OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY: A CONSERVATION CHALLENGE COMING TO A COAST NEAR YOU

Brendan Fogarty

You may have noticed that Long Island is a little crowded. Suffolk County has 1.5 million residents – but so does Nassau, with only half the area. Thankfully, that density has been constant in Nassau for over fifty years, but Suffolk’s has gone up 15%. With more people and more digital appliances, the local electric authorities have long expected a boom in power demand. It never happened. In fact, demand is projected to decrease slightly over the next decade. How does this hook in to bird conservation? We will get to that shortly.

More electricity demand would have forced new power plants to be built, and ratepayers would bear the burden of funding them. Meeting the higher demand would cost more and cause extreme dissatisfaction with the electric utility. You might think that they would love to start new projects for more income, but it turns out that their image is a higher priority. The Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) was facing a very negative customer satisfaction response in 2012. As a result, they began a contract in 2014 with a major utility in New Jersey called PSE&G that has received high customer satisfaction. LIPA handed over the keys to their operations under the new name PSEG Long Island and things have been looking up. There were once plans to overhaul old plants and make a new gas-fired one in Yaphank, but now they have all been deemed unnecessary projects.

Unfortunately, the electric generation status quo on Long Island is a little dirty. The rest of New York State boasts a remarkably clean grid thanks to nuclear and hydro operations, but our local dinosaur plants still burn dinosaur juice. With the fossil fuel appeal dwindling, renewable energy has taken the spotlight, and offshore wind power is center stage. The appeal is that 1) oceanic wind is stronger and more consistent … continued on back page

Spotlight: Black-and-White Warbler

By the time you get this newsletter, chances are that there is a Black-and-White Warbler singing its high-pitched song in the woods nearby. They are one of the first migrant warblers in spring, and despite lacking the colors that make the warbler family famous, they are just as striking.

Black-and-White Warblers crawl along tree trunks like nuthatches, looking for insects in the bark. At night, they forego a full night’s rest and migrate under the cover of darkness. Most songbirds do a majority of their traveling under the stars, using them and a suite of tools to navigate. You might even hear little calls and bits of song emanating mysteriously from the inky sky on a calm May evening.

CALL TO ACTION

There are always opportunities to help our chapter! If you are interested in volunteering on a committee, help with our website, or to be considered for our board of directors, please email us at: hobaudubon@gmail.com

Great Shearwaters stay out at sea, and usually safely avoid turbines. Other birds are less lucky.
MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Brendan Fogarty

As board members, we do our best to stay up to date with issues both on Long Island and throughout New York State. This means meetings, meetings, meetings, and this April is unusual in that we are both hosting the Long Island Audubon Council meeting and attending the statewide Audubon meeting in Glens Falls. The board voted unanimously to get their fearless newsletter editor out from behind his typewriter for once, so I will be attending both! The statewide conference will only be my second, and it looks interesting with topics such as equity and diversity in conservation and the value of partnerships in the Neotropics. We already have a working partnership with Community Cloud Forest Conservation, which provides education to Mayan girls in Guatemala who becomes stewards for the disappearing cloud forests. The process is truly inspirational, and we are lucky to have Rob Cahill sharing it with us in person for our September monthly program.

Birds bring people together in a remarkable way. It helps that birds are everywhere – and I mean everywhere. Even a spat between Antarctic researchers could probably be resolved by an interrupting penguin. But the presence of birds is uniquely universal. Mammals are spectacular, but most of them hide in holes all day, and the biggest are underwater. Fish share that accessibility gap. Insects are accessible, but too accessible — they are more alien than Hollywood could think up and we struggle to relate to them. Plants are less offensive but provide a more subtle form of entertainment. But then there are the birds. Making music, being art. Socializing, playing, struggling. We, people, get that.

