



# 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

Happy Spring! The birds have been chirping since the crocus and the daffodils came up - which seemed earlier this year than ever before! Spring is a symbolic time for rebirth and renewal - as seen in many pieces of literature and settings across television, film, and text - with blossoms and blooms reminding all that the dead of winter is hardly permanent. While the Spring gives us a time to be hopeful, we cannot completely leave behind what happened in the earlier seasons and how they've impacted us in this moment. One significant occurrence from this winter season is the loss of the Dad eagle of the Bald Eagles of Centerport.

It was a very sad day in Centerport. The "Dad" Eagle passed away right before Christmastime. On December 22, 2022, a brave soul, Bobby Horvath, jumped into the freezing water and muck of the Mill Pond to save "Dad." He was taken to the Wildlife In Need Of Rescue & Rehabilitation (WINORR), but sadly passed away the next morning.

Liz Schwartz, a prominent member, advocate, and photographer of the Bald Eagles of Centerport Facebook page, stated there: "For the past 5 years we have chronicled the lives of the Bald Eagles of Centerport. They are a symbol of hope, freedom, and beauty. Through the pandemic, sometimes they were the only thing to look forward to as we suffered losses and uncertainty. I thank everyone who has told their stories about how the eagles 'got them through' a tough time."

And that right there really hit home. While I am sure many of us have scoffed at the amount of Nikons and Canons on and around the bridge at any given time, I've come to reflect on how beautifully symbolic that bridge has become - a gathering place for people of all walks to take pleasure in one of nature's most magnificent creatures that we have been blessed with flying OUR skies. It's truly magical how a pair of eagles created such a large human fanbase that bonded on that bridge and around the Mill Pond, over early mornings, evening sunsets, and everything in between. People made real friends there with others they probably would have never met in any other way or on any other occasion.

While this news of "Dad's" passing is incredibly sad, it's also an incredibly beautiful moment. To see how many people were affected by the Dad and all his offspring is moving enough to restore your faith in humanity if it happened to be lacking. Liz Schwartz wrote: "As I begin to process the last 24 hours, I want to thank all of you who have reached out or left kind words on the page. What started as a Facebook page has become a community of kind people working together for a common good. Whether it is cleaning up the environment, raising money for WINORR, or educating our precious children about the joys of wildlife, we share many of the same values."

With that said, the Bald Eagles of Centerport played a silly joke on April Fools Day. Rob Schwartz, "leader" of the Bald Eagles of Centerport page, posted that he flew a drone over the nest and that mama had laid FOUR eggs with the new ruler of the roost. While just a silly April Fools joke, we are hopeful for that day when a new pair - or maybe even three - eggs are laid for Centerport's newest wings to take flight.

## Winter Ducks in Oyster Bay

### By Christine Suter, Acting Recording Secretary

On February 25th, I gave a winter duck talk and walk at Friends of the Bay in Oyster Bay, co-hosted by the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center. Approximately 30 people of all ages attended to learn about the types of winter ducks that can be found in Oyster Bay.

The Oyster Bay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), recently renamed the Lester Wolff NWR is home to 23 species of waterfowl and has the greatest winter waterfowl use of any of the Long Island NWRs. More than 20,000 ducks have been reported during peak use.

The event began with a lecture at the Friends of the Bay office and ended with a duck walk along Beekman Beach and West Shore Rd. Attendees identified greater scaups, buffleheads, long-tailed ducks, mallards, black ducks, red-breasted mergansers and one pair of common goldeneye.

Winter duck watching is such a fun and rewarding activity and we're so lucky to have such an abundance of them here. The harbors and bays of Long Island are like a Florida vacation for winter ducks. Most of them spend the rest of the year far up north in their arctic breeding grounds. You can always count on the ducks returning to Long Island every winter and it's always sad to see them go at the end of the season.

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## Introducing Christine Suter; Acting Recording Secretary



We would like to give a shout out to Christine Suter who has recently joined the HOBAS board as acting recording secretary. Christine is a native of Huntington, New York and currently resides in Oyster Bay where she is the Assistant Director of Friends of the Bay, a local environmental nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor watershed and surrounding estuary.

