

The Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Newsletter

Serving from Fort Salonga in Suffolk Co. to Oyster Bay and Centre Island in Nassau Co.
Nov 2017 - Jan 2018

Volume 6, No. 1



HURRICANES AND BIRDS

Brendan Fogarty

For a few weeks in August and September 2017, there was little on the news except hurricanes. America had not forgotten about the active seasons of 2004 and 2005, which claimed over five thousand lives. This summer, Harvey, Irma, Jose, and Maria made headlines in rapid succession. Hurricane season peaks along with fall migration, so it is easy to imagine how disruptive these storms can be for birds. How birds interact with hurricanes is hard to study, but there have been some new findings.

After storms make landfall, unusual birds can be found. Many birds become trapped in the calm conditions within the hurricane eye, unable to cross the strongest winds along the eyewall. These trapped birds can become so concentrated that they show up on radar. In 2011, four radio-tagged Whimbrels survived Tropical Storm Irene; two waited out the storm on the coast, but two actually flew right through the worst of it! Sadly, two of the birds were legally shot for sport in the Caribbean just days later, a harsh reminder that birds need protection wherever they go, not just while they visit the United States to breed or fuel up. Whimbrels are strong flyers, but scientists suspect many smaller birds perish when they are overcome by wind. Songbirds can only store a little fat on their bodies, so even those who stay aloft may starve as the storms force them back north to repeat a major leg of their migration.

Most songbirds require live vegetation in which to find food, so strong storms can denude trees and impede foraging. Flooding can prevent ground-feeders like sparrow and thrushes from finding sustenance. In the Southeast, threatened species like Red-cockaded Woodpeckers and Florida Scrub-Jays live in small territories and do not migrate, so they are sensitive to losing their shelter from habitat destruction. *Continued on page 5.*



Ruby-crowned Kinglet: tiny but hardy and ready for a Long Island winter.

This Issue's Cover Bird:

The Ipswich Sparrow subspecies of Savannah Sparrow is not the most eye-catching beach denizen, partly due to its pale teak color scheme, partly because it scurries between dune-grass tussocks like a mouse.

Come November, the Ipswich Sparrow joins the more widespread, smaller, and darker subspecies of Savannah Sparrow on the barrier beaches of the Atlantic seaboard. In spring, the entire population of 6,000 Ipswich Sparrows converges on Sable Island, a 12 square mile sandy cay 108 miles East of Nova Scotia that looks more like a home for Jack Sparrow. Sable Island is only an average of 5 feet above sea level and thus is very sensitive to climate change.

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

**Huntington-Oyster Bay
Audubon Society, Inc.**

The mission of Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon is to protect wildlife and preserve habitat through conservation action, advocacy and education.

Board of Directors

Officers

Vice President: Simone DaRos
s.daros@aol.com

Secretary: Brendan Fogarty
bnf25@cornell.edu

Treasurer: Sean Prestia
sprestia01@gmail.com

Directors

Andy Burke,
need4seed@optonline.net

Tess Copa, *tesicopa@yahoo.com*

Sonia Garrido, *sonia_gp@yahoo.com*

Coby Klein, *cklein@gc.cuny.edu*

Newsletter & Photos

Brendan Fogarty

www.hobaudubon.org

www.facebook.com/hobaudubon

hobaudubon@gmail.com

For Distressed Wildlife

Volunteers for Wildlife

516-674-0982

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Brendan Fogarty

As the workweek came to a close, I stepped outside into a picturesque fall evening: cobalt skies marbled with the bright white fingers of tropical storm Jose, stationary and spinning somewhere south of Rhode Island, churning wind south across Long Island and taking grateful migrants with it. On the pavement lies a Magnolia Warbler, limp and restful, unmoved since it ended its sudden conclusion the night before. My office building is sided exclusively with glass, and any bird that approaches it in flight is only likely to see the reflections of the sky, but thankfully this is only the second migrant fatality I have found on the property. Still, every window must be vetted for its collision potential, even yours at home! Surviving is a challenge, especially for a bird, and especially in migration. And while spring permeates a promise of success for migrants, fall is reflective with the solemn need to forage before everything is buried in snow.

The board also finds itself in a reflective place now. We are sad to the report the passing of two valued HOBAS community members. Both of their lives will get the attention they deserve in two separate pieces in the edition. An additional change is the new vacancy of chapter president, as Stella Miller stepped down after years of meticulous service. Her legacy will also be honored in detail.

