



# Meadowlark

The Newsletter of Genesee Valley Audubon Society  
May-June 2016 Vol. 43, No. 5

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## President's Column by June Summers, President of GVAS

### Wind Turbines on the Lake Ontario shore

Those of us who live within five miles of the south shore of Lake Ontario are privileged to witness an incredible natural phenomenon each spring. Thousands of hawks, eagles, and vultures (raptors) migrate from west to east along the lake shore using the thermals to make their flight easier. At Braddock Bay we are fortunate to have a group of people that count the hawks as they go over and are trying to bring about an awareness of the migration phenomenon. This group is Braddock Bay Raptor Research (BBRR). In 2015 the hawk counter at Braddock Bay counted 53,768 raptors pass over, 521 of which were Bald Eagles.

The south shore of Lake Ontario is also used by migratory song birds on their migration north to rest and feed. In the spring song birds fly at night as they migrate north. As they approach the south shore of Lake Ontario in the morning they descend into forest and field. Braddock Bay Bird Observatory (BBBO) is a research group in the area that bands song birds. In 2015 during migration BBBO banded 8657 birds.

With this in mind, when Lighthouse Wind owned by Apex announced that they plan to construct a wind farm consisting of 71 wind turbines that will be 620 feet tall including the blades along the shore of Lake Ontario on the Orleans-Niagara County Line, the Board of GVAS decided to voice our concern. How tall is 620 feet? The tallest skyscraper in all of upstate NY is Corning Tower in Albany at 589 feet. Imagine the Xerox Tower in Rochester at 443 feet stacked with the Powers building (165 feet) with a flag pole (12 feet) on top and that how tall the 71 wind towers will be on the lake shore. The south shore of Lake Ontario is a migratory corridor for raptors and a stopover area for song birds. Putting an industrial wind farm anywhere along the shore will cause a number of bird species to decline; birds don't navigate around wind turbines well.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is very concerned and indicated that the preliminary review of the radar data

that Apex collected shows very large scale movement of wildlife, most notably birds and bats flying north toward the project area during migration. However, upon approaching Lake Ontario, many of the individuals turn east and follow the shoreline rather than crossing the lake. This west to east movement would force them to fly through the wind turbines that are proposed parallel to the shoreline. This increases their potential exposure and risk if wind turbines were to be built within this area. Furthermore, the data indicate that those nocturnal migrants who approach the shoreline at dawn tend to "fall out" of the sky, looking for areas where they can stop to rest and feed until migration resumes the following evening. In the case of passerines, this could be a variety of habitats such as wooded areas, wetlands, and stream corridors. However, for waterfowl this could include open land such as pastures and crop fields as well as wetlands or the lake. This behavior of landing in and near the lake shoreline may put their path of flight from higher altitudes down to ground level and back each day directly through the rotor-swept zone of wind turbines constructed in the project area, also increasing the risk of collision.

GVAS will continue to voice our concern to the NYS Department of Public Service through the Article X process. We are working with a coalition of groups including Rochester Birding Association, BBBO, BBRR, and Save Our Shores.

### NewYorkWild.org

NewYorkWild.org is a web site that offers several regional wildlife web cameras. This spring there are cameras on a squirrel's nest, Osprey at Montezuma, Purple Martin, Blue Bird, and Wren's nests. Visit the site often to learn about these families as they grow. The cameras are solar powered so you need to visit during daylight hours.

# Programs

## MAY PROGRAM

### Birds Can Save the World

John W. Fitzpatrick, Ph.D.

Sponsored by The Bird House in Pittsford and RBA

May 12, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

The Baptist Temple  
1101 Clover Street  
Rochester, NY 14610

The members of GVAS have been asked to join RBA for Dr. John W. Fitzpatrick's presentation. Dr. Fitzpatrick is Director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. He will emphasize the vital roles that birds continue to play in fostering conservation of worldwide biological diversity. Most important, birds represent our most accessible and sensitive indicators of environmental health and ecological change. Today, thanks especially to the Internet, individual citizens have an unprecedented opportunity to generate essential population trend data at continental scales. Applying advanced data-mining techniques together with high-speed parallel processing has produced a genuine revolution in how we visualize and comprehend species distributions. As a result, humans have crossed an historic threshold and now, literally, serve as worldwide biosphere sensors. The question is, do we also have the will to self-correct?

Since 1995 Fitzpatrick has helped grow the Cornell Lab into a global leader in bird study and biodiversity conservation, and pioneered the development of Internet-based "citizen science" as a revolutionary tool for continent-scale bird monitoring. First author on the controversial 2005 announcement of rediscovery of an Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Arkansas, he led search efforts to locate breeding pairs of this iconic bird of the southeastern North American swamp forests. He has served on national governing boards of The Nature Conservancy and the National Audubon Society, on numerous professional and conservation panels, and on three Endangered Species Recovery Teams.