Christine is a naturalist, nature writer and conservationist. She writes a semi-regular "Did You Know" column in the Oyster Bay Herald about local marine life. In 2020 she earned a Master of Arts in Marine Conservation and Policy from Stony Brook University's School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences. Christine describes what made her want to devote her life to conservation:

"When I was a kid we didn't go to church on Sundays. Instead my mother took us to what she referred to as "The Church of Nature," which meant

that she took us on nature walks in the woods or at the beach. At a very young age she instilled in me and my brother a deep love of nature and sense of duty to protect it."

Christine's interests include horseshoe crabs, beach combing, kayaking, hiking, shorebird and winter duck watching. She is an avid beach cleaner and documents her beach cleaning finds on Instagram @longislandcoastalcleanup.

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## Nominating Committee Seeks Like-Minded Leaders

Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society (HOBAS), formerly Huntington Audubon Society, is seeking serious candidates for board of director roles and leadership positions. The nominating committee is eager to meet interested individuals who feel they may have the skill set to further enhance HOBAS' mission; to protect birds and wildlife through conservation action and education or who can support the board in various administrative ways. Members of the HOBAS Board of Directors are all volunteers who attend monthly meetings and serve on committees such as: programs, field trip leaders, public outreach, conservation, education, newsletter, and communications.



HOBAS, established in 1963 as an all-volunteer, not-for-profit, 501 (c)3 chapter of National Audubon Society is looking forward to reinvigorating the board and leadership with new recruits who want to build upon HOBAS' successes. If you have an interest in dedicating your passion and time to a long- established organization of like-minded individuals, who care deeply about birds, wildlife, conservation, and education then please contact Michael Frank, HOBAS' Treasurer, for more information.

# Plants for Hummingbirds Are Plants For Pollinators

By Julie Sullivan

[www.GoNativeLI.com/Hummingbirds](http://www.GoNativeLI.com/Hummingbirds)

Hummingbirds are efficient pollinators. Every day our ruby-throated hummingbirds eat several times their weight in nectar, pollinating neighboring flowers in the process. Additionally, they supplement their sugary diet with small insects. According to the Cornell Berry Team, “A female ruby-throated hummingbird feeding her young can consume about 2,000 tiny, soft-bodied insects per day -- that’s a lot of the invasive spotted-wing drosophila, or aphids, or gnats or tiny spiders!”



Ruby-Throated Hummingbird on Bee Balm from Audubon Media

Noted entomologist, Douglas Tallamy, author of *Bringing Nature Home*, calls hummingbirds a keystone species, “because they are a species upon which others depend. Thus, when a hummingbird feeds on the nectar and pollen of blueberry flowers, it pollinates the flowers that will produce fruit eaten by songbirds and dozens of other animals, including humans.” Tallamy has also stated, “the widespread preference for non-native plants in the horticultural industry has globally transformed millions of acres from potential habitat into ‘food deserts’ for native insects, with the unintentional consequence of reducing the abundance and distribution of birds as well.” To counterbalance this trend we can plant pollinator gardens on our properties and in sections of our lawns.

To start a pollinator garden, first set up a hummingbird feeder, then begin designing a hummingbird garden with vertical layers and tiers for easy flower access near the protective branches of a small native tree and/or shrub. To satisfy hummingbirds’ needs, grow nectar-rich, tubular flowers in bright colors, such as orange, pink, or purple, and opt for clumps of each of several native perennial flowering plant species the

birds are likely to recognize. Select a variety of species that will bloom in succession throughout the growing season. For example, plant 4 each of pink azalea, black cohosh, and columbine for spring; and aster, Canadian lily, and goldenrod for fall flowers, totaling 24 plants.

- Find a list of native plants for hummingbirds on Long Island: [www.GoNativeLI.com/Hummingbirds](http://www.GoNativeLI.com/Hummingbirds)
- Avoid using insecticides or other chemicals, and purchase plants from reliable native plant suppliers to be sure they haven’t been grown with systemic neonicotinoid insecticides that kill insect pollinators and deter hummingbirds.
- Remember to specify the scientific name when purchasing.
- If possible, request a straight plant, not a ‘cultivar’.
- Ask too if your supplier will help design your garden.

