



The Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society Newsletter

Serving from Fort Salonga in Suffolk County to Oyster Bay and Centre Island in Nassau County

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The mission of the Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society is to protect wildlife and preserve habitat through conservation action, advocacy, and education. This chapter territory serves both Huntington and Oyster Bay townships with its all-volunteer chapter 501c3 non-profit established in 1961.

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Letter from the Editor

By Alexandra Martinez

"This morning I stopped to watch the geese fly, even though I didn't have the time to do so. And I realized that not having the time to do something might be the very reason why I need to do it." — Craig D. Lounsbrough, author and counselor

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! As most of you know (as dedicated readers of this quarterly newsletter), in the last issue I focused on a very special goose whom I aptly named "Broken Wing." Well, here is "part two" of his very sad little story. This goose invaded my life in a way I never thought possible. Like my friends and family, he was on my mind every day. He and his 7 feathered brethren were stalking me - morning and afternoon since June - waiting for the delicious albeit slightly imperfect fruits of my mother's labor (she works at Trader Joe's and was getting Broken Wing fruit, kindly donated by Trader Joe's, as they do for the Sweetbriar Nature Center as well). The fruit was for him specifically, and thus the moochers and freeloaders in his family. I was giving him special treats because I couldn't find anyone willing to give him the treatment his wing needed. I kept a close eye on him and would venture out as early as 6AM to feed him and his family. My family and friends knew about Broken Wing and would ask about him - even bring him a safe little snack on their way to my house if I asked.

When someone or something - in this case, a goose - becomes a part of your daily routine, it's hard to fill the void when they're gone. I am sad to share that Sunday, November 2, is the last day I saw my sweet feathered friend, Broken Wing. I didn't even get to properly feed him that night because an aggressive flock of 5 taunted his group of 8 and chased them out of my yard. I can't put food down when there are multiple flocks around because Canada geese become very aggressive and it's honestly like a gang war in the yard. So, sadly, the last moment I saw him wasn't great. He was chased out of my yard and when the other geese are being aggressive I always worry he's going to get hurt. So I had to go inside so they wouldn't see me and try to hang around. On November 3rd, there were strong winds and rains from the Nor'easter and I'm honestly not sure what happened to him. I searched the pond and nearby areas, knowing that he could only walk or swim, so he had to be close by. I even posted on the Bald Eagles of Centerport Facebook page that has tons of locals out on the scene every day. No one had seen him, but everyone knew which goose I was talking about. People offered to care for him if he was found, but I was never able to find him. On my laps around the pond searching for him, I didn't see his body anywhere. I am glad I didn't because it means I can pretend he might not have had a hard end of his life (eaten by a predator or hit by a car), and I can be hopeful that someone else was able to find him the help that he needed that I couldn't seem to secure for him. My sister knew how upset I was over Broken Wing's disappearance, so she bought me a Canada goose keychain and a beautiful little book I would encourage everyone to read entitled "The Goose with the Broken Wing," a Hearten Books children's storybook.

It's been over a month and I still look for him. Sometimes, when a goose has ruffled their feathers, I get excited with the hope that it's him - that Broken Wing has returned. But, I know this is very unlikely at this point. At a minimum, I feel thankful for all that Broken Wing has taught me, about geese, about caring for others, about family and those things you hold dear. And I am forever grateful to him for making me always stop to watch the geese fly (or walk, or swim, like he was only capable of doing). It might sound ridiculous, but I wish he could be commemorated in some way. The Bald Eagles of Centerport just erected the statue to memorialize "Dad" (the male eagle who began it all for us Centerporters) at the Mill Dam Bridge. I have my own ways of making sure his legacy lives on though, like writing about Broken Wing for two newsletters in a row! May he Rest in Peace wherever he is - and if you happen to see him or know about what happened to him - please reach out to me!

Here is a screen capture from the last video I have of Broken Wing from October 18th. I am also sad I didn't take more photos of him (although the 300 I have of him are probably enough).



An Evening Focused on Environmental Education and Advocacy



By Christine Suter

On Thursday, November 13th, 2025 HOBAS had the privilege of co-sponsoring “Birds, Beverages, and Small Bites - A Policy Potluck About Healthy Coasts” at the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center in Oyster Bay. The in-person event featured three speakers: [Victoria O’Neill](#), Director of Coastal Resilience, Audubon Connecticut and New York, [Christine Suter](#), Executive Director of Friends of the Bay and Co-Vice President of the Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society, and [Erin McGrath](#), Policy Director, Audubon New York.

