



**Rochester Birding
Association**

Little Gull

P.O. Box 92055, 1335 Jefferson Road, Rochester, NY 14692

May 2024 Events and Birding Field Trips

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! All field trips go rain/snow or shine unless there is a travel advisory issued. Trips run approximately 2 to 4 hours. Bring binoculars. Wear weather appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes. Registration is not required, please arrive at the designated meeting location 10 minutes before the start time of the trip. Colds, flu, and COVID are still around--if you're not feeling well, please stay home. Please carpool when possible. Enjoy your trip!

May 1 **Cobb's Hill Park-Washington Grove**

Wed With spring in full swing, come to one of Rochester's best-kept birding secrets: Cobb's Hill Park's Washington Grove. Colorful warblers and other spring migrants arrive *en masse* at this urban oasis of tall stately trees. We will search for Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Blue, and Black-throated Green, Nashville, and Black-and-white Warblers among others. We will likely hear the flute-like Wood Thrush and see Hermit Thrushes searching the ground for food. Sparrows, orioles, and perhaps a Scarlet Tanager will make an appearance. The entrances into the grove have two short steep trails, the main trails are gentle hills. No restrooms available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** opposite the reservoir in the grassy area between the road and the woods; use the entrance off Highland Avenue, just east of Monroe Avenue (NOT the Nunda Blvd. entrance).

Leaders: *Tom and Jeanne Verhulst 585-362-0803, Sue Robertson 585-427-2535 and Pat Martin 585-301-5485*

May 4 **Beginner Birder Trip – Lakeshore Warbler Hotspots**

Saturday The shoreline of Lake Ontario is a haven for migrating warblers and other passerines. We will stop at several areas where these birds tend to congregate in spring. Learn the basics of identifying our most colorful migrants on this trip. We'll be looking for color patterns, song, and the distinctive behaviors to enhance identification skills with these fast-moving beauties. Though flat, trails may be very muddy. **Waterproof boots are strongly recommended!** Dress for the weather and bring binoculars. No restrooms available. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** at the parking lot behind Lakeview Community Church, 30 Long Pond Road, Rochester, NY 14612 (near Edgemere Drive).

Leaders: *Greg Lawrence 585-730-2553, Lynn Bergmeyer 585-576-0422 Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash 585-261-6975*

May 4 **Braddock Bay Hawk Lookout**

Saturday This trip is for the spring hawk flight and migrating songbirds. We will be working to identify distant raptors and meet some great new people, too! This requires a short walk across grass to the viewing platform. Port-a-John may be available. Meet at **9:30 a.m.** at the Braddock Bay Park main parking lot. Use the East Manitou Road exit from the Ontario State Parkway. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.**

Leader: *Mike Tetlow 585-748-5838 and Neal Reilly 518-256-9147*

May 5 **Beechwood State Park and Olga Fleisher Wildlife Preserve**

Sunday Beechwood State Park is on the shoreline of Lake Ontario in Wayne County and should attract warblers, vireos, thrushes and other migrants. The Beechwood trip will involve about two miles of walking over mostly level ground (Port-a-john available) and will last until about noon. Bring lunch if you plan to attend the second part of the trip to the Olga Fleisher Preserve (known locally as Huckleberry Swamp), a bottomland forest and wetland. Huckleberry has both boardwalk and flat forest trails. (No restroom.) Meet at **7:00 a.m.** at Webster Park, corner of Lake and Holt Roads, or at **7:30 a.m.** at B. Forman Park, 4507 Lake Road, Pultneyville, 14538 (Port-a-john). We will continue to Beechwood from there. If meeting at Beechwood, meet at the main parking area off Lake Road, (**not** at the stream area parking) at about **8:00 a.m.**

Leader: *Jim Wood 585-967-8687 and co-leader Jeanne Verhulst 585-362-0803*

May 7 Ontario Pathways (Flint Creek section)

Tuesday We'll look for warblers and other spring migrants along this rails-to-trails pathway in Ontario County. This well-maintained trail is an established favorite for wildlife viewing and scenic views. Wear comfortable walking shoes. At times, the weather can be fickle, dress accordingly! This is a level grade, easy-to-walk, linear trail, 1.6 miles in and 1.6 miles back out. No restrooms available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at the trailhead. It is on the south side of Rt. 96 just east of the Rt. 488 intersection. For anyone needing a bathroom before heading out on the trail, there is a Byrne Dairy on the corner of Rts. 96 & 488.

