Join us for the 114th Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on Saturday, December 21st. This year marks the 50th year HOBAS has been participating in the CBC. In 1963, HOBAS joined North Shore Audubon in covering Northern Nassau County. To join the count, call Bill Reeves (631-266-4309). After a fun day in the field, a compilation supper will be held at the TR Sanctuary where each group’s numbers are recorded. Come enjoy the good food provided this year by HOBAS, the camaraderie of your fellow birders, and hear the results of each group’s count. There are always some interesting surprises.

The Christmas Bird Count is rich in history, having begun in 1900 with one being held right here in the New York City region. Counts are conducted in 50 states and in all 13 provinces and territories of Canada as well as other countries in North and South America. The individual count data are vital in order to make a collective assessment of the overall health of the avian community at that time of year. Each count is held within a circle with a 15-mile radius in a variety of habitats in search of wintering birds. Both bird species and individual numbers will be recorded. The longest running Citizen Science survey in the world, the Christmas Bird Count provides critical data on population trends.

The 113th Count included 2,367 counts who counted 64,073,680 birds!

Please visit National Audubon’s website for more information on the count’s history, objectives, and data – http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count.
Red Knot Finally Proposed as a Threatened Species

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has proposed to list the red knot as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. The red knot is known for its incredibly long annual migration of 9,300 miles each way. The species was long been imperiled. The biggest threat in the US is due to overfishing for horseshoe crabs on the mid-Atlantic coast, where red knots feast on crab eggs on a crucial stopover in their improbably long flight. The adoption of threatened status would bring additional protection measures and funding dedicated to recover red knot populations.

Photo by Gregory Breese, USFWS

Adopt-A-Highway Program

HOBAS serves as the stewards of a mile of Pulaski Road paralleling Wicks Farm in Huntington Station as part of Suffolk County’s Adopt-a-Highway program. Please consider joining us for our monthly cleanups. Share in the camaraderie and fun while getting some exercise. For more information please send an e-mail to Simone (s.daros@aol.com).

Cleanups are conducted at 7:30 AM and usually take only about an hour and a half. Meet at the WPW Growers parking lot across from Wicks Farm. The next cleanup days are:

- Sunday, November 3
- Sunday, December 1

There are no cleanups in January and February. They will resume in March.
From the President
Stella Miller

BIRD FEEDING 101

Feeding birds in winter, while not necessary for survival (birds are equipped to survive winter weather without human assistance), can provide them with an edge during severe weather. Furthermore, observing the antics of our feathered friends at feeders can provide hours of delight! Let’s face it, feeding birds in our yard is more for us than it is for them. And in this case, as opposed to so many other instances of human “interference” when it comes to wildlife, if done properly, there is nothing wrong with providing them with that extra boost.

When feeding wild birds, make sure you feed high-quality seed for maximum nutrition and energy. To attract the most species, black oil sunflower seed is best. Peanut chips are a nice supplement to sunflower seeds, providing a great source of fat and energy. This mix attracts nuthatches, cardinals, woodpeckers, chickadees, tufted titmice, and house finches. Try not to feed the cheaper mixes, as this will attract unwanted, non-native house sparrows and starlings. In addition, nyjer seed in a thistle feeder can provide hours of entertainment. nyjer seed can be used to attract birds such as sparrows, doves, and juncos as well as a tube feeder for smaller birds.

To avoid deadly collisions, and make sure that there is cover nearby for the birds to retreat into. In addition, feeders need to be kept clean in order to prevent diseases from spreading through the local population. Avian conjunctivitis is a deadly disease which affects finches and it can easily be prevented by good hygiene. At least once a month, empty and clean your feeders with a mix of water and bleach. Be sure to dry thoroughly before refilling.

