

The Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society  
*A chapter of the National Audubon Society*



# killdeer

November – December 2011

Serving Huntington Township and the Neighboring Oyster Bay and Jericho Areas

## Bird Seed Sale



Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon will hold its annual bird seed sale on **Saturday, November 12 from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Huntington High School.**

The prices for bird seed have risen tremendously in the past several years and especially in 2011 due to worldwide supply and demand issues. In addition, flooding in the Midwest, as well as decreased production of sunflower seeds has driven prices through the roof. We did our best to keep our prices down and appreciate your continued support through these volatile times. Proceeds from this fundraiser will benefit Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society's conservation, environmental education, and youth programs.

Thank you for your support and we wish you a safe and comfortable winter, with many enjoyable hours of bird watching at your feeders!

## What is the Christmas Bird Count?

Conservation was in its beginning stages around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and many observers and scientists were becoming concerned about declining bird populations. Beginning on Christmas Day 1900, ornithologist Frank Chapman, an early officer in the then budding Audubon Society, proposed a new holiday tradition as an alternative to a holiday tradition known as the Side Hunt, in which whoever shot the most birds or animals won. He proposed a "Christmas Bird Census" that would count birds in the holidays rather than hunt them. 27 Christmas Bird Counters counted 90 species in 25 locations, ranging from Toronto, Ontario to Pacific Grove, CA. In the surveys conducted in late 2010 to early 2011, 61,359,451 individual birds were counted by 2,215 different teams. Today the Christmas Bird Count is conducted from the high arctic of Canada, throughout North America and Hawaii, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. It has provided a database on bird population trends that is essential to understanding how bird populations are doing and the conservation efforts needed to protect them.

## You can be a part of it!

Take a break from the hectic holiday rush, have lot of fun, and participate in the biggest citizen science project in the world! Join us for the **112th Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup>.** HOBAS along with North Shore Audubon covers northern Nassau County. **To join the count, call Bill Reeves (631-266-4309).** If you can't spend the whole day, come for part of it. After a day in the field, a compilation supper will be held at Muttontown Preserve where each group's numbers are recorded. Come enjoy some good food provided by HOBAS, the camaraderie of your fellow birders, and hear the results of each group's count. There are always some interesting surprises.



Sign Up for our  
Email List...

by going to [www.hobaudubon.org](http://www.hobaudubon.org)

## Highway Cleanups

HOBAS has been conducting cleanups along Pulaski Road parallel to Wicks Farm for the past two years. Perhaps you have noticed the blue and white signs announcing our stewardship of this stretch of road. **Cleanups are conducted at 7:30 AM and usually take only about an hour and a half.** Meet at the parking lot across from Wicks Farm. The next cleanup days are:

- Saturday, November 19
- Sunday, December 4

**If you want to be part of this fun group, contact Simone DaRos at 516-987-7136.** You can make a difference by creating a cleaner environment while getting a sense of community by being part of a nation-wide program.



**Membership Meetings**

7:00 PM Refreshments  
7:30 PM Speaker

**November 9, 2011:**

*A Special Documentary Screening:  
The Lords Of Nature: Life in a Land of  
Great Predators  
followed by program and discussion with  
Patrick Thomas, PhD of the Wildlife  
Conservation Society.*

**December 14, 2011:**

*The Ecology of Snow: Nature's Down  
Comforter  
with Michael Bottini*

**See page 6 for details.**

**News from the President**

Stella Miller



**Stillwell Woods Preserve**

Perhaps you have visited this preserve. It is mainly known for its mountain biking trails. Many people are not aware that it has played host to over 85 species of birds as well as butterflies, mammals, and other wildlife.

This underappreciated preserve also contains approximately 25 acres of potential grassland/meadow area that for years have been mowed into what amounts to a lawn. These 25 acres have been on our radar for several years and we are happy to report that we are finally being paid attention to regarding them.

Grasslands have been declining faster than any other habitat in the United States. The primary cause of these declines is abandonment of agricultural lands, causing habitat loss due to reversion to later successional stages (there are approximately 20 more acres of field in Stillwell that are reverting to successional woodland) or due to development sprawl. Remaining potential habitat is also being lost or severely degraded by intensification of agricultural practices, e.g., conversion to row crops or early and frequent mowing of hayfields.

In Nassau County, many open space areas have been developed, or converted to ball fields and other intensely used recreational areas. The back fields at Stillwell have been mowed for many years in order to accommodate model airplane enthusiasts.

Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society (HOBAS) is spearheading an effort to return the back fields of Stillwell into a grassland, which would host an increased number of birds, butterflies, and other wildlife. The County's decision to not mow a portion of the field this spring/summer, after receiving a request from HOBAS, resulted in that section's return to a grassland state, attracting a greater diversity and abundance of birds and butterflies than the site has experienced in many years, delighting preserve visitors. Encouraged by this positive first step, we met with the Nassau County Commissioner of Parks, as well as the Superintendent of Parks in August. We presented the County with a 30-page proposal for a management plan that would allow the majority of the 25 acres to be restored into a grassland that would benefit wildlife as well as the local community.

We have consulted with The Nassau County Soil, Water and Conservation District, who wrote up a slate of recommendations for restoration and also have the support of the Sierra Club, Nature Conservancy, North Shore Land Alliance, and Friends of the Bay. This area is comprised of native herbaceous plants such as milkweed (an important host plant for the iconic monarch butterfly and

*The mission of the Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society is to increase community awareness about the environment and to encourage others to enjoy and protect birds and other wildlife in their natural habitats.*



**killdeer**

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Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 735  
Huntington, NY 11743-0735

a chapter of the National Audubon Society and is published five times a year.

**Officers**

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Editor	Charlotte Miska	516-922-9710
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**Important Telephone Numbers**

Rare Bird Alert	212-979-3070
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**For Distressed Wildlife Call**

Volunteers for Wildlife	631-423-0982
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You can find us on the World Wide Web at  
**www.hobaudubon.org.**

e-mail us at **has@huntingtonaudubon.org**

*News from the President (Continued)*

over 400 insect species), northeastern aster, daisy fleabane, and golden rod, as well as non-native grasses and wildflowers. With the exception of invasive species such as mugwort, multiflora rose, and small patches of porcelain berry, the area is what is known as a “functional grassland” meaning that while the majority of its vegetation is non-native, it provides vital wildlife habitat including abundant food sources and cover. The first phase of this long-term project would consist of an invasive species eradication program, as well as the reseeding and planting of native vegetation in selected areas.

**How can you help?** Go to our website and download the letter to the Commissioner of Parks and send it in to voice your support. If the county agrees to our proposal for a management plan for the preserve, we will reach out to our members and the community for further assistance on this project.

The expansion Stillwell’s grasslands would attract a greater diversity and abundance of butterflies, birds, and other wildlife. In addition, the close proximity to several local schools would provide children with a wonderful outdoor classroom.

HOBAS believes that restoring this area would transform Stillwell into a wildlife haven, providing birders, hikers, butterfly enthusiasts and other nature lovers with a unique opportunity to explore one of Nassau County’s last remaining grasslands. We hope you agree and will support our efforts!

**Out on a Limb**

Alex McKay

Over a decade ago, in *Song for the Blue Ocean*, his classic study of the depletion of the world’s fisheries, Carl Safina wrote, “... on the Elwah River they (chinook salmon) sometimes attained more than a hundred pounds – before dams made that stock extinct.” This September, the dams began coming down and revegetation of 70 miles of free-flowing river will begin. According to a *New York Times* editorial, “Some biologists believe the fish will eventually reach their pre-dam peak.” Located on Washington’s Olympic Peninsula, the Elwha flows through national park and forest to Puget Sound and the Pacific. Restoration of the historic salmon run is another chapter in the ongoing success story of liberating hundreds of American rivers from years of imprisonment behind often obsolete, unsafe, and unnecessary impoundments.

The story begins with the removal of the Edwards Dam on the Kennebec River near Augusta, Maine. After a 10-year effort by a coalition of organizations including Trout Unlimited and American Rivers, the dam began coming down in 1999, restoring 17 miles of free-flowing river and

opening recreational opportunities and spawning areas for Atlantic salmon, shad, striped bass, and other species. In 2011, “The Year of the River” we can celebrate the removal of 1,000 dams from America’s riverscapes.