Leaders: *Lynn Bergmeyer 585-576-0422 and Rosemary Reilly 585-748-0802*

May 9 Rush Riverside Refuge (in association with Rush Recreation and Parks Association)

Thursday The town of Rush has recently acquired a new patch of land containing old-growth woods, farm fields in various stages of succession, and a mile of Genesee River frontage. Join us as we explore this "new" birding spot. Trails may be wet and muddy, waterproof shoes/boots are recommended. No restrooms available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at the former Monroe County Fair Site, 6565 East River Rd, Rush, NY. Park and meet in front of the large barn straight in and just to the left of the entrance road.

Leader: *Ann McMican 585-533-1222 and co-leaders Sue Robertson 585-427-2535, Nick Kachala 585-750-5536*

May 11 Manitou Beach Preserve

Saturday Our trip to this lakeside treasure should rack up good numbers of warblers, flycatchers, and other spring arrivals. Owned by Genesee Land Trust, Manitou Beach Preserve consists of 5 acres of flat, field, forest and hedgerow, shrub, and cattail wetlands extending into Braddock Bay. Wear waterproof, sturdy shoes and don't forget the bug spray! No restrooms available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** in the Owl Woods parking lot on Manitou Beach Road (Route 261) at the Lake Ontario State Parkway.

Leader: *Amy Kahn 585-310-2330 and co-leader Christina Hoh 973-224-7009*

May 12 Amy's Pond and Woodsmith – Genesee Land Trust / RBA Joint Trip

Sunday This is a field trip to the private property of Amanda Smith-Hatch for spring migrants, early nesters and waterfowl. Two adjacent easements make up 187 acres that include two large ponds, mature woodland, and open fields all within 0.5 mile of Lake Ontario. Past trips have yielded eagles, bitterns, herons, many warblers, Scarlet Tanagers, etc. We'll walk along uneven trails, so bring a walking stick if needed, and prepare for a medium-long hike in an outstanding sanctuary open only by special arrangement -- many thanks to Genesee Land Trust! No restrooms available. Meet at **7:00 a.m.** at Webster Park on the west corner of Holt and Lake Roads, or at Amy's Pond at **7:30 a.m.** 484 Lake Road, Ontario, NY about 1 mi east of County Line Road, turn down the long gravel driveway (on the south side of Lake Road) until you reach the marked parking area.

Leaders: *Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash 585-261-6975 and co-leader Lorna Wright, Executive Director, GLT*

May 14 Oatka Creek Park

Tuesday Woods and meadow provide great habitat for nesting species such as Indigo Bunting, Eastern Towhee, Blue-winged Warbler and Field Sparrow. This will cover about 3 miles of mostly flat trails. Port-a-john available at trailhead. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** at the park entrance at the intersection of Quaker Road and Union Street in Garbutt.

Leader: *Nick Kachala 585-750-5536 and co-leader Bill Haake 585-755-8253*

May 16 Thousand Acre Swamp

Thursday Thousand Acre Swamp is a preserve owned by the Nature Conservancy of Western New York. It has a bird checklist of 120 species. This level 2.5-mile walk on uneven, sometimes muddy trails, goes through varied habitats, resulting in a variety of breeding bird species and migrants. The habitats include swampy woods, drier woods, a marshy area, meadows, and a pond. Shorter routes are possible. The entrance and parking lot are on the west side of Jackson Road opposite Penfield Center Road in Penfield. Boots and mosquito repellent are recommended. No restrooms available. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** in the parking lot. For more information, including photos, go to <https://thegreenjay.jalbum.net/Thousand%20Acre%20Swamp/>

Leaders: *Jay Greenberg 585-256-0485 and Richard Ashworth 585-381-2189*

May 18 Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday We will search for Prothonotary Warblers, Yellow-throated Vireos, Cerulean Warblers, and other birds at this local natural treasure. This trip is a combination of driving and walking and includes a boardwalk, forest trail, and dirt road. Mostly flat but uneven trails. Length about 3 miles total; walking. Port-a-john available

President's Corner, Randi Minetor

Could you use some good news? Here's something you'll really like.