## Local reliable suppliers include:

ReWild Long Island	KMS Native Plants LLC	LI Native Plant Initiative
Northport Native Garden Initiative	Dropseed Native Landscapes L.I.	Quality Parks Native Plants

How to Create a Hummingbird Friendly Yard	Getting Started with Native Plants	Establishing Pollinator Friendly Habitats and Food Sources for Bees, Butterflies, and Birds	Suffolk Alliance for Pollinators

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

Non-Profit  
Organization  
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Huntington, NY  
Permit No. 546

For \$20 a year, you can be a member of the all-volunteer Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society. Your membership directly supports HOBAS' mission to advocate for wildlife and habitat through conservation efforts, educational opportunities, and youth programs. Please join or renew today; HOBAS appreciates your support!

**Name:**

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**Mailing Address:**

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**Email Address:**

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**Telephone Number:**

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**Including:**

\_\_\_\_\_ \$20.00 annual chapter only membership

\_\_\_\_\_ Additional Donation

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



## UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS



### May 14<sup>th</sup>, 8AM, Hempstead Lake State Park:

It's Mother's Day and the height of spring migration! Hempstead Lake is one of the warbler rest spots on Long Island. A great trip for families that should turn up a treasure trove of migrants. Directions: Take the Southern State Parkway to Exit 18 (Eagle Ave.). Turn right onto Eagle Ave. and continue into the park. We will meet in the main parking lot by the Environmental Education & Resiliency Center.

### May 21<sup>st</sup>, 8 AM, Jamaica Bay National Wildlife

**Refuge:** No location on Long Island gets a greater diversity of migrants than Jamaica Bay. The Refuge is host at this time of year to songbirds, shorebirds, waders, terns, and so much more. Directions: Take the Southern State Parkway West to the Belt Parkway to Exit 17S (Cross Bay Blvd.). Turn right and take Cross Bay Blvd south to the visitors' center.

### June 25<sup>th</sup>, 9 AM, Caumsett State Park:

Caumsett is a breeding bird hotspot. It is also home to the only remaining population of Baltimore checkerspot butterflies on Long Island, plus a host of other butterfly species. Directions: From Main St (Rte. 25A) in the Village of Huntington, turn onto West Neck Rd. and follow north until you reach the Park, which is on the left.

### July 30<sup>th</sup>, 9 AM, Cranberry Bog Preserve:

This former cranberry farm in Riverhead is now home to a variety of rare plant and insect species that can be found on Long Island only in the Pine Barrens. Directions: Take the LIE east to Exit 71 (Manorville) and turn south onto NY 24S. At the traffic circle, take the 1st exit onto Lake Ave. Look for a sign that marks the entrance to the preserve.

### August 20<sup>th</sup>, 8 AM, Makamah Preserve:

Forest! Wetland! Saltmarsh! Makamah has it all. Let's find some early fall migrants together in this gem of a preserve. Directions: The preserve is located on the north side of Rte. 25A in Fort Salonga.

**\*ALL FIELD TRIPS ARE HOSTED BY DR. COBY KLEIN.\***

**REGISTRATION IN ADVANCE IS REQUIRED : 585-880-0915.**

All participants must print and sign a waiver to be provided upon arrival (<https://bit.ly/HOBASwaiver>).

Please visit our website & social media for updates & additions to field trips & programs!

## Beginner Birder Borrow Bag

Beginner birders are invited to borrow a "Beginner Birder Borrow Bag" from Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society. Inside each bag is a pair of Nikon Prostaff binoculars, a Kaufman Field Guide to Birds of North America, and a birder's journal. You are encouraged to take the birding borrow bag on a backyard stroll or to a nearby park or preserve and gain skills in using binoculars to view birds.



Thumb through the user-friendly Kaufman Bird I.D. Field Guide to challenge yourself on the identification of new birds. Enter your bird discoveries inside the bird journal for others to share. HOBAS wants to inspire you to get outside and try your hand at birding.