Over this cold winter a kind mother named Kimberly noticed a funny woodpecker in her backyard, just upslope from the Walt Whitman Mall. Within a day of sharing her photo online, dozens of people visited and saw one of the only Pileated Woodpeckers on Long Island. The rest of his species demands true foothills, and thus do not pay Long Island much attention. Yet here he was, making the absolute best of his rare choice. He even drilled a big hole just off Kimberly’s deck. I hope his story ends well, but the human side of it was just great to see. Kimberly is now hooked on birds, inspired by a huge and grateful showing by the birding community. And of course, by the birds themselves.

The birds do the inspiring, but we — you and I — are the vector that connects birds to the future conservationists. We help native girls do this in Guatemala, but we also do it here. We will again send several children to day camps in our area — but every day we can also share the wonder of nature with people of all ages. Take your friend outside. There is no better way to get someone to care, and then they will be empowered to act as a conservationist.

Membership is just $20 per year. Please join or renew today to support our conservation, advocacy and educational programs and projects. Your membership allows us to count your voice as we advocate for wildlife and habitat, including issues on a local, regional, national and global level. We truly appreciate it and extend our heartfelt thanks!

Membership-$20
I wish to make an additional donation of

Name
Address
City State Zip code
Would you like to receive alerts and notices? email

Please fill out this form and mail with your check to:
Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon
PO Box 735
**REEL-IN-AND-RECYCLE PROJECT**  
*James Ricci*

Since I was young, I always felt a special connection with nature. Growing up, some of my fondest memories were visits with my family to nature preserves such as the Holtsville Ecology Center, Sweet Briar Nature Center, and Caumsett State Park. While at these sites, my father and I enjoyed identifying birds and marking them off in our field guide. One of my favorite parts of these preserves was visiting the rescued animals and being able to appreciate wild animals up close. It was during these times that I felt a special connection to these animals and decided that I would do whatever I could to help local wildlife.

As I grew older, I began looking for opportunities to make good on my promise. This winter, I reached out to Simone DaRos, at HOBAS, to assist me on my mission. Together, we talked about the dangers of fishing line on local marine animals and birds. I learned that a fishing line receptacle could be a way to help prevent microfilament lines from becoming a hazard to these animals. Therefore, I am looking to put up more finishing line receptacles at fishing spots along north shore waterways. These receptacles not only prevent extra line from reaching the water but the collected line can then be recycled to make needed fish habitats.


It is my plan to begin with the installation of several fishing line receptacles, in collaboration with the USFWS and HOBAS, at Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge. My ultimate goal is to help keep our waters clean as well as promote awareness. Please take the time to learn more about my campaign and contribute to the cost of creating and installing these receptacles by donating to me at [gofundme.com/reel-in-and-recycle](gofundme.com/reel-in-and-recycle) — thank you!

→ *James Ricci is a 7th grader at Oldfield Middle School in Harborfields Central School District.*

**TARGET ROCK: POLISHING A HOT SPOT**  
*Simone DaRos*

The Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge is located on the north shore of Long Island, just 20 minutes from New York City. The 80-acre refuge serves as a beautiful oasis amongst the suburban landscape. It is home to one of the few public access fishing areas available to New York City residents attracting large numbers of fisherman to its small, half-mile stretch of rocky beach. The refuge is also visited by many families who come to picnic on the beach or hike the forested trails. The main impacts threatening Target Rock NWR are litter, graffiti, and impacts associated with angling.

The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics is teaming up with staff from Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge to execute site-specific blend of training for agency staff, targeted education programs for local youth and adults, resource monitoring programs, service work and expert consultation. The primary objective of this effort is the improvement of on the ground resource conditions, increased awareness of impacts at the refuge, elevated Leave No Trace programs within agency management plans and increased practice of Leave No Trace skills and ethics by the visiting public. The Center’s goal is to bring long-term solutions that will help the Target Rock NWR on its road to recovery.

HOBAS will be partnering with the US Fish and Wildlife Service during the week of September 17-24, 2018 at Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge in the Leave No Trace Hot Spot 2018 Program. Join us!

**TARGET ROCK Beach Clean Up**  
*September 29th, 2018 9 AM -12 PM*

No registration required. Rain or shine. Dress appropriately. Gloves, trash pickers, bags, water, and granola bars provided. Wear a hat, comfortable shoes, sunscreen, insect repellent, and bring extra water and snacks for your comfort. We appreciate your time helping!

