

# SAPSUCKER WOODS EVENTS

SEASONAL UPDATE FOR LOCAL MEMBERS

ISSUE NO 5-FALL 2009

## SAPSUCKER WOODS CENTENNIAL YEAR

### Old Traditions and New Birds



Laura Erickson

Above, two adult Great Blue Herons tend their nest of four active, demanding chicks. Below, two Virginia Rail chicks take to the trails.

#### SAPSUCKER WOODS' AVIFAUNA ENTHRALLS!

What do a twittering Sedge Wren, a White-eyed Vireo, a family of Virginia Rails, a single Orchard Oriole, a persistent American Bittern, and a loud family of Great Blue Herons have in common? All of these species, both common and uncommon, made an appearance this year in Sapsucker Woods.

In April, during the fickle early springtime of upstate New York, a pair of Great Blue Herons placed a bet that the dead tree in the middle of the pond at Sapsucker Woods would be perfect for a nest. It was a bold move—to our knowledge no Great Blue Herons had ever nested anywhere in Sapsucker Woods at all, let alone two-thirds of the way up a giant, aged, windblown snag.

Lab staff and visitors watched with excitement and a bit of anxiety as the nest grew from a few haphazard sticks to a bulky structure three feet across. Weeks passed before we saw the first fuzzy head emerge from the interior, and then another. Thousands of smiling visitors had the opportunity to observe the intimate happenings at the nest, and on July 30, all four fledglings took their first flight.

The herons are only the latest clue that there's more to be found in Sapsucker Woods than meets the eye. Your continued participation and support of our Sapsucker Woods has played a big role in keeping us abreast of the natural happenings in our own backyard, and we'll continue to offer new reasons for you to make the journey here.

So come by this Fall to explore the Sanctuary on guided bird walks and explore the building on special behind-the-scenes tours! Learn something new at a Monday Night Seminar, and see if you can taste the difference at our Bird-Friendly Coffee Expo. Finally, bask in the beauty of our September 17 Art Opening while enjoying refreshments and a chance to meet Lab Staff. As a member of the Cornell Lab, you've earned it!

#### Connect with the Cornell Lab and Sapsucker Woods online

Learn more about Great Blue Herons and other local birds online at [www.AllAboutBirds.org](http://www.AllAboutBirds.org).

Follow our updates about Sapsucker Woods online via Twitter at [twitter.com/sapsuckerwoods](http://twitter.com/sapsuckerwoods).

Read about the Cornell Lab and the world of birds on our blog at [www.redesign.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.redesign.birds.cornell.edu).

Curious as to what's being seen in the sanctuary? Check out the **eBird Google Gadget** online at [www.birds.cornell.edu/Education/visit/SSW/sswbirds](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/Education/visit/SSW/sswbirds).

Let us know what you are seeing in Sapsucker Woods! Report your sightings at [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org), check out our flickr photo-sharing group online, and add your own photos at [www.flickr.com/sapsuckerwoods](http://www.flickr.com/sapsuckerwoods).



Cameron Rogman

## ONGOING EVENTS AT THE LAB

### Monday Night Seminars

Monday Night Seminars were originally conceived by Lab founder Dr. Arthur A. Allen as a venue for sharing the complex world of science in a format aimed at a public audience. Seminars typically begin at 7:30 P.M. (doors open at 7:00 P.M.) in the Visitors' Center Auditorium. Cayuga Bird Club meetings are the second Monday of each month. The meetings begin at 7:30 P.M., followed by the talk (closer to 8:00 P.M.). As always, admission is free and open to all. Check online at [www.birds.cornell.edu/mns](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/mns) for more information.

<p><b>September 21</b>  <b>Russ Greenberg</b>  <b>Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center</b>          The science behind bird-friendly coffee</p>
<p><b>September 28</b>  <b>Dave Ewert, The Nature Conservancy</b>          Stopover sites for landbirds in the Great Lakes region: identification and protection</p>
<p><b>October 5</b>  <b>Pedro Fernandes, Cornell Lab of Ornithology</b>          Rendering Wrens—from field sketch to final art</p>
<p><b>October 19</b>  <b>Jim Dale, Max Planck Institute for Ornithology</b>          Encounters with Quelea—the most numerous bird in Zimbabwe</p>
<p><b>October 26</b>  <b>Jeff Podos, University Of Massachusetts, Amherst</b>          What's in a song?</p>
<p><b>November 16 (Book Signing)</b>  <b>Olivia Gentile, author</b>          Birding Planet Earth: The Passion and Adventures of Phoebe Snetsinger</p>

### Visitors' Center Information

Monday-Thursday: 8:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.      Sapsucker Woods  
 Friday: 8:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.                      trails are open  
 Saturday: 9:30 A.M.-4:00 P.M.                dawn-to-dusk,  
 Sunday: 11:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.                365 days/year!

*The Visitors' Center is closed Easter Sunday, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, December 26, New Year's Day, and January 2. On Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, the day after Thanksgiving, and December 27-31, the Visitors' Center will be open from 10 A.M.-4 P.M. (Sunday hours remain 11-4).*

**QUESTIONS? CALL  
607-254-2473**

### Upcoming Events

#### GUIDED BIRD WALKS

Every Saturday and Sunday we offer free weekend bird walks. Walks begin at 8:00 A.M. during September and October, then 9:00 A.M. through December.