From Fort Covington Dam on the Salmon River in New York, Embury Dam on the Rappahannock in Virginia, and Steels Mill on Hitchcock Creek in North Carolina, dams large and small, like London Bridge, are falling down. Across country in Washington, removal of 125 foot Condit Dam on the White Salmon will open miles of spawning grounds from its sources near Mount Adams to the Columbia for steelhead and the endangered Chinook salmon. On the Washington coast, a mile-long, century old dike is coming down, along with restoration of upstream habitat, on the Nisqually River – a project to be documented on Carl Safina’s *Saving the Ocean* PBS series.

At 210 feet, Glines Canyon Dam on the Elwha will be the largest dam yet removed. The project, authorized in 1992, will take three years and 50 million dollars, well worth the wait to bring a fishery back from extinction and set a river free. The salmon run on the Elwha could reach 300, 000 fish. The Elwha project proves what can be done to rescue rivers long considered barren and gives hope for other restorations such as one under study on California’s Klamath, once the third largest source of wild salmon in the lower 48.

These success stories remind us of what might have been had some earlier battles been won like the effort I well remember to stop the Gooley Dam on the Upper Hudson. A century ago, O’Shaughnessy Dam on the Tuolumne, fought by John Muir and his newly founded Sierra Club, flooded a second Yosemite that Muir called a “mountain temple.” There is now a plan and an organization working to restore Hetch Hetchy without damaging San Francisco’s water supply and returning it as part of Yosemite National Park.

Glen Canyon on the Colorado replaced cathedrals of canyons with silt-laden Lake Powell. David Brower, writing an introduction to Eliot Porter’s wondrous photographs of what was lost, *The Place No One Knew* said, “Glen Canyon died in 1963. I was partly responsible for its needless death. So were you.” It will be a lifetime or two before a Glen Canyon could be reincarnated. The twentieth century was the century for dam building. Hopefully, the twenty-first will continue to see the dismantling of many more. *Song for a Blue Ocean* was a dirge, a lament for a dying ocean and its creatures, but now there is cause to sing a paean of joy for the rebirth of hundreds of our rivers and the oceans they flow into.

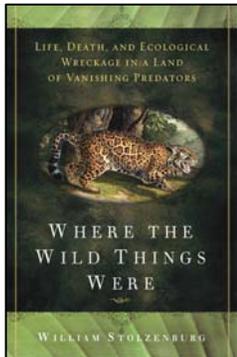


## A Bird's Eye (re)View

Stella Miller

### *Where the Wild Things Were*

by William Stolzenburg



When I heard about this book, I raced out to purchase it. Predators, or carnivores, are my favorite group of animals and I have been passionate about them since I was a little girl. I eagerly dug in and was utterly absorbed.

As suburbanites, many of you may be thinking, “Why should I care about predators?” The reasons may surprise you. Predators are

keystone or umbrella species. Protect them, and the vast habitats needed to sustain them, and you protect everything else that lives within that habitat, including the birds that Long Islanders enjoy during migration.

The presence of predators helps to maintain a healthy balance within our natural communities. One classic example can be found in Yellowstone National Park. Once wolves disappeared from the park, the ecosystem began to suffer. With no major predators to fear, elk and deer began to congregate and demolish anything they could reach. Willow and aspen trees began to die out as these ungulates browsed them down to nothing. Returning wolves to the park has forced prey animals to disperse, allowing the over-browsed trees to flourish. Riverbeds are once again lush and green. Where there are trees and shrubs, there are nesting birds. See the connection?

Wolves also provide food for other wildlife. Ravens, bears, magpies, and eagles all benefit from wolf kills. The presence of wolves has helped bring down the coyote population, which was exploding and suppressing smaller predator populations. With the reduction of coyotes, these animals, such as fishers, wolverines, bobcats, martens, and badgers, are increasing in number within the ecological community. It is all a careful balancing act, and one that is carefully intertwined. Take one component out of the equation and watch an entire ecosystem begin to decline.

