



THE URBAN AUDUBON

Audubon's Aviary
113TH Christmas Bird Count



**NYC AUDUBON
MISSION & VISION**

Mission: NYC Audubon is a grassroots community that works for the protection of wild birds and habitat in the five boroughs, improving the quality of life for all New Yorkers.

Vision: NYC Audubon envisions a day when birds and people in the five boroughs enjoy a healthy, livable habitat.

THE URBAN AUDUBON

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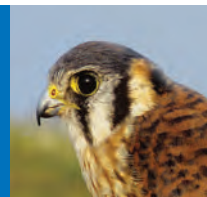
Executive Director Glenn Phillips

NYC Audubon gratefully acknowledges the support of **Fiduciary Trust Company International** as the lead sponsor of *The Urban Audubon*



PRESIDENT'S PERCH

Harrison Maas



As advocates for nature in New York City, we in the NYC Audubon community know that one of the most important places for birds along the East Coast is Jamaica Bay. More than 300 bird species are regular visitors or year-round residents, including over 100 species of conservation concern. The bay's mudflats, beaches, and other diverse habitats are essential for the survival of birds, especially shorebirds, migrating along the Atlantic Flyway.

Your support of NYC Audubon's work in Jamaica Bay has never been more urgent. Just a few years ago, our volunteer monitors counted tens of thousands of shorebirds at migratory stopover sites on the bay. This year they saw only a few thousand. As this issue goes to press, hurricane Sandy has further underscored just how fragile our coastal habitat is: Huge amounts of raw sewage and oil were dumped in the bay and its landscape has been dramatically altered. Now, more than ever, we must fight to protect and restore this critical habitat—just when we have the greatest opportunity to help forge its future.

Right now, decisions are being made that will determine whether Jamaica Bay will be able to withstand future assaults, natural or man-made, and remain a refuge for all the birds that depend on it. This summer, the city and federal government signed an agreement to manage the bay jointly. The National Park Service is drafting a new management plan for Gateway National Recreation Area, of which the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge is a major part. NYC Audubon is the lead organization looking out for birds in this process. Thanks to your support, we are working to make sure that protecting and restoring wildlife habitat is given the highest priority. We mobilized over 700 members to sign our petition regarding the proposed regulations for Gateway.

Your contributions sustain our research and restoration efforts in the bay, filling a gap left by federal, state, and city agencies hampered by funding cuts and competing urban priorities. And our work aligns with National Audubon's regional initiative to save migratory bird species.

Since 2009, staff and volunteers have been gathering data on the numbers, health, and food sources of shorebird species, as well as the level of human disturbance at key sites. This research will show how Jamaica Bay fits into the large picture of bird migration and survival and will guide habitat management and restoration.

For the fourth year, our citizen science teams conducted a survey of horseshoe crabs, which crawl onto the beaches to lay eggs that serve as a major food source for migratory shorebirds. We also continued our volunteer beach clean-ups, habitat improvement programs, and educational events in communities around the bay.

Our work in Jamaica Bay—and throughout the five boroughs—is possible only because of your continued financial support. Please renew your support with a generous year-end donation in the enclosed envelope, or at www.nycaudubon.org. Together, we will protect wild birds in New York City.

CORRECTION: In "A Tribute to Peter Joost upon His Retirement" in the fall 2012 issue, Peter Joost was incorrectly listed as a past president of the Brooklyn Bird Club. He was the editor of its newsletter, *The Clapper Rail*. *The Editors*

REMEMBER NYC AUDUBON

A bequest is a thoughtful and straightforward way to protect birds and bird habitat in the five boroughs. It can be expressed "I bequeath [a sum of money or a percentage of my estate] to New York City Audubon Society, Inc. a not-for-profit organization with offices at 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1523, New York, NY 10010, for its general purposes." Consult your attorney and give Executive Director Glenn Phillips a call at 212-691-7483.

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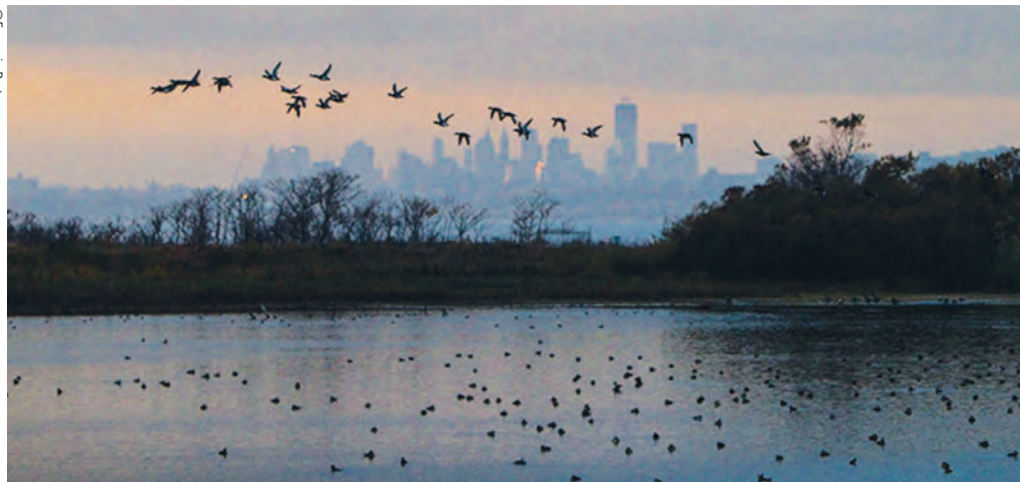
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Snowy Owl
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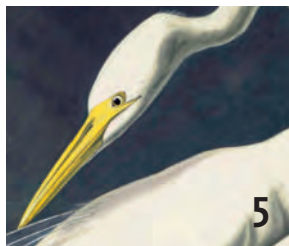
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Susan Elbin, Steve Nanz, and Don Riepe

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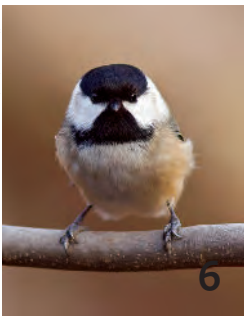


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TRIP LEADER PROFILE: GLENN PHILLIPS

Mary Jane Kaplan



Glenn Phillips

Glenn Phillips first played the role of nature-walk leader at the age of twelve, when he led a wildflower class near his California home. (Puzzling out wildflower species, he maintains, is even more satisfyingly difficult than identifying those confusing fall warblers.) Later, working at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and the New York Botanical Garden, he not only led tours but also trained

docents to lead tours for adults and children. For the past six years, as executive director of NYC Audubon, he has spent most of his time at the office on 23rd Street, but he also plays an active role in the organization's education program, leading bird and/or botany walks for NYC Audubon members. And, beginning this fall, he has led some of the family bird walks that NYC Audubon offers each Sunday in collaboration with the Central Park Conservancy.

