



Meadowlark

The Newsletter of Genesee Valley Audubon Society

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President's Column

By June Summers

Simple Solutions to Prevent Collisions (From National Audubon Society)

Making our communities and skies safer for birds. From communication towers and tall buildings to residential windows and glass doors, birds face a multitude of dangers as they navigate our built environment. Research indicates that more than one billion birds may be killed per year in the United States alone as a result of collisions, happening in both commercial and residential settings, at all hours of the day. Surprisingly, the majority of these deadly collisions are occurring in low-rise buildings, rather than skyscrapers. The biggest hazards contributing to these collisions - **artificial light at night** and **glass**.

Some simple actions can help make our communities and the skies safer for birds.

Light

Artificial lights and skyglow around buildings can be fatal to migrating birds at night, disorienting them or drawing them off course, leading them to circle in confusion and land in a vulnerable state. Lights may also attract birds to buildings and other structures.

Considering these night-time hazards, here are some simple steps to help prevent collisions. Visit [Lights Out](#) to learn more about programs and activities underway focused on light and collisions.

• Reduce amount and intensity

Bright lighting can attract birds migrating at night, especially during periods of rain, fog, or low clouds, and cause them to collide with hard surfaces near the lights. Turn off or dim exterior lights, including decorative lighting and floodlights. Turn off internal lights or close shades, curtains, or blinds to prevent birds from seeing through windows and trying to fly through them. When converting to new lighting carefully assess quality and quantity of light needed, and avoid over-lighting with newer, brighter technology

• Change the direction

Lighting that is directed upward, such as search lights, can attract or disorient birds migrating at night. Direct exterior lighting downward or shield light fixtures to prevent light from spilling upward or creating a horizontal glare.

• Shorten the duration

Lights that remain on continuously attract birds migrating at night. Installing motion sensors for exterior or security lights will ensure they are only on when needed, reducing their ability to attract birds. For beacon lighting, switch to lights that blink continuously or continuously cycle on and off.

Glass

Birds don't 'see' glass the way we do and may fly into windows and other surfaces that reflect the surrounding landscape or try to fly through glass that appears transparent and invisible. Birds need strong clues on or around glass to warn them that it's there. To prevent these collisions, which can occur day and night, check out the approaches below. Visit our [Reducing Collisions](#) page for additional resources.

• Create patterns on the outer surface

Place dense patterns, such as stripes and dots, on the outer glass surface using commercial products designed for this purpose, or create your own design using craft paper, tape, stickers, paint, and markers designed to be used on glass.

• Make the glass appear opaque

Completely cover the outer glass surface with paint, perforated vinyl film, or other materials that will make the glass appear opaque. Perforated vinyl film products are available, which create a solid appearance from the outside, but allows views from the inside.

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- **Physical barriers**

Place physical barriers like screens, netting, or hanging cords in front of the glass. As long as the physical barriers do not contain open spaces that are larger than 2 x 2 inches, or the hanging cords are spaced no wider than 4 inches apart, they can effectively discourage most birds from trying to fly through them into the glass.

- **Close blinds or curtains**

Blinds can help discourage birds from flying into windows by creating the appearance of a series of barriers. Closing curtains and shades can also discourage collisions on windows that appear transparent from the outside; however, they are best used on windows where collisions are being caused by the appearance of transparency.

- **Move interior plants away from windows**

Plants directly visible within windows and atria can be a danger as birds perceive them as habitat and may try to fly towards them.

- **Place bird feeders directly on windows**

Research has shown that feeders closer than three feet prevent birds from building up enough momentum to harm themselves if startled.



Programs

Singers in the Dark, Conserving the Mysterious Whip-poor-will and Other Nightjars

March 25, 2025, 7:30 pm, By Zoom

There was a time when woods across central and southeastern

North America were filled with the mysterious nighttime song of the Whip-poor-will. Often heard but not



seen, this bird's evocative call now evokes sadness and nostalgia for many, especially as its song slowly disappears across its range.

The Whip-poor-will is a member of the nightjar family, birds known for their haunting songs and nocturnal habits. Like the Whip-poor-will, other nightjars like Chuck-will's-widow and the Common Nighthawk are also declining due to habitat loss and pesticide use, among other human-caused threats.

This American Bird Conservancy video takes an in-depth look at these three nightjars. After the program I will send links to sites with more information about Nightjars if you are interested.

Please register for this program; email June Summers at summers@frontiernet.net by March 23.

April Program

Microplastic: Small Particle, Big Impact?

April 22, 2025, 7:30 pm, By Zoom

Kaeti Stoss, Environmental Education Specialist, at RIT

Plastic pollution is a growing concern, especially the tiny particles known as microplastics, which may negatively affect human health and the environment. Scientists are researching where plastics come from, how we are all exposed to them, and how climate change plays a role in spreading plastics.

That's why the Rochester Institute of Technology is working to bridge this gap in understanding with a multidisciplinary approach, including a partnership with the University of Rochester in the Lake Ontario MicroPlastic (LOMP) Center - this complex issue requires many different ways of investigation and outreach. By involving residents in hands-on science outreach and projects, we aim to not only raise awareness but also empower people to be part of solutions that will protect their health and environment.

Please register for this program; email June Summers at summers@frontiernet.net by April 20.

Bird of Prey Days

April 25-27

Braddock Bay Park

See BBRR.org for schedule of events



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The Meadowlark is published online the first week of March, June, September, and December. If you are interested in receiving a reminder when the new Meadowlark is released, send an email to gvaudubon@gmail.com.

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

Field Trips

Ontario Beach Park and Seabreeze

Wednesday, March 12, 10:00am

Meet at 50 Beach Avenue

Preregister by Monday, March 10

Registration and details <https://tinyurl.com/vzea2jp7>

All are welcome to join Genesee Valley Audubon Society in search of overwintering ducks and other waterfowl. We will begin our day at the Genesee River harbor. We will meet in the parking area north of the Port Authority building just south of the Charlotte Pier. Next we will caravan down to the Irondequoit Outlet bridge at Seabreeze and pop over the bridge to the new Sandbar Park in Webster to see what birds we may find there. We will be alternating between standing and walking on cold, possibly icy/snow-covered surfaces (parking lots and piers). Viewing from your vehicle down at Seabreeze and the Sandbar Park overlooking Irondequoit Bay is an option. We will be listening and watching for waterfowl and other birds that overwinter in our area. Dress for the weather and possible slippery conditions. Binoculars will enhance your enjoyment.

Nature Walk Along the Braddock Bay East Spit

Westpoint Marina, 105 E Manitou Road

Sunday, April 27, 8:30am-10:30am

Register <https://tinjyurl.com/9taxb4ez> **by Friday, April 25**

Thank you for your interest in Genesee Valley Audubon Society's (GVAS) walk along the east spit at Braddock Bay as we watch for waterfowl, overwintering residents, and possible early migrants. We will gather on the north end of the parking lot at Westpoint Marina at Braddock Bay, 105 E Manitou Road before 8:30am. Dress for the weather. We will be walking between the bay and the lake on a natural surface of sand and clay with scattered rocks and roots. Trail Assessment <http://tinyurl.com/yw22p4tc>. NOTE: Braddock Bay Raptor Research's annual Bird of Prey Festival continues at the park starting at 11:00am parking near the Donald Schlieter Lodge.

Brickyard Trail at Sandra L. Frankel Nature Park,

Spring Evening Outing

Thursday, May 8, 7:00pm-9:00pm

Register <https://tinyurl.com/4xdbvskn> **no later than Tuesday, May 6**

Participants will meet in the parking lot next to Brighton Library, near the road, 2300 Elmwood Ave., 14618. Everyone is invited to join GVAS and Burroughs Audubon on a casual evening nature walk to watch for birds and listen for frogs and other wildlife. This short easy walk of about a mile and a half round trip will give us a chance to explore an urban wetland at dusk. Who knows

what we will find? This relatively flat path surface is finely crushed stone and is plenty wide enough to accommodate any wheelchair or stroller. We will be crossing the road at a designated crosswalk to get



to the path. Public facilities are available inside the library during hours of operation. Please direct any needs or concerns to June Summers at summers@frontiernet.net. Trail Assessment <https://gis.audubon.org/birdability/>

Mount Hope Cemetery, 1133 Mt. Hope Ave.,

Saturday, May 27, 8:00am-9:45am

The mature trees of this 200-acre 1838 Victorian cemetery are very attractive to migrating birds. Join us for a 1-mile stroll that is partly on pavement and partly on an uneven dirt path, with a hill. This is not accessible for strollers or wheelchairs. Meet at the gatehouse by the North Gate, the entrance that is across from Robinson Drive (NOT the entrance opposite the Distillery Restaurant). Parking is available inside the cemetery next to the 1862 chapel that is visible when you drive in the Gate. There is a \$15 charge for this tour, which goes toward restoration work at the cemetery. Pre-registration will be available one month ahead of the tour at <https://fomh.org/tours-events/tours/> or participants can just show up on the day of the tour. For questions, contact Joanne at jwmitchell@rochester.rr.com.

Genesee Valley Park, Greenway/Erie Canal Trail

Saturday, June 7, 9:00am-11:00am

Register <https://tinyurl.com/37w3ebhx> **by Thursday, June 5**

In celebration of the bicentennial of the Erie Canal and spring migration, GVAS will be featuring a late spring bird outing with the Erie Canal and a beautiful Fredrick Law Olmstead-designed park for our listening and viewing pleasure. Participants will meet in the sports complex parking lot at 131 Elmwood Avenue, 14611. This location is on the bus route. Handicapped parking is available. Please dress for the weather. Sunscreen, hat and water bottle are recommended. Most if not all of our explorations will take place on pavement. More detailed trail assessment will be available, if the snow ever melts. For questions or concerns contact Loretta at loretta.morrell.gvas@gmail.com.