



The Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society Newsletter

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

Volume 14, Issue 2
May - August 2026

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.

Board of Directors Officers

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Opportunity available

Vice President

Christine Suter

christine.HOBAS@gmail.com

Recording Secretary:

Christine Suter

christine.HOBAS@gmail.com

Treasurer

Michael Frank

vonfranz77@gmail.com

Directors

Tess Copa, Education

tesicopa@yahoo.com

Michael Frank,

Fundraising & Membership

vonfranz77@gmail.com

Coby Klein,

Conservation/Field Trips

klein@gc.cuny.edu

Roxana Saravia,

Programs Coordinator

roxiesaravia@gmail.com

Greg Richter,

Outreach

Alexandra Martinez

Newsletter Editor

ms.alexandra.martinez@gmail.com

www.hobaudubon.org

Letter from the Editor

By Alexandra Martinez

Happy Spring! I swear this will be my last Letter from the Editor about Canada geese. By summer, I'll hopefully have found a new topic to consider. This winter, the Canada geese continued to fascinate me. I was in the midst of trying to untrain Broken Wing's flock from coming to my house in the morning before I left for work and returning in the afternoon, shortly after my car was parked. It wasn't that I didn't want to see my feathered friends anymore, but more so that I learned firsthand why they say DO NOT FEED THE WILDLIFE. While it was so incredibly enjoyable to cut up fruit and hear the squishy sounds of their beaks mashing up bananas or the machine-gun vibrations of them inhaling seeds, I realized I changed their patterns. They were arriving for breakfast and dinner and probably not eating as much grass in between. They were freeloading off of me, expecting their Trader Joes quality fruit and their Chewy-bought waterfowl food and it became a complete necessity for them. While I was okay with this for the winter when the ground was covered with snow, I knew I had to ease up on the feeding as it wasn't natural and I also couldn't go into Spring with these poop covered mountains of snow in my yard. So, I promised to stop feeding Broken Wing's flock after the February blizzard. I was only doing it for BW anyway and he disappeared back in November (if you've been following along with my saga).

After the snowstorm in February, this new Canada goose began showing up in my yard. I noticed him first because he was flockless. He was the only goose flying solo - or really, walking and waddling solo. As I began to pay greater attention (and as the snow began to melt), I noticed something else interesting about him too: he had a band on his leg. What was this band? Was that what was keeping the others away from him? Why was he banded? What is with all of these nuanced geese in my life? I did some research. It turns out that geese are banded with aluminum or plastic leg bands managed by the United States Geological Survey's Bird Banding Laboratory. Yes, this is a thing! This important scientific endeavor helps to track the movement of individual birds, understand survival rates, and notice patterns of behavior. The data from the tracking helps to set hunting regulations, allow migration patterns to be studied, and assists in managing wildlife diseases. Needless to say, this is important stuff!

After taking my first photograph of Scotia (his name, yes HIS name, as I will come to explain), I started doing research on banded birds and realized I NEEDED to get all 9 numbers on his band to learn more. On February 21, when I was home during the winter recess, Scotia showed up again! I spent nearly two hours, used two devices, and over 75 photos later, I had all of the numbers! I followed the simple direction I could now see on his band... www.reportband.gov. When I went to the website, I was able to enter the numbers from the band, identify the type of band, answer a few questions, and receive my certificate of appreciation! Here it is as proof! I have contributed to science! And, my gut was right, Scotia (named for his original location) was a male! He hatched in 2021 or earlier, was banded in June 2022, and left upstate New York for Long Island's beautiful shoreline!



So now, if you see a banded bird, whether it is on their leg or on their neck, consider contributing to science! Fun fact: horseshoe crabs are also tagged on their shells. If you find a horseshoe crab and report it to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife service, you get a certificate and a cool horseshoe crab pin! This is my next goal!

The Perfect Day for Duck Watching

By Christine Suter



The weather was unrelenting this winter with the snow that kept falling and seemed to never leave the ground, but Saturday, February 28th turned out to be a perfect day for the fourth annual Winter Ducks of Oyster Bay Duck Talk and Walk.