Glenn is also active in NYC Audubon's international travel program. In February 2013 he will lead a trip to Costa Rica for the

third time, along with local expert Richard Garrigues. In Glenn's view, trips to Costa Rica and similar birding hotspots serve a variety of purposes for NYC Audubon. The destinations chosen are important to New York City birds, both those that breed here and those that use our parks as stopovers during migration, and tourism revenues engender support for their winter habitats. Also, the trips foster bonds between the organization and its members at the same time that they raise money to support conservation work. And—not least—they're a lot of fun for all concerned.

NYC Audubon's list of local "Events and Adventures" is growing longer each year as participants and trip leaders suggest new activities and venues. This winter Glenn has added a new international destination: the island of Jamaica, which shares with the current destinations the qualities of relatively easy travel and lots of spectacular birds. (See page 10 for details.)

Glenn enjoys leading nature walks today just as much as he did as a youngster. Beyond that, he stresses, education is one of the three pillars of NYC Audubon's strategy for conserving birds and their habitats in the city, along with advocacy and science. If it's fun as well, then all the better. Be sure to check out the list of upcoming walks and trips in this issue.

VOLUNTEER!



Make a difference for New York City's wildlife by volunteering with NYC Audubon. There are many ways to help. If interested, please contact the office at (212) 691-7483 or at the emails listed below.

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

Help answer inquiries about wildlife and about our field trips, classes, events, and conservation work. Also help with mailings, research, data entry, photocopying, and filing. Word-processing skills and knowledge of birds are helpful, but not required. This is a great opportunity to learn the ins and outs of a small nonprofit. If

interested, contact volunteer@nycaudubon.org.

CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS

If you are interested in contributing to NYC Audubon's conservation and science work, there are a variety of projects to choose from. **Project Safe Flight** volunteers monitor buildings in the city to help us learn how they affect migratory birds; data collected support our work to make migration through the city safer. **Jamaica Bay** program volunteers monitor migratory shorebirds and horseshoe crabs, so that we may better understand how populations of these species are changing and how we can

work to conserve them. **Harbor Herons Great Egret Foraging Study** volunteers collect data on foraging long-legged waders around the New York Harbor to help us better understand how these birds use our wetlands. All of these programs can use your help in the spring, summer, and fall. To learn more or to sign up for an orientation or training session, contact John Rowden: jrowden@nycaudubon.org.

BIRD TRANSPORTERS

We often receive phone calls from concerned citizens who have found injured birds, but are unable to transport them to medical facilities. We need caring and compassionate

volunteers to transport injured birds to licensed wildlife rehabilitators and veterinarians where they can receive proper medical attention. To volunteer contact John Rowden at jrowden@nycaudubon.org.

PRESS AND PROMOTION

Do you have a background in event promotion or advertising, and want to support bird conservation? We are looking for someone familiar with the ins and outs of press releases and event promotion who can help spread the word about our trips, classes, and other events. If interested, please contact Tod Winston at twinston@nycaudubon.org.

*Audubon's Aviary:
The Original Watercolors for
The Birds of America*
by Roberta J.M. Olson
Skira Rizzoli, 2012

Anyone who has a rudimentary acquaintance with birds knows something about John James Audubon and has seen reproductions of his bird art in books and as posters. Perhaps this familiarity has bred a dullness of response. But try taking a look at Audubon's paintings—from which copperplates were made—at the “Audubon's Aviary” exhibition at the New-York Historical Society, which begins in spring 2013. You'll be stunned.

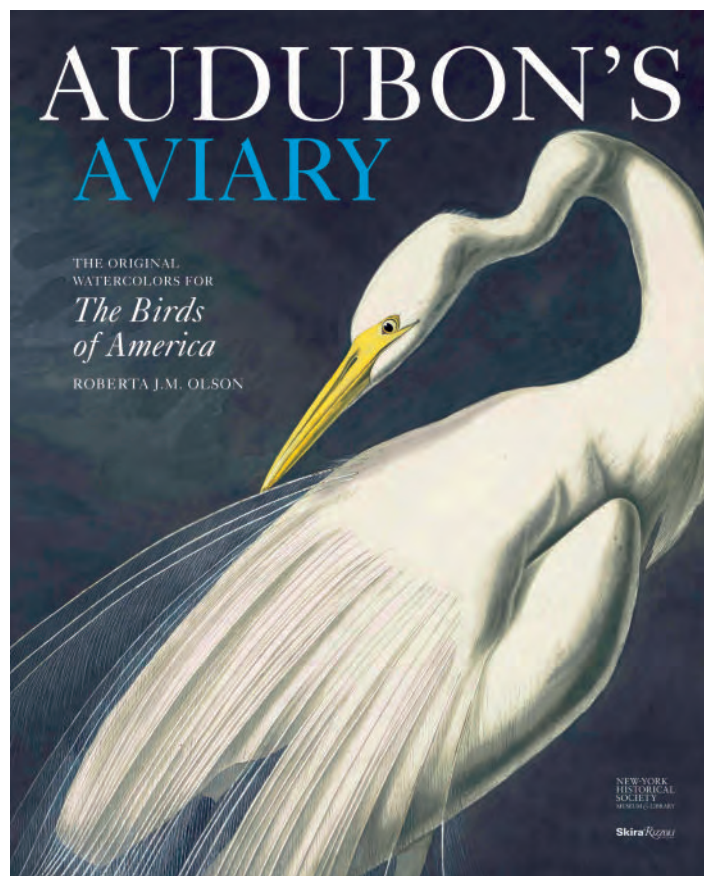
Now Roberta J.M. Olson, who has overseen the “Aviary” exhibits and is curator of drawings for the Society, has brought something of this excitement to a book.

One of the greatest treasures held by the New-York Historical Society is its collection of Audubon's watercolors, the basis for his monumental work, *The Birds of America*. Most were purchased from his widow, and the Society continued to add to its collection, which also includes one of the magnificent double-elephant folios engraved by Robert Havell, Jr. Today the Society holds the most impressive collection of Audubon material anywhere.