I'm delighted to announce that the RBA Board of Directors voted in March and April to fund two big projects in 2024.

The first is the purchase of a brush mower for the Rush Recreation and Parks Association (Rush RPA) for care of its Hundred Acre Nature Park. **RBA provided \$3,750, or 25% of the total purchase price**, so that Rush RPA can take over the conservation of this grassland property from vendors who have been mowing it.



Photo by Richard Ashworth

Rush RPA will now be able to select which areas of the grassland get mowed at specific times, giving the organization the advantage they need to drive out invasive species. Even more important, caretakers of this land can now make certain that no mowing takes place during late spring, when birds like Bobolinks, Eastern Meadowlarks, Field Sparrows, and others are nesting and raising young.

If you'd like to visit this protected grassland at 250 Rush Scottsville Rd. (Rt 251, just west of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum), the site is open to the public. This month, a number of events are scheduled there:

Saturday, May 4, 8-10 a.m. Bird Walk: Learn about birds, bird songs, spring wildflowers and tree identification—with Ann M, Birder and Naturalist and members of the Mendon Foundation

Saturday, May 11, 10-11:30 a.m. Invasive Species Identification and Mapping: Learn to recognize key invasive species and map them with your phone. Special attention will be dedicated to species phenology, growth habits, preferred habitat, and more—with Matt Gallo, Terrestrial Invasive Species Coordinator

Sunday May 26, 1-3 p.m. Plant and Insect Identification: Enjoy learning about plants, trees, bushes, pollinators and other insects at The Hundred Acres Nature Park—with RRPA member Carol R, Native Plant specialist

The second project came to us from our friends at Genesee Land Trust. **RBA has contributed \$20,000 of the \$49,200 required to construct a handicapped-accessible observation deck at the new Salmon Creek Nature Preserve** in Parma, 492 Bennett Road (County Rd 220).

Genesee Land Trust's newest nature preserve opened in September 2022 along Salmon Creek, adjacent to the Braddock Bay Wildlife Management Area. The 29-acre preserve protects a mix of habitats including grasslands, wetlands, and woodlands, with trails and areas conducive to birding, fishing, and passive recreation. Birds seen recently there include American Pipit, Vesper Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird, Wild Turkey, Cedar Waxwing, Swamp Sparrow, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Cooper's Hawk, Field Sparrow, Eastern Bluebird, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Bald Eagle, Belted Kingfisher, and many more.

We hope to support lots of projects like these. You can play a role in this: Later this year, we will launch a campaign to keep our funds strong, and to partially replenish what we give to organizations throughout our area. We will ask our members to participate in this effort to keep RBA an important player in funding projects that improve access to birds and birding.

I'll be in touch with you soon with more details. In the meantime, enjoy the wonders of spring migration as our warblers, vireos, and other colorful songbirds move into and through our area. Hooray for May!

Volunteer Opportunities!

Want to have the fun of meeting lots of enthusiastic birders at events throughout our area? Take a shift at the Rochester Birding Association table at one of these exciting events! RBA has never been in higher demand at events in our parks than we are this summer, so we need lots of help with staffing our table. It's an easy day: Just come and talk to people about birds and birding, hand out brochures, and give people our new RBA wristbands.

We're planning to raffle off a bird feeder during each event, compliments of our dear friends at The Bird House. So people will fill out tickets with their name and phone number and drop them into a bowl. Easy-peasy!

Here are the event dates. Can you help? Please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Lauren Doucette, at lannedougherty@gmail.com.

Saturday, June 8, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.: Genesee Valley Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club, Mendon Ponds Park. John Boettcher always staffs this, but we need more people for the morning shift, 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon.

