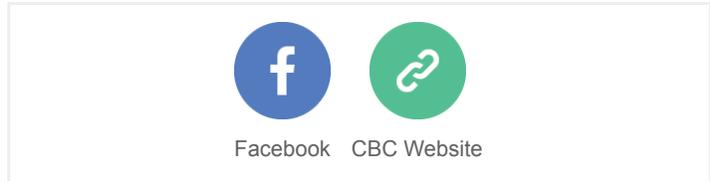
Please include your email address (or addresses for family memberships) with your membership application to receive the club newsletter.

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](#).



You are receiving this email
as a member of the Cayuga Bird Club.
We do not share our email list with any other organization.

Cayuga Bird Club
159 Sapsucker Woods Road
Ithaca NY 14850

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