Every year I do this program in collaboration with Friends of the Bay, the Huntington Oyster Bay Audubon Society, and the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center. The sanctuary provides extra binoculars for the event, and for the past two years the WaterFront Center in Oyster Bay

has graciously allowed us to use their space for the “intro-duck-tory” talk portion of the program. It’s the perfect location because as soon as we walk out the door we can see winter ducks.

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, so with that said, you are almost guaranteed to see ducks during the winter. Usually, we start at Beekman Beach and make our way up West Shore Road, but this year the walkway was still covered in snow, so instead we walked along the water through Theodore Roosevelt Park.

It was one of the first sunny days in a while and the ducks must have been enjoying it as much as we were. We got to see buffleheads, greater scaups, red-breasted mergansers, long-tailed ducks, as well as a large flock of brants. For the grand finale we were treated to an appearance by one of our local bald eagles that flew down carrying a carcass and starting pecking at it on the ice!

Toward the end of the walk, we passed a few men who were standing outside of the Atlantic Steamer Fire Company Marine Facility by the boat ramp in the park. They had seen us all standing by the water’s edge with our binoculars watching the eagle. One of them asked (and I don’t think he was joking), “Did you all come down here because you knew that the eagle was going to be down here right now?” I guess he thought we planned our walk to coincide with the eagle’s visit, but the truth is we were just as pleasantly surprised as he was.

I really enjoy doing this program every year because duck watching brings me so much joy and it gives me the chance to share that joy with other people. What’s great is that usually there’s a mix of seasoned bird watchers as well as people who are new to it, and it’s great to see the smile on a newcomer’s face when they successfully identify their first winter duck. After that, you know they’re hooked.

There is Hope for Horseshoe Crabs in New York



By Christine Suter

In the last edition of our newsletter, we were asking for your help in advocating for Governor Hochul to sign the Horseshoe Crab Protection Act into law which would ban harvesting horseshoe crabs for bait and for biomedical use in New York State.

The good news is that Hochul signed the bill on December 18th after reaching a compromise whereby the ban would be phased in over a three-year period. There will be a 25 percent reduction in the harvest in 2026, a 50 percent reduction in 2027, a 75 percent reduction in 2028, and a full ban in 2029.

This is a tremendous victory for the Atlantic horseshoe crab and for the numerous environmental groups and individuals who advocated for the bill to be passed. Hochul failed to sign the bill in 2024 arguing that the ban would have unintended consequences on the commercial fishing industry and biomedical advancements, and that it would not allow

adequate time for those industries to make the transition to alternatives. This new agreement would allow for that time.

Connecticut banned the harvesting of horseshoe crabs in 2023, so soon horseshoe crabs will be fully protected in all of the Long Island Sound. Thank you to everyone who took the time to call, write, or email the governor asking her to sign the bill. The state of Massachusetts is now considering a bill to ban the harvesting of horseshoe crabs for bait, but it does not address the harvesting of horseshoe crabs for biomedical use.

Horseshoe Crab Tracking Pins!

As mentioned in the Letter from the Editor, people have reported receiving silver horseshoe crab pins from the United State Fish & Wildlife Service's Cooperative Horseshoe Tagging Program. This example of a certificate and pin was posted by a Facebook user "Sunset Beach."

The horseshoe crab tags are small and white or yellow plastic discs that are attached to the left side of the crab's shell, near what is known as the "dorsal edge." Volunteers and researchers are the ones to place tags and do so in order to be able to monitor the location, migration, population, and lifespan of the horse shoe crabs for research. Their purposes are the same as those who track birds, such as the Canada goose mentioned in the Letter from the Editor.



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



Inspired by content from inside this newsletter, if you see banded wildlife, report it!

Information from the USGS website



Examples of [federal bands](#) and [color markers](#)

If you have already reported your federal band or color marker and want another copy of your [Certificate of Appreciation click here](#)

Please contact us at bandreports@usgs.gov if you experience any problems with this site.