Saturday, June 29, exact time TBD: Hamlin Beach State Park 75th anniversary, at the park

Saturday, July 20, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: New York State Parks and Historic Sites 100th Anniversary, Letchworth State Park. We have one person for this, but we need three more for morning or afternoon shifts.

To reserve your shift, contact Lauren Doucette

lannedougherty@gmail.com

BIRDS AND BREWS

Join us for craft beers and conversation!

A chance to meet up and socialize with people who love birds.

Wednesday, May 29, 2024 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

TRATA

The Restaurant at the Armory

145 Culver Road, Rochester

A full menu and a self-serve beer and wine wall—
what could be more fun than that?

Our seating will be at high-top tables in the bar.

<https://tratarochester.com>



Cooper's Hawk, E. Manitou Rd.
© Alan Swire March 21, 2024

Welcome to the Flock

Join us in welcoming these 13 new or returning members who joined in the last month.

Angelique Armstrong
Heather Christie
Clyde Comstock
Fred Cromey

Ellen Foos
Linda Howell
Michael Kozakiewicz
Iris & Robert Kunzer

Yanfang Ren
Kathy & Steve Wolf
Vonda Woodfield



Snow Geese, Hamlin
© Alan Bloom 2/20/23

Current RBA Membership as of April 15 is 360:

- 337 Household memberships
- 1 Junior member
- 1 Corporate member (The Bird House)
- 21 Complimentary

Jo Taylor, Membership Data



RBA Monthly Meeting—Thursday, May 9th, 2024 @ 7 pm

Asbury First United Methodist Church, 1050 East Avenue, Rochester NY

“Studying Open-ocean Bird Distributions Using eBird”

Dr. Michael Schrimpf, Post-doctoral Fellow, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Dr. Michael Schrimpf is a seabird ecologist who grew up in Wisconsin, and first developed an interest in birds in college. That interest, combined with a desire to explore the oceans, led to his graduate work with seabirds. He studied alcids like Common Murres and Rhinoceros Auklets on the West Coast while completing a master’s degree at the University of Washington, and then began working in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean during his PhD work at Stony Brook University, on Long Island, NY. His current work at Cornell involves partnering with expedition cruise companies to understand how eBird data from ships can help map seabird distributions.

*Look for the Zoom link in your email a few days prior to the meeting. The Zoom Room **will open shortly before 7 p.m.** Don’t wait until the last minute to sign on, you might be left out!*



Birding Field Trips Continued

about midway through the trip. Meet at **7:00 a.m.** at the Brockport Wegman's parking lot (restrooms available). For those traveling from the west: meet at the Upper Stafford Marsh Overlook near 5999 Albion Road, Oakfield, NY at **7:30 a.m.** It is advisable to bring water and snacks or a picnic lunch since there may be no local resources and the trip may last into the afternoon. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.**

Leaders: *Tom Nash and Sheryl Gracewski 585-261-6975 and co-leader Cathy Ballard 585-322-2621*

May 19 Norway Road

Sunday

This unassuming trip usually racks up a long bird list. From nesting Cerulean Warblers to Purple Martins along the lake, this trip showcases roadside birding in spectacular fashion! There are no long walks, no rough terrain as we walk along a paved country road making multiple stops to bird along Norway Road. No restrooms except at Wegmans. Meet at **7:00 a.m.** toward the upper end of Wegmans' parking lot in Ridgmont Plaza off Route 104 in Greece (opposite Heritage Drive).

Leader: *Nick Kachala 585-750-5536 and co-leader Cathy Ballard 585-322-2621*

May 21 Taylor Road – Headwaters of Irondequoit Creek

Tuesday

We will walk the woods and mowed grassy trails of the 65-acre property of RBA members Linda and Charlie Kenyon. Hedgerows, fields, Irondequoit Creek, brushy habitat, and woods should be productive for thrushes, late warblers, and woodpeckers among others. No restroom available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at 66 Taylor Road, Honeoye Falls, NY 14472. Park in the wide driveway or on Taylor Road.