Olson's book includes a biographical sketch, two essays, and highlights from *The Birds of America* paintings. One hundred and fourteen works of art are culled from the total of 435, and there are miniature versions of “the rest of the flock.”

Besides reminding us of important events and relationships in his life, Olson presents Audubon as a complex figure; unraveling his story, she states, “beg[s] for several lifetimes and multiple volumes.” In recent years there have been some significant Audubon biographies and a great number of articles. In a small space, Olson's sketch fits well beside them and adds new insights.

In the first of the two scholarly essays, Olson illuminates Audubon amid his contemporaries and predecessors. He is a pioneer, she shows, with unparalleled field experience and relentless curiosity. Here and in other parts of the book, illustrations are enormously



helpful in making points, comparing Audubon's paintings to those of other artists or showing blow-ups for detail. The second essay, by Marjorie Shelley, teases out Audubon's technique, about which he himself was notably silent. It's a masterly exposition of the artist's “endless inventiveness.” Her discussion would turn anyone into an Audubon fan.

The next section, a selection of the paintings, is a treasure. It includes Audubon's comments taken from the text that accompanied his plates for *The Birds of America*, analysis of technique, biographical or contextual information, current information about the bird displayed, and one or more additional small illustrations that shed light. But it is the paintings, so beautifully and vividly reproduced, that are the main show.

With impressive scholarship, delicacy, and respect Olson brings us close to the paintings and to the man. At one point, she evokes how Audubon's brown ink fingerprints on the back of some paintings make her feel that she is in his presence. This extraordinary book makes me feel the same way.

“Audubon's Aviary: Part 1 of the Complete Flock,” the first of three annual exhibitions at the New-York Historical Society, will take place March 8-May 19, 2013.

MAY MIGRATION RECORDED IN BLIPS AND BLEEPS

Kate Walker

In May, NYC Audubon undertook an ambitious project to collect two coordinated sets of data that will help us know more about how birds migrate north through and around the built environment in Manhattan during spring migration.

As part of Project Safe Flight, these migration data will help answer questions such as: Do birds go east or west around the city, or do they fly up the canyon-like avenues? Do birds fly at higher or lower altitudes than usual when encountering tall skyscrapers?

Working with J. Alan Clark of Fordham University, NYC Audubon placed on Governor's Island an avian radar unit (DeTect, Inc., Panama City, FL). Throughout May this unit collected data that indicate the numbers of birds migrating toward the tip of Manhattan. The Leon Levy Foundation provided funding for the radar unit, and the Harbor School and the National Park Service assisted with data collection. Currently, DeTect technicians are deciphering the data—teasing apart radar images that could be birds, bats, bugs, or even boats.

Also in May, NYC Audubon set up highly sensitive microphones, designed especially to record distant night flight calls in the sky (Wildlife Acoustics, Concord, MA) on the rooftops of four buildings managed by the Durst Organization. The properties utilized span Manhattan from east to west but are at roughly the same latitude (40° 45' 19" N). The buildings ranged in height from 40 feet to 945 feet.

These microphones recorded the night-time calls of migrating birds: not full calls, but rather very short, species-specific vocalizations used during migration. Andrew Farnsworth of Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and an NYC Audubon board member, is working with NYC Audubon to identify the species that were recorded.

Together, the data sets will give us a picture of migration: how many of which species are migrating where over New York City. The radar data will tell us the approximate numbers of birds, altitude, and direction of migration, and the microphones will tell us what species are calling overhead.

It will take time to analyze the raw data collected, but NYC Audubon has already learned a lot about spring migration. The microphone at 1133 Sixth Avenue (515 feet in height) picked up the most bird calls, but the nearby microphone at a higher altitude at One Bryant Park (945 feet) recorded the least number of calls. The building on the west side picked up far fewer calls than the building on the east side.

NYC Audubon repeated the experiment this fall to see if these patterns recur: Does the tallest building once again record the least number of calling birds? Is the east side preferred to the west side?

NYC Audubon staff will continue to study night flight calls and radar-tracked migration patterns as they seek to unravel the mysteries of avian migration through New York City.

THIS WINTER, MAKE YOUR BIRDING COUNT

Melissa Husby

113TH CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DECEMBER 14 TO JANUARY 5, 2013

Attention, citizen scientists! Songbirds and shorebirds of summer may have headed for sunnier climes, but winter offers two important opportunities for birders across the nation to contribute to the ornithological record.

Now in its 113th year, the Christmas Bird Count will take place from December 14, 2012 to January 5, 2013. This count

originated as an alternative to the Victorian tradition of shooting game birds on Christmas Day, but don't let the name fool you—the modern count offers birders the chance to participate over the course of three weeks. Each borough of New York City is organized into an official "count circle" led by a count compiler. Birders at all levels are welcome, and new this year, the Christmas Bird Count is free to all participants. To volunteer with a local count, please contact the count compiler for your preferred borough:

THE 16TH ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT FEBRUARY 15-18, 2013

New York City has historically been underrepresented in this count, so we need your help! You can join in from the comfort of your own home, but you don't need a backyard to participate in this free and flexible count—you can also bird in your neighborhood or your favorite park. Simply pick a place, count birds for as little as 15 minutes or as long as you like over the four-day event, and record your results via an online form. For more details, please visit www.birdsource.org/gbbc.

Count	Date	Coordinator	eMail
The Bronx	Saturday, 12/23	Michael Bochnik	bochnikm@cs.com
Brooklyn	Saturday, 12/15	Heidi Steiner-Nanz	heidi.steiner@verizon.net
Manhattan	Sunday, 12/16	Susan Elbin	selbin@nycaudubon.org
Queens	Sunday, 12/16	Ian Resnick	avian@nyc.rr.com
Staten Island	Saturday, 12/15	Ed Johnson	cicadaman1@aol.com



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Tribute in Light at the 9/11 Memorial, 2012

IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS AND PROJECT SAFE FLIGHT:

Fall migration and Project Safe Flight got into full swing by September 11 and the annual Tribute in Light Memorial. This year volunteers and staff counted nearly 5,000 birds in the light beams. Most of the birds were seen between 9:30pm and 11:30pm, and our partners from the Municipal Art Society and the National September 11 Memorial & Museum assisted us in turning out the lights twice during the course of the evening. Counting birds on one night of the year only shows us a tiny piece of the larger pattern of migration over New York City. With logistical support from the Durst Corporation and generous funding from the Leon Levy Foundation, we are collecting night flight calls of migratory landbirds as they pass over central Manhattan. Adriana Palmer is coordinating the effort—and tending to microphones, data cards, and sound files. So far we have seen that more birds fly over the center of Manhattan than over the east or west shores.