Despite our challenges, we press on, and are looking forward to a successful future. All of the board has been actively involved amazing outreach over the traditionally-slow summer, tabling for Oyster Bay's cruise night many, many times, and we hope to appear at more events through the fall. Coby and I are running some field tips to enjoy the splendor of late fall and early winter, and there are great programs for when the weather makes great indoors may prove more appealing. With the birds who don't have the option to go indoors in mind, we will be running our annual birdseed sale in late November, which will be more convenient than ever before thanks to our own Andy! Our Treasurer Sean has an eye for detail and has already organized our financials to be sleeker than ever. Sonia has made sure our events appear in every reasonable periodical. Tesi will be attending her first Audubon council meeting in November. And last and anything but least, Simone has been shining especially bright as our vice president lately, making sure all ends meet. We are fortunate to have a great crew for our board, and we offer our gratitude to all our dedicated volunteers both past and future. There are always opportunities to get involved with HOBAS, whether it be on the board or in the field. Please email any of us for more information!

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**

OUT ON A LIMB:***REMEMBERING ALEX MCKAY******Bill McAneny***

Read the title of this column again. It is the last time it will appear in our newsletter. The originator of many articles under this title has gone to a more perfect environment.

The very early days of Huntington Audubon coincided with the birth and growth of the environmental preservation movement in the U.S. Although we were to be a bird club, the founders of our chapter were insistent on emphasizing Conservation with a capital C.

We didn't even know how to do this. But we had a newsletter for our members and we were determined to learn and share. Along came Alex McKay.

Alex was an English teacher in one of the high schools in Huntington, and he was by nature and education a learner and a sharer. In an early newsletter, he wrote about the natural world we were damaging and why it was important to think differently. He realized that his opinions were contrary to the wasteful way of life at that time, so he eventually chose the title for his columns that you see above.

Today many of his columns seem to be rather tame, but in those days they were on the cutting edge. He truly felt he might be out on that limb. Nonetheless he persisted. He told us, "Here's the problem and here's what we have to do." As the cartoon character Pogo said at the time, "We have found the enemy and he is us." Alex poked holes in common beliefs, and his columns resonated with us.

We never had to remind Alex of a deadline or a need for another column. He was a self-starter and a realist. He was a good and loyal friend. I spoke with him on the phone after his dear wife, Ruth, died. He was ailing then, but he was still glad to hear from me and we had a good conversation.

The world we knew is changing fast. I am glad Alex doesn't have to fight the next battle, but we always will be looking for the next "Alex" to come along. We will always need a succession of learners and sharers to care for our fragile planet. Do not be afraid to go out on a limb.

***REMEMBERING ALICE******Ginger Mahoney***

Alice Del Bosco's dedication to all things Audubon is recognized by all who knew her. She was a founding member of Huntington Audubon Society and served two terms as president of the chapter. Alice was a "regular" at Long Island Audubon Council meetings and New York State Audubon Council meetings and served as secretary for the latter. She had a special place in her heart for Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and served on its board for over 15 years.

While I too applaud Alice's service and accomplishments, I fondly remember a friend and mentor....

I had decided to become a "birder" (a long story) and so attended my first ever Audubon meeting in the basement of the Huntington Public Library. Alone, and knowing no one, I took a seat and waited! Within minutes a pleasant woman, named Alice, sat down and began talking to ME. I liked her and to my surprise when she got up and started the meeting, I learned she was the chapter's president.

That night in 1996 was the first of many Audubon meetings for me and I quickly learned that Alice Del Bosco was a force that got things done. She motivated others with her vision and willingness to work hard on causes she believed in. TRS was one of those causes. This first National Audubon Society reaches thousands of children each year and Alice encouraged our chapter to support them with generous donations from our annual Birdseed Sale fundraiser and attendance at their annual Gala. Whenever the Sanctuary needed an extra volunteer or someone to man a booth at one of their events, Alice could always be counted on.

Committee meetings of all kinds - education, membership, 100th Birthday of National Audubon, HAS's 50th Anniversary - met in Alice's home. She was a gracious host who welcomed us into her kitchen for coffee or tea and then into the dining room where cookies and snacks and our agenda awaited us! After long hours of work and discussion at NYS Audubon Council meetings, Alice was ready to host a "party" in her room or attend it in someone else's! She was a people person!

