

# Meadowlark

The Newsletter of Genesee Valley Audubon Society  
November-December 2018 Vol. 46, No. 2

## President's Column

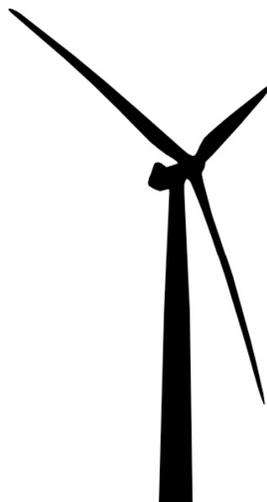
by June Summers

### Lighthouse Wind Energy Project

Since mid-2016 Genesee Valley Audubon Society has been participating in the Article 10 permitting process run by the New York State Department of Public Services (NYS DPS) for the Lighthouse Wind Project along the shore of Lake Ontario at the Niagara and Orleans County line. Migratory birds use the lake shore as a migratory pathway, concentrating along it in large numbers when the weather is good.

Apex Wind, the parent company, has submitted their second set of Stipulations, a set of plans, to the NYSDPS. GVAS and several other groups such as Save Our Shores in the Towns of Yates and Summerset find this set of stipulations lacking just as we did the first. Their passerine and raptor monitoring protocol did not gather enough data to truly get a correct count or understanding of the birds that use the area.

Apex recently came to Rochester and appeared to WXXI's 1370 Connections show saying that wind turbines kill fewer birds than cats and cited just one of many studies that estimate bird casualties from wind turbines; this particular report only looks at wind-related deaths among small passerines (perching birds or songbirds). It does not include raptors, waterbirds, waterfowl, or game birds. This study is out of date, 18 years old, and looked at wind turbines much smaller than the 600-foot turbines plus the blade height that Apex plans to put in at Lighthouse.



In the year 2000 there were just a handful of utility-scale turbines. That number has since increased to more than 54,000 turbines (according to the American Wind Energy Association). In addition to the turbines, think about the thousands of miles of transmission lines (another significant source of bird mortality) that were added to connect wind farms to the energy grid. In reality, the number of bird deaths annually from wind turbines is increasing dramatically. American Bird Conservancy estimates the current annual number of bird fatalities at approximately 1 million (based on new, independent studies that use canines for improved carcass detection), and that figure is projected to grow to between 3 and 5 million annually by 2050, based on the expected growth of the wind energy industry.

We need alternative energy sources to turn climate change around, but we need them sited properly, taking birds and wildlife into consideration. Even the American Wind-Wildlife Institute states, "The siting and operation of wind energy facilities also risk adverse impacts to wildlife, particularly to individual birds and bats (Arnett et al. 2008; Strickland et al. 2011). The potential for biologically significant impacts to wildlife continues to be a source of concern as populations of many species overlapping with proposed wind energy development are experiencing long-term declines due to habitat loss and fragmentation, disease, non-native invasive species, and increased mortality from numerous other anthropogenic activities (NABCI 2009; O'Shea et al. 2016)." The best way to avoid bird and bat deaths is to properly site wind projects out of areas where they concentrate.

As a concerned party GVAS sends comments on stipulation documents to the NYSDPS because the lake shore is the wrong place for any wind turbine project. To find out more about the Lighthouse Wind Project and the people that don't want it in their town go to Save Ontario Shores, <https://lakeontarioturbines.com/>.

# Programs

## November Program

### All About Monarchs

Tuesday, Nov. 27, 2018, 7:30 pm

Brighton Town Hall, Downstairs meeting room  
2300 Elmwood Ave., Brighton

Monarch butterflies are such an iconic symbol of summers and migration. But, how do they get all the way up here from Mexico and how do they get back? This year seems to have been a good summer for Monarchs—we saw lots of them around. So what made this a good year for Monarch caterpillars and butterflies?



Tiffany Clay, a graduate student at SUNY Brockport, is doing research on Monarchs on the area wildlife refuges. She is going to fill us in on the research she is doing.

## ROC THE DAY

Have you ever wished you could make a donation to Genesee Valley Audubon Society with your debit or credit card? Well, there is one day a year when you have that opportunity, it's "**ROC the Day**." ROC the Day is the United Way's 24 hours of giving. You can donate to GVAS or Rfalconcam during this event that will be held on "Giving Tuesday November 27, 2018."

**ROC**  
THE DAY

Donations can be made online at [www.roctheday.org](http://www.roctheday.org) or by phone 1-800-242-0238. You can pay with any major credit card or debit card or through a PayPal account. Plus the United Way will chose a handful of lucky donors to be ROC Stars and their charity will receive a free \$500 donation. Please give on ROC the Day and take a chance at being a ROC Star.