“Litter along the shoreline, including dangerous monofilament line, threatens refuge wildlife and degrades the experience for all visitors. Application of the Leave No Trace skills and ethics will help restore Target Rock to the jewel it truly is!”

- Ann Marie Chapman, USFWS
**BE A GOOD EGG**

Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society will be partnering with Audubon New York, Be a Good Egg project, on

**July 1, 2018 from 8 AM—12 PM**

at the beautiful Hobart Beach in Northport, NY. Come and stop by our education outreach table and learn more about birds like Least Terns, Piping Plovers, and American Oystercatchers, which all nest and rest on the beaches of New York every spring and summer. From April through August, thousands of birds nest on the bare sand on many of New York’s beaches and inlets. These hardy little birds are threatened by predators, extreme weather conditions, and careless people. When a person or dog walks through a nesting area, the adults run or fly off in fear. During the nesting season, this exposes the eggs or chicks to fatally high temperatures and drastically increases the risk of predation. In the spring and fall, many other shorebirds migrate through New York and New Jersey on journeys that can be as long as 9,000 miles, stopping on our beaches to rest and refuel. Credit: Be a Good Egg Program, Audubon New York.

Interested in volunteer opportunity at this event? Email: [s.daros@aol.com](mailto:s.daros@aol.com) for more information.

**MESSAGE FROM NEW LEADERSHIP**

*Ana Paula Tavares, Audubon New York, Executive Director*

It is a wonderful privilege to join Audubon and its remarkable network to serve this mission we all care so much about. Saving birds and the places we all need is inspiring and urgent. In addition to leading Audubon New York, my role will also include leading Audubon Connecticut and serving as senior advisor to Audubon’s International Alliances program. Birds do not recognize state boundaries; this new arrangement aims at increasing collaboration between New York and Connecticut states with that thought in mind. The opportunity to lead forest, coastal, and urban conservation work on-the-ground while educating the next generation of conservationists in New York and Connecticut is very exciting. What can be more inspiring and worthy of protection than our planet, with all its wonders, beautiful birds, wildlife and people? I am energized and committed to work hard and collaboratively to set and achieve ambitious goals. The time is now. Thank you for being part of the Audubon network in New York. We are stronger together, and I look forward to continuing to work with you to protect birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow.

Ana will become only the second female director of Audubon New York, after her predecessor Erin Crotty.

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**NEW! Member’s Gallery**

_Do you have any great photos of nature or wildlife from within our chapter territory? Send us and we may feature it HERE!_

→ [bnf25@cornell.edu](mailto:bnf25@cornell.edu)

→ “A major joy and blessing of our backyard is the many species of wild birds that visit there. We take great delight in feeding them and greater delight in observing them. We encountered this handsome hawk, sitting on the railing of our deck, looking to take advantage of birds searching for food in our backyard. He also eyed our pet ring neck dove, Jacques, who was safe in his glass enclosed porch. After a while, he continued on his way, with no apparent casualties to report.”

Photo and text: Chuck & Bibi Bishop
BIRDING IT FORWARD:
HOW I WAS GIVEN THE GIFT OF BIRDING

Amy White

Sometimes I lay in bed and test my bird calls, anxiously awaiting the first songs of the welcomed migrants missed over the long winter. I owe thanks to a special person for turning me on to the most interesting, thrilling, educational, and joyous hobby that I have ever experienced. Not to mention my hobby has strengthened my marriage and I am helping the environment as well!

My bestie is Simone DaRos and she has been a light in my life for 50 years! When we met in kindergarten it was immediately apparent the she and her family were different. This beautiful little blonde had some very interesting pets. In our small suburban town it wasn’t common to have an American alligator and an ocelot at home. Simone’s mother was an animal enthusiast and volunteered at the Bronx Zoo. I was fascinated and impressed with this families’ love and respect for animals. And I was hooked on this fun and amazing new friend. Fast forward 45 years, I finally took the plunge and decided to start sharing and getting involved in this strange lifestyle Simone had of “birding.”

After hearing so much about the passion for and pure joy of her birdwatching I thought my husband and I gotta get some of that! So she loaded us up with these incredible things called “bins,” which I mistakenly kept calling “binocs” for short. We went with “bins” in hand to Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge and on that day our lives changed. Truly! I am a different person and we are a different couple. I have a new adventure that brings me joy every single time I partake in it. I share this glorious adventure with my beloved husband and it has brought us closer. I am more aware of this planet and how important conservation is, and how important birds are to our planet, our environment, our lives, and quite simply how magnificent they are.

On that glorious day, Simone patiently taught us how to use “bins,” how to spot a bird in a tree or on the ground, notice field marks and as much information she could possibly cram in for our very first birding experience. It was phenomenal! All of a sudden, I was landing my sights on the most amazing colors and the cutest, smallest little fluff balls of love that I could imagine! I, too, have always loved animals, but never quite realized or was aware of the sheer beauty and fascination of birds! That day for the first time I saw up close the beauty of a cardinal. I grew up seeing dozens of cardinals in my life but never did I see them through binoculars revealing magnificent color and detail. It amazed me to learn how the color of the male is different from the female or that they make a sound like a “chip!”

And while we stood and looked and listened Simone was constantly directing us to other birds, everywhere. And teaching us the calls and what to listen for. I was floored! This was the best treasure hunt I had ever been on. And we found GOLD as far as I was concerned. She really got my heart racing when she said there was a Barn Owl at Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Owls? For real? In the wild? Not at a zoo? I was beyond hooked and knew this is what I wanted to do and share with my husband. A LOT! To this day I am obsessed with owls and have had the pleasure of seeing as many as I possibly can and still my heart beats fast with joy when I do so! For the past 10 years Simone, my husband and I have had countless hours of fun, laughter, learning, and happiness birding. How I can possibly thank her for sharing her knowledge and skill and passion with us I will never know.

I do know that I, too, try to pay it forward by attempting in my own small way to share my joy with all whom I know in the hopes that they too can experience the joy of birding. I recently lent my bins to my friend who went on vacation in the Bahamas and she was thrilled to see this gorgeous bright and beautiful bird which turned out to be a bananaquit! My husband and I are no experts by any means, but the continued search and hunt for birds all the while being further educated on these amazing species is a pastime I am so very thankful for everyday! This birding journey has brought me to the jungles of the Yucatán, the shores of Maine and lots of places in between. From Red-breasted Nuthatches to Spotted Owls in Akumal Monkey Sanctuary in Quintana Roo Mexico the journey has been pure heaven! And I owe it all to my bestie, Simone DaRos, my strange kindergarten friend with the ocelot and alligator!
FIELD TRIPS

REGISTRATION BY PHONE IS REQUIRED. Please register at least two days ahead of your trip. Membership is not required; experts and newcomers welcome. Don’t forget to bring binoculars, proper clothing and shoes, and insect repellant! If you need to borrow binoculars, ask your leader if she or he has extras to bring.

→ April 22, Sunday, 8 AM
**Jones Beach State Park**
Leader: Blair Broughton; Registration: 631-885-1881
Meet at the West End Boat Basin/Coast Guard Station.

→ April 28, Saturday, 8 AM
**Alley Pond Park, Little Neck, NY**
Leader: Sharon Brody; Registration: 516-433-5590
Meet at the large lot on 76th Ave just E of Springfield Blvd.

→ May 6, Sunday, 8 AM
**Central Park, New York, NY**
Leader: Blair Broughton; Registration: 631-885-1881
Meet at the Boathouse, along the Lake shore, near 78th St and 5th Ave.

→ May 12, Saturday, 8 AM
**Robert Moses State Park**
Leader: Brendan Fogarty; Registration: 516-782-0293
Meet in the NE corner of field 5, nearest to the lighthouse.

