



Cayuga Bird Club

NEWSLETTER

ESTABLISHED 1914

MARCH 2009

PARTNERSHIP AWARDED GRANT TO ADOPT CAYUGA LAKE IMPORTANT BIRD AREA

BY SUSAN DANSKIN

Recently a grant of \$10,000 was awarded to the Montezuma Audubon Center (MAC) and the Cayuga Bird Club (CBC) for the adoption of the Cayuga Lake Important Bird Area (IBA) under Audubon New York's Adopt an IBA program. The grant is funded by the Triad Foundation, Inc.

Cayuga Lake was selected as an IBA because significant numbers of waterfowl gather there in winter. According to Audubon's IBA web site, Cayuga Lake hosts anywhere from 4% (Canvasbacks) to 45% (Red-heads) of New York State's wintering populations of a variety of species. For more information about the IBA program, visit their web site at <www.audubon.org/bird/IBA>.

Audubon New York is promoting the Adopt an IBA program, hoping to engage the community in conservation efforts. Specific emphasis is placed on becoming involved with the adopted IBA in an environmentally sensitive way. Learn more about the Adopt an IBA program at <ny.audubon.org/BirdSci_IBAs_Adopt.html>.

With their emphasis on habitat enhancement, support of IBAs, public involvement, and education, MAC is a perfect candidate to adopt an IBA. As stated in the partnership's grant proposal, CBC is a partner in the adoption because of the club's "access to historical bird data, their role in the community as advocates for habitat enhancement for birds and other wildlife, and their expertise in bird monitoring of the Cayuga Lake area." The grant provides \$1,000 to CBC "for project development and coordination efforts."

The Cayuga Lake adoption project plans a wide range of programs and events to take place throughout 2009. According to the grant proposal, activities will include:

- Kick-off of the adoption in January and February
- Outreach to local communities to raise awareness and recruit volunteers
- Youth poster contest to highlight waterfowl that helped the lake meet IBA criteria
- Promotion of Great Backyard Bird Count in the Cayuga Lake area
- Development of materials to raise awareness of the importance of Cayuga Lake to birds
- Habitat enhancement projects such as Osprey platforms or bluebird boxes
- Development of youth focused materials to highlight MAC's Wildlife Festival, Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Migration Celebration, and Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge's Wildflowers & Wine
- Invasive species removal, native planting project, and clean-up initiative

Clearly the proposal covers quite a wide scope of activities and provides plenty of opportunities for involvement by members of CBC. It is very easy to take the amazing birding opportunities provided by Cayuga Lake for granted. This adoption is a perfect way for each of us to stop and consider this incredible resource, give a little something back, and promote the lake's birding value in the wider community. 🐦

WATCHING BIRDS IN THE ITHACA AREA FOR NEARLY 100 YEARS

CAYUGA BIRD CLUB

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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 Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Johnson Center on Sapsucker Woods Road. All programs and field trips are free and open to the public. Membership costs \$15 per year, \$10 for students, 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, duck silhouette by Lena Samsonenko.

Visit the Cayuga Bird Club website at:
WWW.BIRDS.CORNELL.EDU/CAYUGABIRDCLUB

From the President

After last month's troubles with Cooper's versus Sharp-shinned Hawk identification, I had hopes that my skills might be improving. Having read of my difficulties, Anne Marie Johnson sent me a link to Project FeederWatch's accipiter identification web page, <www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/AboutBirdsandFeeding/accipiterIDtable.htm>. The combination of detail-revealing photographs and corresponding descriptions had me feeling more confident about my skills. Believe it or not, my first opportunity to test those skills was eerily similar to my dream. I happened to be at the Lab of Ornithology when a woman brought in a pair of dead birds, one a Ruffed Grouse and the other an accipiter. As in the dream, I literally was able to study the bird in the hand. Unlike in the dream, the characteristics were glaringly obvious—a pronounced head, fine streaking on the breast, and clearly shorter outer tail feathers than inner—a Cooper's Hawk without any doubt. Doubt was quick to return with my next encounter. A few weeks later, I spied an accipiter perched in a tree near DeWitt Middle School's very own feeder garden. Without binoculars, I was helpless to determine anything beyond knowing that I was looking at an adult accipiter—rusty breast and long tail. Focused on trying to make out the tail feathers and then rushing to find a pair of binoculars, I completely forgot to examine head size, nape coloration, and body shape. I guess this is just a case where I am destined to be a life-long learner.