## The Invasive Spotted Lanternfly

Spotted Lanternfly is an invasive pest from Asia that primarily feeds on tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) but in the US feeds on a wide variety of plants such as grapevines, hops, maple trees, walnut trees, fruit trees and others. This insect could impact New York's forests as well as the agricultural and tourism industries.



The Spotted Lanternfly is a particular threat to apple and other fruit trees. Apples are not only a major agricultural crop for New York but also the nectar and insects in the trees and flowers feed our resident and migratory birds. The Spotted Lanternfly could cause major problems for birds.

In early October New York officials enacted a quarantine on movement into the state of landscaping debris and other items from four states impacted by a new invasive insect called the Spotted Lanternfly .



The quarantine restricts movement of certain goods into New York from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Virginia. Items affected include yard waste, firewood, wooden crates, nursery stock, fruit and produce. Also included are outdoor articles such as lawn tractors, grills, tarps and vehicles stored outdoors.

People transporting any of the listed items will need documentation of the origin and destination of shipments. The state Department of Agriculture will have compliance checks around the state.

People who visit the infested states are urged to inspect their vehicle for lanternfly egg masses and scrape them off before leaving.

# Field Trips

## Chickadee Hike

**November 3, 2018, 9:00 am**

Come and join Joni & Jon Dubner for a walk in the woods, no more than 2 hours in Mendon Ponds Park. Walk a trail and feed the chickadees, tufted titmice &



nuthatches while enjoying nature. Fun for the whole family!! All are welcome to participate in this outdoor adventure on Saturday, November 3, 2018.

**We will meet at 9:00 am in the Nature Center Parking lot on Pond Rd off of Clover St** (the southernmost of the 3 park entrances off Clover) Dress for the weather (wear boots, warm clothes, etc.). Seed will be provided – donation optional.

## 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY NATURE WALKS

The first Sunday of every month GVAS will host a nature walk through a local park. Join our adventure as we stroll through the park looking for birds and other wildlife. See the beauty that nature has to offer. We will visit a different location each month. Listed below are upcoming walks:



**Nov. 4, 9:00 am, Westpoint Marina at Braddock Bay,** Meet at the public parking lot before you enter the marina, 105 E. Manitou Rd.

**Dec. 2, 9:00 am, Shadow Pines Park in Penfield,** Meeting place to be announced.

Follow GVAS on Facebook or Twitter for updates or email Lisa at [lisamck0503@gmail.com](mailto:lisamck0503@gmail.com). Also feel free to call or text Lisa at 585-899-9616.

## The Winter Garden for birds

by Loretta Morrell

In winter the gardens in the northeast are asleep, but the winter resident birds are quite active just trying to survive the harsher temperatures, the diminished availability of food, and the temporary loss of protection that leaves provide against predators. Gardeners can do a lot of little steps to help insure their survival.

Just like humans, birds need shelter, food, and water to survive. Many of us enjoy watching birds coming to our feeders. The best sources of food in these feeders are high in fat: Black oil sunflower seeds and suet. Bird feeders should be cleaned seasonally or when food has visible mold or otherwise appears spoiled. A good scrubbing with water and a bottle brush should do the trick.

Berries and fruit still clinging to bushes and trees offer food. Woodpeckers can pound on tree trunks to locate bugs that are behind the bark. Chickadees and other birds would have previously stored their caches along the rough trunks of trees or even within the curled leaves that have not yet succumbed.

Birds also need a source of water year round. Heated bird baths can be a bit pricey. Heaters that can be submerged in the bird bath bowl can also be used, and are more affordable. Another suggestion is to use pet heated bowls. These are much deeper than a bird bath, and adjustments would need to be made such as adding stones to the bottom, and elevating them on a railing or pedestal. You could even set them inside your warmer season birdbath, if it can withstand the winter elements.



The colder months also make it more difficult for birds to find protection from predators, whether it be from above or from the ground. Leaving stalks on denser plants such as grasses or clusters of fall perennials can provide a quick retreat. A brush pile in a secluded corner of the lawn will also provide shelter from wind and attack. Native conifers offer excellent roosting and protection. Using leaves and compost for mulched areas not only protects the delicate plants or roots as intended, but it can also provide a source of forage for early migrants, and may mean the difference between survival or not.

# **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.

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### **Board of Directors**

#### **Genesee Valley Audubon Society, Inc.**

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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.

### **GVaudubon.org to be back up**

GVaudubon.org web site will soon be back up and running. We have hired Mike Governale to design it. We will once again be able to share our newsletters, programs and field trips online. And we think you will like the way we will look. Check us out by the middle of September.