



Cayuga Bird Club

NEWSLETTER

ESTABLISHED 1914

JUNE 2007

Help Save Our Natural Areas From Garlic Mustard

BY ANNE MARIE JOHNSON

Like many non-native invasive species, garlic mustard, *Alliaria petiolata*, is wreaking havoc in local woodlands, displacing native grasses, herbs, and tree seedlings. Many local preserves organize

Identification tips:

- Grows to 3 feet tall
- Typically produces one flowering stalk with small, four-petal white flowers clustered at the top
- Mature leaves are triangular, sharply toothed, becoming smaller toward the top of the plant



David Ruppert

garlic mustard pulls in an effort to stem the rapid spread of this invasive species. Suzanne Henderson, club secretary, suggested that perhaps club members could help remove garlic mustard while out birding. She contacted the Cornell Plantations and spoke to Krissy Faust, who welcomed the idea. Krissy provided information compiled by the National Park Service for the mid-Atlantic region (see sidebar on page 6). She said, "Early detection and rapid response is the most important thing we can do for our natural areas right now."

Because hand pulling and removing garlic mustard must continue yearly until the seed bank is exhausted, hand pulling is most effective on smaller infestations. Catching a small cluster of plants early can prevent a major infestation.

After garlic mustard has started to flower, any pulled plants need to be bagged and removed to ensure that no seeds remain on site. A flowering

Garlic mustard on Ellis Hollow Creek Road in Dryden.

What you can do to help:

- learn how to identify garlic mustard plants
- carry plastic garbage bags when you go birding
- dig up plants found in small infestations
- bag the plants and remove them
- record where the collection was made, and send the information to the land owner
- help spread awareness

plant can continue to mature and produce seeds even if it has been pulled up. 🐦

Find more information

Find additional information about garlic mustard online at one of these web sites:
www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/plants/garlicmustard.shtml
www.nysgextension.org/gllhabitat/epacd/pages/plants/PDF/garlicmustard.pdf
dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/LANDS/Weeds/GarMust.htm

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The Cayuga Bird Club meets on the second Monday of each month, September through June, at 7:30 P.M. in the Auditorium of the Johnson Center on Sapsucker Woods Road. All programs and field trips are free and open to the public. Membership costs \$15/year, payable in September. To join, send a check (made out to "Cayuga Bird Club") to Cayuga Bird Club Treasurer, c/o Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, NY 14850.

Bird club members receive the Cayuga Bird Club Newsletter monthly from September through June. Send newsletter submissions to Anne Marie Johnson, contact information above. Of particular interest are articles about local bird sightings, bird behavior, or birding hot spots, as well as original poetry, art, and photos.

Chickadee illustration in masthead by Karen Confer, waxwing duck silhouette and illustration for native plants column by Lena Samsonenko.

Visit the Cayuga Bird Club website at:

WWW.BIRDS.CORNELL.EDU/CAYUGABIRDCLUB

In Appreciation of Deirdre and Other Talented Club Members

BY LINDA CLOUGHERTY

As Deirdre Anderson said her goodbyes to the club at the May meeting and resigned as president, I reminisced about Deirdre's two year's with us. There is no doubt that she presided over and directed the club in a way not seen at least during my tenure as a club member. The club is now an insured, 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization with a new web page to take it into the future. For all of this, thank you Deirdre! We wish you a wonderful, bird-filled life in Virginia, and we hope you find another bird club to join, which will surely benefit from your energy, generosity, and enthusiasm. We will miss you!

As I thought about Deirdre's leadership of the past two years, memories of the club from the last decade or so surfaced and reminded me that this club has a great reservoir of talent to be thankful for. There have been and continue to be a multitude of club members who contribute time, effort, and expertise to keep the club the smoothly functioning, educational, and entertaining organization that it is. The following is by no means a complete recount, but here are some highlights I am particularly thankful for: the various bird identification courses; a newsletter of professional quality produced by Anne Marie Johnson; countless wonderful field trips and field trip reports by countless wonderful field trip leaders (you all know who you are!) organized by Ann Mitchell; monthly educational articles on native plants written by Joel Baines; beautiful photographs of beautiful birds by a host of club photographers; the informational kiosk at Myers Point Park spearheaded by Meena Haribal; a solid organizational foundation headed by a variety of dedicated club officers; and interesting program presentations often by club members. I just want you all to know that your efforts, as well as those of others not specifically mentioned here, are greatly appreciated. I speak for the membership when I say THANK YOU for all you do! 🐦

Events Calendar

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
JUNE 11 Monday 6:00 P.M.	Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Myers Park, Lansing Dish-to-pass supper	The annual dish-to-pass dinner will be held at Myers Park in Lansing (off Route 34B) in the first pavilion on the right, near the birding kiosk. See below for more information.
AUG. 20 Monday	Newsletter deadline	Send newsletter submissions to Anne Marie Johnson, contact information on page 2.
SEPT. 10 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: TBA	See the September Newsletter for details.

Come to the Annual Cayuga Bird Club Dish-to-Pass Supper and June Meeting

Monday, June 11, 2007 ♦ 6:00 P.M.

Myers Point Pavillion ♦ Friends, food, bird walks, fun!

- 6:00 P.M. Meet at the pavillion (near the bird information kiosk) for a walk around the spit, marina, and park
- 6:30 P.M. Supper will be served. Bring a generous dish to share (we need appetizers and desserts as well as main dishes), your own place setting, and something to drink.
- 7:00 P.M. Short business meeting as we eat

FIELD TRIP REPORT: ITHACA AREA, APRIL 28

BY GLADYS BIRDSALL

Saturday morning I was joined by David McCartt, Suzanne Henderson, and Eileen and Richard Maxwell for a walk at Dryden Lake. After finding only Canada Geese on the lake, we took a short walk to the platform, going east along the lake, and from there we headed back towards West Lake Road along the old railroad bed. We saw a mystery warbler overhead that we thought might have been a Yellow-rumped Warbler. It landed high above, and with poor lighting we were unable to make a definite identification. We walked back towards Chaffee Road and followed the trail towards Dryden.

We saw and heard many common species. Some of the highlights included Brown Thrashers (at least three; once we had a pair together in the top of a tree), a Ruffed Grouse that we heard drumming quite a few times, and Wild Turkeys calling many times from east of the trail. We also had wonderful long looks at three Ruby-crowned Kinglets, which were feeding in shrubs along the stream. They showed the red feathers on

their crowns, which several in our group had never seen before.

Woodpeckers for the day included Red-bellied, Downy, Hairy, and Northern Flicker. Sparrows included Song, Chipping, Swamp, Field, and a Savannah Sparrow that we found in the field at the top of West Lake Road at the end of the trip. It perched on a fence post for a good look.

There were Tree Swallows around Dryden Lake, and we watched as one, with a fluffy, soft white feather in its bill, apparently tried to impress a female. The bird flew around with the feather and landed on a wire nearby. Three Barn Swallows flew around in the fields where we saw the Savannah Sparrow. Eastern Meadowlarks also sang out from both sides of West Lake Road.

It was a nice, although brisk, morning walk. Several times we wished for better lighting on the birds, but we still had some great sightings. Thanks to everyone who came along. 🐦

MINUTES: CAYUGA BIRD CLUB MEETING

MAY 14, 2007

BY SUZANNE HENDERSON

The auditorium was filled to capacity when president Deirdre Anderson opened the meeting with a warm welcome to all. This meeting was Deirdre's last as club president because of her move to the Richmond, Virginia, area to begin a new job.

Susan Danskin was thanked for providing cookies. Laura Stenzler volunteered to bring cookies to the September 10 meeting, the first meeting after a summer break. The last meeting for the academic year will be an annual dish-to-pass dinner at Myers Park in Lansing (off Route 34B).

RECENT SIGHTINGS

Many migrants are returning or passing through. Highlights include:

- Sedge Wren at Carncross Road near Montezuma
- Marsh Wrens
- Wilson's Phalaropes--two females in breeding plumage at the Mucklands near Montezuma
- Cerulean Warbler singing at Salmon Creek Bird Sanctuary
- Swainson's Thrush
- Clay-colored Sparrow on Vine Street near East Hill Recreation Way

OLD BUSINESS

Deirdre announced that the new club website is up and that Linda Clougherty has agreed to serve as Webmaster, although she feels the title should be changed. Deirdre thanked Linda for accepting this responsibility.

NEW BUSINESS

- Deirdre announced that because she is resigning as President, according to the club's by-laws, the club's Vice President, Laura Stenzler, becomes President. She also announced that in accordance with the by-laws, the officers and board elected Gladys Birdsall to serve as the Vice President until the next club elections. Deirdre thanked Gladys for stepping into this position.
- Deirdre announced that Ann Mitchell, who is the club's Corresponding Secretary as well as chair of the Field Trip and Speaker Committee, would very much like to have another member assume the Corresponding Secretary duties. Deirdre encouraged anyone interested to talk to Ann about the duties of the Corresponding Secretary position.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Deirdre reported the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's success at the World Series of Birding.
- Deirdre reviewed upcoming field trips and the Lab's International Migratory Bird Day Celebration on May 19.
- Mark Chao explained the upcoming Finger Lakes Land Trust Spring Bird Quest to take place Memorial Day weekend. Registration fees and pledges will help raise funds to support the land trust's efforts to preserve vital bird habitat in the Finger Lakes Region. The club voted to donate \$100 to the land trust.
- Deirdre surprised Anne Marie Johnson, Laura Stenzler, Kim Kline, Suzanne Henderson, Linda Clougherty, and Ann Mitchell with thoughtful gifts to thank them for their service and assistance to her as club President.
- Deirdre displayed a hunting vest decorated with a vintage patch from the Cayuga Bird Club as well as patches from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon. She asked if anyone might know who originally owned the vest. Deirdre said that she received the vest from Nancy Dickinson at a going away party. The vest was originally purchased at a yard sale in Brooktondale.
- Linda Clougherty thanked Deirdre for her incredible enthusiasm as club president and for all that she accomplished.

CAYUGA LAKE BASIN BIRD LIST

Susan Danskin read the Cayuga Lake Basin bird list and recorded a lengthy list of sightings, but some warblers and flycatchers are still absent and eagerly awaited.

EVENING PROGRAM

Marie Read, a natural history photographer, shared a wonderful selection of images and sounds gathered during an autumn 2006 trip to Australia. Marie and her husband, Peter Wrege, embarked on a three month adventure in Australia. Marie took about 7,000 images, and Peter recorded many vocalizations. Marie's patience and persistence enabled her to capture creatures at their best, as was evident in her presentation. Her anecdotal accounts of the events that went into producing those intriguing images were wonderfully entertaining and informative. 🐦



This White-eyed Vireo spent about ten days in Sapsucker Woods. First discovered by Ryan Douglas, Meena Haribal, and Stuart Krasnoff on April 24, when this photo was taken, it was last seen on May 5.



Larry and Sara Jane Hymes found this Clay-colored Sparrow in their yard in Ithaca on May 5, 2007. The bird stayed for two days, long enough for several visitors to admire it.

FIELD TRIP REPORT: ITHACA AREA, MAY 12

BY GLADYS BIRDSALL

On Saturday, May 12, I led a large group of enthusiastic birders around the Wilson Trail at Sapsucker Woods. Seven people showed up for the Cayuga Bird Club Trip and eight people from the Spring Field Ornithology class joined us. Although we heard many birds that we could not locate, we ended with a total of 55 species identified.

We started out seeing 5-6 Yellow-rumped Warblers before reaching the Podell Boardwalk. At the end of the boardwalk, we heard a Brown Creeper, a Northern Waterthrush, and an Ovenbird. From high in the trees we heard Eastern Wood-Pewee, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Scarlet Tanager, and Great-crested Flycatcher. We heard Wood Thrushes throughout the walk, and near the end one graciously sat up on the limb of a tree for wonderful views and continued to sing.

We watched some competitive behavior between two Great-crested Flycatchers. We saw two male Scarlet Tanagers together, and as they sat not too far apart, obviously in a duel, a female tanager flew up near them to keep things lively. A Veery flew up onto a branch below the tanagers. This Veery did not sing but later, near the end of the trail closer to Lab, we did hear a Veery sound its alarm call a few times, the down slurred veer call.

A big highlight was a Swainson's Thrush, which I had first thought to be a Veery. Once I got my binocs on it, I realized it was not a reddish brown bird at

all. It was quiet, not singing, and had a distinct buffy eye ring. It ran all around and hopped up onto logs. It would stay still for only 15-20 seconds at a time. The chest was mottled with no large distinct spots like the Wood Thrush. It appeared more greyish in the lighting we had, and not brown, like the Wood Thrush or Hermit Thrush. Everyone managed to see the bird, but not for long enough. It was a life bird for many, and although it was somewhat cooperative, it kept on the move.