And now on to club business...

Bob McGuire and I recently met with Frank Moses of the Montezuma Audubon Center (MAC) to discuss the Cayuga Bird Club's involvement in the adoption of the Cayuga Lake Important Bird Area. From our discussion, it appears that MAC will be looking to the club for assistance in generating project ideas and for volunteers to help implement those projects. I am looking forward to exciting opportunities for individuals to get involved in promoting to the general community the importance of Cayuga Lake to birds. Please read more about the adoption in an article on page 1.

In recent months, several club members have approached me regarding Cayuga Bird Club spon-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



Events Calendar

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
MAR. 2 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Monday Night Seminar Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: Harold Greeney	Reproductive behavior is one of the least studied aspects of tropical bird biology. Harold Greeney, Director of the Yanayacu Biological Station in Ecuador, has studied the nesting behavior of over 400 species in Ecuador over the past seven years. In his presentation, "The Breeding Ecology of Ecuadorian Birds," Harold will present photographs and anecdotes about the nests he has observed, including the first nests known to science for the Peruvian Antpitta, the Moustached Antpitta, the Black-billed Mountain Toucan, and the Bicolored Antvireo.
MAR. 3 Tuesday 6:30 P.M.	Birds and Birding Lecture Ford Library in Ovid Speaker: Kevin Griffith	Kevin Griffith will present "Birds & Birding in the Finger Lakes National Forest" at the Ford Library in Ovid. See page 7 for details.
MAR. 7 Saturday 7:30 A.M.	Field Trip: Cayuga Lake Leader: Susan Danskin Meet: Johnson Center*	Join Susan for a day of birding around the lake. Bring lunch and snacks. There will be a stop for food as well. Dress warmly. Contact Susan at <danskin@twcny.rr.com> or at 277-2622 with any questions.
MAR. 9 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: Jason Townsend	Jason Townsend, a Ph.D. student at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, will present "Bicknell's Thrush Life History and Conservation Issues: From the Northeast to Hispaniola." Jason's research focuses on two aspects of Bicknell's Thrush life history: threats to their wintering grounds on Hispaniola and accumulation of mercury on their high elevation breeding grounds.
MAR. 23 Monday	Newsletter deadline	Send newsletter submissions to Anne Marie Johnson, contact information on page 2.
MAR. 23 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Monday Night Seminar Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: Cal Vornberger	Cal Vornberger, professional wildlife photographer and author of the award-winning <i>Birds of Central Park</i> , spends a great deal of time in New York City's Central Park photographing avian visitors. In his presentation, "Central Park: A Photographer's Perspective," Cal will show his photos and discuss some of his more memorable experiences, as well as discuss some of his techniques for finding and photographing these colorful (and elusive) visitors to the city.
MAR. 28 Saturday 7:30 A.M.	Field Trip: Cayuga Lake Leader: Shawn Billerman Meet: Johnson Center*	Meet Shawn for an all day trip around the lake. Dress for the weather. Bring snacks and lunch. There will be a stop for food along the way. Contact Shawn at <smb223@cornell.edu> or at (516) 376-4587 with any questions.
MAR. 30 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Monday Night Seminar Johnson Center Auditorium Speakers: Chris Cokinos and Todd McGrain	For their presentation, "Hope is the Thing With Feathers: Inspiration for the Lost Bird Project," Utah State University English Professor Chris Cokinos will read from his award-winning book, <i>Hope Is the Thing with Feathers: A Personal Chronicle of Vanished Birds</i> , which is about the extinctions of six North American birds, and Cornell University Art Professor Todd McGrain will speak about his Lost Bird Project, which immortalized five North American birds that were driven to extinction in modern times. Todd's five large-scale bronzes are being exhibited in the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's observatory through March.

*Meet for field trips in the front parking lot.

Events Calendar continued

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
APRIL 5 Sunday 7:30 A.M.	Field Trip: Cayuga Lake Leader: Bill Baker Meet: Johnson Center*	This all day trip will travel around the lake. Dress for the weather. Bring snacks and lunch. There will be a stop for food along the way. Contact Bill at <bilbaker@lightlink.com> or at 275-0540 with any questions.
APRIL 6 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Monday Night Seminar Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: Stan Senner	The Tongass National Forest, the nation's largest national forest and part of the largest intact temperate rainforest in the world, is home to old-growth forests, brown and black bears, Marbled and Kittlitz's murrelets, Queen Charlotte Goshawks, and all five species of Pacific salmon. It also is a place where controversy has raged for many decades about whether, where, and how much timber should be cut. In his presentation, "Big Trees, Birds, and Conservation in the Tongass Rainforest," Audubon Alaska's executive director Stan Senner will describe this unique region and Audubon's efforts to apply the best science to finding positive conservation solutions.
APRIL 13 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Cayuga Bird Club Meeting Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: Charles Eldermire	"Traveling with the Emperors: Studying Geese from the Yukon to the Aleutians."
APRIL 20 Monday 7:30 P.M.	Monday Night Seminar Johnson Center Auditorium Speaker: Greg Shriver	Greg Shriver, Assistant Professor of Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, will present "Salt-marsh Sparrows."

*Meet for field trips in the front parking lot.

FIELD TRIP REPORT: CAYUGA LAKE, FEBRUARY 8

BY BOB MCGUIRE

Seven people joined me for a cool, windy trip around the lake: Paul Anderson, Susan Danskin, Gary Kohlenberg, Ann Mitchell, Bruce and Lynn Rich, and Laura Stenzler. The ice edge was just north of East Shore Park, and from there we noted three Bald Eagles, a large raft of Redheads, numerous Common Mergansers, and a few Hooded Mergansers. We then headed for Myers Point and from the various vantage points found more Hooded Mergansers, Redheads, Canvasbacks, both scaup, Gadwalls, and Common Goldeneyes. The ice on the private marina had begun to thaw, and a Belted Kingfisher kept watch from the docks.


After a brief stop at the new Triangle Diner, we drove down to Long Point. Given the strong northwest wind, we decided to skip the point and concentrate

on the feeders at house #2108. We quickly were rewarded with six Purple Finches. At Farley's Point we found another *aythya* flock, more Common Goldeneyes, and a young Iceland Gull. Factory Pond in Union Springs yielded another new bird for the day, American Wigeon, as well as Buffleheads and Redheads.

Perhaps the second best stop of the day was a short walk through Lettie M. Cook Memorial Forest north of Union Springs. We had barely gotten into the woods when a Barred Owl sprang from its perch and flew off ahead of us. Several of the group followed it and were rewarded by another perched owl, this time a Great-horned, being mobbed by crows.

We saw Tundra and Mute swans at the head of the lake and drove on around to the ice edge at Bonnie

Banks Road. There we found more swans and an almost-Cackling Goose. At Deans Cove we picked out two Horned Grebes and were treated to a close-in fly-by Glaucous Gull. On a tip from Paul Hurtado, we checked Sheldrake and easily found a single Red-necked Grebe right off the point.

From there we headed inland to look for the Snowy Owl. We found it near the intersection of Center Road and County Road 129. When we arrived at around 4 P.M., the owl was half-hidden at the base of a fence post. Soon thereafter it popped out and stood in profile for everyone to admire. We still had time before dark and, after a pause at the Cayuga Lake Creamery, made our last stop at Taughannock State Park where we found another Red-necked Grebe. 

MINUTES: CAYUGA BIRD CLUB MEETING

FEBRUARY 9, 2007

BY SUZANNE HENDERSON

The February meeting was called to order by President Susan Danskin. Two visitors introduced themselves to members and guests. Mary Patterson and Suzanne Henderson were thanked for providing refreshments for the evening. Linda Clougherty and Gladys Birdsall volunteered to bring refreshments for the March 9 meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

- Susan shared information regarding Audubon's adoption of the Cayuga Lake Important Bird Area. Susan and Bob McGuire met with Frank Moses, of the Montezuma Audubon Center (MAC), to learn in more detail the objectives to be achieved under the Triad Foundation grant. At this time the Cayuga Bird Club (CBC) is needed as a source for ideas. MAC will present to the public the specific projects it wants to undertake. There is hope that perhaps school groups can also be enlisted to participate in the planned activities.
- The club is still looking for a new club historian. Caroline Manring has volunteered to assist the historian in writing for the club. Any member interested in this position should contact Susan.

NEW BUSINESS

- The club has a new Webmaster. Matt Medler has agreed to take on this important responsibility and do some much needed updating of our web site. A hearty thank you was extended to Matt.
- The New York State Young Birders Club (NYSYBC) (ages 12–19 years) has invited bird clubs to become partner organizations. NYSYBC is currently a small organization formed by Hope Batcheller and adopted by the New York State Ornithology Association. It is designed to encourage young people in New York to appreciate and respect wild birds and their habitats. NYSYBC has a Code of Conduct and has promised to comply with the American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics. Partner organizations commit to sponsoring and conducting one field trip per year and to assisting with local publicity and recruitment efforts. The partner fee is based on membership size: \$50 for groups with 101–200 paid memberships and \$75 for groups with 201–300 paid memberships. CBC currently has 140 paid memberships. John Confer spoke in favor of supporting young

people and having CBC become a partner. Laura Stenzler suggested putting the website in the next newsletter, for members to visit. A vote could be taken at the next CBC meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Susan announced the next bird club meeting Monday, March 9, with guest speaker Jason Townsend, who will present "Bicknell's Thrush Life History and Conservation Issues: from the Northeast to Hispaniola."

BASIN LIST AND RECENT SIGHTINGS

Kevin McGowan read the Cayuga Lake Basin bird list for the previous week. Along with an interesting census of wintering birds, some more noteworthy sightings included tens of thousands of Redheads on Cayuga Lake, Red-necked Grebe, Short-eared Owl in Aurora, Bald Eagle, Snow Buntings, and a great abundance of Pine Siskins. Several folks have been making daily observations of a Snowy Owl at the intersection of County Road 129 and Center Road in Ovid.

EVENING PROGRAM

The audience was treated to a very special program provided by three Cornell University students who also are dedicated birders known to most folks in the club: Tom Johnson, Jay McGowan, and Brad Walker. Their presentation, "Accessible Arctic: The Birds and Beasts of Churchill, Manitoba," provided a beautifully illustrated account of their summer (May 23 through August 1, 2008) working with Hudsonian Godwits. It was interesting to learn about breeding Hudsonian Godwits, but Tom, Jay, and Brad also captured in photos many of the other species breeding in a rich interface of habitats from tundra to boreal forest to wet sedge meadows. There was a nice informal quiz, matching tundra nests (holding beautiful clutches of eggs) to the bird owners. There were fabulous photos of at least 45 different bird species, along with a nice sampling of the gorgeous plants and flowers (many with equally gorgeous butterflies) and a few resident mammals. The only undesirable critters encountered appeared to be the swarms of mosquitoes and biting flies. Thanks to Tom, Jay, and Brad for sharing their experiences. 🐦

FIELD TRIP REPORT: SUMMERHILL, JANUARY 25

BY BILL BAKER

Five people (Ann M., Bob M., Paul A., Dave N., and Susan D.) joined me for a very chilly, though beautifully sunny, half day trip up to Summerhill. We saw a nice variety of expected winter birds with one quite exciting moment right at the end of the morning.

At Bob's suggestion we headed to Summerhill in a round about way, checking fields along Malloryville, Champlin, and Dresser roads. We found several small flocks of Snow Buntings and Horned Larks as well as one Northern Shrike on Camplin Road about ½ mile south of Dresser Road. Only Ann and Paul got good looks at the shrike before it disappeared behind a line of brushy trees.

We parked on Dresser Road where it meets Salt Road and walked about a ½ mile in both directions on Salt Road and down Hoag Road a short ways. Almost immediately we found a small flock of White-winged Crossbills at the top of a Norway Spruce. We found three other flocks of crossbills (or perhaps the same flock moving around) as we walked Salt Road. Try as we might, we couldn't change any of them into a Red Crossbill.

At the north end of our walking we came to a nice sunny patch from which we could see several feeders in a yard. We found a Red-breasted Nuthatch here as well as Black-capped Chickadees, juncos, and

tree sparrows. Walking back south, we didn't find anything new except for hearing a raven fairly far off in the distance.