Learning to spot birds, observe their antics, and appreciate their beauty is certainly something that brings joy and wonder to many. With just a few pieces of field equipment you can explore birding with friends and family or on a guided bird walk. Perhaps you will get hooked on birding and will want to acquire your own birding equipment in the future. Beginner birder borrow bags can be loaned to you for two-week intervals. We ask that you take care of the equipment and return the items in good working condition. Please contact Christine Suter at [christine-suter@live.com](mailto:christine-suter@live.com) and arrange for a pick-up and return time for the beginner birding borrow bag.

HOBAS's newsletter editor welcomes photos and updates about your birding experiences. Please email photos and stories to: [ms.alexandra.martinez@gmail.com](mailto:ms.alexandra.martinez@gmail.com).

Beginner Birder Borrow Bags were made possible by the generous donation by Patrick and Anita Tannuzza and daughter, Patricia Farnum. Thank you for supporting HOBAS' educational engagement initiatives.



## HOBAS Seeks Monthly Program Chair

Over many years, HOBAS has presented a rich and diverse set of monthly educational programs ranging from birding, plants for birds, birds of prey, conservation initiatives, and others of L.I. just to name a few. HOBAS' recent program chair has moved, and we are looking to find someone who would enjoy taking on this role. The program chair will be responsible for booking, coordinating, and hosting up to 10 monthly online speaker programs. It would be beneficial for interested persons to be self-directed, well-organized, and comfortable holding Zoom meetings. Please contact Michael Frank, HOBAS' Treasurer, at [vonfranz77@gmail.com](mailto:vonfranz77@gmail.com) for more information.

Thank you in advance for your interest in supporting HOBAS' educational and outreach goals. We look forward to meeting with you!

## Bird Window-Collision Prevention Borrow Bag: You Can Create Bird Friendly Windows at Home, Work, or At School!



Birds face many challenges and threats as they go about feeding, breeding, migrating, and moving about. One such threat is when birds collide into windows. Research has revealed that up to 1 billion birds die from window strikes in the U.S. each year. According to The American Bird Conservancy, “Home windows make up half of the bird strikes.” “Addressing collisions at home makes a massive difference for birds, and there are many bird-window deterrents you can choose to fix your glass.” HOBAS wants to empower and engage you to help birds overcome the threat of window bird collisions at your home, work, or school. To facilitate your efforts in creating a more bird friendly home, workplace, or school HOBAS has created loaner window bird-collision prevention borrow bags.



You may request a borrow bag which is filled with the resources you will need. Inside each bag you will find different bird deterrents such as anti-collision UV liquid, decals, bird tape, or adhesive dots to apply to your windows. With proper application, you will help birds avoid flying into your glass windows. Properly applying the temporary adhesives will help to deter birds from accidentally flying into your windows. This simple act can directly aid in the prevention of window bird strike injuries and fatalities. This small act saves birds. We want to help you help birds!

Bird Window-Collision Prevention Borrow Bags contain: Collidescape High Performance Bird Tape, Collidescape, High Performance Dot Patterns, and Window Alert Anti-collision UV liquid and decals.

Please contact HOBAS’ Conservation Chairperson, Julie Sullivan, at [jsllvn768@gmail.com](mailto:jsllvn768@gmail.com), and arrange to borrow a bird window- collision prevention borrow bag and please return any unused materials so we can replenish the bag for the next user. Please share your photos and story with HOBAS’ newsletter editor at: [ms.alexandra.martinez@gmail.com](mailto:ms.alexandra.martinez@gmail.com).

Bird window collision prevention borrow bags are generously funded by donations made by Patrick and Anita Tannuzza and daughter, Patricia Farnum. Thank you for your thoughtful support!

### Where can I learn more about window bird strikes?

National Audubon Society	American Bird Conservancy
	

## Summer Camp Scholarship Opportunities

Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society is looking forward to continuing and expanding our summer 2023 nature camp scholarship initiative. Students who receive summer nature camp scholarships will enjoy learning about their natural surroundings with the guidance of experienced outdoor educators and volunteers. Children will engage in outdoor hands-on activities and environmental ecology experiences while having fun through games and peer-to-peer relationship building.