Near the Sherwood Platform, we watched a Great-blue Heron stand in the pond and a Belted Kingfisher perch on a broken snag and vocalize. We saw several warblers near the platform and along the Wilson Trail back toward the Lab, including a Wilson's Warbler, which was very hard to spot. It would pop up for a few seconds and then go back into the low brush, but it sang several times. Other warblers we found included Blue-winged (heard only), American Redstart, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green, and Common Yellowthroat.

Along our walk, we heard and saw several Baltimore Orioles. Just before the Owens Observation Platform on the new Fuller Wetland, a male Purple Finch sang from the top of a young tree.

Sapsucker Woods was teeming with more people birding than many of us had ever seen before. It was a beautiful morning to be out, and we were not disappointed. Thanks to everyone who came on the walk. 🐦

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE GARLIC MUSTARD FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND

Garlic mustard was first recorded in the United States around 1868, from Long Island, New York, and was likely introduced from Europe by settlers for food and medicinal purposes.

DISTRIBUTION AND ECOLOGICAL THREAT

Garlic mustard ranges from eastern Canada, south to Georgia and as far west as Kansas and Nebraska. It occurs in a wide range of moist to dry habitats including roadsides, floodplains, and forest edges and interiors and does not tolerate highly acidic soils. Garlic mustard invades areas disturbed by human activities and appears to be aided by white-tailed deer that prefer to eat native wildflowers and leave garlic mustard untouched. Garlic mustard displaces many native spring wildflowers such as spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra canadensis*), toothworts (*Dentaria* species), and trilliums (*Trillium* species) that occur in the same habitat. It also is credited with the decline of the West Virginia white butterfly (*Pieris virginiensis*) because chemicals in garlic mustard appear to be toxic to the butterfly's eggs.



David Ruppert

DESCRIPTION AND BIOLOGY

- Plant: a biennial herb in the mustard family (*Brassicaceae*); completes its life cycle within two years and dies back by the second June, when it is recognizable only by its dried fruiting stalks; flowering plants range from 1 to nearly 4 feet in height.
- Leaves: crushed leaves and stems have a garlic-like odor; first-year plants appear as a rosette of kidney-shaped leaves that stay green throughout the winter; in its second year, the plant forms a shoot which rapidly elongates and flowers in early spring.
- Flowers, fruits, and seeds: clusters of small white flowers in the axils of leaves along the stem; each flower has four petals in the shape of a cross; fruits are slender, erect capsules that contain a row of shiny black seeds when mature.
- Spreads: a single plant can produce hundreds of seeds, which are scattered up to several yards from the parent plant.
- Look-alikes: toothworts (*Dentaria* species), sweet cicely (*Osmorhiza claytonii*), wild anise (*Osmorhiza longistylis*), and early saxifrage (*Saxifraga virginiensis*).

PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Because garlic mustard seeds can survive for five or more years in the soil, effective management of garlic mustard requires a longterm commitment. Hand removal of entire plants, including the roots, is effective for light, scattered infestations. Cutting flowering plants low to the ground in spring will prevent flowering and thus seed production. Careful hand removal and bagging of plants with mature fruits can be done from June through August. Several herbicides are also effective for its control. Researchers are investigating the potential for biological control of garlic mustard.

NATIVE ALTERNATIVES

Once garlic mustard has been removed, re-establish native groundcovers such as wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*), evergreen wood fern (*Dryopteris marginalis* or *intermedia*), foam flower (*Tiarella cordifolia*), creeping phlox (*Phlox stolonifera*), or New York fern (*Thelypteris noveboracensis*). 🐾



Native Plants for Native Birds: *Fraxinus americanus* (White Ash)

BY JOEL BAINES, PHOTOS BY DAVID RUPPERT

Like maples, female white ash trees are prolific seed producers, with winged samaras filtering down from above every fall in great numbers.

These seeds are important food for many birds including Evening Grosbeak, Ruffed Grouse, and Wild Turkey.

White ash, like all ashes, have compound leaves, which means each leaf is divided into multiple leaflets. In the case of white ash, there are usually seven leaflets arranged as three pairs with each leaflet opposite its partner and a single leaflet at the tip.