In other locations dominant predators keep the lower tier predators (or mesopredators) under control. Animals such as raccoons, red foxes, and domestic and feral cats and dogs can decimate local bird populations. A study done in the chaparral country of California near San Diego is an example of this. In the study areas where there were no coyotes to keep red foxes, raccoons, and cats under control there was a dearth of nesting birds. Further in the canyons, where coyotes flourished, the birds were thriving. Why? Coyotes were able to control the populations of the mesopredators, leading to less predation on the nests. As a

larger animal, coyotes tend to prey on small mammals rather than nesting birds and eggs. In the Dakotas, ducks nests were being decimated by red foxes until the 1970's when a ceasefire was declared in the war on coyotes. The results? Coyotes began to control the fox population. This in turn led to a 15% increase in nesting success. Stories like these abound from all over the United States, supporting the case for protecting predators.

Many people fear predators. They think the only good predator is a dead one. As explained in *Where the Wild Things Were*, this is the farthest thing from the truth. As the situation in Yellowstone illustrates, these animals are essential to our natural world. Without these powerful and vital creatures, entire landscapes can change for the worse. Ridding our natural areas of such an important component can create ecological havoc.

For many people, myself included, predators fill more than just a niche in the ecosystem. They symbolize the last of the world's last great wilderness areas and are a reminder of days gone by, when magnificent wildlife roamed the plains, forests, and mountains of our country. They fill us with awe, a bit of fear, and also a sense of peace. Even if all we ever do is tiptoe to the edge of nature and peer in, the knowledge that these wonderful creatures are still living in our wilderness areas stirs our blood and nourishes the wildness in our souls.

Predators are especially important to our ecosystem. With wildlife under siege in our modern world, it is vital that everyone know what we will be missing should we eliminate large predators from our planet. This book is a must read for anyone interested in our natural world.

*For more information on predators, please be sure to attend our November 9<sup>th</sup> membership meeting. Promptly at 7 PM we will be screening the documentary, “The Lords of Nature”, followed by a program and discussion with Dr. Patrick Thomas of the Wildlife Conservation Society.*

## Thank You!

When you attend our membership meetings, you are in for an interesting and thought-provoking evening as a result of the high-quality of the presentations provided each month. But you are also treated to a beautifully set table of refreshments. These treats seem to magically appear before each meeting and then disappear when it is time to leave. **Simone DaRos, Hospitality Chair**, makes this job look effortless; it is anything but. Thank you Simone for the extraordinary job you do and for all your time and effort.

Many thanks also to all who have contributed to the refreshment table. Your generosity in is much appreciated.

## Birds and Hurricane Irene

John Turner

When thinking about hurricanes it's understandable that our first thoughts often center on human welfare: the impacts these severe weather events have on people and communities. Power being lost by fallen trees limbs, those same limbs and the trunks they're attached to coming down on cars and houses, flooding of roadways and basements, erosion of the Island's shoreline and, of course, unfortunate loss of human lives.

We don't usually think about how these same hurricanes adversely impact birds but they certainly do and in a number of ways. These impacts often include direct and indirect impacts acting in concert. For example, Hurricane Hugo, which in 1989 hit the low country of South Carolina, destroyed thousands of acres of prime pine forest habitat for the federally endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker, resulting in a decline of this species in that state. Many woodpeckers were killed outright. This same storm is reported to have killed half of the Puerto Rican parrots, another federally endangered species, that were alive at the time. Of the many groups of birds that are killed by these very powerful storm events, seabirds are typically very hard hit as they typically have no place to go to gain "shelter from the storm."

Birds that survive the immediate effects of hurricanes can be affected in the days that follow. Many birds get caught by, or entrained within, the powerful winds of hurricanes and get carried hundreds and sometimes even thousands of miles from their normal range. Becoming exhausted from the battering winds they're dumped in inhospitable habitat where they often perish. For example, Hurricane Irene dumped, a White-tailed Tropicbird, alongside a road in an upstate potato field; not surprisingly this pelagic bird of tropical waters soon perished. Similarly, two South Polar Skuas were found laying on the ground on Long Island – one exhausted bird on a Nassau County north shore beach, the other at the west end of Jones Beach. Without human intervention the long term prospects for such birds are not great - they are exhausted and may be unable to feed or, if they can, are situated in a foreign environment that may not provide recognizable or adequate food resources.

