



Cayuga Bird Club

November 2020

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Calendar

For the foreseeable future, CBC presentations and meetings will be on Zoom. These events remain free and open to the public. Register at: cayugabirdclub.org/webinars

Nov 9 (Mon) 7:30pm: Zoom Presentation: Social Lives of Bornean Babblers (Sara Kaiser), followed by CBC meeting.

Dec 7 (Mon) 7:00pm: Zoom Social Hour hosted by Diane Morton. Hang out with members and tell us what you're seeing when you're out and about or just looking through your window.

Dec 14 (Mon) 7:30pm: Zoom Presentation (Melissa Groo), followed by CBC meeting.

2021

Jan 1 (Fri): Ithaca Christmas Bird Count.

Jan 11 (Mon) 7:30pm: Share Your Photos Night (hosted by Kevin McGowan), and CBC meeting.

Dec 1-10 CBC Trip to Colombia. Contact Jody (jodyenck@gmail.com) for information.

Please check our web calendar for up-to-date field trip information, including

Cayuga Bird Club Meeting

Cooperation in Bornean songbirds:

The unique social lives of year-round foraging groups



Speaker: Sara Kaiser

Research Ecologist, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Monday, November 9, 2020, 7:30pm

Register in advance for the Zoom webinar here:

<https://tinyurl.com/cbc202011mtg>

The island of Borneo is a biodiversity hotspot in Southeast Asia where, even today, countless new species remain to be discovered. The island is home to as many as 633 bird species, including 50 endemics, most of which are montane residents. Little is known about the life history of most of these species. In my talk, I will describe some of what we have learned from a long-term study of the life histories of the montane bird community in Kinabalu Park, located in the northern state of Sabah in Malaysian Borneo.

In the Old World tropics, birds often form cooperative associations in conspecific foraging groups that are maintained year-round, including the breeding season. I will share with you what we discovered about the remarkable social systems of this unusual type of group living in Grey-throated Babblers and the endemic Chestnut-crested Yuhina. The Old World tropics remain disproportionately less studied than other regions, even relative to tropical regions in the Western Hemisphere. Join me to become inspired to visit this birding hotspot in the tropical, montane rainforests of Borneo.

About the Speaker: Sara Kaiser is a Research Ecologist at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, with interests in exploring the diversity of avian mating systems in underrepresented regions. Her training includes a Ph.D. from Cornell University in behavioral ecology, an interdisciplinary M.S. from Michigan State University in ecology, evolutionary biology and behavior, and a B.S. from Iowa State University in zoology. She conducted postdoctoral research

schedule changes, at cayugabirdclub.org.

Cayuga Lake Basin First-of-Year Birds Reported October, 2020

10/26 Summer Tanager

2020 year count: 277 species

Thanks to Dave Nutter for compiling these records. Complete lists can be found on the CBC website.



Female Summer Tanager at Durland Preserve. Photo by Jay McGowan

According to Jay McGowan, the Summer Tanager that has been seen at Durland Preserve recently is the second contemporary record in Tompkins County. There was a male near Trumansburg last spring. But it's the first contemporary record in the Basin that has been "chaseable," although it has been challenging for many to track down this week."

Winter Finch Forecast



Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins are making their presence felt this autumn. Read the latest Winter Finch Forecast by Tyler Hoar at the new Finch Research Network (FiRN) website: finchnetwork.org/winter-finch-forecast-2020

**Time to Renew Your
Membership**

at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, and Smithsonian Center for Conservation Genomics.

Cayuga Bird Club meetings start at 7:30pm on the second Monday of each month, September through June, and are open to the public. Each virtual meeting begins with the speaker's presentation, followed by club business.

From the President

The beautiful fall colors are dwindling. The days grow short as the clocks fall back. Our summer breeders and their newly fledged have largely headed south, as have most breeders from up north who have come and gone on their long journey south to warmer lands. The remaining hardy residents, and a few stray half-hardies, are hunkering down like us humans for the coming winter. They are starting to be joined by an influx of winter birds and late migrants, and November is a good time to get outside to greet their arrival.



