



Cayuga Bird Club

June 2019

In This Issue:

[Cayuga Bird Club Annual Picnic, June 10](#)

[Calendar](#)

[From the President](#)

Diane Morton

[June Field Trips](#)

[Conservation Action Committee News](#)

Jody Enck

[Field Trip Report - Finger Lakes](#)

[National Forest](#)

Josh Snodgrass

[Field Trip Report - Greensprings and](#)

[Arnot Forest](#)

Diane Morton

[Field Trip Report - Three Hawthorn](#)

[Orchard Walks](#)

Chris Tessaglia-Hymes

[Field Trip Report - Braddock Bay Bird](#)

[Observatory](#)

Diane Morton

[Spring Bird Quest Recap](#)

Mark Chao

[Cayuga Basin First Records](#)

[Spot the Robin](#)

Ken Haas

[Montezuma Muckrace September 6-7](#)

[Costa Rica Trip, February 2020](#)



Cayuga Bird Club Annual Picnic

June 10, 2019

6:00 pm

Myers Park Pavilion A, Lansing

Cayuga Bird Club's annual dish-to-pass dinner will be held at Myers Park in Lansing (off route 34B) on Monday, June 10, at 6:00 pm. Bring a generous dish to share—main dish, appetizer, salad, or dessert. Also bring your own place setting, something to drink, and binoculars. There will be a short bird walk after dinner. Come meet and socialize with your fellow bird club members! Families and friends are welcome.

From the President

Diane Morton

Our club is made up of a wonderful community of people with a common shared interest - birds! Every time I go on a Cayuga Bird Club field trip I learn something new: identification tips (what was that call?), interesting bird behaviors, and where to go to find certain birds at a given time of

Calendar

June 1, 7:00am - 12:00pm, CBC Field Trip: Danby Hotspots
Leader: Wes Blauvelt

June 2, 7:00am - 12:00pm, CBC Field Trip: Park Preserve
Leader: Paul Anderson

June 8, 7:30am - 12:00pm, CBC Field Trip: Connecticut Hill
Leaders: Suan Yong & Dave Gislason

June 10, 6:00pm CBC Annual Picnic, Myers Park, Lansing

Sept. 7-8, Montezuma Muckrace, Montezuma Wetlands Complex

Sept. 9, 7:30 pm, CBC meeting, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Sept. 13-15, NYSOA annual meeting, Kingston NY

Feb. 14-23, 2020, CBC trip to Costa Rica

Please check our web calendar for up-to-date field trip information, including schedule changes, at cayugabirdclub.org.

June Field Trips

Sat., June 1, 7:00 am - noon, Danby Hotspots

Led by Wes Blauvelt

Meet at Jennings Pond at 7:00 am to start. We'll visit the Great Blue Heron rookery in West Danby, wetlands near Hillview Road (where we may hear Virginia Rail), and Michigan Hollow Road for warblers. Waterproof footwear and insect repellent may be helpful.

Sun. June 2, 7:00 am - noon, Park Preserve

Led by Paul Anderson

Meet at the parking lot of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at 7:00am for carpooling. The 300-acre Park



year. There are many places I've now been birding with the club that I may never have visited on my own. We learn so much from each other - and develop friendships.

Our annual June picnic is an event for Cayuga Bird Club members to all get to know each other a bit better - in a beautiful setting with birds around us. Please come! Bring a dish-to-pass, your own place setting and beverage, and binoculars. If you've been thinking of joining the club, but have not yet made that commitment, you are welcome to join us. Family members and friends are welcome too!

Our bird club has also made connections with the wider community through the Conservation Action committee's work. We've had help on those projects from the Ithaca City Forester, Jeanne Grace, and Stewart Park staff, from Cornell Botanic Garden botanists, and recently, from students in David Streib's high school class at New Roots. It was a real pleasure to have these young people help to pull invasive privet, plant young trees and shrubs donated by the Cornell Botanic Garden and the City of Ithaca, and pick up large amounts of trash at the natural area at Lighthouse Point/Jetty Woods. On the two days that I was down there for the New Roots work days I was truly impressed by how much the students accomplished and by how engaged they were with improving that area for birds and wildlife. This was a wonderful connection between our club and the students, made possible by Jody Enck, our Conservation Action committee chair, and David Streib at New Roots.