JAMAICA BAY

Conservation activities this fall in Jamaica Bay have been focused on management-related actions. In addition to our submitted comments on Gateway's General Management Plan, we have been in discussions about the new Jamaica Bay Science and Resilience Center, a research center that will embrace the exciting new Jamaica Bay Parks initiative of the National Park Service and the City of New York. Associate Director for Citizen Science John Rowden and I have been meeting with senior staff at Jamaica Bay to discuss next steps for resource management based on the results of our multi-year waterbird surveys. We have witnessed the dramatic decline and ultimate abandonment of the waterbird colony on Canarsie Pol. Egret, heron, and ibis colonies

have increased to a lesser degree on other smaller islands in the bay, but the increase does not account for all the birds previously nesting on Canarsie Pol. We have also reported a four-year downward trend in the number of migratory shorebirds foraging at Jamaica Bay during their spring migration, although one of the main high-energy food sources (horseshoe crab eggs) has remained stable. John and I will be working closely with the natural resource managers at Gateway to examine trends in waterbird populations and to identify research directions to better inform management decisions. To this end, I co-led a working group session at the Northeast Bird Conservation Conference at Plymouth, MA, focusing on coordinating regional waterbird monitoring.

WESTERN LONG ISLAND SOUND AND THE NARROWS

Even as the winter approaches, the Western Long Island Sound/Narrows region is still alive with egrets and herons. One of the projects we are conducting with the aid of our citizen scientists aims to identify areas used by egrets for roosting. When the birds are not nesting in the colonies, where do they spend their time? Continuing our partnership with NJ Audubon Society, NYC Audubon volunteer Joe O'Sullivan and NJ Audubon staff member Mike Allen took to the skies with our partners at LightHawk, searching for egrets late in the day. Based on sightings from that trip, volunteers have been locating roosts throughout the greater harbor region. Most of the roosts have been found in NJ, but we are still looking in Staten Island and Brooklyn. Some of the birds we have seen could be "our" birds. Some of them could be visitors from farther north, staging their migration south.

On a different front in this region, we are in the beginning stages of a new, multi-partner project in Queens focused on best management practices for stormwater management. Stay tuned for details as the project moves forward.

STATEN ISLAND

Our emphasis on Staten Island for the past several months has been related to a Harbor Estuary Program grant to NYC Parks & Recreation and NYC Audubon to restore habitat at Prall's Island (off Staten Island's northwestern shore) for wading birds. Parks is doing the planting, and NYC Audubon is monitoring birds, including migrating passerines, as a way of evaluating the restoration. This fall we found lots of warblers amid the poison ivy plants. We have been counting and identifying them as part of the project.

And now... it's time to plan for the Christmas Bird Count and the Great Backyard Bird Count. See page 6 for details.

You can find the latest conservation project updates on our blog, *Syrinx*, at www.nyc Audubon.org/?Itemid=224.

EVENTS AND ADVENTURES

- **NYC Audubon Events**
- **Partnership Events**

- **CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, ALL BOROUGHES**

See dates and details for Christmas counts in all boroughs on page 6.

- **VAN CORTLANDT BIRD WALKS, THE BRONX**
Saturdays, December 1 - February 23, 8-9:30am
Guide: Andrew Baksh or Urban Park Rangers (first Saturday of the month)
With the Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy and NYC Department of Parks & Recreation

Meet at Van Cortlandt Nature Center. Influential birders such as Roger Tory Peterson and Allan D. Cruickshank learned their craft on Van Cortlandt Park's ecologically diverse grounds, and these walks celebrate the tradition set by them. Participants will look for resident and migrant species and discuss a wide range of avian topics. For more information, please call 718-548-0912. No registration necessary. No limit. Free

- **DUCKS, RAPTORS AND MORE AT PELHAM BAY PARK, THE BRONX**

Saturday, December 1, 9am-3pm
Guide: Gabriel Willow

Come explore the lovely coves and rocky outcroppings of Pelham Bay Park, looking for wintering ducks, migrating raptors, and more. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$70

- **PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB**
Wednesdays, December 5, January 2, February 6, and March 6; 6:30-8:30pm

Instructors: David Speiser, Lloyd Spitalnik

Meet at the National Audubon Office, 225 Varick St. Whether you're a beginning or more advanced photographer, our friendly photography club is the place to discuss diverse photography-related topics and hone your skills. Skilled bird and nature photographers

David Speiser and Lloyd Spitalnik will share their expertise and help you improve your work. Registration required. No limit. \$7 per meeting or pay a discounted price for the remainder of the year through June

MEMBERS-ONLY

December Member Trip to Fort Tilden and Floyd Bennett Field, Queens

Saturday, December 8, 9am-12pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Take a trip to Fort Tilden and Floyd Bennett Field to search for raptors and waterfowl. Transport by passenger van is offered to a limited number of guests and will leave Manhattan at 8am, returning by 1pm. Please call 212-691-7483 to register. Van limited to 11 people; walk limited to 20. Free to members only at the Family and Supporter levels

- **WINTER BIRDING ALONG THE HUDSON: WAVE HILL**
Sundays, December 9, January 13, and February 10; 9:30-11:30am

Guide: Gabriel Willow
With Wave Hill

Meet at the Perkins Visitor Center. Come explore the beautiful gardens and woodlands of Wave Hill and observe the hardy birds that spend the winter in this urban oasis. Advanced registration is

recommended, online at www.wavehill.org, by calling 718-549-3200 x305, or at the Perkins Visitor Center. (Walks take place rain or shine; in case of severe weather call the number above at x245 for updates.) Ages 10 and up welcome with an adult. Walks are free; please visit www.wavehill.org for Wave Hill admission pricing. NYC Audubon members enjoy two-for-one admission.

- **WINTER BIRDS & SURVIVAL**
Saturday, December 15, 10am-1pm

Guide: Don Riepe
With Gateway National Recreation Area

Meet at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center for an easy hike around the West Pond, gardens and upland woods. Learn how plants and animals adapt to winter, and look for waterfowl, owls, and wintering birds. To register, contact Don Riepe at 718-318-9344 or donriep@gmail.com. Limited to 25. Free

- **PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP: WINTER WATERFOWL, LI**
Sunday, December 16, 8am-12pm

Instructor: Lloyd Spitalnik
Meet at Mill Pond in Bellmore, Long Island. Photographer Lloyd Spitalnik will teach you how to think like a professional as he takes you to his favorite spots to

shoot ducks, loons, grebes, and eiders. Learn how shutter speed, aperture and ISO all work in conjunction to get proper exposure. All skill levels welcome. Limited to 8. \$70

- **NEW YEAR'S DAY BEACH-WALK, BREEZY POINT, QUEENS**
Tuesday, January 1, 11am-1pm
Guides: Mickey Cohen, Don Riepe
With Gateway National Recreation Area

Meet at Building #1 in Fort Tilden, Breezy Point, Queens. Keep up the 30-year tradition by joining us for a brisk hike along the beach at Fort Tilden to celebrate the New Year. At noon, hike up to the hawk watch for a great view of the ocean and New York Harbor. Afterwards, visit the Rockaway Artist's Alliance for free coffee, cake, and champagne. No reservation necessary. For more information, contact Don Riepe at 718-318-9344 or donriep@gmail.com. No limit. Free

- **PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB**
Wednesday, January 2, 6:30-8:30pm

See the December 5 listing for details.

- **WINTER SEALS AND WATERBIRDS OF NY HARBOR**
Sundays, January 6 - February 3, 2-4pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Meet at South Street Seaport's Pier 17 and come aboard NY Water Taxi's eco-friendly vessel for a winter adventure in New York Harbor. Look for harbor seals on the rocky shores of Governor's Island and the more remote Hoffman and Swinburne Islands. Learn about the surprisingly diverse winter birds of New York City, including ducks, geese, loons, and sandpipers. See the Statue of Liberty and pass under the Verrazano Bridge. Complimentary hot drinks. Limited to 90. To register, contact New York Water Taxi at 212-742-1969 or www.nywatertaxi.com. \$35 for adults; \$25 for children under 12 (no member discount)



Common Eider



● **PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP: WINTER WATERFOWL OF LONG BEACH ISLAND/ BARNEGAT LIGHT, NJ**
Saturday, January 12, 6:30am-4pm
(Rain date: Saturday, February 2)
Instructor: David Speiser

Photograph harlequin ducks, purple sandpipers, scoters, long-tailed ducks, and possible Ipswich savannah sparrows or short-eared owls. Enjoy small-group instruction focusing on exposure technique, cold weather photography, and composition. Equipment requirements: DSLR, 200-400mm or greater. Tripod not required. Birds may be close, so some flexibility in focal length is desired. Trip includes walking over a mile on uneven or icy trails. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 8. \$165

© François Portmann



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

as well as wintering ducks, grebes, and loons. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 12. \$75

● **SOARING RAPTORS: EAGLES AND OWLS OF THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY, NY**
Sunday, February 3, noon-7pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

You don't have to travel to Alaska to see our country's emblem, the American bald eagle. Thanks to one of the most successful reintroduction programs on record, many eagles now soar over the nearby Hudson Valley. Travel with us to see this spectacular raptor, as well as possibly spot the secretive short-eared owl. Bring lunch. Transport by private coach included. Limited to 35. \$75

● **PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB**
Wednesday, February 6, 6:30-8:30pm

See the December 5 listing for details.

● **LATE WINTER BIRDWALK AT JAMAICA BAY**
Sunday, February 17, 10am-1pm
Guide: Don Riepe
With Gateway National Recreation Area

Meet at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. Hike around the East and West Ponds to look for

rafts of wintering ducks in breeding plumage, raptors such as northern harrier, sharp-shinned hawk, and long-eared owl, and possible early spring migrants. To register, contact Don Riepe at 718-318-9344 or donriep@gmail.com. Limited to 25. Free

● **PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP: CENTRAL PARK FEEDERS AND RESERVOIR**
Saturday, February 23, 8:30-11:30am

Instructors: David Speiser, Lloyd Spitalnik

Meet at the Central Park Boathouse. Learn how to photograph songbirds and ducks with Photography Club leaders David Speiser and Lloyd Spitalnik. At the Ramble feeders, we'll photograph white-breasted nuthatches, brown creepers, American goldfinches, yellow-bellied sapsuckers, and more. Then we'll be off to the reservoir to look for northern shovelers, ruddy ducks, and hooded mergansers. This workshop will focus on proper exposure and tracking of fast-moving songbirds. Limited to 8. \$60

● **WINTER AT JONES BEACH, LI**
Tuesday, February 26, 8am-4pm
Guides: Peter Mott, Tod Winston

Several bird species that nest in the far north spend the winter at Jones Beach, where they prosper in a habitat similar to their summer home on the tundra. We'll start at Point Lookout and work eastward to Robert Moses State Park in hopes of finding an interesting variety of avian species including harlequin ducks and eider. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 11. \$40

● **WINTER BIRDS OF BARNEGAT, NJ**
Tuesday, March 5, 9am-4pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Explore Barnegat Inlet's expansive beach to view the winter birds that gather where land, bay, and sea meet. Search for harlequin

ducks, horned larks, Lapland longspurs, snow buntings, and snowy and short-eared owls. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 11. \$80

● **PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB**
Wednesday, March 6, 6:30-8:30pm

See the December 5 listing for details.

● **WINTER BIRDS OF SANDY HOOK, NJ**
Saturday, March 9, 10am-5pm
Guide: Joe Giunta, Happy Warblers LLC

Sandy Hook, a spectacular barrier island at the northernmost point of the NJ coast, hosts a variety of species including Arctic-bound migrants and harbor seals that lie on the beach to warm up in the sun. Other possible sightings: loons, sea ducks, snow buntings, and horned larks. Bring lunch. Transport by passenger van included. Limited to 11. \$65

● **TO REGISTER FOR ALL NYC AUDUBON EVENTS and for more information, visit www.nyc Audubon.org or call 212-691-7483 unless otherwise specified.**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **Classes meet at 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1523.**
- **Contributing Members (Student/Senior level and up) receive a 10% discount on most local trips and classes. See membership form on page 15.**
- **For all coach and van trips, the meeting location is in front of 71 West 23rd St. in Manhattan unless otherwise specified.**
- **We depart promptly at the stated start time.**
- **For all overnight trips, membership in NYC Audubon at the Student/Senior level and up is required. See membership form on page 15.**

