



Little Gull

Visit the RBA's website at www.RochesterBirding.org

Rochester Birding Association, P.O. Box 92055, 1335 Jefferson Road, Rochester, NY 14692-9998

July and August 2022 Events and Birding Field Trips

Please note: Leaders and trip details are subject to change. Please check the most recent issue of the Little Gull, or the online schedule at the RBA website <https://rochesterbirding.org/>, for updated information prior to departure! Trips run approximately 2 to 4 hours! Bring binoculars. All field trips will go rain/snow or shine unless there is a travel advisory issued. Online registration <https://rochesterbirding.org/> for each trip is required and opens at 7:30 PM, 7 days before the trip date and ends at 1 PM the day before the trip. When COVID guidelines allow, if at all possible, please carpool!

- Jul 30**
Saturday
Conesus Inlet State Wildlife Management Area
Explore this expansive wetland for Virginia Rails and Wood Duck families. We've seen eagles on a reliable basis, Cliff Swallows and more. This trip is a combination of driving, stopping at over-looks and short walks on dirt trails and dikes. Length about 1.5 mile of walking. Restrooms are available at the meeting place only. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** at Vitale Park on Route 20A in Lakeville. The Park entrance is by the Lakeville post office on the south (lake) side of Route 20A and across the street from Smith's Hardware. There's a possibility of a trip extension to the Genesee Airport area. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.**
Leader: Jim Kimball 585-519-9211 and co-leaders Christina Hoh 973-224-7009, Nick Kachala 585-750-5536, and Elijah Kruger 585-329-7754
- Aug 7**
Sunday
Beginner Birder Trip – Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge
Learn more about the fall migration of shorebirds in this nearby birding treasure. We'll visit key spots you'll want to revisit again and again! There will be a number of stops during this mostly driving trip. Restrooms may be available at the Visitor Center. Meet at **1:00 p.m.** in the Bushnell's Basin Park and Ride lot. The lot is off Route 96 just south of Exit 27 from I-490. Alternatively, meet up with the group at the first stop, the Montezuma visitor center at **2:00 p.m.**
Bring binoculars and, if you have them, spotting scopes.
Leader: John Boettcher 585-671-9639 co-leaders Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash 585-261-6975
- Aug 21**
Sunday
Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge
We'll be looking for waterfowl and migrating shorebirds. Expect to see herons, eagles and possibly falcons. There will be a number of stops during this mostly driving trip. Restrooms may be available at the Visitor Center. Meet at **10:30 a.m.** at the Montezuma Visitor Center. Pack a lunch. **Spotting scopes would be useful. Radios would be helpful.**
Leaders: Dominic Sherony 585-298-4260 and Mike Tetlow 585-748-5838
- Aug 27**
Saturday
New! Braddock Bay East Spit
The East Spit of Braddock Bay is a well-known spot for migrating shorebirds in late summer. Herons, eagles, Osprey and early warbler migrants are also possible. The trail is a woodland path between Lake Ontario and the Braddock Bay Marshes. We will walk out to the end of the spit and back, about 1 mile. The trail is muddy, narrow and has uneven, rocky footing in places. Sturdy waterproof shoes or boots and bug spray will be needed. Crossing the channel to the barrier island will be completely optional and dependent on water levels. Restrooms are usually available next to the Marina building. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** in the East Spit parking lot beyond Westport Marina at Braddock Bay. **Note: You must drive through the Marina to reach the East Spit parking lot. Spotting Scopes would be very helpful.**
Leader: Neal Reilly 518-256-9147 and co-leader: Greg Lawrence 585-730-2553



Photo by Richard Ashworth

President's Corner, Randi Minetor—

Summer at last! Birds that receded behinds shields of leaves and grasses to hatch and raise their young are back in focus now, openly feeding their recent fledglings and urging them to become more independent. Some birds are busy raising a second brood, especially European Starlings, House Sparrows, Rock Pigeons, Red-winged Blackbirds, and others—so our feeders have become crowded with noisy fledges and exasperated parents.

While the prices of sunflower seed, peanut pick-outs and suet have risen along with every other consumer product this summer, few purchases give us as much joy as the ones that bring birds to our backyards. I consider a 50-pound bag of sunflower hearts an investment in my personal happiness.

With the influx of young birds, we have seen a corresponding increase in the number of messages we receive through RBA's main information email (info@rochesterbirding.org) and through Facebook Messenger, asking what to do about a young bird found on a backyard deck or in the middle of a yard. Many such inquiries suggest that the bird "looks sick" or "seems to be injured."

