



Meadowlark

The Newsletter of Genesee Valley Audubon Society

Nov-Dec 2019

Vol. 47, No. 2

President's Column

By June Summers

Audubon In Action Grant

For the past year GVAS has had a grant from the National Audubon Society called an Audubon in Action Grant. This grant gave GVAS the ability to reach out to the neighbors around Cranberry Pond to tell them about the restoration project scheduled to be put in the marsh this winter by National Audubon Society. In the spring GVAS paid for a bus and escorted two 3rd grade classrooms from City School #50 up to Braddock Bay for the field trip of their lives. They got to use binoculars, see a young painted turtle, ducks, geese and more.

During the summer we were able to work with the City Recreation Department to bring groups from three Recreation Centers to Braddock Bay for field trips. Many of these children had never been to the bay or Lake Ontario. They got to catch frogs, see Great Blue Herons, and put their feet in the lake.

We hired a coordinator to head up the Cranberry Pond Marsh Bird Monitoring project.

The coordinator trained eight volunteers how to identify marsh bird calls and how to collect the data. These volunteers went out once a week just before sunset for eight weeks listening for Sora, Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Common Gallinule, Pied-Bill Grebe, American Bittern, King Rail, American Coot and more. They recorded the birds they heard on data sheets that were sent to the National Audubon Society for analysis. Many thanks to our coordinator Michelle Gianvecchio and all our volunteers: Connie Ehindero, Ann Smith,



Rivka Noll, Lydia Culbert, Rosmary Johnson, Dale Drexel and Robert Buckert.

In 2018 volunteers cleaned up one and half miles of shore and beach by picking up approximately 180 pounds of trash. This year volunteers cleaned up the same area around Braddock Bay picking up 158 pounds this year. Other volunteers pulled 250 pound of European water chestnut out of Braddock Bay in 2018. This year there were only 12 water chestnut plants, but the plant has spread to Salmon Creek. So, we still have work to do. The Genesee Land Trust's Landscape Apprentice program pulled invasive plants from 100 yards of the Cranberry Pond trail. In all over the past year we have had 87 volunteers working on projects near or around Cranberry Pond.

We plan to continue the work next summer.

The New National Audubon Society Report on Birds and Climate Change

On October 10th the National Audubon Society (NAS) released a new report on climate change and the effects it is having on birds. This report uses over 140 million observations and more than 70 different data sets. It also includes climate change information about vegetation changes, human land use, and birds and land use.

It will look at survivability of birds by degree. It looks at what will happen to birds if the temperature rises by 1.5, 2, 3 degrees Celsius. At a rise of 3 degrees Celsius, 389 of 604 species of birds (or 64%) will be moderately to highly vulnerable.

You will be able to find this new informative report online at climate.audubon.org. The bird guide on the NAS web site will be redesigned to include the vulnerability information.

Programs

NOVEMBER Program

Things That Go Bump in the Night, Wildlife Cameras

Monday, November 18, 2019, 7:30 pm
Brighton Town Hall, Downstairs meeting room
2300 Elmwood Ave., Brighton

Dave Will, Lead Zoo Naturalist for Citizen Science for the Seneca Parks Zoo, has been doing a research project using wildlife cameras in wooded areas along the Lake Ontario shoreline for several years now.

Dave will share the animals he has seen pass the camera and some of their behavior. You might be surprised to see what is awake outside when you are asleep.

JANUARY Program

Freshwater: Upstate NY's most valuable resource

Tuesday, January 28, 2019, 7:30 pm

Location to be Announced

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) helps the public contribute to healthier lands and waters in the Finger Lakes, where harmful algal blooms now occur in all 11 lakes—from the shallowest to the deepest and most pristine. TNC is collaborating with municipalities, agencies, volunteer groups, academic researchers and farmers to reduce phosphorous and other pollutants in our waters and invest in nature's ability to help keep our waters safe.

Jim Howe, the TNC Chapter Director for Western New York, will tell us how they are doing this work and how we can be a part of this movement.

2019 Audubon Convention

by Brandon Tate and Emmeline Grommé
GVAS board members Brandon Tate and Emmeline Grommé traveled to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to attend the 2019 National Audubon Convention. The themes of this year's convention included Great Lakes restoration, bird-friendly buildings, and diversity and inclusion in the Audubon network. We look forward to applying the strategies learned at the Audubon Convention to our conservation initiatives in the Genesee Valley!

Brandon and Emme gave a presentation titled *Magnetoreception in Migratory Birds: A Research Opportunity for Underrepresented College Students*, describing their work with the McNair Scholars

Recent Bird Reports

Nearly 3 Billion Birds Gone Since 1970

In September Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the American Bird Conservancy released a report on their research in the journal *Science*; the article is titled "The Decline of North American Avifauna."

This study took data from 50 years of the North American Breeding Bird Survey and the Christmas Bird Counters from 100 years ago, on to the eBirders of today and many more studies. It found a very concerning trend: wild bird populations in the continental U.S. and Canada have declined by almost 30% since 1970. Ken Rosenberg, Cornell Lab of Ornithology Conservation Biologist, who led the international team of scientists, said, "These bird losses are a strong signal that our human-altered landscapes are losing their ability to support birdlife." "And that is an indicator of a coming collapse of the overall environment."