#### BIRD-FRIENDLY COFFEE EXPO, SEPTEMBER 20

Did you know that your coffee drinking habits can actually help conserve habitat for birds? Learn more about the birds that are affected by coffee plantations, the science behind bird-friendly coffee, and take the opportunity to taste a variety of brands (from our own local Gimme! to regional brands like "Birds & Beans"). Stop in Sunday, September 20, between 11:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M. Bring a mug, and learn just how good coffee can be!

#### BEHIND-THE-SCENES TOURS FOR MEMBERS

The third Saturday of every month is your chance to take a behind-the-scenes tour of the Lab of Ornithology from 11:00 A.M.-NOON. Tours are a member benefit, but registration is required a week or more in advance. Call 254-BIRD to reserve your spot.

#### "TEXTURED BIRDS" OPENING RECEPTION

SEPTEMBER 17

Join us for an evening of beautiful art, tasty refreshments, and a behind-the-scenes look at the Lab's education program. You're sure to enjoy it, and learn something, too! Learn more online at [www.birdsleuth.net/texturedbirds](http://www.birdsleuth.net/texturedbirds).

### Book Readings for Children

Every third Thursday of the month at 4:00 P.M., the Adelson Library (on the second floor of the Visitors' Center) hosts the "Kid's Corner" children's reading program. Hands-on activities follow each reading. This program is intended for children in grades K-5.

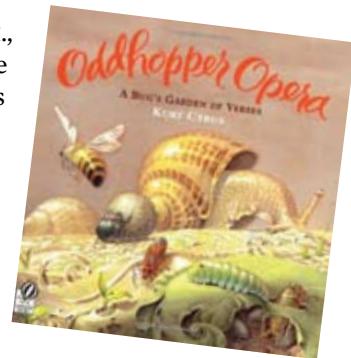
#### UPCOMING READINGS

**September 17:** *Oddhopper Opera: A Bug's Garden of Verses* by Kurt Cyrus. A fun and rhyming look at the world of beetles, earwigs, and other earth dwellers.

**October 15:** *True Blue Friend: A Whale's Nature Tale* by Cheryl Block, illustrated by Gene Takeshita. This award-winning book tells the story of a young whale's friendship with an old blue whale.

**November 19:** *Ziccah Blows Her Horn* by Elizabeth P. Gabriel. In a small village in Africa a baby elephant named "Ziccah" is born—with a trunk shaped like a horn! Not until she hears the musical sounds from the nearby village does she finally understand her purpose.

**December 17:** *Crows! Strange and Wonderful* by Laurence P. Pringle, illustrated Bob Marstall. Take a fascinating look at this clever bird's social behaviors—mobbing, food gathering, and family cooperation. Hear first-hand from Dr. Kevin McGowan about some of the best-studied crows in the world: Ithaca's crows!



# BirdSleuths Create Stunning Artwork

*“Textured Birds: Art Meets Science”  
on display from September 15  
through December 15*

What do you get when you combine motivated teachers, enthusiastic students, a bird-oriented curriculum called BirdSleuth, and inspiration drawn from research projects at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology? A one-of-a-kind collaboration of beauty and science, on display this fall.

This collaboration begins with the Lab’s Education Program, which reaches students of all ages, all around the world, through innovative curricula, courses, and workshops. This year, students at Tualatin Valley Junior Academy in Hillsboro, Oregon worked with science teacher Phil Kahler and art teacher Toni Kahler to produce professional-quality



*Blackburnian Warbler, by Kim, Grade 9*

ty art of focal species currently under study by Lab scientists. These paintings are unique and wonderful, with a textured surface that rises off the canvas and gives the subjects life.

Be among the first to see this amazing and unique collection of artwork by attending the opening reception on the evening of Thursday, September 17. Learn about the exciting work being done behind-the-scenes at the Lab through stimulating presentations by Lab educators, complimented by hors d’oeuvres and beverages. Learn more online at [www.birdsleuth.net/texturedbirds](http://www.birdsleuth.net/texturedbirds).

We hope to see you Thursday, September 17 at the exhibit opening, from 5:30–7:00 P.M.

## CELEBRATE 100 YEARS OF SAPSUCKER WOODS



DAVID ALLEN

### HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT

Ever wonder what Sapsucker Woods looked like over its 100-year history? Well, we’ve put together an exhibition of photos chronicling the changes that have taken place over the last 70 years (since aerial photography began in New York). In addition, we’ve resurrected a variety of old photos from the Lab’s history in Sapsucker Woods and will be displaying them in the Visitors’ Center during the month of November. So, whether you’re a new member interested in learning about the past, or a long-time member looking to re-live it, stop in and enjoy these mementos from Sapsucker Woods’ past.

### CARVED SAPSUCKER SCULPTURE UNVEILING

World-reknoned wood carver Floyd Scholz was recently commissioned by Lab friend Charlie Shelley to produce a one-of-a-kind carving of a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Sapsucker Woods. The fine detail that Floyd coaxes out of a piece of wood results in a work that seems alive! This carving will go on display in the Visitors’ Center during the first week of November as part of our permanent collection alongside the retrospective photography exhibit in the Observatory.

We look forward to your visit!



CAMERON ROGNAN (4)

Discover something new this fall!



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The Cornell Lab of Ornithology

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