The vast majority of us are not wildlife rehabilitation professionals, so what appears to be sickness or injury to the untrained eye may simply be a young bird figuring out how to use its wings. Your concern is admirable, but the bird probably does not require human intervention—and, in fact, humans handling the bird or trying to treat it may do more harm than good.

Before you pick up the bird or call a rehabber, ask these questions:

Is it a fledgling? If so, let it be. The bird is still learning to fly, and at least one parent bird probably has an eye on it. The baby bird needs time to gain strength in its wings and figure out the mechanics of flight. There's no need for you to do anything.

Is it featherless and too young to fly? Perhaps a gust of wind knocked the nestling out of the nest, or maybe a predator (like a hawk, a blue jay, or a cuckoo) messed with the nest and the bird fell out. If you can see the nest and it's fairly easy to reach, you can put the bird back in it—but if the nest is out of reach, leave the bird where it is. Its parents may come back for it.

Is it stunned? Did you hear a bump against a glass window before you found the bird? It may have flown into one of your windows and stunned itself. This can happen to adult birds as well as fledglings. Keep an eye on it as it recovers, but don't touch it unless it truly appears to be injured. Many stunned birds will feel better in time and will simply fly off. If it's still there in an hour or so, contact a wildlife rehabilitator (you'll find a list of local ones on our website at rochesterbirding.org/faqs/wildlife-rehabbers-for-western-new-york/). Don't touch the bird until you get instructions from the rehabber about how to do this safely.

The fact is that many birds lose a nestling or an entire brood during breeding season. This is just the way nature is, and it can be hard for kind birders to accept. Keep in mind, however, that birds have been on the planet for millions of years, so they know how to take care of their own children without our help. We should intervene only when absolutely necessary.

Finally, the most helpful thing you can do to prevent injury to nestlings and fledglings is to *keep your cat indoors*. Outdoor domestic cats—not feral cats, but pets—are the number one threat to birds around the world. Injured, sick, or recently fledged birds die from cat attacks more often than from any other predator. Please take this simple step to defend the lives of wild birds.

See you in the fall!

RBA in the Field

Powder Mills Park & BANC Sanctuary – May 14, 2022

For an annual trip with a history of rainy mornings, we lucked out this year. Twenty of us gathered in warm sunshine at the park Fish Hatchery and began scanning the usually productive ‘sunny tops’. However, they were almost devoid of birds. We did get good views of a stunning male Scarlet Tanager and a surprising Dark-eyed Junco in the woods, in addition to the expected Great Blue Heron and Yellow Warblers. We were also treated to an extended display of a Red-winged Blackbird repeatedly dive-bombing one of the resident Red-tailed Hawks.

Moving on to the Daffodil Meadow Trail, a single Bay-breasted Warbler was briefly seen at the trailhead, but otherwise migrants were absent. Among the summer residents, Yellow Warblers, a Chestnut-sided Warbler and an early Ruby-throated Hummingbird were recorded. Gray Catbirds were everywhere and ended up being the most recorded species of the morning. In searching the wetland for Wood Ducks (eventually seen in flight), we observed at a distance a small, dark duck - probably a Hooded Merganser – in the water with a fledgling.

After a short visit to the south end of the park, fifteen of us drove to the Burroughs Audubon Nature Club sanctuary on Railroad Mills Road. Here we admired the wildflowers carpeting the lawn and part of the trails before completing a walk through the woods and swamp and along Irondequoit Creek. We added several expected birds to our list, including Eastern Bluebird, Eastern Phoebe and Swamp Sparrow.

At the conclusion of our trip, we agreed it had been a beautiful morning of enjoyable birding, in spite of the lack of migrating warblers. We ended with a species count of 45. I would like to thank Tom Verhulst for co-leading and Christina Hoh for kindly taking care of our e-Bird listing and reporting.

Richard Ashworth, Christina Hoh, Tom Verhulst

Thousand Acre Swamp— May 19, 2022

It was very gloomy with the temperature in the 50s and no wind when the 8 participants plus 2 leaders met for the trip at 7:30 AM. The rainy forecast may have discouraged more people from participating, and there were 3 no-shows among those registered for the trip. Besides the weather, there were high pollen levels and swarms of hungry mosquitoes to contend

with. They seem to get started earlier every year!