In time, I too was attending those NY State Council meetings with Alice. She knew everybody and everybody knew and respected Alice Del Bosco. *Continued on page 8.*

THANK YOU STELLA

Simone DaRos

As many of you may already know, Stella has stepped away as Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon's President last May, after ten years of chapter leadership. HOBAS will miss our President, Stella Miller, for her vivacious, enthusiastic and hard-working leadership. Those of you who know Stella undoubtedly have experienced her infectious laughter, boundless energy, and deep commitment to education and excellence for all things wildlife and conservation. It has been these attributes and more that Stella has brought to her presidency of HOBAS for the last decade.

When Stella initially signed onto HOBAS as a Board member, 11 years ago, her leadership skills and progressive vision for the chapter became evident and she was quickly elected chapter President in record time. Throughout Stella's tenure she received several awards recognizing her many accomplishments including the prestigious Audubon New York Norman Stotz Award for Outstanding Chapter Leadership in March 2011.

Her devotion to volunteer-based projects and collaborative relationships lead her to spearhead many initiatives on habitat restoration and preservation at Stillwell Woods and Preserve, Underhill Preserve, Shu Swamp Preserve, and the collaborative effort in the formation of the Preserve Plum Island Coalition. Stella's networking, fundraising skills and outreach education skills shined during her presidency at HOBAS.

From tabling events, designing educational literature, giving educational programs, booking monthly programs, coordinating volunteer opportunities, maintaining records and designing the HOBAS website... and much more!

Stella worked sunrise to sunset driven by her desire to pursue ways the chapter could further engage in protecting birds and other wildlife, to promote conservation action, and to assist community members in connecting with nature.

We want to thank Stella for her dedication to Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society and her commitment to HOBAS' mission. Stella will be missed as the chapter engages in our mission but we are grateful that Stella continues to assist HOBAS with habitat restoration at Underhill Preserve. HOBAS' Board of Directors thanked Stella and gave her a handmade silver Raven charm necklace, a raven plaque, wild flowers, and a cake as a token of our appreciation for her commitment to HOBAS. We wish Stella the best as she explores new opportunities and horizons.



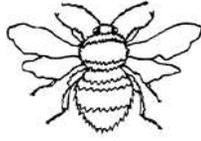
Hospitality Committee Seeks New Chairperson

HOBAS is looking for a new hospitality chairperson. The chairperson would be fully in charge of shopping, setting up, cleaning up, and seeking volunteers and donations for our monthly meetings held at the Cold Spring Harbor Public Library the second Wednesday each month from 6-8:45pm. If you or someone you know is interested or would like more information in chairing the HOBAS hospitality committee please email Simone at:

s.daros@aol.com



The last Semipalmated Plover to depart for fall considers her cold sandscape.



Teachers: Seeking a Schoolyard Native Garden Plan

Teachers are invited to submit a detailed plan to create a native plant, bird-friendly, pollinator, schoolyard habitat garden at their school.

Planting a native plant, bird-friendly, pollinator, schoolyard habitat garden can be a valuable resource for teachers, students, and wildlife throughout the seasons. Developing an outside school space filled with native grasses, perennial flowers, and fruiting shrubs and trees can serve as both a passive learning site and a direct-teaching area where students make field observations and gain personal appreciation and hands-on knowledge about the interconnections found between plants and animals.

Attracting native pollinators such as bees, butterflies, and birds to a schoolyard habitat garden filled with native plants is a fascinating way to excite youngsters in foundational science concepts that are fundamental to life sciences. Restoring a schoolyard landscape with beneficial plants provides an area to attract and sustain wildlife and is a place where students and the school community engage in science inquiry in a meaningful context and may become involved in cooperative projects.

Teachers are invited to submit a native plant, bird-friendly, pollinator schoolyard habitat garden plan for your school project by Nov 10th 2017. We will select the one project with the best plan and will sponsor the purchase of your native plants. All entries must include an introduction about the project, details about the school site, plans to prepare, plant, and maintain the habitat, a list of native plants (common and Latin names), and teacher and administrator's name with contact information. Please mail all entries to:

Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society
P.O. Box 735
Huntington, NY 11743-0735
Attn: native plant schoolyard habitat

The recipient will be notified by November 30th, good luck!