If you follow these guidelines, you will be treated to a delightful array of bird visitors all winter long. You may even find yourself entertaining more than just the “usuals.” Through most of last January and February a very tame pine warbler visited my feeder each day. I also was very lucky to discover something even more special than my pine warbler. After hearing a fuss on my deck one night, I discovered a southern flying squirrel having his way with the feeders! This was a squirrel species I was NOT going to try to deter. For about two months, this adorable creature came in for his nightly buffet. He became so tame that I was able to stand within a foot or so and watch in awe as he ate the pecans I put out each night. (Yes, I found myself leaving extra special treats for this extra special guest). As the weather warmed, he found a mate and they moved off.

Is there a specific time to take the feeders down? No, not really. I generally take my feeders down once the grackles have moved off. Is there a specific time to put them out again in mid to late summer to attract the young of the year. This summer my feeding station was an avian Romper Room with baby chickadees, house finches, Carolina wrens, red-bellied woodpeckers, and cardinals all vying for space.

These tips are just the basics. Feel free to research online for more in-depth information on how to welcome birds to your yard. Don’t stop at feeders, there is so much more you can do to provide a bird friendly yard, but I am getting ahead of myself. Let’s save that for another article.

Providing extra energy and nutrition for your feathered friends is a rewarding experience for both humans and birds alike. I wish you a delightful winter enjoying the antics of your feathered visitors.

Birdseed Sale 2013
Don’t forget to pick up your seed on Saturday, November 2, 2013 Huntington High School 9:00 AM — 2:30 PM
Out on a Limb  
Alex McKay

Once again the muse is film – *Green Fire, The Lost Bird Project*, and we bring you now *Flight of the Butterflies*, a Canadian documentary dramatizing the life of zoologist Fred Urquhart and his quest to solve the mystery of the movements of the monarch butterfly that had fascinated him since boyhood in Toronto. With the aid of his wife Norah and thousands of volunteers who tagged and returned tags and tagged monarchs, Urquhart was able to trace the monarchs’ southward migration routes as far as Texas, but there the trail ended until he enlisted Ken Brugger, a young naturalist, and his young Mexican wife, Kathy, who extended the quest into central Mexico.

The Bruggers search ended on January 9, 1975 when a local woodcutter in Michoacan, Mexico led them into the mountains where they beheld a fir forest festooned with millions of wintering monarchs. Urquhart soon visited the site and reported the “glorious, incredible sight” in *National Geographic* for August 1976. Miraculously, a fallen oyamel limb held a monarch with a white tag that had been affixed in Minnesota. The winter migration mystery was solved.

*Flight of the Butterflies* interweaves biological footage about monarchs with the Urquhart story. In March the monarchs stir from their semi-dormancy and mate, the females moving north into Texas and beyond in search of milkweed plants to lay their eggs and start the next generation. Close-up photography reveals the laying of the tiny egg on the underside of a milkweed leaf, the emergence and growth of the striped yellow, black, and white pupae and its metamorphosis into the unique emerald chrysalis. We then see the transformation within the chrysalis to the complete butterfly.

It may take as many as three or four or even five generations for the monarchs to reach the northern limit of milkweed in Canada, the presence of milkweed absolutely necessary to the reproduction and survival of the monarch population. In the fall, the final “super generation” moves south and finds its way over two to three thousand miles to the oyamel forests without ever having been there as their great, great, great and greater grandparents were. The new mystery becomes the question of how they find their way.

I was able to see *Flight of the Butterflies* at The Wild Center in Tupper Lake but was unable to attend a lecture by Chip Taylor, founder of MonarchWatch at the University of Kansas. I was, however, able to view a video of the lecture on the Wild Center website. (Highly recommended: Google “The Wild Center” and click on “Watch Flight of the Butterflies” and then “All About Monarchs”). Dr. Taylor’s lecture might be titled “Plight of the Butterfly” since recent developments indicate hard times in store for the monarchs. The winter of 2012-2013 was the worst on record, down to about 1.9 hectares occupied from an average of almost 7.5 and a high of 22. (The winter population is measured in hectares occupied). Drought and wildfires in Texas diminished the presence of milkweed, and agricultural economics and practices with herbicides to produce more corn, soy, and sorghum have further eliminated milkweed along the northward path of the monarchs in spring. Millions of acres of breeding habitat are being intensively farmed.