In spite of the gloom, or perhaps because of it to some extent, there was plenty of birdsong. We ended up with 43 species. It was certainly a good day for Wood Thrushes with at least 5 singing birds, although none were seen. There were numerous American Redstarts heard, and a few were seen. Another highlight was a singing Scarlet Tanager that most of us got a look at, but it seemed colorless in the gloom. However, some of the expected species were strangely quiet, and perhaps the lack of sun had something to do with it. We heard only a few Yellow Warblers, although a week earlier, there seemed to be dozens singing. Similarly, we saw only one or two Swamp Sparrows and heard none, although a week earlier, many were singing.

Nearly all of the species we found were likely breeders. The only migrants reported were Black-throated Blue Warbler and Tennessee Warbler. The birdsong identification feature of the Merlin app reported hearing Purple Finch and Mourning Warbler. However, we decided not to add these relatively uncommon species to the trip list without human confirmation. The checklist can be viewed at <https://ebird.org/atlasny/checklist/S110669449>.

The rain held off until about 10:00 AM, by which time the birding was mostly finished, and it rained lightly for the rest of the trip. In spite of the weather, pollen, and mosquitoes, it was a fun trip, and I don't think anyone had any regrets about coming.

Jay Greenberg, Richard Ashworth

Sandra L. Frankel Nature Park (Brickyard Trail)

May 28, 2022

The inaugural RBA visit to the Sandra Frankel Nature Park, also known as the Brickyard Trail, took place under cloudy skies with occasional light rain and temperatures in the low 60s. The sub-optimal light conditions and the advanced late spring foliage meant that birds were more often heard than seen, but the seven participants and two leaders did find a respectable total of 37 species.

Common Yellowthroats and Yellow Warblers were seen well, as were a fine Baltimore Oriole, a Northern Flicker, and a Northern Mockingbird. Swamp Sparrows and Marsh Wrens sang from the reeds, and a pair of Green Herons flew overhead. A usually shy and reclusive Least Bittern perched in the cattails near one of

the ponds long enough for everyone to get a good look, and as it was the first one ever reported at this hotspot, it was the undoubted highlight of this enjoyable trip.

Tom and Jeanne Verhulst

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge—May 21, 2022

On a beautiful summer-like day, three leaders and nine participants made a six stop journey the two Wildlife Refuges near Alabama, NY.

Our first stop was at Stafford Overlook of Goose Pond in the Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area. We had several of the expected species like: Wood Duck, Great Blue Heron and Great Egret. We also picked some nice specialties like: Purple Martin, Bobolink, Common Gallinule and Osprey.

Our next stop was Swallow Hollow Nature Trail in the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Birding started out slowly, but quickly picked up. Along the boardwalk we had many American Redstarts, and other warblers like Hooded and, of special note, Cerulean. We had several good views of Yellow-throated Vireos. A Wood Thrush was found sitting on a nest followed by an Ovenbird perched in a tree giving us a concert of “teacher-teacher-teacher.”

At Feeder Rd. we easily found two adult Sandhill Cranes and two very small colts. Also heard there were Marsh Wren, Swamp Sparrow, and Warbling Vireo.

Cayuga Overlook presented us with views of flocks of Redheads, Ruddy Ducks, American Coots with chicks. A highlight bird was about ten Black Terns soaring everywhere. In total, 65 species were seen on the trip.

Cathy, Sheryl, & Tom

Ganondagan State Historic Site—May 28, 2022

Three kids two parents and 2 leaders had lots of fun on a wet muddy trail day. We started our day in misty light rain which meant we didn't have to share the trail with other users but got to hear and see lots of bird species. We walked through fields and shrubland, past a wetland and along a wooded stream valley with more fields on one side and the stream on the other. The variety of habitat led to 44 species including some of our most colorful birds - Indigo Bunting, Eastern Bluebird, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Baltimore Oriole, Hooded Warbler. We had lots of Gray Catbirds, Red-winged Blackbirds, Swallows

(Barn, Tree, Bank), Robins, Yellow Warblers, Song and Field Sparrows. We also saw or heard some of our less common species including Turkey, Grasshopper Sparrow, Green Heron, Belted Kingfisher and American Kestrel.

Amy Kahn and Neal Reilly

Ganondagan State Historic Site Trout Brook Trail

June 4, 2022

Nine attendees accompanied Neal Reilly and Amy Kahn on a 3 hour walk at Ganondagan on a lovely though breezy day. We had a total of 47 species for the day including 5 species of woodpecker, 4 species of flycatchers, 4 species of nesting warblers, and 4 species of swallows. This walk is lovely because it travels through shrubland, by a wetland and along a wooded stream ravine that abuts grasslands. We had Belted Kingfisher, Baltimore Oriole, Scarlet Tanager and Hooded Warbler as well as Field Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Common Yellowthroat and Blue-winged Warbler.

