



Cayuga Bird Club

November 2016

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Calendar

Oct. 29 Photo exhibit and talk by Sarah Blodgett, Photographer and Cayuga Bird Club member
 7:30 pm, Lansing Town Hall, 29 Auburn Rd, Lansing

Nov. 3-24 Audubon Photography

Cayuga Bird Club Meeting, November

14

Speaker: Vanya Rohwer

Of Mansions and Shacks: Understanding Divergent Nest Building Behaviors Between Two Populations of Yellow Warblers



Yellow Warblers have one of the widest breeding distributions of all North American wood warblers, ranging from the equator to Alaska. Different breeding sites pose different challenges to successfully raising

young, and one way for Yellow Warblers to overcome these challenges is by building nests that are well suited to local environments. Vanya Rohwer will discuss why Yellow Warblers breeding between two different locations in Canada—a temperate and subarctic site—build such dramatically different nests, and will highlight some of the process of discovery associated with this research.

Vanya Rohwer is the Curator of the Bird and Mammal collection at the Cornell University Museum of Vertebrates. He completed his dissertation (working mostly on bird nests) at Queen's University in 2015, and nearly all

Nov. 7 Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Event: *Sonic Sea*
7:00 pm, Cornell Cinema

Nov. 13 Loon Watch, Taughannock Falls State Park, 6:40 am - 8:40 am
Leader: Wes Blauvelt
Meet at Taughannock Falls State Park, at lakeside, just south of Taughannock Creek

Nov. 13 Field Trip: Local Hotspots along Cayuga Lake, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Leader: Bob McGuire
Meet at Stewart Park northeast parking area

Nov. 14 Cayuga Bird Club Meeting, 7:30 pm
Speaker: Vanya Rohwer,
Of Mansions and Shacks: Understanding Divergent Nest Building Behaviors Between Two Populations of Yellow Warblers
Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Dec. 5 CLO Seminar: *Cat Wars: The Devastating Consequences of a Cuddly Killer*, 7:30 pm
Speaker: Peter Marra
Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Dec. 12 Cayuga Bird Club Meeting, 7:30 pm
Speaker: David Winkler
Frontiers in the Study of Bird Movements
Cornell Lab of Ornithology

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

First-of-Year Birds Reported during October 2016 for the Cayuga Lake Basin

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

Oct. 4 Brant

2016 count to date: 270 species

on Yellow Warbler nest morphologies, Vanya traveled to Churchill, Manitoba where Polar Bears loomed in willow thickets, Beluga Whales breached in Hudson's Bay, Mosquitos buzzed insistently, and the dusk twilight of northern latitudes lingered till 2am.

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

From the President

Jody Enck

Hello Cayuga Bird Club Members,



I hope you are excited about the upcoming season – bird feeder season that is. Many of us feed birds year-round. Some plant native plants that provide flowers, nectar, insects, fruits, and other sources of food all through the summer and fall. Others keep their seed feeders filled throughout the summer months. But for me, winter is the real feeder season. There is nothing like watching the antics of feeder birds taking advantage of food provided to them. If you are able to put your feeders near some brushy cover, all the better for birds that like to have some protection to dive into when a predator shows up.

I have to admit that it is hard for me to be thinking about winter. As you read this, I have been in Honduras for about three weeks traveling the country and making new friends with people in the six bird clubs scattered around the country. I can't wait to come back and share stories with you all. If you can't wait either, head over to my blog at www.modelbirder.blogspot.com where I've been posting some snippets from my travels.

October Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Minutes

recorded by Becky Hansen are available at the [CBC website](#).

Sarah Blodgett Exhibit: **Bird Tales, the Life and Times of a Recovering Commercial Photographer**

Saturday October 29th
7-7:30 Viewing of Artwork
7:30-8:15 Talk
Reception 8:15-9:15pm

Ithaca-based photographer Sarah Blodgett will share her journey into wildlife photography at the Lansing Town Hall on Saturday, October 29, at 7:30 pm. Sarah will lead us along her path from her commercial photography to her most recent work, sharing her inspirations and her travel adventures. Her photographs of the natural world will be on display at the Lansing Town Hall through December.