In my 12 years as a Cayuga Bird Club member, field trips have been the biggest part of my engagement with the club. The suspension of all field trip activities since March due to COVID-19 has been a disappointment for many, I'm sure. Three weeks ago, when I was elected as the club's new president, the COVID-19 numbers for Tompkins County and surrounding areas, which had managed to remain low throughout the pandemic, appeared to be at a stable low point, such that we started formulating plans for starting field trips again. But just two weeks later, when the executive committee met on Zoom, the numbers spiked upwards, both locally and nationally. With this testament to how quickly the virus can spread, the committee came to a consensus that, no, this was unfortunately not yet the time to start field trips again. In lieu of field trips, I thought it might be a good idea to give a quick guide on what to look for in November.

Waterfowl: An hour at Stewart Park will almost always find some interesting duck species or other waterfowl. This is also the time of year when huge rafts of Aythya ducks (Redheads and Scaups) can appear at the south end of the lake. Snow Geese will also be coming through soon, though they tend to land north of Long Point and beyond. When conditions are right you can see skeins of them flying south over Ithaca, usually in the middle of the day.



Redheads

Loons: Throughout November, during the first two hour after sunrise, Common Loons migrate down the length of Cayuga Lake in surprising numbers, up to thousands in one morning when winds blow favorably from the north. Taughannock Point has been the site of the traditional loon watch, but other sites on the lake can be good too. Dress very warmly to face the

Autumn is the time to join or renew your membership in the **Cayuga Bird Club!**

Annual dues are \$15 per household or \$10 for students. Your dues support the club's activities, including monthly meetings with invited speakers, club projects, and more. Members receive our monthly Cayuga Bird Club newsletter, September - June.

Dues payments may be made via Paypal at [cayugabirdclub.org/membership](https://www.cayugabirdclub.org/membership)

or by mailing a check to:
Cayuga Bird Club
c/o Cornell Lab of Ornithology
159 Sapsucker Woods Road
Ithaca NY 14850

Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird

by Wallace Stevens
Illustrated by Rachel Lodder



Among twenty snowy mountains,
The only moving thing
Was the eye of the blackbird.

blustery cold wind.

Pine Siskin



Winter Finches: An irruption of winter finches is in progress, with enormous numbers of Pine Siskins throughout the east and midwest, and already reports of Evening Grosbeaks at feeders in our area. Look for any unusual suspects at your feeder.

Field Birds: When driving along quiet roads in open country, look for small gatherings of Horned Larks or potentially larger groups of Snow Buntings. In any given such flock, see if you can pick out a Lapland Longspur or two. American Pipits are also coming through. They seem to pay a visit to Myers Point or Salt Point each fall, though their cryptic coloration makes them hard to pick out as they forage along the shingle beach.

Owls: When out near woods at night listen for courting Great Horned Owls as they begin their nesting season. Or see if there is a Barred Owl asking "Who cooks for you?" Or maybe you'll hear the yodel or trill of an Eastern Screech Owl. If driving by an open field in the evening, look for Short-eared Owls hunting alongside Northern Harriers.

Share your sightings with the CayugaBirds listserv or our Facebook group. These forums, along with e-bird alerts, are good ways to find out where interesting birds are being seen on a particular day. Or just explore on your own. This time of year, the absolute numbers of birds may be fewer, but you might also discover a wayward rarity.

As a reminder, bow-hunting season is in progress and regular deer hunting will begin on November 17, so wear bright colors for safety.

Finally, if you have any ideas big or small about how the club can improve your birding experience or otherwise advance the cause of birding, conservation, and outreach, please drop me an email at cayugabirdclub.president@gmail.com.