To learn more about the USGS [Bird Banding Lab, click here.](#)

Information from the

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Website

<https://www.fws.gov/crabtag/>

The Maryland Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office has been coordinating a coast-wide tagging program for horseshoe crabs since 1999. Crabs have been tagged by researchers and biomedical companies conducting numerous studies on horseshoe crabs along the Atlantic Coast.

We are providing an online reporting method for your convenience, but if you have any questions or comments or would like to report this information over the phone, please call 1-800-448-8322.



To find out how to participate in a horseshoe crab monitoring and tagging event, visit www.nyhorseshoecrab.org/sites to find a survey site near you.



UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS & PROGRAMS



Children's Crab Meadow Beach Walk

Saturday, May 23, 2026 at 11:45AM

Crab Meadow Beach, Northport

Join us as we explore Crab Meadow Beach at low tide. We will learn about the tides and how they affect the creatures that live at the beach, plus we will go on a fun scavenger hunt. For kids ages 5-10 and their caretakers. Please wear comfortable outdoor clothes. The program is free, but registration is a must.

To register, call or text Tess at 631-896-2872.

Bird Walks with Roxana

Two Dates!

7:00 AM, Saturday, June 27, 2026

7:00 AM, Sunday, July 26, 2026

Join Roxana from the Huntington Oyster Bay Audubon Society for a guided morning bird walk at Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve. The bird walk will run approximately 1.5 hours. All ages and birding skill levels are welcome! Please bring binoculars if you have them.

Please register via link or by scanning the QR code below: <https://tinyurl.com/HOB-Audubon>



Field Trips with Dr. Coby Klein

Various Locations & Dates:

June 28, 2026: "Birds & Bugs" at the Cranberry Bog Preserve, 9:00 AM

Riverhead, New York

July 12, 2026: Connetquot River State Park, 8:00 AM

Oakdale, New York

July 26, 2026: Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge, 8:00 AM

Broad Channel, Queens, New York

August 2, 2026: Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge, 8:00 AM

Shirley, New York

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



UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS & PROGRAMS



Birds of Prey

Wednesday, June 17, 2026 at 7:00 PM

**Cold Spring Harbor Library (Large Meeting Room)
95 Harbor Road, Cold Spring Harbor**

Join us for a raptor program presented by Sweetbriar Nature Center, where you'll encounter some of the most majestic birds of prey. This presentation features some of Sweetbriar's rescued ambassador owls, a falcon, and more. Discover the unique adaptations that enable these incredible birds to thrive in their environments. Come and learn what makes these avian predators so fascinating and special.



Register at the link or scan the QR Code below:

<https://shorturl.at/oCQIL>



Horseshoe Crabs: They've Survived Everything, But Can They Survive Us?

Two Dates & Locations!



Horseshoe crabs are fascinating ancient creatures that have existed for 450 million years and survived five mass extinction events, but can they survive humans? Join Christine Suter, Vice President of the Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society and Executive Director of Friends of the Bay, to learn about the natural history of horseshoe crabs, their relationship to migratory shorebirds, the use of their blood in the biomedical industry, and conservation efforts.

Cameron Jenness, education director for the WaterFront Center, will discuss the New York Horseshoe Crab Monitoring Network and how you can participate in horseshoe crab monitoring surveys in Oyster Bay (May 27th presentation only).

Registration: Wednesday, May 27, 2026 at 6:00 PM

The WaterFront Center at 1 West End Avenue, Oyster Bay

Register for the May 27th program at www.friendsofthebay.org/events or scan the QR code below:



Registration: Thursday, July 30, 2026 at 7:00 PM

The Huntington Public Library at 388 Main Street, Huntington

Register for the July 30th program through the Huntington Public Library webpage, beginning July 1st



A Note From Dr. Coby Klein

Last year, I arrived at the field for one of my son's little league games and was greeted by a pair of extremely agitated [killdeers](#). My birdy sense started tingling right away. A minute later one of the [birds](#) started doing the broken wing dance and I knew there had to be a nest right there. Many mama birds that build a nest on the ground will try to lead predators away from her babies by acting like she's injured and therefore an easy meal. By the time the predator gives up, it will hopefully have forgotten about the tasty eggs/chicks. Only in this case, the danger wasn't predators, but errant baseballs, unaware 7 year olds, and their equally unaware parents and coaches.