→ May 13, Sunday, 8AM
**Sterling Forest, Tuxedo Park, NY**
Leader: Coby Klein; Registration: 585-880-0915
Meet at the end of Ironwood Drive in the park.

→ May 20, Sunday
**Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge**
Leader: Blair Broughton; Registration: 631-885-1881
Meet at visitor center parking lot.

→ June 3, Sunday, 8 AM
**Tiffany Creek, Oyster Bay, NY**
Leader: Blair Broughton; Registration: 631-885-1881
Meet in the park lot off Sandy Hill Rd.

→ June 9, Saturday, 8 AM
**Nickerson Beach, Lido Beach, NY**
Leader: Blair Broughton; Registration: 631-885-1881
Meet in SE corner of biggest parking lot at Nickerson.

→ June 10, Sunday, 2 PM
**Bailey Arboretum, Oyster Bay, NY**
Leader: Coby Klein; Registration: 585-880-0915
Meet in the parking lot. This trip is great for families!

→ July 29, Sunday, 4 PM
**Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge**
Leader: Coby Klein; Registration: 585-880-0915
Meet at Visitor Center parking lot.

→ August 12, Sunday, 8 AM
**Makamah Preserve, Fort Salonga, NY**
Leader: Coby Klein; Registration: 585-880-0915
Meet at parking lot along Fort Salonga Rd/25 just W of Makamah Rd.

EVENTS

→ April 22, Sunday, 11 AM — 4 PM
**SOUND OFF Day**
Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum
Come visit our table in front of the museum!

→ June 23, Saturday, 10 AM
**Little Naturalists: Summer Solstice Hike!**

→ July 1, Sunday, 8 AM — 12 PM
**Be a Good Egg**
Hobart Beach, Eaton’s Neck
Come visit our tent right on the beach! We will be sharing information on the local beach-nesting birds.

→ September 29, Saturday, 9 AM — 12 PM
**Target Rock Clean Up**
Hobart Beach, Eaton’s Neck
Come visit our tent right on the beach! We will be sharing information on the local beach-nesting birds.
Events: May 2018 - Aug 2018

PROGRAMS

→ ALL PROGRAMS held at Cold Spring Harbor Library
95 Harbor Rd, Cold Spring Harbor, NY
7 PM light refreshments, 7:30 PM speaker

→ May 9, Wednesday, 7 PM
Trashed Nests, Poisoned Bellies and Entangled Wings: A Bird's Eye View of Plastic Pollution by Erica Cirino

Like modern humans, today's birds come in contact with plastic on a near-daily basis: they see it, they build with it, they eat it, they feed it to their young. This is especially true of birds living in the plastic-strewn marine environment, which has resulted in more than 90% of the world's seabirds having consumed plastic at some point in their lives. All this plastic has come at an enormous cost to birds' survival on Earth. In this presentation, you will learn more about the threats plastic poses to avian wildlife and what you can do to help.

→ Erica Cirino is an international science writer and artist interested in exploring the human connection to nature. Through her writing, art and wildlife rehabilitation work, Erica hopes to foster human thought, conversation and, perhaps, admiration for the natural world. Her stories appear in publications such as Scientific American, VICE, Ars Technica, Audubon, The Atlantic, National Geographic Voices, The Center for Humans and Nature’s City Creatures blog, Nautilus Magazine and Undark Magazine. She is an award-winning photographer and mixed-media artist.

→ June 13, Wednesday, 6 PM
Photography Fundraiser by Alexa Helburn, 6 PM
Plants for Birds Program by Dr. John Rowden, 7:30 PM

Before our regular monthly program, at 6 PM you are invited to join us to view and enjoy the inspired nature photography of High School student, Alexa Helburn. There will be refreshments. Original nature photographs will be available as a token of appreciation for your generous donation (cash or check please). They would be lovely Father’s Day or graduation gifts for the nature lover in your life! Your participation in this fundraiser will be supporting an aspiring new photographer and HOBAS at the same time. Thank you for your support!