I encourage you to read the article in *Living Bird Magazine* online at <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/vanishing-1-in-4-birds-gone>.

There are also things you can do to help birds. Work on your sustainability practices. Reduce your carbon footprint. Make the world a better place for birds, make windows safer, keep cats indoors, reduce lawns, plant native plants, avoid pesticides, drink coffee that is good for birds, protect our planet from plastics, watch birds, share what you see. For more information on the way you can help birds go to <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home/seven-simple-actions-to-help-birds/> or audubon.org.

An endangered Whooping Crane in the wild near Baraboo, Wisconsin.



Program at SUNY Geneseo to study the biochemical

process used by migratory birds to perceive the Earth's magnetic field.

No Audubon Convention is complete without field trips! This year, convention attendees visited the headquarters of the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, Wisconsin, to learn about the organization's work to protect the endangered Whooping Crane and 10 other endangered and threatened crane species around the world.

Field Trips

Chickadee Walk

November 9, 2019, 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 9, 2019. **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.



Dear Members,
GVAS would like to try to save trees and money. It is becoming very expensive to print and mail newsletters to all our 1600 members. Would you be interested in receiving your Meadowlark by email? If so, please email June Summers at summers@frontiernet.net. Please put Meadowlark in the subject line and include your name, email, zip code and that you want to receive the Meadowlark by email.

The Importance of Autumn Leaves

By Loretta Morell

Think about what trees do for us! According to a website for the State University of North Carolina one large tree can create a day's supply of oxygen for four people. Trees sequester carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, and sulfur dioxide. It is one way a homeowner can help reduce his or her carbon footprint. Trees help retain water and return it to the atmosphere instead of the storm drains. Trees hold soil and slow down erosion, and trees are both habitat and an important link in the food chain.

Even more good news: leaf litter provides both shelter and food storage for over-wintering birds and small mammals, so rather than painstakingly removing every leaf consider mulching with them to protect roots of more winter-sensitive landscaping, or add them to a compost pile for some rich loam for the next growing season.

Planting a tree that is native to its environment is also important. Insects and trees of any given native habitat evolved together. One of Doug Tallamy's examples is an oak tree versus the Ginkgo

Nature Walks

Sunday, November 17, 2019 8:00 am - Durand Eastman Park. Meet at Log Cabin Rd and Lakeshore Blvd.



Sunday, December 8, 2019 9:00 am - Black Creek Park. Meet by Woodside Lodge, from the Union St. park entrance.

Nature Strolls

Nature Strolls are designed to be accessible to all participants despite their compromised fitness level or reduced mobility.

Tuesday November 5th, 10:00am - 11:15 am We will meet at the Marina at the bottom of Petten Street past River Street just South of the O'Rourke bridge. We'll head north along the river and enjoy the fall colors, ducks and whatever other sights we might see along the way. The path is a combination of boardwalk and tarmac with very little grade variation: wheelchair, scooter and stroller accessible.

Chickadees and Fairies, Tuesday, December 3rd at 10:00 am

Meet in the parking lot of the Mendon Ponds Park nature center at 27 Pond Road, Honeoye Falls. We will walk the back portion of the natural surface trail to find the Chickadees and observe what winter resident birds are present. We will also keep an eye open for the fairy houses that are popping up here and there. Interested participants are welcome to walk over to Wild Wings afterward and check out the educational birds and Zoara, the bobcat. Dress for the weather and wear footwear that might get wet. The trail surface is grass, gravel and dirt but relatively flat.

Tree. "Native Oak Trees support over 500 species of caterpillars. The Asian imported Ginkgo trees host only five species. When it takes over 6,000 caterpillars to raise one brood of chickadees, this is a significant difference."

If you remove a non-native or lose a tree to disease or predation, chose a native bird-friendly alternative to replace the tree being removed. For a suggestion of what to plant see our Plant for Birds list at <https://gvaudubon.com> and look under the DISCOVER tab.

Genesee Valley Audubon Society

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

Board of Directors

Genesee Valley Audubon Society, Inc.

Officers: *President*, June Summers; *Vice President*, vacant; *Secretary*, Joni Dubner; *Treasurer*, Karen Curtis.

Committee Chairpersons: *Field Trips*, vacant; *Fundraising*, Lisa McKeown; *Publications*, Joanne Mitchell; *Programs*, vacant; *Publicity*, Carol Merkel; *Conservation*, June Summers; *Membership*, Loretta Morrell; *Education*, vacant; *Hospitality*, vacant; *Director-at-Large*, Nancy Strong, Emmeline Gromme, and Brandon Tate; *Webmaster*, vacant; *Web Host*, vacant.

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.

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

Braddock Bay Cleanup

On September 21, 2019 GVAS coordinated the International Beach CleanUp at Braddock Bay. Our 16 volunteers picked up 158 pound of trash, covered 2 miles of shoreline and removed 12 bags of trash. Many thanks to our two Board members who coordinated the cleanup, Loretta Morell and Lisa McKeown.

Thanks as well to our hard working volunteers: Doug Robjohn, Elizabeth Robjohn, Jim Quackenbush, Ann Smith, Paula Doyle, Pam Ellis, Tricia Wright, Beth McGrath, Fred Hamaker, Rachel Andrus, Christine Ferry, Lynn Ferry, Joe Ferry, Andrew Fisher, Thomas Evans, Bryan Butzer.