After our picnic in June, Cayuga Bird Club takes a break for the summer season. We do continue to have bird walks at Sapsucker Woods every Saturday and Sunday, at 8:30 AM through the summer (and all year round). While you are out birding this summer, take note

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!

**Sat., June 8, 7:30am - noon,
Connecticut Hill**

Led by Suan Yong and Dave Gislason

The Connecticut Hill Wildlife Management Area is the largest WMA in New York State and has a variety of habitats, including mature forests, streams, ponds and open meadows. 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 have questions, contact Suan at suan.yong@gmail.com

**First-of-Year Birds Reported
for the Cayuga Lake Basin**

Cayuga Lake Basin birds reported in May are listed below.

4/30 Black Tern
4/30 Great Crested Flycatcher
4/30 Wood Thrush
4/30 Lincoln's Sparrow
4/30 Bobolink
4/30 Rose-breasted Grosbeak
5/1 Veery
5/1 American Redstart
5/2 Ruby-throated Hummingbird
5/2 Orchard Oriole
5/2 Blue-winged Warbler
5/2 Black-throated Blue Warbler
5/2 Magnolia Warbler
5/2 Canada Warbler
5/2 Scarlet Tanager
5/2 Indigo Bunting
5/3 Semipalmated Plover
5/3 Least Sandpiper
5/3 Wilson's Phalarope

of breeding behaviors of birds you find. Do you observe birds bringing food to a nest? Baby birds ready to fledge? These types of observations can be very helpful for learning about species that breed in our area. In 2020, club members will have the opportunity to join other volunteers to contribute data on nesting birds for the New York state's third Breeding Bird Atlas. I encourage our members to join in this rewarding effort. eBird will be the portal for data submission. If you don't already use eBird to record your sightings, give it a try! You can enter the appropriate breeding code for your observations, ranging from "Singing Male (S)" to "Nest with Young (NY)", and other categories that reflect the likelihood that a bird species is successfully nesting at that location. You can learn more about eBird Breeding Codes [here](#).

Cayuga Bird Club activities will start up again in September with monthly meetings with program speakers, more field trips, and continuing conservation and outreach projects.

See you at the picnic!

Diane

**Conservation Action Committee is
taking action to help birds**

Jody Enck

May was a busy month for committee members down at Lighthouse Point/Jetty Woods. We continue to monitor the Prothonotary Warbler nest boxes we put in these woods and at Stewart Park. Looks like Tree Swallows have taken a liking to the Purple Martin complex we erected at Stewart Park, adding feathers to some of the compartments.

With plant donations from both the Cornell Botanic Gardens (Sycamore trees) and the City of Ithaca (Black Cherry, Silky Dogwood, Red-stemmed Dogwood), we have been able to start

5/3 Red-headed Woodpecker
 5/3 Yellow-throated Vireo
 5/3 Red-eyed Vireo
 5/3 Prothonotary Warbler
 5/3 Cape May Warbler
 5/3 Northern Parula
 5/3 Blackburnian Warbler
 5/3 Chestnut-sided Warbler
 5/3 Wilson's Warbler
 5/4 Stilt Sandpiper
 5/4 Philadelphia Vireo
 5/4 Grasshopper Sparrow
 5/4 Golden-winged Warbler
 5/4 Tennessee Warbler
 5/4 Orange-crowned Warbler
 5/4 Cerulean Warbler
 5/4 Bay-breasted Warbler
 5/5 American White Pelican
 5/5 Clay-colored Sparrow
 5/5 Blackpoll Warbler
 5/6 White-eyed Vireo
 5/6 Swainson's Thrush
 5/7 Eastern Wood-Pewee
 5/9 Eastern Whip-poor-will
 5/9 Willet
 5/9 Summer Tanager
 5/10 Black-billed Cuckoo
 5/10 Short-billed Dowitcher
 5/11 White-rumped Sandpiper
 5/11 Snowy Egret
 5/11 Willow Flycatcher
 5/11 Worm-eating Warbler
 5/11 Dickcissel
 5/13 Ruddy Turnstone
 5/13 Semipalmated Sandpiper
 5/13 Alder Flycatcher
 5/15 Common Nighthawk
 5/17 Gray-cheeked Thrush
 5/18 Yellow-billed Cuckoo
 5/19 Whimbrel
 5/19 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
 5/20 Sanderling
 5/20 Olive-sided Flycatcher
 5/21 Black-necked Stilt
 5/22 Acadian Flycatcher
 5/24 Hudsonian Godwit
 5/24 Red Knot
 5/30 Red-necked Phalarope
 5/31 Nelson's Sparrow

2019 year count so far: 263 species

Thanks to Dave Nutter for compiling these records for the club. More details for first sightings of the species listed are on the [CBC website](#).

improving the woody plant diversity in the Lighthouse Point/Jetty Woods.