Amy Kahn and Neal Reilly

Letchworth State Park —June 5, 2022

A small but hearty group of birders took the multi-stop Letchworth tour on a lovely Saturday morning and afternoon, led by Environmental Educator Elijah Kruger. The group started at 5:30 am at the Dam overlook and finished at the train bridge with a view of the Bald Eagle nest and a short hike, with many stops in between. At various locations, birders heard and saw expected species: Yellow Warbler, Indigo Bunting, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Red-tailed Hawks. Highlight species included a great look at a Magnolia Warbler on the new Autism Nature Trail, Acadian Flycatcher and Winter Wren near a bridge, Cerulean Warbler on the road down to Lower Falls and a quick look at a Louisiana Waterthrush at Wolf Creek. Further highlights were a great look at a Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Gibsonville, the group heard a Mourning Warbler and Scarlet Tanager near a camp office, a family of Wood Duck in the river from over the Highbanks recreation area and a Peregrine Falcon mixing with Turkey Vultures viewed from Humphrey's Overlook. Though we heard many Hooded Warblers, views of the bird were elusive for most of the group. Overall, the group netted a respectable 73 species.

Elijah Kruger, Neal Reilly, Leah Mould



September Monthly Meeting: Eastern Australia: Its Unique and Spectacular Birds by Dominic Sherony

If you had to select two words to characterize Australian birds, they might be strange and beautiful. There are bird families that have spectacular colors, some that have ancient origins, and others with unusual behaviors. The varied habitats and geological history of Australia resulted in a diversified bird population that has a high percentage of endemic species. I will focus on selected families of birds or individual species and present their uniqueness and, in some cases, their unusual lifestyles.

RBA Field Trips Continued

Sept 3 **Beginner Birder Trip** – Charlotte and Turning Point Park

We'll be looking for shorebirds, warblers, and other fall migrants along the river and lakeshore. At Charlotte Beach, we'll look for gulls in many plumages and some shorebirds, too. At Turning Point Park, we will look for the usual suspects and fall migrants. Bring binoculars. The Charlotte Beach area is mostly flat and paved-one long steep grade at Turning Point Park. Length about 2.0 miles total. Restrooms are available at Charlotte only. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at Ontario Beach Park in Charlotte in the northeast corner of the parking lot, beside the Genesee River outlet. **Bring binoculars and, if you have them, spotting scopes.**

Leader: John Boettcher 585-671-9639 and co-leader Rosemary Reilly 585-748-0802

2022 RBA Picnic

How great. We went to a picnic, we sat at tables, enjoyed the outside, ate together, catching up with old friends, making friends with new members. Richard Ashworth led us on our annual tour of this unique area and the evening's birds (some only heard).

To all the wonderful individuals and helpers who made the picnic successful (and an awful lot of fun) I say THANK YOU!

Wanda Thistle

RBA At the ADK EXPO June 11 – John Boettcher

It was great fun, and I would encourage anyone with evangelical feelings about birding to come and help with the booth next year. Imagine a gathering for folks that are interested in the outdoors. What a great place to find new members for the RBA. The added benefit is that you get to listen to a lot of people enthusiastically describing their bird related experiences. All are entertaining such as the fisherman who was stalked by an owl and the gardener who had to be reminded to fill the feeder by the insistent hummingbird. Of course, you will be occasionally stumped trying to identify a bird based on their description.



Do you love helping with events?

Do you enjoy keeping in touch with a group of enthusiastic volunteers?

Are you comfortable sending emails and following up?

Then you may be our next Volunteer Coordinator!

We're looking for someone who can make sure that we have volunteers to staff tables at events throughout the year—

Birds of Prey Days, Adirondack Outdoors Day, Halloween at the Public Market, and others.

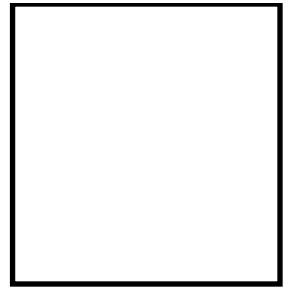
The position also includes management of our volunteer database, and our display materials used at events.

Sound like you?

Contact Randi Minetor at writerrandi@gmail.com to learn more.



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RBA Annual Picnic, photos by Richard Ashworth