The trees grow rapidly, favoring rich, moist, deep soils. The soil does not have to be loamy: Ithaca clay is a favorite as the roots penetrate even the most dense clays. Ash are commonly used as street trees because of the light shade they provide (i.e. lawn friendly), their pleasing almost pyramidal habit, and the low level of required care. White ash is the biggest member of the group, with adults potentially reaching 100 feet in height while width is modest: about half the height, even in open grown trees. Ash lumber is legendary for its attractiveness and durability. It has been used for construction and, of course, for bats used in professional baseball. Deer are not partial to ash, but young trees may need some protection. With a growth rate of two feet a year, they will quickly be out of the browse zone.

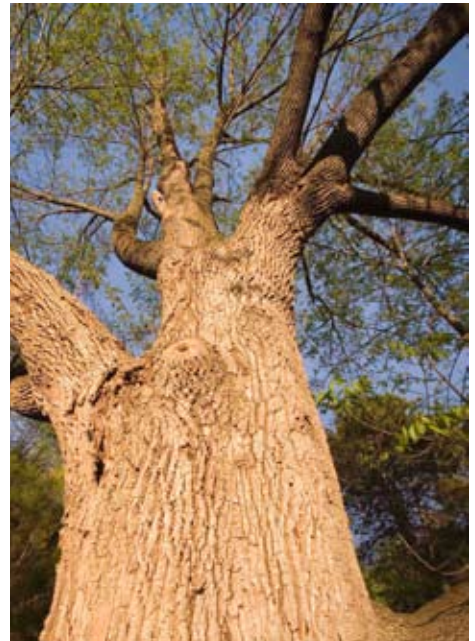
Ash forests grow rapidly in our area, but as a stand matures in the second growth forest, individual trees are naturally thinned as they seem to give up the race to the canopy in lieu of their brothers and sisters. These saplings mysteriously fail to leaf out in a year and eventually rot at the base. The reason for their demise is unclear, but it is likely part of the syndrome called Ash Decline. When the syndrome is modest, the thinning benefits the stand because it favors fewer and larger, healthier trees that eventually will

produce abundant fruit. But in some areas more trees than not will fail to survive to adulthood. Why some regions in the Ithaca area (one borders the Hawthorn orchard) largely have been spared serious Ash Decline is unclear but may simply reflect the excellent growing conditions there. Trees that are subjected to significant air pollution, salt, or drought stress (i.e. urban trees) are highly susceptible to Ash Decline.

One culprit in the syndrome is a piropiasm (a type of bacteria) that causes Ash Yellows. The organism is introduced by insects through their saliva. Although well grown trees often are resistant and show no ill effects, once signs such as branch and crown die-back are noticed in stressed individuals, there is little that can be done to save the tree.

Yet another danger to keep an eye out for is the recently introduced Emerald Ash Borer, whose larvae live under the bark and plug the part of the tree required for transporting nutrients between leaves and roots. The insect is currently devastating ash forests in Southeastern Michigan. The states of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Maryland have introduced fines on export of wood from infested areas. The web site <www.emeraldashborer.info> has links to pictures of the life stages of the troublesome insect, and if you notice any, you should contact the appropriate authorities. It has not yet been reported in New York State, but we should remain vigilant.

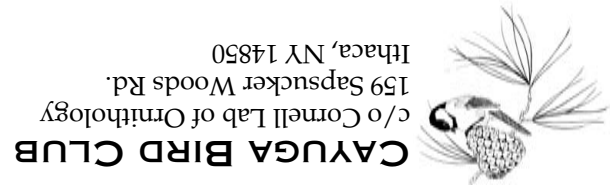
Given all this risk, why would anyone plant an ash tree? With such a fast growing, lovely tree that is also bird friendly, the benefits are clear. Good culture, the key to disease resistance, is rather simple in much of our area because the natural soil is supportive of healthy trees. Therefore, the risk locally may be quite low. In the future, disease resistant varieties no doubt will be propagated to take up the slack. If ash trees are growing near you with little problem, you probably have the deep rich and moist soil to support them. 



One of several Bay-breasted Warblers that delighted birders in Sapsucker Woods on May 11, sometimes foraging at eye level.



Thomas Hoebbel



NEXT MEETING
JUNE 11
DISH-TO-PASS SUPPER
MYERS POINT PAVILLION
6:00 P.M.
SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS

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HELP SAVE OUR NATURAL AREAS FROM
GARLIC MUSTARD

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FIELD TRIP REPORTS

NATIVE PLANTS FOR NATIVE BIRDS:
FRAXINUS AMERICANUS (WHITE ASH)