The Hovel Chalet was quite active with tree sparrows, juncos, Black-capped Chickadees, Downy and Red-bellied woodpeckers, a White-breasted Nuthatch, Blue Jays, and goldfinches. From there we drove down Fillmore Road all the way to Route 41A, stopping at another house with feeders on the way, where we saw our only Pine Siskins of the day.

The farm at the corner of Fillmore and Route 41A yielded our most exciting moment of the day. As we were almost to the intersection, we noticed a hawk flying over the trees in front of us. After a bit of discussion, we all agreed it was a Red-shouldered Hawk. It flew behind the silo and we lost track of it. At that point a hawk appeared to the northwest and climbed very high. We almost lost sight of it when Dave said that it was coming down right at us. It came down in a very fast stoop, which ended right above us over the barn. It missed getting any of the pigeons it was after, but the dive was wonderful to watch. We never reached a consensus about the identity of this bird. Whether it was the Red-shouldered we had seen or a Cooper's Hawk was still not clear after a good bit of discussion. 🐱

President's Message

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

sorship of the New York State Young Birders Club (NYSYBC). This newly formed club, a special project of the New York State Ornithological Association, was conceived of by teenagers. According to the club's web site, the purpose of the club is to provide "community, friendship, and fun for young people who have a passion for wild birds and their habitats." It is certainly an endeavor worthy of our support. Currently ten bird clubs and Audubon chapters from throughout the state have shown their support for NYSYBC by becoming partner organizations. These organizations commit to "encouraging young people to appreciate and respect wild birds and their habitats, sponsoring and conducting one field trip per year (if requested), assisting NYSYBC with local publicity and recruitment efforts to attract youth members, complying with the NYSYBC Code of Conduct and American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics, and providing financial support spe-

cifically for NYSYBC." Dues for a partner organization of our size are \$50 per year. At our March meeting, I encourage the membership to vote yes on a proposal for the Cayuga Bird Club to become a partner organization to NYSYBC. Please read more about NYSYBC in an article on page 9 and visit their very professional website at <www.nysyoungbirders.org>.

Susan

For Sale

BUSHNELL SPACEMASTER II,
LENS 22X AND 15-45X ZOOM,
TRIPOD SLIK T-960: \$350.
CONTACT BRUCE RICH AT 272-7295.

Birding Program at Library in Ovid

BY SALLY ELLER

On Tuesday, March 3, from 6:30-7:30 P.M. at the Ford Library in Ovid, Kevin Griffith will present "Birds & Birding in the Finger Lakes National Forest," a program of slides, information, and discussion. Kevin will talk about which birds to look for in the various seasons, with tips on good birding spots in the Finger Lakes National Forest (FLNF). Kevin will also discuss the extensive research he has conducted in the forest over the past ten years, including work on the Ruffed Grouse, American Woodcock, and the Chestnut-sided Warbler. Kevin, a native of Ovid, is also a bird-bander specializing in the population ecology of the American Kestrel.

Kevin has lectured widely about birding in the FLNF, including for the New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA) and the Rochester Birding Association. Kevin has been Region 2 editor of *The Kingbird*, published by the NYSOA, and is Field Edi-

tor of the Rochester Birding Association's newsletter. He is past president of the Genesee Valley Audubon Society and past vice-president of the Genesee Ornithological Society. He formerly wrote a birding column in Rochester's *Democrat and Chronicle* and was a contributing author for the revision of *Bull's Birds of New York State*, which can be found in the Ford Library.

The Ford Library is located at 7169 North Main Street in Ovid. All of the library programs are free and open to the public. The library is handicap accessible. Registration for this program is not required. For more information, call the library at (607) 869-3031. Library hours are Tuesday and Wednesday 1:30-5:00 P.M. and 6:00-8:00 P.M., Friday 10:00 A.M.-12 noon and 1:00 P.M.-5:00 P.M., and Saturday 9:00 A.M.-12 noon. 🐦

ITHACA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2009 RESULTS

BY KEVIN J. MCGOWAN

The Cayuga Bird Club sponsored the 109th Audubon Christmas Bird Count in Ithaca on January 1, 2009. Although falling short of the record 93 species seen last year, this year's count proved to be another good one. Participants recorded a total of 88 species during the day, and an additional three species were seen during the count week. The day itself was cold and windy, even if the sun did shine.

Among the highlights of the day were a record count of 110 Tundra Swans and high counts of Iceland Gull (6!), Long-tailed Duck (14), Common Goldeneye, and Common Merganser. The land birds with new high counts were Hairy Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Northern Cardinal, American Goldfinch, and the current birds-of-the-season: White-winged Crossbill and Pine Siskin.

The compilation dinner was fun, and the food was great. You should have been there if you weren't!

Thanks to Bard Prentiss for taking over the organization of the count from long-time organizer Gladys Birdsall. Thanks too to Gladys Birdsall, Bob McGuire, Jay McGowan, Laura Stenzler, Sandy Podulka, Asher Hockett, Bill Baker, Jane Graves, and Mark Chao for being area compilers. Also, thanks to Linda Clougherty for taking feeder-watcher reports.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Elaina McCartney

Pileated Woodpecker seen near Route 89 along the railroad bed trail between Hog Hole and Glenwood Heights during the Christmas Bird Count.

ITHACA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2009 RESULTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Snow Goose	1	Barred Owl	1
Canada Goose	4487	Belted Kingfisher	9
Tundra Swan	110 (high count)	Red-bellied Woodpecker	177
Gadwall	3	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	3
American Wigeon	6	Downy Woodpecker	418
American Black Duck	50	Hairy Woodpecker	147 (high count)
Mallard	748	Northern Flicker	17
Northern Pintail	2	Pileated Woodpecker	21
Canvasback	100	Northern Shrike	2
Redhead	899	Blue Jay	733
Ring-necked Duck	5	American Crow	4894
Greater Scaup	13	Fish Crow	7
Lesser Scaup	12	Common Raven	7
Scaup sp.	2	Black-Capped Chickadee	2923
Long-tailed Duck, 6 th time on count	14 (high count)	Tufted Titmouse	521 (high count)
Bufflehead	4	Red-breasted Nuthatch	39
Common Goldeneye	126 (high count)	White-breasted Nuthatch	340
Hooded Merganser	count week	Brown Creeper	20
Common Merganser	127 (high count)	Carolina Wren	26
Red-breasted Merganser	1	Golden-crowned Kinglet	18
Ruddy Duck, 5 th time on count	9	Eastern Bluebird	141
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	Hermit Thrush	count week
Ruffed Grouse	5	American Robin	28
Wild Turkey	105	Northern Mockingbird	15
Common Loon	1	European Starling	3383
Pied-billed Grebe	3	Cedar Waxwing	274
Horned Grebe	1	American Tree Sparrow	386
Great Blue Heron	4	Song Sparrow	64
Turkey Vulture	4	Swamp Sparrow	5
Bald Eagle, 7 th time on count	3	White-throated Sparrow	135
Northern Harrier	1	White-crowned Sparrow	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	7	Dark-eyed Junco	941
Cooper's Hawk	16	Snow Bunting	281
Northern Goshawk	1	Northern Cardinal	669 (high count)
Red-tailed Hawk	150	Red-winged Blackbird	11
Rough-legged Hawk	7	Common Grackle	2
American Kestrel	4	Brown-headed Cowbird	6
American Coot	300	Purple Finch	7
Killdeer, 8 th time on count	count week	House Finch	630
Ring-billed Gull	534	White-winged Crossbill, 9 th time on count	156 (high count)
Herring Gull	1227	Common Redpoll	1
Iceland Gull, 7 th time on count	6 (high count)	Pine Siskin	343 (high count)
Lesser Black-backed Gull, 3 rd time on count	1	American Goldfinch	1116 (high count)
Great Black-Backed Gull	120	House Sparrow	1064
Rock Pigeon	1375	Total individuals	31290
Mourning Dove	694	Total species	88
Eastern Screech-Owl	15	Total species including count week	91
Great Horned Owl	3		

New York State Young Birders Club Update

BY CARENA POOTH AND ANNETTE LEHNER

The New York State Young Birders Club (NYSYBC) got together for the second time on January 17, 2009. The day started with a field trip sponsored by the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club, which had set aside a territory along the Hudson River for NYSYBC in the New York State Annual Waterfowl Count. Due to single digit temperatures, the river was mostly frozen. However, spirits were high as everyone enjoyed good views of four Bald Eagles perched and flying near some open water in the river, and a fifth Bald Eagle was observed soaring overhead a little later. After the waterfowl count, the young birders spent some time birding at the New York State Department of Conservation's Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center (SKFEEC) in Wappingers Falls, where they found and enjoyed terrific views of an adult Red-headed Woodpecker.