Victoria O’Neill gave a presentation about why salt marshes are important, outlining the benefits they provide for shorebirds and other animals, as well as for humans and the planet. She also highlighted some of the current projects Audubon New York is involved in to restore salt marshes in our area.

I, Christine Suter, spoke about how Friends of the Bay, a local environmental conservation and advocacy nonprofit organization, is working to preserve and protect the Oyster Bay-Cold Spring Harbor Estuary through water quality monitoring and shellfish restoration projects.

Erin McGrath provided a mini advocacy training focused on the Horseshoe Crab Protection Act as the action item. She discussed the intrinsic connection between horseshoe crabs and migratory shorebirds and outlined the most effective ways to advocate for policy change with our elected officials either over the phone, through social media or via email or snail mail. She ended her presentation by displaying a QR code which when scanned led audience members to a digital petition asking Governor Kathy Hochul to sign the Horseshoe Crab Protection Act.

The event was educational and engaging and audience members asked the speakers a lot of great questions. Thank you to our friends and colleagues at the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary for inviting us to co-sponsor such a wonderful event.

2025 Bird Seed Sale

By Michael Frank

To all of our loyal members (and non-members too) who joined us for 2025’s Annual Bird Seed Sale fundraising event. We had another successful event and we would like to extend our gratitude to everyone who made that possible. We would like to especially extend a very special thank you to Andy and the entire staff at the Wild Birds Unlimited store on Jericho Turnpike in Syosset. They were, again, very generous, providing us with their help, their time, and their generosity throughout the entire process. Thank you to all! Looking forward to next year and to keeping our wonderful birds well fed through the winter and the upcoming year.

Daily Savings Club Member Benefits

EVERY DAY YOU GET **15% OFF** The Regular Price of All Our Exclusive, Fresh, High-Quality Bird Food.

\$10 BIRD BUCK For Every \$200 You Spend on Any Merchandise in the Store.

5% OFF The Sale Price of All Our High-Quality Bird Food During Our Bird Food Sales.

AND YOU GET A **FREE GIFT** For Joining the Only Club that Saves You Money on the Best Bird Food All Year.

Join Now!

Weekdays only
only valid for
US-born birds
must be a resident
of our region

The Time is Now to Save Horseshoe

Crabs in New York

By Christine Suter

We do not have much time left to convince Governor Kathy Hochul to sign the Horseshoe Crab Protection Act (S.4289/A.4997) which would ban the taking of horseshoe crabs in New York State for bait and for biomedical use. She has until December 19th to sign the bill into law, but she may choose to veto the bill before then.

Horseshoe crabs have existed relatively unchanged for approximately 450 million years and they have survived five mass extinction events. They are a keystone species, which means that there will be devastating repercussions on other species if their numbers fall below levels that are sustainable. The *rufa* red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*) and other species of migratory shorebirds are particularly dependent on horseshoe crabs for their survival. They rely heavily on fatty-rich horseshoe crab eggs to refuel them on their long 9,000-mile trip north to their arctic breeding grounds each spring.

Sadly, horseshoe crab populations in New York have been steadily decreasing because they are harvested and chopped up to be used as bait in the eel and whelk fisheries and because their spawning beaches are decreasing in number due to shoreline hardening and sea level rise.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's benchmark stock assessments of horseshoe crabs from 2019 and 2024 both showed horseshoe crab stock status in New York as being "poor." New York State is the only state on the Atlantic coast exhibiting poor status of horseshoe crab stock.

Furthermore, a study released this summer in the journal *Nature* by Crosby et al. revealed a severe decline in multiple horseshoe crab populations in the Long Island Sound over the past 20 years.

For half a century, humans have depended on horseshoe crabs for our survival as they have played a major role in modern medicine. The horseshoe crab's unique copper-based blue blood has been used for decades by the biomedical industry to test for infection-causing bacteria in injectable drugs, intravenous solutions, vaccines, and medical implants. The process of extracting their blood, however, leaves them depleted and unable to thrive and reproduce. Thankfully, there are now alternatives to using horseshoe crab blood in the biomedical industry, and we can focus on helping them instead of harming them. For decades, horseshoe crabs have helped save our lives. Now it's our turn to help save theirs before it's too late.