Maybe most important was help we received from David Streib, Environmental Science teacher at New Roots Charter School, and sixteen students who helped us out over three days. The students braved drizzle, sun, high humidity, lots of mud, poison ivy, and hissing Canada Geese to help us take out invasive plant species, plant native ones, and erect some fencing donated by the Cornell Botanic Gardens.

By the numbers...

Invasive plant species removed from the Lighthouse Point Woods:

Privet – about 9,200 stems

European Buckthorn – about 205 stems

Multiflora Rose – about 25 stems

Tartarian Honeysuckle – 2 stems

Native plant species planted:

Red-stemmed Dogwood – 56 cuttings

Silky Dogwood – 7 seedlings

Sycamore – 10 saplings

Black Cherry – 4 seedlings

Choke Cherry (transplanted out of the trail) – 2 seedlings

Buttonbush – 2 seedlings

Bird species recorded in Lighthouse Point Natural Area this spring:

I have personally recorded 82 bird species in just April and May. This includes seven species of ducks and geese (four of which are nesting there), six kinds of raptors, including nesting Ospreys, four species of woodpeckers nesting

Bird Club meetings are available on the Cayuga Bird Club [website](#).

Field Trip to Finger Lakes National Forest

Josh Snodgrass



photo by Diane Morton

On Saturday May 4th, eBird's Global Big Day, 22 adventurous birders (including a first time birder from my workplace) joined me at Teeter Pond in the Finger Lakes National Forest for a casual Big Day in Schuyler County. The morning began with a dense fog, obscuring views of the pond, but setting a wonderful intimate tone for the trip. We had a nice mixed warbler flock on or near the ground in the fog, with great close views of Palm and Yellow-rumped, a bright male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker perched close by for excellent views. We scared up a few Wilson's Snipe in Horton Pasture once the fog burned off, and had a good mix of grassland specialists, but rather poor views of Meadowlark and Bobolink. We reluctantly declined to chase a Golden-winged Warbler that came through on the RBA, figuring the logistics of making that chase with a group that size were pretty daunting. From Teeter Pond, we headed south through the National Forest, making quite a few stops at other hotspots. Other forest highlights were a Blue-headed Vireo, Least Flycatcher, Nashville Warbler, and later on gorgeous male Black-throated Blue and Blackburnian warblers. After a brief rest stop and lunch at the

there, including migratory Northern Flicker. Both Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos are nesting in these woods. Five species of Sparrow have passed through or are nesting, and all are migratory. Five species of blackbirds have been recorded this spring, and all, including Baltimore Oriole, are migratory. Finally, I have recorded eleven species of Warbler in these woods this spring, with at least five of them breeding or attempting to find a mate (Northern Waterthrush). Other migrants breeding there include Mourning Dove, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Spotted Sandpiper, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. The Double-crested Cormorant colony is up to at least 40 active nests as of May 25 (up from a dozen nests last year).

Come on down to the Lighthouse Point Natural Area to see and hear these birds yourselves, and see what we've accomplished to improve habitat there!

Field Trip to Greensprings and Arnot Forest



photo by Tracy McLellan

On May 11, 30 people gathered at Greensprings Natural Cemetery to explore the fields of Greensprings and woods of adjacent Arnot Forest. Field trips to this spot have been part of Cornell's Spring Field Ornithology (SFO) class for many years. We were delighted that Steve Kress, Spring Field Ornithology teacher extraordinaire, could be one of the leaders for our club trip to

Dandy Mart (adding some suburban birds and Chipping Sparrow), the remainder of our group headed to Rock Cabin Rd and Catherine Creek Marsh where we were treated to a roosting Eastern Screech Owl, Ruddy Ducks, nesting Bald Eagles, and all of the local swallows including Cliff with its bright orange rump and white forehead patch.

We encountered about 80 species over the course of the day, had some excellent views of migrants and returning breeding birds, and had a great group of folks of all experience levels, all generous in their sightings and helping to get as many people on each bird as possible. Thanks for a great trip!



photo by Tom Hoebbel

Hawthorn Orchard Trips

Chris Tessaglia-Hymes

On Sunday, May 12, Ken Kempfues, Diane Morton, Paul Anderson, and I co-led a collective group of 22 intrepid souls to the Hawthorn Orchard. It was destined to be an unproductive day due to the cold (42°) and wet conditions. Despite the conditions, we somehow managed to see or hear 33 species of birds—many of these being heard only.

We slogged along significantly muddy trails, and stopped at various spots along the North Ravine trail. We took opportunities to discuss some of the natural history and conservation efforts to preserve the ecologically

this special destination. Past SFO leaders Meena Haribal and Diane Morton also led groups for this trip, so that each group's size could remain small, modeled after SFO field trips.

While the day began chilly and wet, with less than ideal visibility, the birds were still active. We all enjoyed Greensprings' specialty: Bobolinks! Field Sparrows also sang in the open areas and Eastern Phoebe and Eastern Towhees were at the edges of the grassy habitat there.

Entering Cornell's Arnot Forest where it adjoins Greensprings, we watched a singing Nashville Warbler, several Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and a couple of Veeries, well-camouflaged in the undergrowth.



Veery, photo by Raaj Bora

Meena's group headed farther up the hill at Arnot Forest and were rewarded with good looks at Prairie Warbler and Ovenbirds.

The Banfield Road entrance at the other end of Arnot Forest offered Indigo Buntings, Scarlet Tanager, Baltimore Orioles, singing Red-eyed Vireos, American Redstarts and many Yellow-rumped Warblers. Farther up the road we watched a handsome Blackburnian Warbler singing.

As Diane's group was headed to the south entrance of the Arnot Forest, a Ruffed Grouse stepped out onto Irish Settlement Road. It very slowly walked across, pausing to look at us, allowing everyone in our vehicles to get great

important Hawthorn Orchard. Along the way, we spotted only a handful of Nashville Warblers, heard an Ovenbird sing once and a Veery call out a few times. We saw an uncooperatively backlit Northern Parula, and also heard a single Lincoln's Sparrow sing. It was certainly a challenging day to be out birding with the cold drizzle, but we made the most of it and somehow survived the final hypothermic trek back to our cars. Cheers to all of the participants for great effort. The complete checklist may be seen here:

ebird.org/view/checklist/S56178389.

With expectant hopes of better spring migration to come, we made an additional last-minute offer to Cayuga Bird Club members to explore the Hawthorn Orchard again the following weekend, on both Saturday, May 18 and Sunday, May 19.

On Saturday, May 18, Ken Kemphues, Bob McGuire, Suan Yong, and I co-led a group of 20 birders to the Hawthorn Orchard. It was a very sunny day, with a cool North breeze, and it was not raining! Conditions were still very wet and muddy throughout the Hawthorn Orchard. It was unprecedentedly quiet bird-wise, given that this walk was occurring in the middle of peak spring migration. We managed to see or hear 48 species of birds.

The highlights of this walk include two Ovenbirds singing and calling in the Northeast corner, sporadically heard singing Tennessee Warblers with a couple even seen briefly. A single male Nashville Warbler very cooperatively flew into the Northeast clearing for brilliant views of it singing in the sunlight. Toward the end of the walk a Wilson's Warbler was singing and foraging in open brushy edge

views of this beautiful bird!



Ruffed Grouse, photo by Raaj Bora

Thanks to Lynn Leopold and Joel Rabinowitz for speaking to our group about Greensprings when we arrived and to Greensprings Natural Cemetery for being so welcoming to visiting birders!



Marsh Wren, photo by Raaj Bora

Braddock Bay Field Trip

Diane Morton

On May 18, Sandy Podulka and I led a group of 15 participants to Braddock Bay Bird Observatory (BBBO) on Lake Ontario and nearby birding hotspots. This required an early wake up, leaving Ithaca at 5:15 am to get to Braddock Bay by 7:30 am. We began our morning at BBBO observing the process of collecting and banding birds migrating through this spot.

It was fascinating to accompany the BBBO volunteers as they performed net-checks to collect birds caught in the rows of mist net hammocks. We watched staff and volunteers

habitat to the West of the Oxley Equestrian Center. This is a good spot for Wilson's Warbler, where they have been seen in past years. The complete checklist may be seen here:

ebird.org/view/checklist/S56441128.

On Sunday, May 19, Diane Morton, Ken Kemphues, Paul Anderson and I co-led a collective group of 18 birders on this final spring trip to the Hawthorn Orchard. It was unfortunately another relatively quiet day at the Hawthorn Orchard, with few warblers found feeding within the Hawthorn Orchard proper. Several warblers were sighted or heard flying extremely high overhead, in a general Northward direction. A total of 56 species of birds were seen or heard on this morning.

Highlights of this walk include the brief and challenging views of a fast-moving migrating flock of birds in the upper canopy of the maples along the North Ravine trail. This was a good demonstration of how mixed species flocks sometimes behave during spring migration, exemplifying the birding slang "warbler neck." Other highlights include singing Tennessee Warblers, the same single singing male Nashville Warbler from the Northwest clearing, brief views of adult male Bay-breasted Warblers, morning migrating Scarlet Tanagers, a well-seen male Indigo Bunting in the Northwest clearing, multiple Baltimore Orioles, over fifty low-flying Blue Jays in migration, multiple Red-eyed Vireos foraging in the oaks by the Northwest clearing, a single Alder Flycatcher giving "pip" and "reer" notes from the wooded knoll just West of the South rugby ball field, and the final golden nugget for the day was a single Black-billed Cuckoo seen well by a couple and seen in flight by several. We had initially been observing a newly

extricate warblers, sparrows and some larger songbirds, tucking each bird into a cloth bag carried around the volunteer's neck. We were treated to close views of Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroats, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Wilson's Warbler, Swamp Sparrow, and several Gray Catbirds (which vocalized loudly!).

Inside the banding station, we watched the volunteers age, sex, measure, weigh and band the birds brought in from the mist nets. We could observe details on these birds as they were held in hand before release -- much easier to see than when the birds are moving rapidly in the wild. We were even able to watch two Ruby-throated Hummingbirds get leg bands, their tiny legs sticking out through a hole in a mesh bag to receive a band.

Andrea Patterson, President of Braddock Bay Bird Observatory, told us about the banding projects of the BBBO and about their new Motus tracking tower. Motus tracking detects tiny radio tags attached to birds (or even butterflies!) when they fly within range of the Motus tower's receiver. With a series of Motus towers set up along migration routes, and with more migratory birds receiving Motus tags, a great deal can be learned about the migration routes of birds and other migratory wildlife, at the level of a single individual's movements.

The BBBO grounds provide wonderful habitat for birds, and we saw many other birds there, including Cape May Warblers and three Red-headed Woodpeckers that flew over. Hundreds of Blue Jays also flew above us.

We walked the roads close to BBBO and heard several different warblers, including Northern Parula and Prairie warblers singing on opposite sides of the road. Overlooking the lake, we watched Caspian Terns and Double-crested Cormorants flying by, and saw distant Red-breasted Mergansers and Long-tailed Ducks.

constructed Baltimore Oriole nest that was discovered the day before, when the Black-billed Cuckoo flew into the same branch cluster near the nest and remained motionless in classic cuckoo style. It later moved around in the tree before flying off to the South. One has to wonder if the cuckoo flew to the branch cluster with the oriole nest because of the similarity this particular nest has to that of a tent caterpillar nest. The complete checklist may be seen here:

eBird.org/view/checklist/S56485576.

A note about the natural history of the Hawthorn Orchard. During certain years, the fruiting hawthorn, apple, and pear trees of the Hawthorn Orchard may become infested with the larvae of leafrollers of the Tortricidae moth family. The Tortricidae family is called leafroller because of how they characteristically curl or roll the edges of a young leaf together with their silk to create a protective temporary "home" for the growing larvae to stay in during the daytime. Some years, there will be an abundance of leafroller larvae, and during off years (such as the case this year) there may be significantly reduced hatching or productivity of these moths. While this family of moth is considered a pest among apple and pear growers, it has become a notable staple food for neotropical migrant birds. Following a highly productive year for the adult moths, there can be an abundance of larvae found in the springtime at places like the Hawthorn Orchard. When this happens, the neotropical migrants will specifically gravitate into the Hawthorn Orchard to feast upon and fatten up on the leafroller larvae. In fact, if you carefully observe how the migrants forage here, you will see them repeatedly probe into young growth of various leaf clusters to locate, extricate, and consume the



Caspian Tern, photo by Raaj Bora

Stopping briefly at the Manitou Beach Marina on Bayview Drive, we watched the stuttering flight and bobbing walk of a Spotted Sandpiper, and also found Mute Swans and Barn Swallows. We next walked the loop trail at Owl Woods and found warblers in the treetops, including Pine, Cape May and Nashville Warblers and American Redstarts. We also had good looks at Red-breasted Nuthatch, a perched Yellow-throated Vireo, and a Veery skulking off the trail near the end of the walk.

After lunch, we headed to Braddock Park to walk the boardwalk at the marsh. We were rewarded with excellent views of singing Marsh Wrens (dozens of them!), Swamp Sparrows, and Yellow Warblers, close up and in excellent light. This was a wonderful finish to a fine day of birding.



Yellow Warbler, photo by Raaj Bora

We found 74 species on our field trip. Thanks very much to Laura Heisey for keeping eBird lists for each of our stops.

yummy morsels of leafroller protein packets. Hopefully, next year will be a banner year for Tortricidae moth larvae; if and when that happens, expect to have amazing views of excellent numbers of neotropical migrants using the Hawthorn Orchard. We will have to wait and see!

Montezuma Muckrace 2019

Friday - Saturday,
September 6th–7th,
7pm-7pm

The 23rd annual Montezuma Muckrace, a fundraiser organized by the Friends of the Montezuma Wetlands Complex, will be held on September 6-7 this Fall.

Teams bird together from 7:00 PM Friday until 7:00 PM Saturday, trying to locate as many bird species as possible. Winning teams over the past several years have identified as many as 148 species, and collectively, as many as 192 species have been seen by the 15 to 28 teams, in a single day

In the 22 year Muckrace history, over \$125,000 has been donated in support of bird habitat restoration, research or public access.

If you'd like to organize a team to participate in this year's 24-hour Muckrace, with sponsorship by the Cayuga Bird Club, contact Diane Morton at

cayugabirdclub.president@gmail.com.

The club can sponsor two teams this year. You can also participate in the Muckrace on your own. It is a fun event for a good cause!

Spring Bird Quest 2019

Mark Chao



photo by Tom Hoebbel

Saturday, May 25

Goetchius Wetland Preserve

Flatiron Road, Caroline

40+ species of birds seen and/or heard, 10 participants

- * An AMERICAN BITTERN pumping in the large cattail patch near the parking area, heard by most in the group but not by me
- * At least two WILSON'S SNIPE flushing up from the grass upon our approach, issuing soft vocalizations that were unfamiliar to me. I think these were the first snipe I've ever found in 14 years of the SBQ.
- * One or more BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS calling throughout the morning, including one that Tom Hoebbel and I saw flying out of a tree at 6:10 AM, wheeling over an open field, and finally taking cover in the shadowy crown of a distant sapling
- * The expected trifecta of grassland birds – BOBOLINKS, SAVANNAH SPARROWS, and EASTERN MEADOWLARK. One meadowlark perched up and sang for a long time in the sunshine.
- * Multiple WILLOW and ALDER FLYCATCHERS and one LEAST FLYCATCHER singing
- * A female BALTIMORE ORIOLE deliberately picking at some buds on a tree (not sure if she was collecting nest material or foraging)
- * A female-type PURPLE FINCH repeatedly singing a short song and perching up for some open viewing
- * Many TREE SWALLOWS offering very fine



CBC Trip to Costa Rica

February 14-23, 2020

Time to start planning your birding travels! Cayuga Bird Club has teamed with Holbrook Travel to offer a trip to Costa Rica February 14-23, 2020.

Program Highlights:

- Hike and explore multiple ecosystems of southern Costa Rica in search of endemic and other hard-to-find bird species.

- Meet and go birding with the San Vito Birding Club, and seek out elusive species such as the Fiery-billed Aracari, White-tailed Emerald, Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, Lance-tailed Manakin and more.

- Go birding in "La Osa," a biological corridor, home to more than 375 species of birds including targets like Rusty-margined Flycatcher and Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager.

- Learn about the Organization for Tropical Studies, their work, and current projects underway in the Las Cruces Research Station.

- Embark on a birding boat tour through mangroves of Rincón.

Trip Cost: \$3,185 (10 participants)

Cost includes meals, accommodations, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, in-country transportation, full-time guide, internal flights, bottled water on the bus, donation to Cayuga Bird Club, carbon offset. Does not include international airfare, tips/gratuities or items of personal nature.

views, including a pair engaged in maybe 8 copulation attempts in about 30 seconds atop a nest box

- * A male EASTERN BLUEBIRD also coming close for great views, plus a female seen later flying with food in her bill

- * A NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH singing out in the middle of the dense wetland vegetation

- * Two male BLACKPOLL WARBLERS all lit up in the branches of roadside willows, offering outstanding views for all, plus some very good photo ops for Tom.



Blackpoll Warbler, photo by Tom Hoebbel

Saturday, May 25

Roy H. Park Preserve (southern portion, aka the Baldwin Tract)

Irish Settlement Road, Dryden

45+ species of birds seen and/or heard, 30 participants

- * 12 singing warbler species, including PRAIRIE, CHESTNUT-SIDED, BLACK-THROATED GREEN, MAGNOLIA, YELLOW-RUMPED, TENNESSEE, BLUE-WINGED, CANADA, AMERICAN REDSTART, and OVENBIRD. A subset of us got at least brief views of Prairie, Magnolia, Blue-winged, and Common Yellowthroat at close range.

- * A FIELD SPARROW that sang and sang its typical rising song within earshot of practically the whole initial straightaway and across the spruce plantation to the orange-blazed trail

- * A second Field Sparrow that twice sang an unusual two-part song whose trill was lower in pitch than the initial notes. This song seemed exquisitely sad and contemplative to my ears, though I am sure it is quite rousing for other Field

For a detailed itinerary, visit
holbrook.travel/cayuga-cr20.

Newsletter Editor Position Open

Tracy McLellan has done a wonderful job as editor of Cayuga Bird Club's Newsletter over the past year. Unfortunately, Tracy will not be continuing this service to the club, due to other personal commitments.

If you'd like to volunteer for the Cayuga Bird Club newsletter editor position, or find out more about it, please email Diane Morton at Cayugabirdclub.president@gmail.com.

Sparrows.

* A male RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD perched up on a bare branch, presumably digesting a recent guzzle of nectar

* A presumed RED-SHOULDERED HAWK calling in the woods near the shelter

* A male YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER at a nest, seen by many in the group but alas, not by me and others at the front of our long file



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, photo by Tom Hoebbel

plus an Eastern Pine Elfin— a very beautiful butterfly and a life sighting for me, and indeed a species I'd never previously noticed even in books.

Sunday, May 26

Bock-Harvey Forest Preserve

(owned by the Finger Lakes Trail Conference subject to a conservation easement held by the Finger Lakes Land Trust)

34 species of birds seen and/or heard, 18 participants

After a surprisingly quiet walk through the old-growth woods, our patience and persistence finally paid off when we returned to more open edge habitat. Here we all got fine scope views of a male SCARLET TANAGER and male INDIGO BUNTING, plus repeated close binocular views of a CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER. Many birds sang but remained unseen, including HOODED WARBLER, BLACKPOLL WARBLER, BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO, EASTERN TOWHEE, WOOD THRUSH, and others.

(One special aspect of this walk was the participation of my 80-year-old mom, Johanna Chao, who is visiting this weekend from

Massachusetts. She was very happy that I, and now she too, could connect with so many nice people. Thank you!)

Monday, May 27

Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve

56 species of birds seen and/or heard, 23-25 participants

The PRAIRIE WARBLERS, BLUE-WINGED WARBLERS, and CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLERS here were very vocal along several of the field edges, but alas, we got only brief obscured views of them despite much effort. We had similarly fleeting viewing opportunities with a BLACKPOLL WARBLER and a BROWN THRASHER, both down by the north pond. Here we did have a reasonably long open view of a WILLOW FLYCATCHER, which at one point was singing at the same time as a nearby ALDER FLYCATCHER. Other species, including BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER and HOODED WARBLER, sang but stayed behind a few too many layers of branches to see.

The viewing highlight of the morning might have been a BOBOLINK that perched and sang for a long time atop a little shrub in the first grassy field. Or maybe it was the GREAT BLUE HERONS at their rookery above the wooded pond next to the West Danby Fire Department's facility on Sylvan Drive. I think that there are at least 8 nests here. Here at this pond, we also found the morning's biggest surprise – a DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT, a rare find for the SBQ.