Leader: *Jeanne Verhulst 585-362-0803 and co-leader Linda and Charlie Kenyon 585-624-2697*

May 23 Oatka Fish and Game Club

Thursday

The Oatka Fish and Game Club owns and conserves 500 acres of mature woodland forest along Oatka Creek and the escarpment tablelands above it that provide ideal habitat for migrating and nesting passerines. Thanks to the efforts of Jim Mott and Jim Miles, Cerulean Warblers were documented as nesting there in 2022 and seen in 2023. The Club generously invited RBA to hold field trips. We will walk on the wide, undulating, forest trail above the creek and possibly up on the escarpment searching for remaining migrants and nesting birds including Scarlet Tanagers and Mourning Warblers. Sturdy shoes are recommended. Dress for the weather and insects. A bathroom is available on site. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at the clubhouse parking lot (end of Wilcox Road). 8237 Wilcox Road, LeRoy, NY 14482. **Note:** If high winds are predicted the trip will be cancelled.

Leaders: *Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash 585-261-6975 and co-leaders Tom and Jeanne Verhulst 585-362-0803*

June and July: Many Birds Are on Nests – Consider Helping with the NY Breeding Bird Atlas!

May 25 Powder Mills Park and BANC Sanctuary (a joint trip with Burroughs Audubon Nature Club)

Saturday

Powder Mills Park is a mature woodland and wetland park that can be productive for many late-migrating or nesting species. In recent years, Baltimore Orioles, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Scarlet Tanagers, Pileated Woodpeckers, Red-tailed Hawks, have all nested there. The trip will continue with a visit to the BANC Sanctuary on Railroad Mills Road, where we'll walk the trails around the woodland, wetland, and creek habitats. Nesting species there include Eastern Bluebirds, House Wrens, Eastern Phoebe, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and adjacent tree lines have produced a variety of migrating warblers. Both locations are mostly flat trails; waterproof footwear is advised. Please note that no restroom facilities will be available at the Sanctuary. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** at the Powder Mills Park Fish Hatchery parking lot on Park Road.

Leader: *Tom and Jeanne Verhulst 585-362-0803*

May 26 Sandra L. Frankel Nature Park (Brickyard Trail)

Sunday

The wide, flat, multi-use Brickyard Trail winds between Westfall Road and Elmwood Avenue in Brighton. With woods at both ends and ponds and marsh in the middle, it provides varied bird habitat. We will walk the full length of the trail and back (1.7 miles) to look for Song Sparrows, Marsh Wrens, Common Yellowthroat, Red-eyed Vireo, and others. Green Herons, Catbirds, and woodpeckers nest here. Dress for the weather. Insect repellent may be needed for the wooded sections. No restrooms. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** in the parking area near the entrance to Temple B'rith Kodesh (2131 Elmwood Ave.). The trail entrance is nearby. Wheelchair friendly—please call leaders for accessibility questions.

Leaders: *Jeanne and Tom Verhulst 585-362-0803*

June 1 Ganondagan State Historic Site

Saturday This trip has generated large species lists due to the many habitat types we will travel through. We will start from the parking lot to the longhouse and walk wide mown or packed dirt trails through the Meadowlark field and then head down through woods, shrub land, and wetland to an overlook in grassland. The round trip is 1.5 miles and includes some hills. After we reach the overlook, those who wish can continue for another 2 miles on the narrower Seneca Trail through field and woods, across County Route 41, and along a wooded stream valley to the Bobolink field. Restroom facilities are available at the museum center at end of trip. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** in the main parking lot situated below the new museum at 7000 County Road 41 (Boughton Hill Road), Victor, NY 14564.