HURRICANES AND BIRDS (Continued from page 1)

In general, storms are dangerous for birds and can undo years of conservation work. But species in the Caribbean are even more exposed, since their habitats are often restricted to single islands. Hurricane Iniki in 1992 was blamed as the last straw in the decline of the Kama'o, which was the most abundant bird on Kuai only one hundred years earlier. There have been several modern storm-related extinctions in the Caribbean. It is remarkable that a species that has been adapting to their island home for eons can be gone overnight. It makes one realize how adaptive – and yet failingly vulnerable – biodiversity is.

We can all help migrants by conserving land, especially precious breeding grounds and stopover sites. Even at home we can put decals on our windows to avoid bird strikes, and provide native plants so birds can get the nutrients from the plant sources they have known for thousands of years (did you know that antioxidants in native berries help flying birds prevent buildup of toxins as they migrate?). We cannot stop hurricanes, but we can make sure birds are best prepared to tackle the natural and unnatural hazards of the world.

SUMMER SCHOLARSHIPS AT THE SANCTUARY

Julie Nelson

Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center would like to express our gratitude to the Huntington-Oyster Bay Society for graciously donating five, week-long scholarships, for children from the Westbury and Oyster Bay-East Norwich School Districts.

During their weeks the children engaged in hands-on activities such as bird watching, pond and marine ecology, habitat exploration and so much more. The children left each and every day laden in dirt and smiles from the experiences they gained outdoors. They also created lasting friendships and a deeper appreciation for the wonders that nature gives us.

For years the Huntington-Oyster Bay Society has provided these positive experiences for so many children. The Sanctuary is very thankful for their dedicated and unwavering support of these children.

Programs and Field Trips: Nov 2017 - Jan 2018

GENERAL INFO

- Nature programs, field trips and activities are open to members and nonmembers alike.
- **All programs, unless otherwise specified, are held at the Cold Spring Harbor Library.** Refreshments begin at 7:00 and the speaker starts at 7:30. Registration is *not* required.
- Field trips are open to both experts and newcomers. **Registration is required.** Please register at least two days ahead of your trip.
- Call the leader for a status update in case of unfavorable weather.
- Don't forget to bring binoculars, proper clothing and shoes, and insect repellent! If you need to borrow binoculars, ask your leader if she or he has extras to bring. And for the comfort and safety of all participants, please refrain from wearing perfume or smoking on field trips.



We are lucky to have a healthy wintering population of Canvasback in our territory!

November

→ **Program: *From Whales to Plankton-Why Our Local Waters Are Worth Protecting***

Speaker: Chris Paparro

Wednesday, November 8, 7 PM

With endless stories and photos of fish kills, oil spills, etc filling our daily newsfeeds, it appears that our environment is in a horrific state of "Doom and Gloom". Although we do face many environmental challenges, this constant bombardment of negativity creates a lack of enthusiasm for action. Regain your enthusiasm for protecting our marine environment by learning about some of the fascinating marine life that inhabits the waters of Long Island. *Chris manages the Marine*

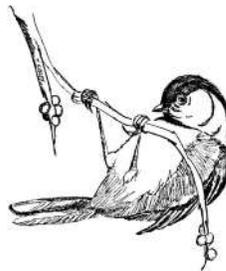
Sciences Center at Stony Brook University's Southampton Campus and writes for several magazines. He has a passion for wildlife photography and communication, coastal ecology, fishing, and the outdoors. He has a BS in Marine Science from LIU/Southampton.

→ **Trip: *Jones Beach State Park***
Sunday, November 19, 9 AM

By late November, many of the winter species have returned. We may see a variety of seaducks, raptors, and Snow Buntings. Lost birds from all over the country can end up at barrier beaches this season, so we may see something surprising!

Leader: Brendan Fogarty **Registration:** 516-782-0293

Directions: Meadowbrook Parkway south, take first right into West End after drawbridge. Continue past tollbooth (no fee), Police Station, and stop sign, and make a right after the sign for the West End Boat Basin and Coast Guard. Meet by the little concession building facing the boat basin.



→ **Annual Bird Seed Sale!**

Pickup from Wed Nov 29 through Sunday Dec 3

Location: Wild Birds Unlimited, 625 Jericho Tpk, Syosset
516 226 1780

For more information, see **page 8** or go to **hobaudubon.org**

December

→ **Trip: *Montauk Point***
Sunday, December 2, 9 AM

All day trip. Winter waterfowl abound including scoters, eiders, loons, gannets, and numerous pond ducks

Leader: Brent Bomkamp **Registration:** 631-885-1881

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 at the concession building at Montauk Point State Park.