Please join us in asking Governor Hochul to sign the Horseshoe Crab Protection Act today by visiting <https://act.audubon.org/a/horseshoecrab> or by scanning the QR code provided.

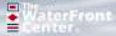
Photo Credit: Photos taken by Christine Suter in Slaughter Beach, Delaware during a horseshoe crab spawning event in May of this year.

Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon
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  **Friends OF THE Bay** 
PROTECTING OYSTER BAY & COLD SPRING HARBOR Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center

“Winter Ducks of Oyster Bay”
Duck Talk and Walk
Saturday, February 28 at 10 am
(Rain Date March 1)

Introductory duck talk at 
1 West End Ave.

Presented by
Christine Suter
Executive Director, Friends of the Bay
Co-Vice President, Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society

Followed by a duck walk along
Beekman Beach and
West Shore Rd.

Co-hosted by the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center and the Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society

To register visit www.friendsofthebay.com/events or scan the QR code

Winter Ducks in Oyster Bay A Duck Talk and Walk with Christine Suter

Long Island is like a Florida vacation for winter ducks. In fact the Lester Wolff/Oyster Bay National Wildlife Refuge has the greatest winter waterfowl use of any of the Long Island Refuges. More than 20,000 ducks have been reported at one time during peak use.

Join Christine Suter, executive director of Friends of the Bay and co-vice president of HOBAS, for an introductory lecture about the numerous species of ducks that make their home in Oyster Bay and Cold Spring Harbor for the winter. Then test your duck-watching skills during a walk along Beekman Beach and West Shore Road in Oyster Bay.

When: Saturday, February 28th at 10 am

Where: The WaterFront Center, 1 West End Ave., Oyster Bay

Register at: www.friendsofthebay.org/events



UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS & PROGRAMS



Birds of Montauk Trip

Thursday, January 1st, 2026 at 10A.M.

During this all day trip, Dr. Coby Klein will discuss winter waterfowl abound including scores, eiders, loons, gannets, and numerous pond ducks.

Directions: LIE to Exit 70, Manorville. Go south on Route 111 to Route 27. Take Route 27 east all the way to the Montauk Point Lighthouse. There may be a parking fee. Meet at the concession building at Montauk Point State Park.

Registration in advance is required with Dr. Coby Klein: 585-880-0915

Beach Babies: Long Island's Nesting Shorebirds with Dr. Coby Klein

January 28th, 2026 at 7P.M.

Cold Spring Harbor Library

Each spring, Long Island's beaches host a remarkable drama as piping plovers, oystercatchers, from predators to tides to the footsteps of beachgoers, as they raise their young in the open sand. Discover their incredible resilience and the local protection efforts that keep their fragile coastal world alive.

Registration in advance is required with Dr. Coby Klein: 585-880-0915

Winter Duck Walk

Sunday, February 1st, 2026 at 10 A.M.

(if it rains, the event is cancelled)

Join HOBAS Co-Vice President Christine Suter for a winter duck walk along the Lloyd Neck Road causeway to look for long-tailed ducks, scaups, common goldeneyes, black ducks and more!

Directions: From Main Street in Huntington turn onto West Neck Road and head northeast for approximately 3.5 miles. Turn Left at the entrance to West Neck Beach. Park in the West Neck Beach parking lot and meet at the entrance booth. Note that the bathroom on site may be closed during the winter.

Email christine.hobas@gmail.com to sign up.

Christine Suter is hosting an **additional duck walk on February 28th with Friends of the Bay & the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary at the Water Front Center** (see folded half opposite postage). Register through the QR code on the infographic.

Pinecone Bird Feeder Program

Wednesday February 18th 2026 at 1:00pm (Raindate: February 19th, 2026 at 1:00pm)

&

Wednesday April 8th 2026 at 1:00pm (Raindate: April 9th, 2026 at 1:00pm)

Winter is here, and our feathered friends could use some extra food. Let's help them by making our own homemade birdfeeders out of pinecones and birdseed! We will also go out for a walk in the woods, weather permitting. For kids and adults age 5 and up.

Cold Spring Harbor Library
95 Harbor Road
Cold Spring Harbor, NY

This program is FREE, but registration is a must. To register please call or text 631-896-2872.