Thanks, and good birding,

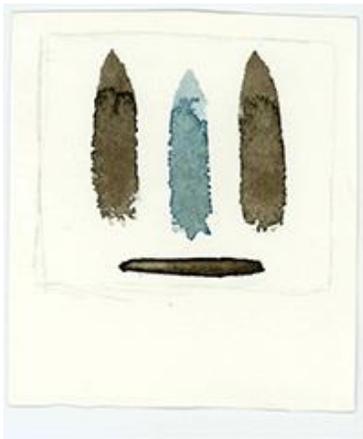
Suan

Blackpoll Warbler Detected by CBC Motus Station

by Diane Morton

photo by Suan Yong

On October 7, 2020, at approximately 7:40 pm, our Cayuga Bird Club Motus receiver at Myers Point detected a Blackpoll Warbler on its southward migration. This bird had been radio-tagged two weeks earlier, on September 21st, at



II
 I was of three minds,
 Like a tree
 In which there are three blackbirds.



III
 The blackbird whirled in the autumn
 winds.
 It was a small part of the pantomime.



IV
 A man and a woman
 Are one.
 A man and a woman and a blackbird
 Are one.



Braddock Bay Bird Observatory (BBBO) on the south shore of Lake Ontario. One of eighteen Blackpoll warblers tagged at BBBO this fall, this Blackpoll spent five days near the observatory before it departed to pass later by Myers Point. No additional detections further south have yet been reported.

Blackpoll Warblers

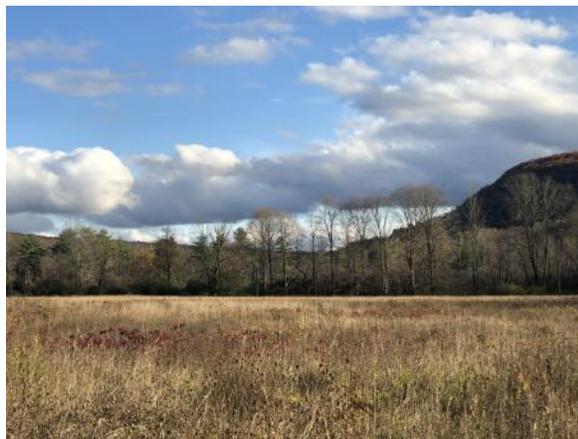
are very long-distance migrants, flying up to 12,400 miles roundtrip each year between their nesting areas in northern Boreal forests to wintering grounds as far as the Amazon Basin of South America. While their spring migration is primarily overland, their fall migration can include a four-day trans-oceanic flight.

Blackpolls are one of the fastest declining songbirds in North America. Further studies of their migration routes will help to identify important areas to protect for their successful conservation.



Here is more from one recent study using geolocators to follow Blackpoll migration: [A Boreal Songbird's 20,000 km Migration Across North America and the Atlantic Ocean](#) DeLuca, et al., Ecological Society of America, 2019.

Field Trips



Durland Preserve

Field trips have long been a major activity of the Club. I had hoped to be able to restart the weekly trips once we had COVID under control in the area. Given the recent spike in infections, the officers of the Club decided unanimously to postpone scheduling any trips for the foreseeable future. We did consider ways to mitigate the risk, including limiting the number of participants, the length of the trips, the destinations (no narrow trails), and so on.

We will continue to monitor the situation and get back to in-person field trips as soon as possible. Meanwhile, we would like to encourage everyone to get out birding. Take a look at past newsletters for ideas on where to go and when. And please post a brief trip report to either the CayugaBirds list serve



V

I do not know which to prefer,
The beauty of inflections
Or the beauty of innuendoes,
The blackbird whistling
Or just after.



VI

Icicles filled the long window
With barbaric glass.
The shadow of the blackbird
Crossed it, to and fro.
The mood
Traced in the shadow
An indecipherable cause.



VII

O thin men of Haddam,
Why do you imagine golden birds?
Do you not see how the blackbird
Walks around the feet

or the CBC Facebook page (with photos, or include a link to your eBird checklist).