Leaders: Amy Kahn 585-310-2330 and co-leader Neal Reilly 518-256-9147

June 2 Letchworth State Park

Sunday This trip frequently garners one of the higher bird lists among RBA field trips. Of course, it gets an early start! We'll look for birds not frequently seen on other trips, such as Acadian Flycatcher. We'll do a fair amount of walking: one somewhat steep but short forest trail and a dirt road down to the river level, as well as some roadside birding. Restrooms are available at several locations along the way. Meet at **5:30 a.m.** at the Dam Overlook Gifts and Grill parking lot (use the Route 36 entrance to Letchworth State Park). Pack a lunch and snacks, as the trip will likely last well into mid-afternoon. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.**

Leader: Elijah Kruger 585-329-7754 and co-leader Neal Reilly 518-256-9147

June 8 Ganondagan State Historic Site, a Field Trip for Young Birders

Saturday This trip is open to young birders ages 8 to 18 accompanied by a parent. This trip has generated large species lists due to the many habitat types we will travel through. We will start from the parking lot to the longhouse and walk wide mown or packed dirt trails through the Meadowlark field and then head down through woods, shrub land, and wetland to an overlook in grassland. The round trip is 1.5 miles and includes some hills. After we reach the overlook, those who wish can continue for another 2 miles on the narrower Seneca Trail through field and woods, across County Route 41, and along a wooded stream valley to the Bobolink field. Restroom facilities are available at the museum center at end of trip. Meet at **10:00 a.m.** in the main parking lot situated below the new museum at 7000 County Road 41 (Boughton Hill Road), Victor, NY 14564.

Leader: Amy Kahn 585-310-2330 and co-leader Neal Reilly 518-256-9147

June 8 Taylor Marsh (Joint trip with the Bergen Swamp Preservation Society)

Saturday Taylor Marsh is a preserve owned by the Bergen Swamp Preservation Society and located in Ontario County north of Honeoye Lake. It is best known for marsh birds, including both American and Least Bittern and Virginia Rail. However, the star attraction is the Sandhill Cranes that have been present in this area all year around for many years. Breeding has been confirmed. They are occasionally heard at Taylor, although seldom seen. Taylor also has brush-shrub and wooded upland habitat with a good variety of spring migrants and breeding birds. An adjacent hay field is home to Bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlarks. It has a checklist of nearly 145 species that can be downloaded at https://bergenswamp.org/TaylorMarshBirdList_19_03_03.pdf. This is mostly a flat trail, which can be muddy, and has one very small shallow stream to cross. Waterproof boots are advisable. No restrooms available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at the Taylor Marsh parking area on the west side of Allen's Hill Road just south of Nighan Hill Road. From Rochester, take I-390 south to the Avon exit. Turn left onto Routes 5&20 and go east. In the town of Lima, turn right onto Route 15 A and follow it south. Turn left onto Richmond Mills Road (Livingston County Road 41). It becomes Ontario County Road 15. Follow County Road 15 past County Road 37 and turn right at the next stop sign onto Allen's Hill Road. (There is no road sign at the intersection.)

Leaders: Lynn Braband 585-436-9388 and Jay Greenberg 585-256-0485

June 9 Wyoming County Fields and Forest—New Compehner Farm

Sunday This is a great opportunity to explore an upland region of northeastern Wyoming County including New Compehner Farm (6340 LaGrange Road Wyoming, NY 14591). We will look for migrating and resident warblers, a variety of native sparrows, hopefully returning cliff swallows, both oriole species and open country birds, in a nice mixture of open fields and wooded habitats and bird friendly plantings. We will focus on locating several nesting species. This trip has a little of everything on a beautiful farm. Easy walking, but will cover a mile or two; wear sturdy shoes. The trip will last until noon. Use a restroom *en route*, if possible (there is a McDonalds in the town of LeRoy), otherwise a bathroom is available at the home of the leader. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** at 6340 LaGrange Road, Wyoming, NY 14591.