MEMBERS-ONLY

Winter Bird Walk in Central Park
Tuesday, January 15, 8-9:30am
Guide: Harry Maas

Meet at Central Park West and 72nd St, parkside. Join NYC Audubon President Harry Maas to search for possible visitors from the north such as pine siskins, redpolls, and crossbills, as well as regular winter residents. Limited to 20. Please call Adriana Palmer at 212-691-7483 to register. Free for contributing NYC Audubon Members at the Student/Senior level and up

● **SNOW BIRDS OF FLOYD BENNETT FIELD AND FORT TILDEN, QUEENS**
Saturday, January 26, 10:30am-4pm

Guide: Gabriel Willow

Winter brings many rare birds to NYC that can't be found here at any other time. Most exciting are the "snow birds" of the Arctic tundra that can occasionally be found in tundra-like habitats further south, such as snow buntings and snowy owls. Look for horned larks, tree sparrows, and rough-legged hawks,

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL TRIPS

**MONTAUK WINTER WEEKEND:
SEALS, SEA BIRDS AND SANDY
BEACHES, LONG ISLAND, NY**
Friday, January 4, 3pm -
Sunday, January 6, 4pm
Guides: Mike Bottini, Mickey
Cohen, Don Riepe

With American Littoral Society

Visit the vast dunes, beaches and woods at Montauk during peak sea bird season and hike the beautiful "Walking Dunes," Hither Woods, Oyster Pond and the "Seal Haul-out" site. Includes double-occupancy lodging at the luxurious Manor House, most meals, guided hikes, evening programs, a star watch, and free pickup at the LIRR station in Montauk. To register, contact Don Riepe at 718-318-9344 or donriep@gmail.com. Limited to 60. \$375 (\$120 single supplement)

**BIRDING THE ANDEAN SLOPES:
NORTHWEST ECUADOR**
Friday, January 11-Monday,
January 21
Guides: John Rowden,
Edwin Perez

Join us for a trip to one of South America's most celebrated (and spectacularly scenic) areas for birding, led by one of Ecuador's finest bird guides. Starting from Quito, the trip will cover east and west slope Andean birds, from paramo to foothills. Target species include the coveted Andean cock-of-the-rock, long-wattled umbrellabird, Andean condor,



*Sword-billed
Hummingbird*

sword-billed hummingbird, as well as fascinating manakins, colorful tanagers, and many rarities. Please visit our website or contact Tod Winston at twinston@nycaudubon.org to learn more. Limited to 12. \$2,395 (\$250 single supplement)

**COSTA RICA: VOLCANIC
HIGHLANDS AND GULF OF
NICOYA**
Saturday, February 23-Saturday,
March 2
Workshops: Tuesdays, February 5
and 12, 6:30-8:30pm
Guides: Glenn Phillips,
Richard Garrigues

Join Executive Director Glenn Phillips and Richard Garrigues, author of *Birds of Costa Rica*, for a tour of some of Costa Rica's most beautiful and fascinating landscapes, home to a dizzying array of tropical birds including over two dozen hummingbird

species. We'll stay in a lovely cloud forest lodge as we visit haunting Poas volcano; pass through warm Caribbean lowlands on our way to the impressive, conical peak of Arenal volcano; and then descend through tropical dry forest to reach the spectacular gulf of Nicoya. Target species include fiery-throated hummingbird, Montezuma's oropendola, lovely cotinga, roseate spoonbill, and much more. Includes two pre-trip workshops, lodging, local transportation, most meals, and all park fees. Please visit our website or contact Tod Winston at twinston@nycaudubon.org to learn more. Limited to 12. \$1,995 (\$300 single supplement)

**JAMAICA: THE BLUE
MOUNTAINS, COCKPIT
COUNTRY, AND CARIBBEAN
COAST**
Thursday, March 14-Monday,
March 18, 2013
Workshop: Thursday, March 7
Guides: Glenn Phillips, Lyndon
Johnson, Wendy Lee

Enjoy a luxurious tropical getaway on the isle of Jamaica—and explore one of the best island birding destinations in the world, at the perfect time to see both migrant and resident species. A total of 307 bird species has been recorded here, including 180 migrants. Jamaica also boasts of 28 endemic species (native only to Jamaica), more

than any other West Indian island. Most of these can be found in the two very different habitats we'll visit: the stunningly beautiful Blue Mountains and the pristine and exotic Cockpit Country. We'll finish off our tour at the renowned Rocklands Bird Sanctuary, where the spectacular red-billed streamertail, or Jamaican hummingbird, feeds from the hand. Includes one pre-trip workshop, accommodations at the sumptuous Strawberry Hill and Silver Sands resorts, local transportation, meals, and all park fees. Limited to 12. \$1,895 (\$550 single supplement)

**TEXAS COAST AND HILL
COUNTRY**

Saturday, April 6-Sunday,
April 14
Guides: Don Riepe,
Carol Borneman

Fly to Houston and start with a visit to the High Island and Galveston areas during peak spring bird migration. Other highlights: the Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge, an Austin boat tour to watch thousands of bats emerge at dusk, and a visit to Texas Hill Country to look for the endangered golden-cheeked warbler and black-capped vireo. Includes roundtrip flight, local transportation, lodging, some meals, and park fees. Limited to 14. \$1,950 (price is subject to change)

NYC AUDUBON BOARD SEEKS NEW MEMBERS

NYC Audubon is seeking nominations to its board of directors for two-year terms beginning in January 2013. If you are a member of NYC Audubon at the Student/Senior level and up, you are eligible to submit a nomination. Please submit your suggestions to David Speiser, chair of the nominating committee, at nominations@nycaudubon.org.

BIRDING SAFELY IN NEW YORK CITY

NYC Audubon recommends that when birding in city parks, you bird in the company of a friend or group, be particularly cautious in secluded sites, and be aware of your surroundings in order to ensure your safety. Notes about personal safety are included in relevant sections of the Go Birding section of our website. www.nycaudubon.org.

TRACKING THE BIG WHITE BIRD

Carol Peace Robins

Some may call it bling. It is, after all, a rather in-your-face yellow. But to Susan Elbin, NYC Audubon's director of conservation and science, it is a low-tech tracking device, one that's much more visible than a leg band (try spotting a band on a bird wading in a marsh!) She and the conservation team (John Rowden, Liz Craig, and Tod Winston) attached the tags to the wings of fledgling great egrets in spring of this year. These tall and elegant birds were chosen as representatives of the wide variety of long-legged wading birds nesting in New York Harbor. The tagging will enable NYC Audubon to better understand wading bird foraging behavior and seasonal movements—where do they go and why?—as well as provide an indication of the health of the harbor.