→ **Program: *America's National Parks: A Visitors Perspective***
Speaker: Denise Hackert-Stoner and Scott Stoner

Wednesday, December 13, 7 PM

America's National Park Service celebrated its 100th anniversary last year. In honor of this occasion, we will

Programs and Field Trips: Nov 2017 - Jan 2018

enjoy a look at the grandeur of scenery and the diversity of birds and wildlife of the national parks and other special places protected by the National Park Service. From Maine’s rocky coast to Florida’s everglades, through the Great Plains and badlands, the mountains and deserts of the west, and on to the unique habitats of Hawaii and Alaska, we invite you to celebrate our Parks with us! *Scott and Denise are expert nature photographers and have served as officers for multiple bird clubs and conservation groups.*

→ **Little Naturalists Program: *Holiday for the Birds-Storytime, Craft and Walk in the Woods for Kids***
 Location: Cold Spring Harbor Library
Saturday, December 16, 1- 3 PM

Winter is fast approaching, and soon our feathered friends are going to be seeking extra food. Today we will learn how to give them a little help! We will start by reading a story about how our wild neighbors prepare for the changing of the seasons. We will then turn crafty, and make our own homemade bird feeders out of pinecones! Afterwards, we will all take a winter walk in the woods! This program is for

ages 3 to 7 years old. Registration is required!
Leader: Tesi Copa Registration: 631-903-5556

January

→ **Trip: *Sunken Meadow State Park***
Sunday, January 7, 9 AM

We will investigate the trails, ponds, and seashore to see what birds are leftover from the fall and which birds have arrived for the winter.

Leader: Coby Klein Registration: 585-880-0915
Directions: Take Sunken Meadow Parkway north to the end. Meet in the southwest corner of the main parking lot.

→ **Program: To Be Announced!** Visit hobaudubon.org for more future events as they are announced!

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



Future conservationists show off their temporary tattoos and HOBAS totes at our Cruise Night table.
 Photo: Sonia Garrido



Current conservationists at CinemaArts! Half of our board: L-R Sonia Garrido, Coby Klein, and Tesi Copa!
 Photo: Sonia Garrido

Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon
PO Box 735
Huntington, NY 11743

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Huntington, NY
Permit No. 546

Annual Birdseed Sale

HOBAS would not be HOBAS without our annual birdseed sale! However we are mixing it up just a little this year, hosting the birdseed at Wild Birds Unlimited like our wildly popular Plant Sale back in the spring. But we are offering even more flexibility in picking up your order!

How to order: order forms will be distributed to HOBAS members and should arrive in your mailbox mid-October. You can also find the form at hobaudubon.org. Please place your order with a check by **November 19!**

How to pick up: on the form you are asked to select a SINGLE pickup date, from Wednesday Nov 29 to Sunday Dec 3. We ask for one single date as a courtesy to the volunteers who will be on standby to load your birdseed into your vehicle. Weekday pickup hours are 10 AM to 6 PM, weekend hours are 12 PM to 5 PM.

If you have any questions, please contact our own Andy Burke or Stella Miller at Wild Birds Unlimited: 516-226-1780

Wild Birds Unlimited
625 Jericho Turnpike
Syosset 11791
GPS alternative: 48 Hidden Ridge Dr, Syosset

REMEMBERING ALICE *(continued from page 3)*

I felt her guiding me, teaching me. She encouraged me to attend round table discussions and to report on the activities of our chapter. Alice never needed the limelight. She just needed to know that other chapter members were there also learning and willing to champion the causes she so strongly believed in.

There are so many little memories about Alice that still make me smile. She was an avid reader and always read Time Magazine cover to cover. She loved her yoga classes and could stretch with the best of them! I remember a birding trip to Louisiana where we sat drinking coffee and eating beignets at Café Du Monde and how interested she was in how the city of New Orleans was recovering from Hurricane Katrina. I remember the Birdathon Day when she identified my first indigo bunting for me and she was as happy as I was.

Alice was a remarkable woman who gave so much and was loved by so many. She will be missed greatly but her passion and spirit will continue on in those of us who were touched by her. We will be thinking that we just can't join one more committee or that we cannot give one more volunteer hour and then we'll find ourselves saying yes we'll do it. It was always hard to say no to Alice!