The many dozens of tropical and sub-tropical species that appeared on Long Island as a result of Hurricane Irene in late August of this year was proof of the power these severe storm events possess in capturing birds. Exotic to unusual birds seen during and shortly after Hurricane Irene included the aforementioned White-tailed Tropicbird and South Polar Skuas, Sooty, Bridled and Sandwich Terns, Band-rumped and Leach's Storm Petrels, Brown Pelican, and Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers. In addition to the unusual fact these species were found here at all was the habitat these birds (which for the most part are open ocean

birds) occurred in. Several tropicbirds were seen flying up and down the Manhattan section of the Hudson River while several Storm Petrels were found in the south shore bays. The terns were found in some coastal ponds such as Sagg and Hook Ponds on the South Fork.



*Exhausted Skua at Sea Cliff*

*Photo by Mary Normandia*

In response to several dozen e-mails containing reports of numerous tropical birds were being seen throughout the NY metropolitan area, I ventured out on the Sunday of the storm to bird Jones Beach State Park and the Point Lookout area to see if I could view firsthand some of the hurricane-blown birds. It didn't take long before a Sooty Tern appeared flying into the wind on the far side of Jones Inlet. Later on, while trying to track down a White-tailed Tropicbird that had been reported flying west in the bay toward Long Beach, I saw several Wilson's Storm Petrels, undoubtedly blown into the bay by the storm. (I wiffed on the tropicbird.) The sighting of these exotic birds for me was bittersweet: it was exciting and interesting to see whole suite of species that I won't and don't typically see on Long Island, but it was tempered by the fact many of these individual birds will not likely survive.

Not all species face an unhappy fate when confronting hurricanes. A well-known case involved a Whimbrel named Chinquapin which was equipped with a satellite transmitter so its movements could be tracked. Whimbrels are large, strong-flying shorebirds often reaching speeds of 50 mph and healthy individuals can easily complete their biannual transhemispheric migration between North and South America. Chinquapin easily made it through Irene and was confirmed resting in the Bahamas after successfully navigating the storm. Unfortunately, fate was crueler for two other companion Whimbrels, equipped with satellite tags; they also made it through Hurricane Irene only to be shot by hunters upon reaching the Island of Guadeloupe! (Unfortunately, shorebird hunting is legal in some Caribbean island nations with an estimated 30,000 shorebirds killed annually; yet another bird conservation issue begging for action!).

Following the presence and fate of the many exotic birds that Hurricane Irene brought with her as she passed over Long Island made me realize I'll never look at hurricanes the same way!



## MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Membership meetings and most activities of the Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society are free to members and nonmembers. Meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month at the **Cold Spring Harbor Library** except for the months of July and August. Our refreshments will be set up and ready for you at 6:45 PM so that you will have ample time for socializing, meeting Board members, and perusing the printed materials available. The program starts promptly at 7:30.

### November 2011

**Wednesday, November 9, 7:00 PM – Membership meeting at the Cold Spring Harbor Library.** A special documentary screening **starting promptly at 7:00: *The Lords Of Nature: Life in a Land of Great Predators***, followed by program and discussion with Patrick Thomas, PhD of the Wildlife Conservation Society. Narrated by Peter Coyote, this captivating documentary goes behind the scenes with leading scientists to explore the role top predators play in restoring and maintaining ecosystems and biodiversity. After the film, we will have a discussion with Dr. Thomas about predators and the role they play in our world. Dr. Thomas has been with the Wildlife Conservation Society's Bronx (WCS) Zoo's Mammal Department since 1979. He is currently the general curator and is responsible for supervising the care and management of over 4,000 animals from nearly 500 species.

**Saturday, November 12, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Bird Seed Sale at Huntington High School.** Don't forget to pickup your order.

**Wednesday, November 16, 7:15 PM – Meeting of the Board of Directors at the Cold Spring Harbor Library.**

### December 2011

**Monday, December 5 – Deadline for January-February Killdeer.**

**Wednesday, December 14, 7:00 PM – Membership meeting at the Cold Spring Harbor Library.** *The Ecology of Snow: Nature's Down Comforter* with Michael Bottini. This presentation will discuss characteristics of snow that make it an important ecological factor in shaping the distribution and design of many plants and animals. Mike Bottini is a veteran naturalist, outdoor educator, and environmental consultant.