Leaders: Hans Kunze 585-813-2676 and Rick Stevens 585-689-1882

Field Reports

Braddock Bay, Hamlin Beach Field Trip 3/16/2024

A nice group of 9 participants joined myself and Pat Martin (kindly filling in for Lynn Bergmeyer) at Braddock Bay Park on a cloudy, windy, 39 degree morning. We began scanning the multitude of waterfowl at a distance on the bay, focusing efforts on a search for the recently reported Eurasian Wigeon. We failed at that but moved on to work through the large numbers of Gadwall, American Wigeon, Ring-necked Ducks, Canvasbacks and both Scaup species. Searching through them produced 5 Ruddy Ducks, several Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail and 2 White-winged Scoters to name a few highlights of the 22 species of waterfowl. Fifteen Tree Swallows tripped an ebird flag and were the highlight as the only real new spring migrants for most. (Although Pat found a Marsh Wren before others arrived). Two Bonaparte's Gulls came into view briefly for a couple people to see, adding to the new migrant list.

Reports of basically no birds in the fields and few waterfowl took the Hamlin Beach ride off the table so we chose to get out of the wind and take a walk at Burger Park. There Doug and Elizabeth took a quick look at Salmon Creek and added another 120 Ring-necked Ducks, plus Redhead and Bufflehead as we started walking the wet trails. It was very quiet but Bill Haake beat both Merlin and the rest of us in picking out Golden-crowned Kinglet and Brown Creeper calls, which we all got to see a short time later. Then, around noon, the sun peeked out, the temperature jumped to 44 degrees and inspired 3 Common Ravens, 4 Bald Eagles, 1 Sharp-shinned hawk, Northern Harrier and 2 Red-shouldered Hawks up and soaring. I originally called one of the 2 Red-shoulders a Red-tail but as I described how to separate the 2 species the field marks started to merge as the Red-tail became just a larger Red-shoulder, oops!

We moved on from there to Docksidiers on the back of Salmon Creek to look for an Iceland gull that had left the East Spit earlier. No luck with that but we had beautiful looks at a pair of Hooded Mergansers and Common Mergansers. Two distant Wood Ducks were a highlight there for all.

We ended back at Braddock Bay Park where a good, but distant, hawk flight was going on. Turkey Vultures were readily seen with some nearly invisible buteos mixed in. A couple of persistent mem-

bers got to see a Black Vulture to round out their day.

So, the forecasted 54 degree high didn't happen until everyone had left but we made good use of the conditions we had. Thanks to the hard working eyes and ears of the trip members we had a total of 56 species, which were the majority of the species that were in the area that morning.

Mike Tetlow and Pat Martin

Owl Woods Trip 3/23/2024

The morning of the Owl Woods trip was a cold one but that did not stop the birdwatchers! Despite the 28 degree drizzly weather, the group was optimistic about the trip. Unfortunately, no Saw-whet Owls were seen. A probable Long-eared Owl had been flushed in the woods earlier before the trip and was likely seen again by a few participants as it flushed again. A Gray Catbird and Hermit Thrush were seen as well as Black-capped Chickadee, Northern Cardinal, Northern Flicker, Dark-eyed Junco, Cooper's Hawk and other common winter birds.

After the walk through Owl Woods, the members of the group moved to the Hawkwatch platform at Braddock Bay Park. From the platform we were able to observe Bald Eagle, American Coot, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Long-tailed Duck and Red-breasted Merganser. The cold kept us from staying too long but overall a good time was had by all!

Liz Magnanti, Doug Rabjohns and Elizabeth Rabjohns

Pileated Woodpecker, Tinker Nature Park © David Laiacona April 10, 2024



Compete in the 24-hour Genesee Valley Birding Cup

Saturday, May 18

To celebrate the Genesee Valley's unique habitats and the birds that these habitats support, the Humphrey Nature Center at Letchworth State Park and the Genesee County Park & Forest Interpretive Center will hold the first-ever Genesee Valley Birding Cup on Saturday, May 18.

Gather a team of friends—or work alone—to count as many birds as possible within the Genesee River Watershed in just 24 hours. Travel anywhere you'd like; birders may visit any public space within the Genesee River Watershed. All are welcome, whether you are a beginner or a pro!

The marathon day will end with a final tally and potluck celebration at the Genesee County Park & Forest Interpretive Center, 11095 Bethany Center Rd, East Bethany, at 6 p.m. on Saturday, May 18. The team or individual that counts the most bird species will win a prize. Please bring a dish to pass and your birding highlights from the day.

