

# Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Presents

## Nature's Engineers: Beavers Patrick Thomas, PhD December 9, 2015 7pm



For years beavers were routinely trapped and shot and their dams destroyed. But these days, beavers are getting new respect as they are finally being recognized as nature's engineers. In fact, across the West, they are being welcomed into the landscape as a defense against the withering effects of climate change. Beaver dams, it turns out, have beneficial effects that can't easily be replicated in other ways. They raise the water table alongside a stream, aiding the growth of trees and plants that stabilize the banks and prevent erosion. They improve fish and wildlife habitat and promote new, rich soil.

Birdwatchers, especially, have a reason to love beavers- turns out the critters' dams provide critical habitat for a variety of migratory songbirds. Studies have found that the more dams beavers build, the more abundant and diverse local songbirds become.

Join us tonight as we welcome Dr. Thomas and learn just how busy and beneficial beavers really are!

**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. Thomas has worked on field projects throughout the world. Within the past five years he has worked in South Africa, where he developed techniques to non-invasively collect hair samples from lions, leopards and cheetahs for DNA analyses, and in South America where he has been working to evaluate the short-and long-term effects of live-shearing guanacos for their wool, which is being tried as a conservation strategy. He has also traveled extensively for WCS, leading a team to bring back an orphaned snow leopard cub from the Himalayas of Pakistan, to consult with the Kenya Wildlife Service and Uganda Wildlife Education Center on the redesign of their captive animal facilities in Nairobi and Entebbe, and to lead numerous WCS Members' tours to southern Africa.

**All meetings are free and open to the public**  
**Cold Spring Harbor Library, 95 Harbor Road (Rt 25A), Cold Spring Harbor**  
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