As soon as the game ended (in heartbreaking fashion for my son's team), I rushed home and grabbed some fencing and cable ties, and rushed back to build an enclosure. A few minutes later the mom was back in the nest and a few weeks later there were killdeer chicks flying around the field. **Let this be a reminder to us all at this time of the year that not all birds nest in trees. When we encounter killdeers and other ground nesters, let's give them lots of space and always respect the broken wing dance.**

Be a Good Egg Training

Are you interested in working with Audubon staff on Long Island beaches to educate beachgoers about our nesting shorebirds and the importance of protecting their habitat, or helping us protect coastal sites through beach cleanups? Audubon has two training sessions scheduled in May where you can learn more about how to get involved in Audubon New York's Be a Good Egg Program and learn more about the nesting shorebirds on Long Island.

All interested volunteers **MUST** attend one of the trainings.

To register, please email with J.Capone@audubon.org your preferred attendance date.

In-Person Be a Good Egg Volunteer Training
May 9, 2026 @ 1:00PM

<https://act.audubon.org/a/person-bge-volunteer-trainingtrsac>



Virtual/Online Be a Good Egg Volunteer Training
May 19, 2026 @ 7:00P:M

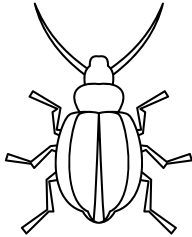
<https://act.audubon.org/a/virtual-be-good-egg-volunteer-trainingtrsac2026>



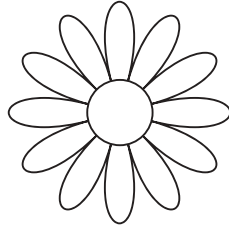
NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

HOW MANY TREASURES CAN YOU FIND?

Directions: As you discover each item, color in the picture or draw/write what you found in the box. Feel free to take photos of your discoveries, but leave these treasures where you found them so others may enjoy them too.



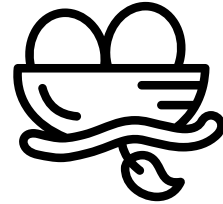
BUG



FLOWER



SOMETHING
SURPRISING



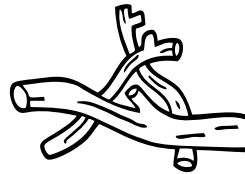
NEST



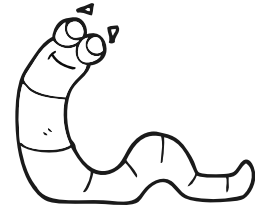
ANIMAL
TRACKS



PINECONE



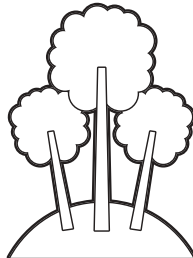
FALLEN BRANCH



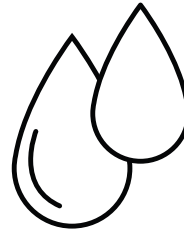
WORM



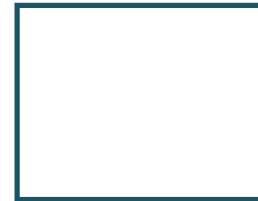
BIRD



THREE DIFFERENT
KINDS OF TREES



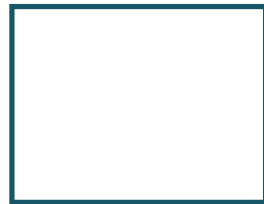
WATER



SOMETHING
COLORFUL



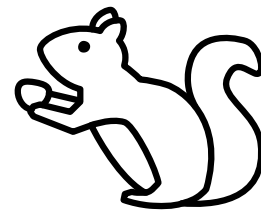
SEED



SOMETHING
BEAUTIFUL



THREE DIFFERENT
KINDS OF ROCKS



SQUIRREL

What else did you find? Write or draw an item you found interesting that wasn't on this list:

