



# Meadowlark

The Newsletter of Genesee Valley Audubon Society

Fall 2025

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## President's Column

### By June Summers

In July Linda Howell (another GVAS Board member) and I spent four days in Montreal at the Audubon Leadership Conference 2025 with over 400 other Audubon leaders and staff. This was a special conference because this is the 120th anniversary of Audubon. We learned what other chapters and the National Audubon Society (NAS) are doing to bring the Flight Plan to fruition. Flight Plan, you might remember, is NAS's strategic plan.

One of the goals in this plan is to promote the creation, consolidation, management and strengthening of more than 80 protected areas covering more than 5 million acres (2 million hectares) in nine Latin American countries. At the conference we learned that NAS has successfully reached 3 million acres in Latin America by working with local partners such as RedLAC and Conserva Aves. By working with local organization Audubon can figure out how to help the indigenous and local people to understand how birds are important in their lives and economies. Sometimes Audubon and the local organizations work together to set villages with bird-related industries to stimulate the local economy.

This was the first international Leadership Conference held by Audubon. Representatives from 9 different Latin American Nations and Canada were in attendance. It was exciting to meet people from other countries and hear what they are doing to conserve habitat for birds. I met Pedro from Save Brazil. Save Brazil is a society for the conservation of birds and other wildlife in Brazil and is part of the global alliance, Birdlife International. The mission of Save Brazil is to conserve birds and their habitat by connecting people to nature. Pedro was at the conference to connect with Audubon for funding and any other help NAS can offer. Look up [Savebrazil.org.br](http://Savebrazil.org.br); click on English at the top.

I also met Julio Montes de Oca, Director of Coastal Resilience for Audubon Americas, which is based in Costa Rica. He supports the development and implementation of projects that safeguard marine-coastal ecosystems, which are critical habitats for resident and migratory birds. Restoration of mangrove swamps has been a large part of his work. I was able to go on a field trip with Julio. It was wonderful to bird with someone who was seeing our wildlife for the first time. He had never seen a white-tailed deer before or a Wild Turkey.

Some of the sessions:

One of the sessions I attended was **Cultivating Decision Makers Through Diplomacy 101**. This session outlined how to work with politicians to get environmental legislation passed while building a relationship with them. Relationships are give and take, and local chapters have advice and more to offer legislators.

Another session that I went to was **Preventing Bird Collisions with Windows**. One of the presenters was from the New York City Bird Alliance that worked with the Javits Center to get them to change out the black glass that covered the building and killed 5,073 birds a year for bird-friendly glass, reducing the bird deaths by 95%. It also decreased the temperature of the center. GVAS is working with an art professor at the U of R to install a large bird-friendly glass exhibit on the art building. We plan to turn this into an awareness opportunity, to make people more aware of this problem.

Linda Howell attended a session on **Connected by Flight: Sharing the Magic of Bird Migration and Motus**. One speaker was Bill DeLuca, Director of Migration Science at Audubon; his counterpart was Stu Mackenzie, Birds Canada, Director, Migration Ecology. Motus is a program of Birds Canada. Tiny tags are placed on birds and other animals. These animals carry these miniaturized tags that transmit information to stations placed across the landscape of Canada, the U.S., and Latin America. Scientists are gaining real time information about where birds are and where they have

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# Programs

## Bird Safe Homes

**September 23, 2025, at 7:30 pm, by Zoom**

**Presenter: June Summers**

Fall migration already started in July and will continue through October. The second largest human caused death of birds is collision with windows. We will cover simple things you can do to your windows and lights to make your home safe for birds and other animals. We will also include the more difficult solutions that might fit your situation. You can become part of the solution and help to increase bird populations. **Please use this link to register:** <https://mobilize.us/s/DYnike>

## Bird Evolution and Anatomy

**October 28, 2025, at 7:30 pm by Zoom**

**Presenter: Dr. Walter Jahn**

Dr. Jahn will help us to understand the evolution of birds from dinosaurs using clues in their anatomy to relate to their development. From the appearance of protofeathers on dinosaurs in the late Jurassic to Theropod Dinosaurs to Neoaves and birds today. This will be a wonderful learning experience.

Dr. Walter Jahn has been a professor of Biology at Orange County Community College for 28 years. He is currently the Vice President and a Sanctuary Steward for the Orange County Audubon Society and a board member of the Basha Kill Area Association. He frequently leads nature walks and gives presentations on a diversity of wildlife topics including his travels in Latin America. **Please use this link to register:**

<https://mobilize.us/s/E2xefw>

## Wonderful Life of Dying Trees

**November 18, 2025, 7:30pm by Zoom**

**Jillian Martin by Video**

Most of us see a dying tree and think, "Oh, We need to cut it down," but dead trees offer a lot of habitat value to forest and our yards. Join us to learn about the life of a dead or dying tree and how you can safely keep a dead tree in your yard to attract birds.

These days one of those birds might include a Pileated Woodpecker. <https://mobilize.us/s/zkHOn1>



## *What an Owl Knows: The New Science of the World's Most Enigmatic Birds*

**December 11, 2025, 7:00pm in Person and by Zoom**

**Presenter: Jennifer Ackerman**

For millennia, owls have captivated and intrigued us. Our fascination with these mysterious birds was first

documented more than 30,000 years ago in the Chauvet Cave paintings in southern France. With their forward gaze and quiet flight, owls are often a symbol of wisdom, knowledge, and foresight. But what does an owl really know? And what do we really know about owls? Scientists have only recently begun to understand in deep detail the complex nature of these extraordinary birds. Some 260 species of owls exist today, and they reside on every continent except Antarctica, but they are far more difficult to find and study than other birds because they are cryptic, camouflaged, and mostly active in the dark of night.



Join Jennifer in a multimedia presentation on what we have learned lately about the nature of the world's most enigmatic birds. With remarkable photos, videos, and audio recordings, Jennifer explores the rich biology and natural history of owls and examines remarkable new scientific discoveries about their brains and behavior.

We encourage you to attend in person at the Fellowship Hall, of Asbury First United Methodist Church, 1050 East Avenue, Rochester, NY, where there will be a live connection to the speaker.

If you want to attend by Zoom email June Summers, [summers@frontiernet.net](mailto:summers@frontiernet.net). She will send you the link to meeting the day before.

Bio. Award-winning science writer and speaker Jennifer Ackerman has been writing about nature and science for more than three decades. She is the author of seven books, including the New York Times bestsellers *The Genius of Birds* (Penguin Press, 2016) and *What an Owl Knows: The New Science of the World's Most Enigmatic Birds* (Penguin Press, June 2023), which was named a New York Times Notable Book of 2023.

Jennifer's previous books include *The Bird Way* (2020), which won the 2021 Whitley Book Award and was a finalist for the 2021 PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award. It was named a Nature Book of the Year by the London Sunday Times. Her book on bird intelligence, *The Genius of Birds*, was a finalist for the 2017 National Academies Communication Book Award and was named one of the ten best nonfiction books of 2016 by the Wall Street Journal. It has been published in 28 languages.

# Field Trips

## On the Canal Summer 2025

There's still time to celebrate the Erie Canalways system's 200th anniversary. GVAS has been exploring the towpaths throughout our county, and we will continue to do so through the end of October. We hope that everyone will come discover with us. Our goal is to keep these outings approximately an hour long and a mile in length. We are varying the days of the week and the times of the day; please check out our offerings and hopefully there will be at least one opportunity that will work well for you and your family and friends.

**Bird and Sit at Lock 32 Pittsford, Erie Canal Heritage Trail, Wednesday, September 3, 2025 at 9:00am– Register at <https://mobilize.us/s/DIIdL0>. Register by Monday, September 1.**

Everyone is welcome! Come try a no-pressure way to enjoy the nature around us. GVAS invites everyone who would love to spend some time outside enjoying a beautiful summer morning relaxing and seeing what we can see. You are invited to journal or draw about what you see and feel or hear, or even just soak it all in, if that is your preference. Your guide will provide some prompts to assist with reflection. Journals, sketchpads, and some writing/art supplies will be provided. You may want to bring your own if you have them. Please also bring your family and friends. Designated parking spaces with ramp access are available. There is an ADA-compliant portable toilet on the premises and some seating: a park bench and three picnic tables are on site, but might be occupied while we are there. Bring your own chair, if that is an option along with water and sunscreen/hat. If you need a chair provided, or have any other concerns, please contact us at

[loretta.morrell.gvas@gmail.com](mailto:loretta.morrell.gvas@gmail.com), so we can offer assistance. Binoculars may enhance your enjoyment. We will have some Binoculars or monoculars for you to borrow for the event.

**Erie Canalways Spencerport Nature Outing, Saturday, September 27 at 9:00am Register at <https://mobilize.us/s/rnozbz> Register by Thursday, September 25.**

Meet at Merz Parking Lot located on the corner of Union and Canal Street South of the lift bridge (Union Street, RTE 259). We will be visiting a canal town on the west side. Here's hoping for a beautiful

almost fall morning. The towpath surface will vary from pavement, to decking, to fine gravel, but it remains fairly flat or has a very gradual incline. The Spencerport Depot and Canal Museum opens at 10:00am and can be accessed from the towpath on the south side. It's worth a stop as are the many restaurants and shops Spencerport has to offer. Our outing will be about an hour in length. Wear comfortable shoes, bring sunscreen and a hat as the majority of the time we will be out in the open. Binoculars will enhance your enjoyment. There will be some pairs of binoculars available for you to use during our adventure. For any questions or concerns please contact Loretta Morrell at [loretta.morrell.gvas@gmail.com](mailto:loretta.morrell.gvas@gmail.com).

**Holley Falls Park, Nature Outing, Tuesday, October 14 at 10:00am Register at <https://mobilize.us/s/5EOVx8> Register by Sunday, October 12.**

Meet at 1 Holley Falls Park Rd, Holley, NY 14470. Come for a relaxing stroll in a beautiful park all decked out for fall. We will be searching for late fall migrants and the birds that overwinter in our area. The trail we will be taking is a mile loop with natural surface. It may be wet if there have been recent rains. Sunscreen and bug spray may be necessary. There are only undesignated parking spaces available. A portable toilet is next to the parking lot. There are several benches and picnic tables to sit and enjoy the view. There are three benches just past the parking lot. Sunscreen and bug spray may be necessary. Binoculars could enhance your enjoyment. A few pairs of binoculars will be available for use during the event. For any questions or concerns, please notify Loretta Morrell at [loretta.morrell.gvas@gmail.com](mailto:loretta.morrell.gvas@gmail.com).

**Erie Canalways Trail Perinton Park, Saturday, October 17 at 9:00am – Register at <https://mobilize.us/s/O3ykci> Register by Thursday, October 16.**

Meet at 99 O'Connor Road, Fairport, NY. Everyone is welcome to join us on our last outing to celebrate the Erie Canal's 200th anniversary. While we can enjoy the towpath year round, the canal closes to navigation in the middle of October. Perinton Park offers several accessible parking spaces, a restroom, and a couple of picnic tables and benches. The towpath is paved in the park but changes to crushed stone as we travel along the towpath. Fall should be showing her colors, and we will be looking for late migrants and year round bird residents as we enjoy the views. You'll want sunscreen and possibly a hat as most of the towpath is out in the open. Binoculars could enhance your enjoyment. A few pairs of binoculars will be available for use during

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### ***Field Trips, continued from page 3***

the event. For any questions or concerns, please notify Loretta Morrell at [loretta.morrell.gvas@gmail.com](mailto:loretta.morrell.gvas@gmail.com).

**Nature Outing with Chickadees and Friends along the Birdsong Trail at Mendon Ponds Park, Saturday, November 1 at 10:00 am. Register at <https://mobilize.us/s/v7bJly> Register by Wednesday, October 29.**

All are welcome to participate in this outdoor adventure. Get back to nature by taking 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!! We will meet Saturday, November 1, 2025 at 10:00 am in the Nature Center Parking lot on Pond Rd off of Clover St (the southernmost of the 3 park entrances off Clover). Binoculars may enhance your enjoyment. Dress for the weather (wear boots, warm clothes, etc.). Seed will be provided. Registration is required by Wed Oct 29. For trail details, check out the Birdsong trail assessment on Birdability here <http://tinyurl.com/yrpudn4u>.



### **Braddock Bay Beach Cleanup Volunteers Needed**

Saturday, September 20 at 9:00am Register at <https://mobilize.us/s/5Xb5T7>

Join GVAS at Braddock Bay for the annual International Coastal Cleanup on Sept. 20 at 9:00 am at Westpoint Marina, 105 E. Manitou Rd. in Greece. We will meet in the public parking loop before the Marina. GVAS has picked up over a ton of trash at Braddock Bay over the years and we need your help this year to keep the bay clean. Trash entangles wildlife and plastic bags cover the bottom of the bay, preventing plants from growing. We have now learned that plastic trash that enters the lake can be ground down into small plastic pieces called micro plastics. Micro plastics get into the food chain from the bottom then into the fish and into people who eat them. Help us stop this process. Thank you to the event sponsor, the Helen and Ritter Shumway Foundation. GVAS will have gloves and trash bags available. Register by Thursday, September 18. Please contact June Summers at [summers@frontiernet.net](mailto:summers@frontiernet.net) or call (585)335-1824 for questions or concerns.

### ***President's column, continued from page 1***

been. The best thing is they don't have to recapture the bird and cause it more trauma.

Linda also attended **How to Reach New Audiences through Social Media**. She learned how to use Facebook to communicate with our current members and Instagram to reach out to younger prospective members.

## **Stewards Needed for the Black Creek Park Bluebird Box Trail**

Genesee Valley Audubon is still in need of a volunteer or two to monitor the Bluebird box trail in Black Creek Park in Chili. This work includes cleaning out the boxes in the early spring and monitoring the boxes during the summer. You need to visit the boxes every few weeks and check to see how the Bluebirds are doing, and throw out nests that are not being used. If needed, let us know and we will help you replace boxes. Let June Summers know if you are interested, [summers@frontiernet.net](mailto:summers@frontiernet.net).



### **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*, vacant; *Conservation*, June Summers; *Membership*, Loretta Morrell; *Education*, vacant; *Hospitality*, vacant; *Directors-at-Large*, Nancy Strong and Linda Howell; *Webmaster*, vacant; *Web Host*, vacant.

*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](mailto:gvaudubon@gmail.com).

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