With the generous donations made by our membership, other donations, HOBAS is looking forward to connecting more youngsters to exciting summer nature camp experiences at Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center’s Summer Sanctuary Adventures, Cornell Cooperative Extension Sea Stars Marine Camp, and Cornell Cooperative Extension Sea Explorers Marine Camp. The various scholarships are coordinated through the partners at these three camps and their respective community outreach networking. Enhancing HOBAS’ mission to educate and inspire the next generation to appreciate and care for birds, plants, wildlife, and habitats is something we feel strongly about. Thank you to our members and for other donations in support of HOBAS’ summer 2023 scholarship initiative!

## Bird Identification Posters Available for Park & Preserve Kiosks



Many hikers and birders enjoy visiting trails at local parks and preserves and often the trailhead kiosk may have educational information posted. However, there are some kiosks that have space for information about the birds one might encounter. When bird identification information is missing from a local park or preserve kiosk **you** can help change that by applying for a laminated bird I.D. poster for that kiosk. Seasonal shifts in bird species found at different areas is an exciting subject of observation and study. Having bird identification posters displayed on kiosks aids in educating visitors about which bird species would possibly occur in that area. Educating others with bird identification information can contribute toward inspiring visitors to seek out natural history information about the birds sighted. Developing bird I.D. skills and enjoying the behaviors and beauty of birds in turn can foster appreciation and care about the habitats in which birds depend.

If you know of a kiosk that you would like to enhance with a laminated bird I.D. poster you will need to obtain permission from the park/preserve supervisor and coordinate access to the kiosk where you will display the bird I.D. poster. Please complete and mail the application for a laminated bird identification poster to Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society, P.O. Box 735, Huntington, N.Y. 11743, Attn.: Bird I.D. poster. HOBAS is looking forward to sharing the excitement of birding through this educational engagement initiative. Thank you for helping to share the joys of birds, birding, and our parks and preserves with others! Please email your pictures and story to HOBAS' newsletter editor: [ms.alexandra.martinez@gmail.com](mailto:ms.alexandra.martinez@gmail.com). This educational engagement initiative is made possible by the generous donation made by Patrick and Anita Tannuzza and daughter, Patricia Farnum. Thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity.

### Application for Laminated Bird I.D. Poster

**Name of Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of the kiosk where the laminated bird I.D. poster will be displayed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Park/Preserve Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Circle one poster:**  Sibley's Backyard Birds of Eastern North America (24"x36")

Where's Wildlife Backyard Birds of New York (20"x30")

Please fill out and mail this application to: Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society, P.O. Box 735, Huntington, N.Y. 11743.

Contact: Email Tess at [tesicopa@yahoo.com](mailto:tesicopa@yahoo.com).

## Birdy Bits

By Simone DaRos

*Killdeer:* The killdeer, *Charadrius vociferus*, is a shorebird that inhabits open areas such as sandbars, mudflats, grazed fields, and can be found on lawns, golf courses, athletic fields, and parking lots. Listen for the characteristic "kill-deer" call. This noisy call has given them nicknames such as Chattering Plover and Noisy Plover. Often seen in dry, flat landscapes, running and halting on the ground in search of insects and earthworms. Although the Killdeer is common around human habitation it is often shy, at first running away rather than flying. When a Killdeer stops to look at an intruder, it has a habit of bobbing up and down. Near the nest, Killdeer distracts predators by calling loudly, bobbing, and running away. Killdeer are known to show a broken-wing display, as an attempt to lure predators away from a nest by feigning injury. Killdeer nests are simple scrapes often placed on slight rises in their open habitats. Killdeer may make several scrapes not far away from each other before choosing one to lay in. The duplication may help to confuse predators (The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, All About Birds). Killdeer. Photo: Paul Kusmin/Audubon Photography Awards



For more information, please refer to the following online resources:

Bird Migration Explorer



Birds Cornell



Partners in Flight Watch List