Although the wintering area in Mexico is now a heritage Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve and commercial logging has been controlled by the Mexican government, illegal and subsistence logging continues to deplete the fir forest that is the monarchs’ winter home. Excessive ecotourism is also becoming a problem. Winter and breeding habitat need to be protected. MonarchWatch and others are promoting milkweed planting and management along with the idea of Waystations – gardens with milkweed and flowers for pollinators and nectar – in an effort to provide habitat in the migratory and breeding range. MonarchWatch is also a source for milkweed plugs and tagging kits. (See the MonarchWatch website [http://www.monarchwatch.org](http://www.monarchwatch.org)).

While the future for monarchs is in doubt, Dr. Taylor believes we will have monarchs, maybe not in the numbers of the 90’s and early 2000’s, but with our help, the marvelous orange and black and white *Danaus plexippus* will survive.

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**Birding and Natural History Field Trip Leaders Needed**

Are you interested in sharing your knowledge of birds, nature, and birding hotspots with others? HOBAS is looking for new field trip leaders to join our team. You do not have to be an expert to lead a trip and field trips can cover any aspect of the natural world – not just birds. Volunteer to lead a field trip by sending an e-mail to Patricia Aitken ([aitkenpatricia@gmail.com](mailto:aitkenpatricia@gmail.com)).
2013 Walk/Run for Wildlife and Conservation
Stella Miller

We could not have asked for a more splendid day than the one we had on September 28th as we hosted our second Walk/Run for Wildlife and Conservation. This was a very special day – we recognized our first ever Conservation Champions. We were honored to recognize two men that have made a tremendous difference in our communities: State Senator Carl Marcellino and Brian Zimmerman, District Manager of the Nassau County Soil & Water Conservation District. I was very proud to present each of our honorees with their well-deserved awards.

I would like to offer a tremendous thank you to everyone who helped sponsor the event: Pentax (donated a pair of DCF SP 8x43 binoculars), Minuteman Press (donated the printing for our event brochures) and Entroubadour (helped underwrite the cost of the tee shirts). We also want to thank the NYS Parks Department (for allowing us to once again host the walk at the most gorgeous possible setting – Planting Fields Arboretum) and especially Adam Katz, Park Manager, for his patience, generosity, and support that went beyond the call of duty.

We want to give a tremendous shout out to Starbucks of Woodbury with a special thanks to store manager Adam Akiwovo. Starbucks donated water and energy drinks for the event, which we greatly appreciate. Thank you to the Planting Fields Foundation for also providing water and cups at the midway point. We also want to say thank you to the sponsors of our gift bags.

The Bronx Zoo (free VIP Tour of the zoo for 6), Bistro Moderne (dinner for two worth up to $100), Wild Honey Restaurant (dinner for two worth up to $100), Sapsuckers Hops and Grubs (dinner for two, worth up to $75), Salon West 230 ($120 gift certificate), ProBuff Auto Detail Center (free auto detail value $120), Syosset Car Wash (5 super washes – value $100), Your Family Auto Center (2 free oil changes, value $90), Fairway Market ($60 gift certificate), Mara’s Homemade ($50 gift certificate), Harbor Mist ($25 gift certificate), and Umberto’s of Plainview ($20 gift certificate).

A very special note of gratitude goes to F.P. “Tony” Bennett, the renowned South Texas bird artist who contributed the beautiful osprey artwork for the tee shirts and to local birder Sam Jannazzo, for contributing the stunning photograph of a northern saw-whet owl for our Conservation Champion Awards. Thank you to Charlotte Miska, Kelly Simmons, Mary Kelly, Joe Wetherell, Donna and Katie Farkas, and Mikaela and Anne Marie Neary – our hardworking Walk/Run volunteers. A tremendous thank you goes to Simone DaRos who was my walkathon partner in crime as we spent countless hours distributing brochures and gathering raffle prizes. And the biggest thanks goes to the folks who participated.