Bob McGuire

Field Trip Coordinator

Bird Club Members Hard at Work for Birds

by Jody Enck

I want to give a big shout-out to the many members of the Cayuga Bird Club who are doing conservation actions around their homes to benefit birds. I am thrilled to hear and see efforts by Marie Read, Josh Snodgrass, Tracy McLellan, Donna Scott and many more. These efforts that benefit birds are so important as birds use these scattered microhabitats, not just natural areas and parks. Birds don't know where eBird hotspots are, but they know where good habitat is located. If you nurture the native plants around your home, birds will come!

If you are on Facebook, please post on the Cayuga Bird Club group page about your efforts. You also can send me a note, and I'll put them together in a future newsletter column. To give us all some inspiration, Marie Read has agreed to share stories with us about her efforts to improve the habitat around her home. Stay tuned to future newsletters for more about that.



Committee members hard at work and social distancing while removing privet.

Our Conservation Action Committee has also been making progress on our bigger projects. Although we have to limit our group work on the Lighthouse Point Woods Natural Area because of Cornell Botanic Gardens COVID-19 rules, we have been able to continue making progress on land owned by the City of Ithaca that lies between the Newman Golf Course and the south boundary of the Lighthouse Point Woods Natural Area. This month, we cleared nonnative, invasive privet out of a sizeable plot, and planted native silky dogwood.

We also checked the six nest boxes we put up in the little slough that runs between the city property and the Natural Area. Two of the six boxes were used by Black-capped Chickadees, and two others were used by House Wrens. Previously, we reported that Purple Martins used the apartment complex we put up in Stewart Park. So, our nest box program seems to be a hit.

Jody Enck checking for nesting activity in one of the six nest boxes we erected in Lighthouse Point Woods.

Of the women about you?



VIII

I know noble accents
And lucid, inescapable rhythms;
But I know, too,
That the blackbird is involved
In what I know.



Planting a red oak seedling was a favorite activity in the after school program.



IX

When the blackbird flew out of sight
It marked the edge
Of one of many circles.

Finally, I have had the pleasure of engaging with some great kids in a Cornell Cooperative Extension afterschool program. On a chilly rainy day last week, six kids and two adults came out to help remove privet and plant a red oak in the same parcel between the golf course and Lighthouse Point Woods. They loved it so much we are going to do it again next week! It is great to see kids involved in bird conservation efforts. Together we can do so much for birds!

Thank you to everyone who has helped with Cayuga Bird Club's conservation projects. This work is continuing; if you would like to get involved with the Conservation Action Committee's activities, please contact Jody Enck at jodyenck@gmail.com.



X

At the sight of blackbirds
Flying in a green light,
Even the bawds of euphony

Trip to Colombia

Bird the Central Andes with Cayuga Bird Club

December 1-10, 2021



We have a new trip to Colombia planned through Holbrook Travel, with a December 2021 departure. Land cost is \$3450 excluding international airfare.

Details are available at: holbrook.travel/cayuga-co21

Would cry out sharply.



XI

He rode over Connecticut
In a glass coach.
Once, a fear pierced him,
In that he mistook
The shadow of his equipage
For blackbirds.



XII

The river is moving.
The blackbird must be flying.



XIII

It was evening all afternoon.
It was snowing
And it was beginning to snow.
The blackbird sat

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. During the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings are virtual, starting with a speaker presentation at 7:30pm, followed by club business. Meetings are free and open to the public, but registration is required at cayugabirdclub.org/webinars.

Membership costs \$15 annually per household, \$10 for students, payable in September. Payment may be made via Paypal at cayugabirdclub.org/membership 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.

Send newsletter submissions to cbceditor1@gmail.com by the 25th to be included in the next issue. Please contribute sightings, news, announcements, book reviews, original poetry, art, photos, and anything else that might be of interest to the local birding community.

Cayuga Bird Club Officer contact Information is available at www.cayugabirdclub.org/about-us.
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](https://www.facebook.com/cayugabirdclub) page and [Webpage](http://cayugabirdclub.org) (cayugabirdclub.org).



Facebook



CBC Website

In the cedar-limbs.

Minutes
of the October 12, 2020
Cayuga Bird Club meeting
are available on the [Cayuga
Bird Club website.](#)



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