**Wednesday, December 21, 7:15 PM – Meeting of the Board of Directors at the Cold Spring Harbor Library.**



### Birders' Box

**September 4, Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge.** Blair Broughton and 10 participants started off the fall birding season with a trip to Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. Even though the East Pond was inaccessible, a lot of good birds were spotted including Black Skimmer, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Great Blue Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Little Blue Heron, Glossy Ibis, Green-winged Teal, Greater Yellowlegs, Semi-palmated Plover, Cedar Waxwing and Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

**September 18, Mount Montclair Hawkwatch.** Plenty of raptors were seen including kettles of Broad-winged Hawks, Bald Eagle, American Kestrel, Merlin, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawk, Osprey, and Turkey Vultures, in addition to large flocks of Chimney Swifts.

**September 22, Oak Brush Plains Preserve.** John Turner and 6 other participants enjoyed a lovely late afternoon walk through the Oak Brush Plains. Even though it was more of a botanical hike, birds seen included Red-tail Hawk, Blue Jays, Eastern Towhee and a Merlin.

**September 25, Accabonac Kayaking Adventure.** Kayak trip on the Accabonac led by Mike Bottini was attended by 12 participants. Birds seen on the trip included Whimbrel, Great and Snowy Egret, Semi-palmated and Least Sandpipers, Ruddy Turnstone, Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling and Osprey.

**October 1, Jones Beach.** Sharon Brody and group of 4 birders saw 40 species of birds at Jones Beach. Highlites were Brandt, Cooper's Hawk, American Oystercatcher, Black-Bellied Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Least Sandpiper, Willet, Marbled Godwit, Royal Tern, Eastern Phoebe, Brown Thrasher, Palm and Black-throated Blue Warblers.

**October 9, Robert Moses State Park Hawkwatch.** Blair Broughton and 9 other birders enjoyed a beautiful morning watching migrating raptors. Seen were Kestrels, Merlins, Peregrine Falcons, and a Harrier. Other birds spotted included a Common Loon, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Kingbird, Tree Swallows, Northern Flicker, Black & White and Black-throated Green Warblers, and the ubiquitous Yellow-rumps.

**Species seen on 2011 HOBAS trips: 179**



## FIELD TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

Field trips are free, unless otherwise specified, and open to the public. Newcomers are welcome. Binoculars are advised. Carpooling is possible, gas and tolls are shared. The trip leader is not responsible for arranging carpools, but will provide names of others who are interested in carpooling. Registration is necessary. Call the trip leader by 9:00 PM Thursday for a Saturday trip and by 9:00 PM Friday for a Sunday trip. You may participate if you didn't register, but we will not be able to notify you of any changes or cancellations without your phone number. Call the leader if in doubt about the weather. For the comfort and safety of all participants, there is no smoking on field trips.

### English Ivy Pull at Shu Swamp

**Sunday, November 13, 1:00 PM.** Join us in helping to restore one of the finest preserves on Long Island. **Coordinators:** John Turner and Stella Miller. Call 516-695-0763 to register.

**Directions:** From Route 25A in East Norwich, take Route 106 north to Oyster Bay. Make left on to Lexington Ave then another left on to West Shore Road. At the Mill Pond (on the left), bear to the right as if to go to Bayville. At first traffic light (water will be on your right) make a left onto Cleft Road. Take Cleft Road to Frost Mill Road, make a left (if you wind up on the causeway going over Beaver Dam, you have gone too far). Shu Swamp will be on your right after you go under the train trestle.

### Pelham Bay Park

**Sunday, November 20, 9:00 AM.** Pelham Bay Park offers you the best chance to see up to four or more species of owls. Views of the Sound should yield a variety of ducks, loons, and grebes. The stadium lights at the southern area of the park host huge Monk Parakeet nests. **Leader:** Blair Broughton. Call 516-802-5356 to register.