Congratulations to our raffle winners! In the $50 raffle, Erin Morris won the VIP tour of the Bronx Zoo while her husband, Jonathan Morris, won one of the gift bags worth $440! Terry Canavan won the other gift basket worth $440. In the $100 raffle, Ginger Mahoney won the Pentax binoculars.

All funds from this event will be used for conservation projects and initiatives, including habitat restoration, the Guatemalan conservation education scholarships, Long Island river otter research, etc. Again, thank you to all that participated, contributed, and volunteered at our Walk/Run for Wildlife and Conservation!
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. The program starts promptly at 7:30. For full program descriptions as well as speaker biography, please go to www.hobaudubon.org.

Wednesday, November 13, 7 PM – Membership meeting at the Cold Spring Harbor Library. Birds of the Northern Forests with Michale Glennon, Ph.D. New York State’s Adirondack Park is a large, intact breeding ground for numerous migratory bird species. This park is a valuable location from which to monitor changes in bird populations from a warming climate. As Science Coordinator for the Adirondack Program of the Wildlife Conservation Society, Dr. Glennon serves a leading role in the ecological research conducted in the Adirondacks.

Wednesday, November 20, 7:15 PM – Meeting of the Board of Directors at the Cold Spring Harbor Library.

Monday, December 2 – Deadline for the January-February Killdeer.

Wednesday, December 11, 7 PM – Membership meeting at the Cold Spring Harbor Library. Plum Island: The Good, the Bad, the Beautiful with John Turner. There has been much focus and effort over the past several years to "save" Plum Island, situated off the North Fork of Long Island. This program will cover the major cultural and natural features of the Island that so many environmentalists, through the Preserve Plum Island Coalition, are working to protect through the creation of a National Wildlife Refuge. John Turner serves as the Open Space Program Coordinator for the Town of Brookhaven. He is the president and co-founder of Alula Birding & Natural History Tours.

Wednesday, December 18, 7:15 PM – Meeting of the Board of Directors at the Cold Spring Harbor Library.

Service Days

Call Stella Miller (516-695-0763) to register. If you have tools and gloves, please bring them. Snacks and water will be provided.

Shu Swamp – Ivy Pull. Join the Shu Crew to help restore one of the finest preserves on Long Island. Wear clothes and shoes you don’t mind getting muddy.

- Saturday, November 23 at 10:00 AM
- Sunday, December 8 at 10:00 AM

Directions: From Route 25A in East Norwich, take Route 106 north to Oyster Bay. Make left on to Lexington Avenue then left on to West Main Street. 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.

Underhill Preserve – Trail Clearing

Saturday, November 30, 10:00 AM. Join us as we clear the trails at Underhill Preserve in Jericho in time for the Christmas Bird Count in December. (This is a most productive count area and the trails have grown in terribly.) Tools, gloves, and snacks will be provided. This is a great chance to explore this preserve which is closed to the public. Work off your holiday feast while doing something good for the environment!

Directions for Underhill: Due to the sensitive location, we will meet and then carpool to the area where we will park. Please meet in front of the Starbucks in the Whole Foods shopping center in Jericho on Route 106/107.

HOVAS Membership Form

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.

Please fill out this form and mail with your check payable to:
Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society
P.O. Box 735
Huntington, NY 11743-0735

Name __________________________
Address __________________________
City __________________________ State ______ Zip _______
e-mail __________________________

HOBAS never sells or shares your personal information.

THANK YOU!
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.

Bayard Cutting Arboretum, Great River
Sunday, November 10, 9 AM. We’ll explore this former estate looking for birds along the numerous trails amidst the spectacular trees and other plants. Open water should reveal winter resident waterfowl. Bayard Cutting Arboretum was donated to the Long Island State Park Region by Mrs. William Bayard Cutting and her daughter, Mrs. Olivia James, in memory of William Bayard Cutting, “to provide an oasis of beauty and quiet for the pleasure, rest and refreshment of those who delight in outdoor beauty; and to bring about a greater appreciation and understanding of the value and importance of informal planting.” The grounds were designed by Frederick Law Olmstead, who also designed Central Park. Leader: Blair Broughton. Call 631-885-1881 to register. Directions: Take Southern State Parkway to exit 45 onto South Country Road. Head east until you come to entrance on your right. There may be an entrance fee.