Plants for Birds: Learn about the benefits of planting with native plants and come with your gardening questions as we explore landscaping ideas for birds and other wildlife. We hope this program will inspire more people to grow native plants in their yards, gardens, patios, and balconies to support bird conservation efforts for both our resident and migrating birds. Dr. Rowden will enlighten us about how landscaping with native plants, can turn a patchwork of green spaces into a quilt of restored habitat. More native plants mean more choices of food and shelter for native birds and other wildlife.

→ John Rowden started at New York City Audubon in 2009 as director of citizen science and outreach throughout the city. In 2013, he transitioned to the National Audubon Society, first working on the Toyota TogetherGreen program before becoming Audubon’s Director of Community Conservation in 2016. John’s work at Audubon has focused on engaging new audiences in the organization’s conservation efforts, personally and through Audubon’s extensive national network. He holds a PhD in Zoology from Duke University.

→ September 12, Wednesday, 7 PM
Community Cloud Forest Conservation in the Highlands of Guatemala by John Cahill

Please join HOBAS for an engaging presentation given by Rob Cahill, Director of Community Cloud Forest Conservation (CCFC). CCFC works directly in the field on ending poverty and protecting forests in the highlands of Guatemala through education, reforestation, sustainable development, leadership scholarships, and ecological improvements to agriculture. CCFC believes that holistic human and community development through education and capacity building is the key to conservation and development in Guatemala’s central highlands. Education, especially for young women, is key to building peace in this region. CCFC instructs students in grades one through nine in their Kids and Birds environmental education program. CCFC protects cloud forests and alleviates poverty in 110 tiny remote mountain villages that border the remaining cloud forests and cloud forest fragments of the region.

→ Rob Cahill and his family moved to Guatemala in the early 2000s and were inspired to help the rainforest. Rob co-founded the Community Cloud Forest Conservation group with the goal of making a significant positive impact in the Guatemalan highlands, for both nature and people simultaneously.
2) turbines can be bigger offshore and 3) they can provide energy directly to nearby coastal cities with fewer transmission losses. To most of the public, offshore wind seems close to golden. But there is one potentially major drawback: the danger to flying animals. A year ago, Dr. Michael Hutchins, the Director of the Bird Smart Wind Energy campaign at the American Bird Conservancy, warned of the dangers of turbines in this very newsletter. You can read their findings in more depth here: https://abcbirds.org/program/wind-energy/

Birds and bats are excellent navigators, but tall human structures are a new challenge for them. Reflective window glass visually cloaks buildings, lights attract rather than deter flying creatures, and turbine blade tips can move faster than a diving Peregrine Falcon. Inland wind turbines are especially known to cause raptor and bat fatalities, but the effect of offshore wind is not well documented, even though Europe has thousands of turbines in their waters. Some birds, such as shearwaters and puffins, seem not to mind them and fly safely above or below; others, such as ducks and loons, will not even approach wind farms. It is not clear how the many songbirds that migrate over water at night are affected, but they are likely in danger of collisions. Undersea animals also show a variety of responses to turbines. It seems that wind farms selectively attract species and make a new sort of pelagic ecosystem.

Contrasting with Europe's many wind farms, the United States has exactly one: five turbines which began producing power in 2016 off of Rhode Island. New York is likely to have at least one of its own soon; the state government ambitiously wants half of our energy to be renewable to 2030, and a project approved to be built off Montauk would power 50,000 homes. Dozens of offshore wind projects are now cooking in the northeast and mid-Atlantic regions, and the proliferation of American offshore wind now seems assured over the next decade.

As conservationists, we should band together to make sure every project is carefully watched and executed properly. HOBAS and the other local chapters band together as the Long Island Audubon Council to create a greater voice to influence such projects. As with any emerging technology, we need to be vigilant for anything unexpected. We know turbines cause many bird strikes. We also know that burning conventional fuel traps atmospheric heat, acidifies the oceans, and adds literally unimaginable uncertainty into the basic geological energy systems upon which we all depend. Nobody likes trade-offs, but we always want to do better, and that will guide us into the next generation of environmentally-friendly energy.