After lunch an organizational kickoff meeting was held to elect officers of the Youth Leadership Council and to discuss plans for the future of the club. Topics included future field trips, publicity, the newsletter, and the website. Hope Batcheller was elected President; Erich Lehner, Vice President; and Brent Bomkamp, Secretary. Hope then appointed Greg Lawrence as Newsletter Chair and Benjamin Van Doren as Website Chair. The young birders are very enthusiastic about the club and most eager to increase its ranks in all three membership categories: Youth, Supporting Adult, and Partner Organization.

Plans for a young birders club began in November 2007 when Hope approached the New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA) at its

annual meeting seeking to form a club similar to the Ohio Young Birders Club started by Kim Kaufman of the Black Swamp Bird Observatory. Hope already had established an online discussion group for young birders in New York. NYSOA eagerly accepted the challenge to create a club for these young birders, recognizing them as future leaders of both local bird clubs and NYSOA. A special committee chaired by Carena Pooth identified the steps necessary to bring NYSYBC to life through field trips, a newsletter, and a website for young members aged 12–19, while making their safety and security the top priority at all times.

In July 2008 the NYSYBC website was unveiled. The young birders held their first field trip in August 2008. Shai Mitra, who serves on the New York State Avian Records Committee, led a group of nine enthusiastic young birders and their parents on a birding exploration of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. The highlight of the day was a White-faced Ibis.

At NYSOA's Annual Meeting in September 2008, President Bill Ostrander announced the appointment of Annette Lehner as Adult Coordinator of NYSYBC. The following month, the club began offering memberships. Details and application forms are available online at <www.nysyoungbirders.org/membership.html>.

As of February 1, NYSYBC had twelve Youth members, thirteen Supporting Adult members, and ten Partner Organizations. More members are needed in all three categories throughout the state. Flyers are available that can be posted at nature centers, libraries, schools, and other places. NYSYBC representatives are ready to present a slide show about the club to your local organization. Please contact us at <ybc@nybirds.org> for flyers. If you are 20 or older, please consider joining NYSYBC as a Supporting Adult and encourage your club to become a Partner Organization. And if you are between the ages of 12 and 19, join NYSYBC as a Youth member and get to know other young birders like yourself! Please spread the word and send all teen birders you know to the club's website, <www.nysyoungbirders.org>. 🐦



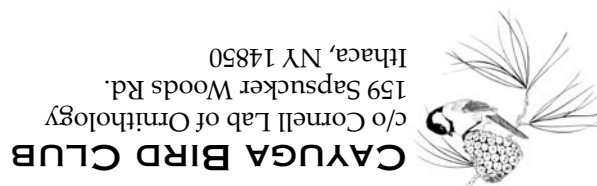
Mary Batcheller

New York State Young Birders Club members on the deck of the Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center, January 17, 2009.

Thayer's Gull found at the compost piles on Stevenson Road in Dryden by Shawn Billerman and Tom Johnson, February 17, 2009.



Tom Johnson



Bicknell's Thrush, Brandt Ryder



NEXT MEETING MARCH 9

JASON TOWNSEND, FEATURED SPEAKER

**“BICKNELL’S THRUSH LIFE HISTORY AND
CONSERVATION ISSUES:
FROM THE NORTHEAST TO HISPANIOLA”**

SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PARTNERSHIP AWARDED GRANT TO ADOPT
CAYUGA LAKE IMPORTANT BIRD AREA

EVENTS CALENDAR

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

MINUTES: APRIL MEETING

BIRDING PROGRAM AT LIBRARY IN OVID

ITHACA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2009
RESULTS

NEW YORK STATE YOUNG BIRDERS CLUB
UPDATE