Connetquot State Park Preserve
Sunday, November 24, 9 AM. The Preserve maintains 3,473 acres of land and water for the protection and propagation of game birds, fish, and animals. Deer and waterfowl are numerous and there are numerous rare plants, such as trailing arbutus and pyxie moss in their natural habitats. The Preserve is a winter waterfowl hang-out as well as many resident birds. There may be some surprises at the bird feeders! Leader: Blair Broughton. Call 631-885-1881 to register. Directions: From the west, get off Sunrise Highway at Oakdale-Bohemia Road, cross over Sunrise, head west and watch for the Park entrance on the right.

Northern Nassau Christmas Bird Count
Saturday, December 21. 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.)

Montauk and the South Fork
Sunday, December 8, 9 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.

Birders’ Box

September 8 – Jamaica Bay. A small group accompanied Blair Broughton on a beautiful late summer day. They saw northern harriers and osprey perched in the same tree with a peregrine falcon in a nearby tree eating its lunch. Big John's Pond produced 7 species of shorebirds including solitary sandpipers, greater and lesser yellowlegs, and sanderlings. Warblers seen were black and white, Wilson's, yellow-rumps, northern waterthrush, and American redstart. A kingfisher and great-crested flycatchers were also seen.

September 22 – Jones Beach. Blair Broughton and a few other birders enjoyed a breezy morning while seeing many great birds. While hundreds of Tree Swallows swirled overhead, species such as eastern kingbird, brown thrasher, northern flicker, and red-eyed vireo were seen. High tide found many birds sitting on the sandbar including oyster catchers, black skimmers, a royal tern, and black-bellied plovers.

October 13 – Robert Moses State Park Hawk Watch. Despite a disappointing number of birds, a dozen people enjoyed birding with Blair Broughton. A strong breeze (wrong direction) allowed only a single peregrine falcon and a northern harrier. Common loons, yellow-rumped warblers, and double-crested cormorants were also seen.

Species seen on 2013 HOBAS trips: 158
Young Naturalist Program

Call Stella Miller (516-695-0763) to register.
No unregistered siblings please.

Holiday Gifts for the Birds: Story, Craft, and Ramble in the Woods
Sunday, December 15, 10:30 AM.
With winter approaching, our feathered friends are going to be seeking extra food to help them survive the colder weather. Today we will learn how to give them a boost! We will start by reading Animals in Winter by Henrietta Bancroft, a story of how our wild neighbors prepare for the winter's cold; then turn crafty and use pine cones, suet, dried fruits, and birdseed to make bird feeders. We’ll hang them on a special holiday tree at the Sanctuary, and then take a winter’s ramble in the woods! When we return, we will quietly observe the birds that have arrived to enjoy their treats. For kids of all ages. Note that most birdseed is processed in plants that also process peanuts if allergies are an issue. Group size limited to 15.

Directions to TR Sanctuary: From the LIE take exit 41 North, Route 106. Proceed on Route 106 North to the Village of Oyster Bay. Make a right onto East Main Street. Proceed 1.5 miles up East Main Street becomes Cove Road at Oyster Bay High School). You will see signs for the TR Sanctuary parking lot on the right.

Out on Another Limb

Alex McKay

On November 5, voters in New York State will be asked to approve or disapprove Proposal 5 which will permit amending the State constitution to allow a land exchange with NYCO Minerals in the Adirondack town of Lewis. The exchange would open 200 acres of Forest Preserve old growth forest to allow expansion of NYCO’s wollastonite mine in exchange for 1,500 acres of nearby land. Opponents argue NYCO has other holdings that can be mined and that the precedent of overriding the “forever wild” clause for a private rather than a public purpose is a dangerous course of action. Proponents argue that the local economy and saving jobs is paramount. Article 14 of the State constitution, the forever wild clause, states that forest preserve lands “shall not be leased, sold, or exchanged.” Methinks we should keep it that way. I’ll be voting no November 5.