Sonic Sea

mansions and shacks – Understanding divergent nest-building behaviors between two populations of Yellow Warblers. Vanya is the Curator of the Bird and Mammal collections at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. His research on birds has focused largely on nests and nest-building. If you want to know about bird nests, ask Vanya.

In addition to our Club meeting on the 14th, we have other Club activities planned this month including two great field trips on November 13th and the ever-fun weekend bird walks offered every Saturday and Sunday morning at the Lab of Ornithology. Please check out our club calendar for a listing of events.

Happy birding!

Loon Watch 2016

Wes Blauvelt will lead this year's **Loon Watch** at Taughannock State Park, from **6:40 am to 8:40 am** on **Sunday, November 13**. Every year, thousands of migrating Common Loons pass over Cayuga Lake on their way south. The numbers are especially concentrated shortly after dawn during the month of November. We will meet at the north end of Taughannock State Park, where Taughannock Creek enters the lake (we'll watch from south of the creek) to count loons as they fly over. Other migrating waterfowl, including Brant, Long-tailed Ducks and scoters may also be seen from this location.

If you are coming from Ithaca, enter the park (lake side) before crossing the bridge over Taughannock Creek and park at the north parking lot near the point. Participants should dress very warmly, as standing by the lake with a North breeze can be very cold.

For more information about this year's Loon Watch,



THE SONIC SEA

The award-winning documentary ***Sonic Sea*** will be shown at Cornell Cinema on Monday, November 7, hosted by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Every day, whales, dolphins, fish and other marine life are threatened by a cacophony of industrial noise from shipping, seismic exploration for oil and gas and naval sonar used for routine training exercises. This endless barrage of noise impairs the ability of our planet's vulnerable marine life to communicate, find food, navigate and breed.

Sonic Sea is about protecting life in our waters from the destructive effects of oceanic noise pollution.

November 7, 7:00 pm, Cornell Cinema. Free and open to the public.

After the screening, join a Q&A discussion with **Dr. Christopher Clark**, of Cornell's Bioacoustics Research Program, who is one of the scientists featured in the film.

<http://www.sonicsea.org/film>

Audubon Photography Exhibit at Montezuma Audubon Center

The Montezuma Audubon Center will host an exhibit featuring 12 spectacular bird photographs from the [2016 Audubon Photography Awards](#).

Photography is a powerful way to draw in audiences, inspire a love of birds, and promote conservation action. This

November 13 Field Trip to Local Hotspots

On Sunday, **November 13**, immediately after the Loon Watch, Bob McGuire will lead a half-day trip to local hotspots (mostly water) to look for ducks, grebes and other birds that might be out on the lake. We'll start from Stewart Park; meet at **9:00 am** at the northeast parking area (first right as you enter the park).

Dress warmly and bring a snack and something to drink. This field trip is open to all.

Cornell Community Garden Report

Mark Chao



About 20 birders joined me on Saturday, October 8 and Sunday, October 9 for Cayuga Bird Club field trips to the Cornell Community Gardens, a site renowned and much beloved among local birders as a hotspot for migrant sparrows and other field birds in late September and October.

Saturday's wet weather may have suppressed our turnout a bit, but those who did attend were dampened only mildly in body and not at all in spirit. And the birds seemed completely unaffected. We ended up getting several good sightings of LINCOLN'S SPARROW, WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW, WHITE-THROATED SPARROW, CHIPPING SPARROW, SAVANNAH

across the country. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

The Montezuma Audubon Center (MAC) is located at 2295 State Route 89, Savannah, NY.

MerlinVision

Help Train Merlin to Identify Birds in Cornell's Macaulay Archive

Merlin, the computer vision photo identification system developed at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, needs more training! Go to [MerlinVision](#) at the Macaulay library website and draw boxes around images of birds to help the Merlin engine become better at bird identification.

Merlin also needs more training images; more than 1000 images are needed for each bird species for accurate identification. See the current [target list](#), and submit your own photos through eBird.

SPARROW and a PALM WARBLER.



Throughout the morning, we also saw impressive numbers of other birds overhead – one flock of more than two dozen KILLDEER over

the fields across the road, maybe 50 CEDAR WAXWINGS, and TURKEY VULTURES circling near and far all morning. Twice we saw a PILEATED WOODPECKER making dashes here and there high in the treeline. Maybe the most cooperative birds of the whole outing were a couple of young or female PURPLE FINCHES perched nearly shoulder-to-shoulder for a couple of minutes, gobbling little green berries in the hedgerow at the south end of the site.



Sunday's field trip began with a distant but exciting view of at least thirteen WILD TURKEYS in the field across the road, walking and then trotting away fast with necks extended and weight forward, showing how surprisingly well built they are for speed.



It was dry but much colder, with a discernible turnover of birds in the plots with the

least half a dozen DARK-EYED JUNCOS and two or three FIELD SPARROWS, the first of those two species I've seen at the gardens in many visits this fall. An EASTERN TOWHEE calling from the treeline brought our weekend sparrow species total to a tidy 10. Again the hedgerow offered added interest, this time with both RUBY-CROWNED and GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS offering up fine views. The north winds swept in some birds throughout the morning too – some migrating BLUE JAYS, a NORTHERN HARRIER that blazed from far north to far south in about 10 seconds, and another fleeting buteo that I later concluded, with Bob McGuire's confirmation, was probably a very late BROAD-WINGED HAWK (I noted the correct shape and underwing pattern, and Bob saw the tail).

Toward the end of our walk, I exchanged greetings with a Chinese woman who was tending her plot. She caught up with us again later, having fashioned a gift for me out of a long-necked gourd and a couple of seeds. She called it "the best bird of the morning." I can't say whether I agree for sure, but it was certainly a sweet and funny surprise, and a fitting symbol of the special union of people, gardens, and birds at this site.



Salt Point Kiosk Dedicated

Donna Scott



Sunny, warm weather helped bring out a crowd of more than 100 people to celebrate and dedicate the new informational kiosk at Salt Point, in Lansing, on Sunday, October 16, 2016. One of the two large panels of the kiosk provides interesting information about Salt Point area birds and was funded by a grant from Cayuga Bird Club. Salt Point visitors and supporters listened to short speeches, studied the kiosk with its 6 panels, saw historic photographs of the salt factory that used to be on Salt Point, and enjoyed refreshments near the shore of Cayuga Lake.

Speakers made brief remarks about various topics related to the kiosk and to Salt Point's history and recent transformation into a quiet, bushy natural area that provides different habitats for birds and wildlife. Speakers included Lansing Town Supervisor, Ed LaVigne; Lansing Town Parks and Recreation Director, Steve Colt; member of both Cayuga Bird Club and Friends of Salt Point Steering Committee, Donna Scott; Lansing hunter-safety trainer, Larry Sharpsteen; and Lansing Town Historian, Louise Bement. In addition, children from the Lansing Elementary School's 4th Grade and their teacher sang two songs to entertain the group!

Then came the ribbon cutting, a fun conclusion to the formal ceremony, where the Supervisor, the Historian, and most of the 4th Graders all held the big scissors to cut the red, white and blue ribbon! None of the ribbon was left behind because the

The Friends of Salt Point is very thankful for the grant from the Cayuga Bird Club!

Be sure to stop by the kiosk at the north end of Salt Point next time you are there. We are counting kiosk visitors as part of the evaluation of this project. So when you or your friends visit, please report back to me (dls9@cornell.edu) the date, time spent, and how many of you went to see the kiosk. Thank you.

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](#).

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



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