# Field Trips

## Mother's Day Walk at Braman Preserve

Sunday May 8, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

GVAS is joining Genesee Land Trust on this wonderful walk in field and woods in Webster. Meet and park at the end of Harlesworth Lane. Call June at (585) 865-6047 by Saturday, May 7 if you have questions.

## Mt Hope Cemetery

Sunday May 15, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Join us at the North Gate of Mt. Hope Cemetery for birding and history as we stroll through the older section of the historic cemetery for two hours. The large old trees and bushes along the hillsides are very attractive to migrating birds. Bring your binoculars and \$7 for the tour fee to Mt. Hope Cemetery.

The North Gate is located on Mt. Hope Ave. across from Robinson Rd., which runs through Highland Park. (This is NOT the gate that is across from The Distillery.) No advance signup is needed. Call June at (585) 865-6047, by Saturday evening, May 14, if you have questions or for directions.

**Note:** The information originally published by Mt. Hope Cemetery incorrectly listed this tour as occurring on Tuesday. It is on Sunday, May 15.

## PEREGRINE FALCONS

Our downtown Rochester Peregrine falcon pair has four eggs this year and they are taking turns incubating them.

You can follow their activities on

**Rfalconcam.com.** Five cameras show you the nest box on top of the Times Square Building. The blogs Falconwatch and Imprints will tell



you the latest happenings in the falcon world.

You can join the Forum and chat with other falcon lovers. You can even buy a T-shirt, coffee cup, or mousepad with a falcon design. Share our love for the fastest animals on the planet.

## Volunteer Projects

### Braddock Bay Water Chestnut Pulls Saturdays July 9 and 16, 9:00 a.m.

New York State Invasive Species Awareness Week is July 10-16 this year so we have decided to help the Finger Lake Partnership Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) bring awareness to the need to control invasive species by holding these pulls. Volunteers will be needed again this summer to pull European Water Chestnut plants. This aquatic invasive could cover the bay in just a few years and block sunlight from reaching the bottom.

Join us at the Braddock Bay Marina on Saturday, July 9 and 16, at 9:00 a.m. We will meet at the public kayak and canoe launch, which is in the parking loop before you enter the marina. Bring a canoe, kayak or boat. Dress for the weather and to get wet, no cotton, bring sunscreen and water to drink.

Call June Summers, 585-865-6047, if you have any questions. Check our Facebook page for more dates.

### Allegheny Nature Pilgrimage Allegheny State Park June 3, 4, 5, 2016

For more information and to register go to [www.alleghenyaturepilgrimage.com](http://www.alleghenyaturepilgrimage.com). To reserve a tent site or cabin at the park, call 1-800-456-CAMP or go to [www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com). Call Jane or Harold Stock at 425-7293 or Julie or Dean Clayton at 249-9489 if you have questions.

### Montezuma Audubon Center 10th Annual Wildlife Festival Saturday May 7, 10 a.m. 6 - 3 p.m.

Live animals, music, food, guided tours, canoeing and bird walks, local artisans and crafters, and more. 2295 State Rte. 89, Savannah, NY 13146  
<http://ny.audubon.org/montezuma>

## Thank you

Thank you to all of you who gave to the GVAS 2015 Annual Campaign. We know that each and every gift came from the heart.

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# Genesee Valley Audubon Society Meadowlark

P.O. Box 15512, Rochester, NY 14615-0512

GVAS: A chapter of the National Audubon Society

The vision of Genesee Valley Audubon Society (GVAS) is to promote environmental conservation. Our mission is to educate and advocate for protection of the environment, focusing on birds, wildlife and habitat.

Keep up-to-date with our web site, [www.gvaudubon.org](http://www.gvaudubon.org)

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*The Meadowlark* is published the 1st of September, November, January, March, and April. Articles for the Meadowlark should be submitted four weeks prior to the date of publication. Send articles to Joanne Mitchell, 169 Black Walnut Dr., Rochester, NY 14615, or at [jwmitchell@rochester.rr.com](mailto:jwmitchell@rochester.rr.com).

**Meadowlark staff:** *Editor & Layout*, Joanne Mitchell; *Business Editor*, vacant; *Printing*, Minuteman Press; *Distribution*, vacant.

## National Audubon is in Transition

Have you been getting a lot of notices that your membership is about to expire and you need to renew it from the National Audubon Society (NAS)? NAS is undergoing a transition from one data base company to another. While this transition is taking place both companies might be sending you membership notices. Hopefully this transition will be finished by the end of the year.

## Meadowlark Opt-Out/Go Green

If you would like to Go Green and reduce the amount of mail you receive, send GVAS an email to [gvaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:gvaudubon@gmail.com). Put Opt-Out in the subject line, include your name, nine digit zip code and email. If you don't have email call June at 585-865-6047, leave the above information, and phone number.

Follow Genesee Valley Audubon Society on Facebook for program and field trip reminders and much more.