**Directions:** Hutchinson River Parkway to the Pelham Bay Park/City Island/Orchard Beach exit. Continue east farther into the park past the traffic circle, then veering left to the parking area on Hunters Island. Meet the group there.

### Chickadee Walk – Family Trip

**Saturday, December 3, 10:00 AM.** Field trip for families to Elizabeth A. Morton National Wildlife Refuge. Morton NWR is famous for its tame Chickadees, who will eat right out of your hand! Children will love this experience and so will adults. We provide the birdseed. **Leaders:** Stella Miller and Kelly Simmons. Call 516-695-0763 to register. Registration is a must so that we know how much seed is needed.

**Directions:** Sunrise Hwy (27) east past Shinnecock Canal. Look for North Sea and Noyack sign and bear left on CR52. Stay on CR52, then turn left at light onto CR38. After 1.4 miles on CR38, turn right onto Noyack Road. After 5 miles, turn left into refuge. Small parking fee.

### Montauk and the South Fork

**Sunday, December 4, 9:00 AM.** All day trip. Winter waterfowl abound including scoters, eiders, loons, gannets, and numerous pond ducks. **Leader:** Sharon Brody. Call 516-433-5590 to register.

**Directions:** LIE to exit 70, Manorville. Go south on Route 111 to Route 27. Take Route 27 east all the way to Montauk Point Lighthouse. There may be a parking fee. Meet by the restaurant opposite the parking lot.

### Northern Nassau Christmas Bird Count

**Saturday, December 17.** Join Audubon members in the oldest continuous citizen science project. Contact Bill Reeves (631-266-4309) if you want to join this fun and important activity. *(See article on page 1.)*

### HOBAS Membership Application

For \$20 a year you can be a member of Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society. Your membership will help support conservation efforts, and educational and youth programs. As a member you will receive our newsletter, an open invitation to our monthly guest lectures, field trips, and events, along with special member's only discounts and events.

**Make your check payable to:  
Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

e-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Send your check and application to:  
Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 735,  
Huntington, NY 11743-0735**

Chapter No. RO2





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Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 735  
Huntington, NY 11743-0735

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**November – December 2011**



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## **Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Proudly Supports the NYS Young Birders Club**

Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society is a proud supporter of the New York State Young Birders Club (NYSYBC). Not only do we financially support the club, as a supporting member we lead yearly field trips. Regularly led by Brent Bomkamp and Stella Miller, past trips have included the Muttontown Preserve, Jamaica Bay, and this past summer's trip, Cupsogue.



Following is the trip report by NYSYBC member Scott Wieman, age 19:

Most people don't think of getting up at the crack of dawn to be at a parking lot on Long Island by 7:30 AM is the way to have fun; especially a Saturday morning in the summer. But for a small group of youngsters and a few adults, there was nothing else they would rather do that morning than just this.

Our group gathered in the northwest corner of the Cupsogue Beach State Park parking lot. Our main goal? Terns. We

gathered our members and, after a brief restroom break, started into the thicket of phragmites bordering the asphalt. The ankle-deep muck that formed the trail sucked in a few shoes and claimed my right flip-flop before we made it to the edge of the water. The majority of our group left their shoes on the bank as we struck out across the shin-high water towards the flats. Part way to the flats, we stopped to scope the distant terns, picking up a few Black Terns and a single Pectoral Sandpiper, spotted by Michael McBrien among the various terns and peeps spread in front of us.

We worked our way closer to the flats, joking and talking as we slogged north through the mud and muck underfoot. We reached more solid ground on the south end of the flats and started scanning the tern flocks, being treated to close looks of both Least Terns and a breeding plumage Red Knot. Within the flocks of Common and Least Terns, we spotted a pair of Roseate Terns and two Forster's Terns. Then, Brent pulled out an Arctic Tern from the flock and got the group on it. Shortly after, groups of older birders joined us as various members of our group pointed out the Arctic Tern to some fairly senior New York birders, who soon confirmed the ID. Shortly thereafter, most of us headed back to the parking lot to disperse and head out on our own. All in all, it was a good morning on the eastern mudflats of Long Island.



**Bird Seed Sale – November 12, 2011**  
Huntington High School, 9:00 – 2:00  
**Don't forget to pick up your bird seed.**