Fledglings are nearly full grown, so the tags do not hinder wing growth, and the tags are so lightweight, they don't interfere with flying. Twenty-five young birds were tagged at two nesting sites: eighteen at Jamaica Bay's Elders Point Marsh East and seven at Hoffman Island, off Staten Island. Observations so far range from the expected (sightings in the New Jersey Meadowlands) to the more surprising (two seen in the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge near Philadelphia) to the quite astounding (one was spotted in Quebec). It is well known that great egrets will disperse northward after breeding before migrating south in winter, but Elbin was surprised to discover just how far north they would go.

The tagging project will provide valuable information for the Harbor Heron Conservation Plan about habitat in need of

protection and will help raise public awareness and understanding of the importance of actively conserving wildlife. Elbin asks that if you see any of these wing-tagged birds this spring, please note the tag code, take a photo if possible, and contact her at 212-691-7483 or selbin@nycaudubon.org.



© Louise Steward

A Tagged Great Egret Spotted at Rivière des Mille Îles, Saint-François, Laval, Quebec

2012-2013 LECTURE SERIES

All lectures are free and open to the public and are held at The Arsenal, Central Park, 5th Avenue at 64th Street, 3rd Floor. This series has been made possible by the support of Claude and Lucienne Bloch and Patagonia.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT: INVESTIGATING WATERBIRD FORAGING BEHAVIOR

By Elizabeth Craig

Wednesday, January 9, 2013, 6pm

New York Harbor is home to an impressive diversity of waterbirds, ranging from long-legged waders such as the great egret and glossy ibis to diving seabirds like the double-crested cormorant. How do these birds live in the urban waterways of New York City? Join Elizabeth Craig, Ph.D. candidate at Cornell University and Research Associate at New York City Audubon, as she explores the urban wild spaces where these birds make their homes, and describes how scientists can use a single feather to investigate waterbird foraging behavior.

COWBIRDS, CUCKOOS, AND FOSTER PARENTING IN THE AVIAN WORLD

By Mark Hauber

Wednesday, March 13, 2013, 6pm

Obligate avian brood parasites, including cowbirds in our parks and backyards, honeyguides in Africa and Asia, many cuckoos across the

world, and even some finches and ducks, lay their eggs in the nests of other species. The host birds raise the brood parasitic birds' young. Mark Hauber, Professor of Psychology at Hunter College, will discuss why and how hosts of brood parasitic birds fail to recognize "foreign" eggs in their nests and whether brood parasitic young face challenges, using illustrations and his experimental studies from North America, New Zealand, and Europe.

VISIONS: EARTH'S ELEMENTS IN BIRD AND NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

By Kevin Karlson and Lloyd Spitalnik

Wednesday, May 8, 2013, 6pm

CONSERVATION PROGRAM UPDATE AND ANNUAL MEETING

By Susan Elbin and John Rowden

Wednesday, June 12, 2013, 6pm

FALL ROOST

Matthew Rymkiewicz

All photos © Trus Kern



Board President Harry Maas, Honoree Ajamu Brown, and Executive Director Glenn Phillips

While fall migrants flew overhead to warmer climes, guests at the 8th annual Fall Roost benefit gathered in the Lake Room of the Central Park Boathouse for an evening of great company, frenzied bidding, and to honor three individuals whose work reminds us what being a member of NYC Audubon is all about.

Ajamu Brown is a TogetherGreen Fellow from the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn, where he created the Bed-Stuy Community Eco-Mapping Project, a goal of which is to identify and cultivate new leaders on environmental sustainability

issues in Central Brooklyn. In an area where gentrification and commercial development threaten public green spaces, especially community gardens, Mr. Brown has worked to raise awareness of the neighborhood's environmental assets and the importance of grassroots partnerships. In his remarks, Mr. Brown shared that growing up in Brooklyn, he had little access to green spaces. Community gardens represented not only an oasis in a desert of concrete, but also a link to history, where an intergenerational bond is forged among people who otherwise would never have met.

Helena Durst is Vice President at the Durst Organization, and has been a partner of NYC Audubon for a number of Project Safe Flight initiatives, including Lights Out NY and bird-friendly buildings. With Ms. Durst's assistance, NYC Audubon has been placing microphones on the rooftops of Durst properties in Midtown, providing invaluable data for mapping how migrant song birds navigate and exploit New York City. Ms. Durst, expecting her son's imminent birth, was unable to attend. Harry Maas, president of NYC Audubon, praised the Durst Organization



Honoree Helena Durst

FALL ROOST ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE FALL ROOST HOST COMMITTEE

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at the Roost as “the leader of New York City property owners making buildings as bird-safe as possible.”

Christopher Ward has served as Executive Director of the Port Authority of NY and NJ, and as the New York City Department of Environmental Protection commissioner. At each of these organizations he has pioneered sustainability initiatives that will impact New York City well into the future. A former NYC Audubon board member, Mr. Ward is currently the Executive Vice President for Major Projects at Dragados USA. In the words of Harry Maas, “There is not enough that can be said about what Chris Ward has done on behalf of NYC Audubon.”

As the evening’s program progressed and the silent auction bidding deadline loomed, the fantastic array of items on the Lake Room’s periphery drew more and more attention. In the end, some may have been disappointed with losing out on their coveted prize, but all were pleased to have spent the night in such fine company and for a great cause.



New York City DEP Commissioner Carter Strickland and Honoree Christopher Ward



Fall Roost Trivia Winners Lenore & Peter Mott, Cheryl Reich, and David Dewhurst. Prizes courtesy of Citadel Group Wines.



Parks Commissioner Veronica White



Ted & Robin Withington enjoy the view from the boathouse.

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News & Notes

NATIONAL AUDUBON HONORS WOMEN IN CONSERVATION

The National Audubon Society awarded its 2012 Rachel Carson Award to Hunter Lovins, the Rev. Canon Sally Bingham, and Janette Sadik-Khan. NYC Audubon's Director of Conservation and Science Susan Elbin was one of 24 New York City women given special recognition for their work in local conservation.

GET YOUR FREE LOOK AROUND

The most recent issue of our free children's publication, *Look Around New York City*, is now available. Designed for children in fourth through sixth grades, *Look Around* aims to get city kids involved in their environment by promoting nature appreciation and preservation. If you'd like a copy or would like to order *Look Around* for your school, please contact John Rowden at jrowden@nycaudubon.org. Funds for the free distribution of *Look Around New York City* come from a generous donation from Con Edison.