(Special thanks to Suzanne Giffin for carrying her scope and tripod on both of these walks, and sharing many great views with many people. Thanks again also to Ken Kemphues, who similarly carried and shared his scope on yesterday's walk, and to both him and Diane Morton for helping to guide our large group.)

In the end (counting a LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH that I found on a visit to the Land Trust's Sweedler Preserve at Lick Brook at dawn today), my species tally for the weekend is 82. This year's SBQ will again yield at least a couple thousand dollars in donations for the Land Trust. (Contact me or visit www.flit.org if you too would like to make a donation.)

Thanks to all for your participation and support!



Spot the Robin

Ken Haas

In early May, Allen Reed in Mecklenburg contacted Diane Morton about a partially leucistic American Robin nesting in his backyard that he thought this might be of interest to Cayuga Bird Club members, especially photographers. Allen invited someone in the CBC to come out to see and photograph the bird. Diane told him she would forward his email to me - a member who lives near him. Allen sent me directions to his house and instructions as to where to find the nest. He said that the bird never goes far from the nest to gather worms for the hatchlings. He nicknamed the bird "Spot".

May 14th was an overcast day with off and on rain. I should have waited for a brighter day to photograph this bird, but curiosity got the best of me and I headed off to Allen's house. Three minutes later I pulled into his driveway. Right away I could see the shrub in which Allen said the nest would be found. Walking up to greet me, a woman who introduced herself as Kathi

Bond said Allen told her I would be down to take pictures. Our conversation had barely started when I saw "Spot" up on an exposed branch of a nearby tree. I quickly got the bird in my viewfinder and bzzt, bzzt, bzzt, bzzt... I started taking pictures at seven frames a second. Then I stopped and lowered the camera. The bird was virtually motionless as it surveyed the situation with a beak full of earthworms. After a brief hesitation it flew to the nest in the shrub – hidden from our view. After a few seconds it flew across the driveway and disappeared under Mayapples to get another round of worms.

I can see why this bird, almost any bird, would be happy here. Allen and Kathi's yard and surrounding property is a botanical wonder. Kathi tells me it used to be the White Nursery some years ago and it's not hard to see the evidence. There was an abundance of birds, even on this gray and drizzly day. All of the usual feeder birds plus Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows, Purple Finch, Baltimore Oriole, Great-crested Flycatcher, House and Carolina Wrens and Catbirds could be seen or heard right where Kathi and I were standing. I'm sure I missed a few. Then the Robin made another appearance and I took a few more pictures. But I wasn't quite satisfied. I went back down the next day when the weather conditions were a bit brighter and easily found the bird again. Actually, Spot is hard to miss, especially when flying. I got more pictures of Spot, some of them in sunlight.

The nest had three chicks in it, though not easily seen. Allen later noted that none of the hatchlings showed white feathers. Allen also reported that Spot is a male robin, arriving with the other male robins in early spring, and quite aggressive in chasing other males away.

Will this leucistic Robin return? As Allen said, "We'll just have to keep an eye out for him next Spring – though it's not hard to 'spot' him!"



Leucistic American Robin photos by Ken Haas

Our next
**Cayuga Bird Club
meeting**
will be held on
Monday,
September 9, 2019,
7:30 pm
at the
Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Mark your calendars!

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 pm 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 the monthly Cayuga Bird Club eNewsletter, from September through June. To make sure you don't miss an issue, add newsletter@cayugabirdclub.org to your email contacts.

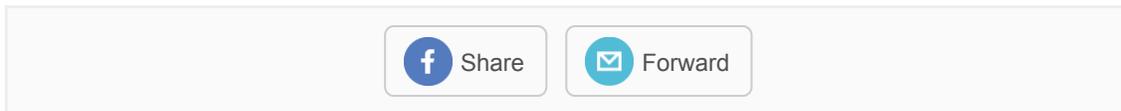
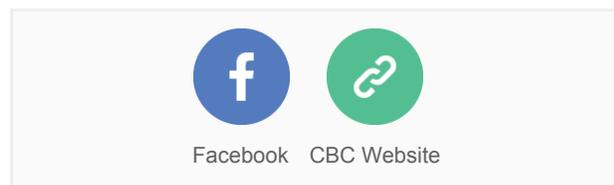
Newsletter submissions may be sent to cbceditor1@gmail.com. Of particular interest are articles about local bird sightings, bird behavior, birding hot spots, book reviews, bird conservation news and original poetry, art, and photos.

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](#)