NATIONAL AUDUBON CONVENTION

After an 11-year hiatus, Audubon will hold a national convention in July 2013. NYC Audubon Executive Director Glenn Phillips is co-chair of the planning committee for the National Audubon Convention, which will take place July 12-16 at the Skamania Lodge in Stevenson, WA. All Audubon members are welcome to attend; details will be available at www.audubon.org as the event approaches.

MANAGING GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

In spring 2013, the National Park Service will issue the first draft of a new General Management Plan for Jamaica Bay National Recreation Area, and NYC Audubon's conservation committee will review it. In the meantime, we continue to collect signatures on our petition (www.nycaudubon.org/gateway-gmp) and work to provide the National Park Service with information about the status of bird populations within the park.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Peter Joost and Jared Keyes have stepped down from their roles as secretary and treasurer, respectively; Steve Nanz has stepped down from the board of directors. We would like to express our gratitude to Peter, Jared, and Steve for the generosity and passion they have each brought to NYC Audubon. We are happy to report that board members Marsilia Boyle and John Shemilt have accepted the positions of secretary and treasurer, respectively.

VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

New York City Audubon's conservation and education work would not be possible without the help of hundreds of volunteers who donate thousands of hours each year. If you volunteered during the period from October 2011 to September 2012 and your name is not on this list, please let us know! We strive to keep accurate records for our funders and want to make sure you receive the recognition you deserve.

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Laura Mauldin JB
E.J. McAdams OA
Abby McBride LA/UA
Rebecca McCarthy TG
Gerry McGee UA
Laura McNeil FR
Tracy Meade TG
Evelyn Melendez TG
Dara Mendeloff JB/PSF
Emelio Mendez TG
Jon Merwin JB/OA
Laura Meyers EO/UA/
WE
Ellen Michaels WE
Judy Miller TG
Lynn Miller TG
David Momjian TG
Mary Tyler Moore OA
Malcolm Morris CBC
Anne Mortimer-Maddox
EO/OA
Peter Rhoades Mott OA
Lawrence Moy TG/JB
Kristin Mullane-
Shimada TG
Keith Mulvihill EO/JB/
PSF
Mary Mundy TG
Sonia Naidu PSF
Steve Nanz EO/OA/
UA/WE
Lela Nargi PSF
Tami Nelson TG
Jennifer Neumann EO/
JB/TIL
Jessica Newman CBC
Diana Nikonchuk TG
Jill Nord TG
Lisa Nord TG
Susan Obrecht CBC
Luke O'Brien CBC/TG
Lisa Ochs EO
Msaitor Omar PSF
Shannon O'Neil TG
Alisa Opar JB
Brenda Ostreicher PSF
Joseph O'Sullivan
CON/EO/HH/OA
Sara Pace UA
Lissette Palestro TG

Adriana Palmer FR/PSF
George Palucci TG
Dan Pancamo UA
Alexander Papachristou
OA
Wynne Parry JB
Joshua Paulino TG
Carla Payano TG
Cheryl Payer CON/
FR/OA
Adam Pekor HH/TG
Joseph Pena TG
Mara Pendergrass CBC
Tom Perlman CBC
Gillian Permuy CON/
HH/JB/TG
Amanda Perry CBC
David Perry HH/PSF/
TG
Nate Perry PSF
Dorothy Peteet OA
Jean Pettibone CBC
Bill Pham TG
David Phu TG
Philippe Pierre-Antoine
CON
Melissa Pizarra TG
Tracy Plowman CBC
Phillip Pond JB
Francois Portmann
UA/WE
Tristan Porto HH
Shirley Qian TG
Kelly Quinones EO
Sahil Rajan TG
Jillian Ramos TG
Joe Ramos TG
Nicole Rand TG
Anita Randolfi CBC
Tina Razack TG
Esther Regelson TIL
Don Riepe CON/EO/
HH/OA/TG/UA/WE
Collin Robateau TG
Sheree Robateau TG
Carol Peace Robins
JB/UA
Dave Robins JB
Chelsea Robinson JB
Eric Rodriguez TG
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Doug Rouso TG
Christina Rubin EO/
LA/UA
Doug Russo JB
Matthew Rymkiewicz
UA
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Phylis Salom EO/OA
Henry Salonen TG
Chris Sangimino TG
Diane SanRoman JB/
TG
Samarra Scantlebury
TG
Lisa Schepke CON/
EO/OA
Mary Schroeder HH
Jonah Schrogin TG
Freda Scott TG
Nick Sedky TG
Jerry Seigler CBC
Emily Sekine TIL
Ann Seligman EO/JB
My Seppo TG

Nancy Severance CBC
Jose Severino TG
Ann Shahmoon TG
Sarina Shahmoon-
Kleinman TG
Suzan Shahrestani JB/
OA
James Sheffield OA
John Shemilt OA
Peter Shen OA
Wen Shi TG
Catherine Shih EO
Fern Silva JB
Michael Sirlag TG
Vladislav Smirnov TG
Kathy Soll TG
Valerie Soll TG
Liz Sorg TG/HH
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WE
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Allan Yuhas JB
Daisy Yuhas JB
Christopher Zavelo OA
Alina Zaynullina TG

Gregory Zelo TG
Jesslyn Zhang TG
John Zucker CBC
Karen Zucker CBC
Matthew Zucker CBC
Ryan Zucker CBC
Mitch Zykofsky JB

NYC Audubon Program Legend

CBC = Christmas Bird Count
CON = Conservation
EO = Education and Outreach
FR = Fall Roost
HH = Harbor Herons
JB = Jamaica Bay (includes Horseshoe Crab and Shorebird Surveys)
OA = Office Administration
LA = Look Around
PSF = Project Safe Flight
TG = TogetherGreen Volunteer Days
TIL = Tribute in Light
UA = The Urban Audubon
WE = Website and The eGret eNewsletter

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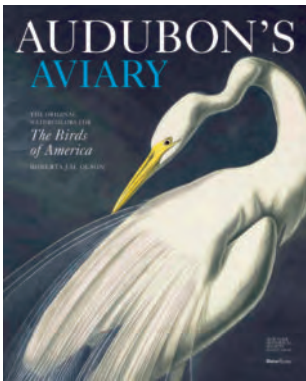


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HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS FROM NYC AUDUBON

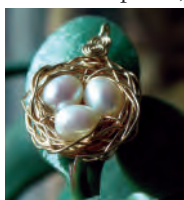


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Happy Holidays!