To register (required) and get all the details, visit

<https://us.openforms.com/Form/5aa61b07-bda9-467e-94b7-a52b6d7ba2ab>



Great Egret (center), Mute Swan,
Braddock Bay East Spit © Alan
Bloom April 6, 2024

Dear Randi, RBA Board and members, Thank you for your generous grant to support the efforts of the Rush Recreation and Park Association. Please visit often. Walks and workdays are listed on our website, <https://rushrpa.org>. Including an RBA walk with Ann McMican, May 9. It is an honor to partner with such a vibrant, thriving organization!
Jack Mould, RRPA Board Member

Records Report March

March came in like a lamb and went out like a lion. February's extremely mild temperatures continued into the first week of the month, with record highs of 72° on 4 March and 74° on 5 March. Temperatures averaged 41.5°, 6.3° above average. The only period with actual winter weather was March 18-24, when lake effect bands deposited as much as 6" in areas of Monroe County. Precipitation totaled 1.94", 0.55" below average, continuing the below-average trend that started in December. Most of the month's snowfall accumulated during that brief period in the third week of the month. Snowfall totaled 9.1", 8.8" below average, which grew the seasonal deficit to 47.3". The total number of records in the data download for the region was just over 55,200 lines, up 10.2% from 2023.

Geese peaked two weeks earlier than in 2023. The highest counts of Snow Goose (3000) and Canada Goose (3000) both were reported on 4 March. By the end of that week, the largest flocks had already left the Region. Tundra Swans followed suit, with a peak of 219 on 4 March as well. As is typical of March, Braddock Bay and the Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area (NMWMA) held the largest numbers of migrant ducks. Counts generally seemed low, with high counts of Gadwall (100, Braddock Bay, 17 March), Northern Shoveler (168, NMWMA, 31 March), Mallard (200, NMWMA, 14 March), and Northern Pintail (800, NMWMA, 8 March), all feeling lower, but some years some of the dabbling ducks do not peak until early April. David Brown found a **Eurasian Wigeon** at Braddock Bay on 12 March that multiple observers reported through 16 March. No noteworthy numbers stood out in the diving ducks, although it was nice to see consistent coverage around Silver Lake in Wyoming County. Silver Lake, the largest body of water in that county, often turns up waterfowl species that are more uncommon away from the Lake Ontario shoreline. Mark Miller reported the only rarity among the diving duck, a single Harlequin Duck on 28 March from West Port Bay in Wayne County.

Grebe numbers built throughout the month. Brad Carlson reported a maximum of 144 Horned Grebes on Silver Lake on 18 March. Andy Guthrie reported 82 Red-necked Grebes in a short period of time from the

Hamlin Beach SP Lakewatch on 26 March. The overwintering Virginia Rail continued along the Quaker Pond Trail at Mendon Ponds Park. Nate Ukens reported another Virginia Rail from Ellison Park on 8 March, which was also seen on 12 March. Observer comments indicated the bird was singing and also suggested it as an early migrant. From a records perspective, "early" Virginia Rails are difficult to assess given Virginia Rail's half-hardy tendencies, compounded more so this year by the unusually mild winter. If a migrant, this individual was about a month early. For spring arrival data flowed up to NYSOA, it would be best to select a date where Virginia Rails start showing up at multiple locations.

Shorebird numbers and diversity built with the progression of the month. Killdeer and American Woodcock arrived in late February this year – early, but not unprecedented – due to the mild conditions. 9 March was noted as a good day for migrating Killdeer, with 45 tallied from the Braddock Bay Hawk Watch. Wilson's Snipe were periodically found in flooded farm fields. The snow storm the weekend of 22-24 March concentrated many Wilson's Snipe to open puddles throughout the region. A Greater Yellowlegs along Carncross Road on 7 March was record early by two days.

A genuine surprise came on 17 March when Chris Wood and Jessie Barry reported a **Black-legged Kittiwake** from the Greece lakeshore with the comments "exceptional on this date." Digging into the paper records (according to eBird this would have been the first March record), one previous March record exists: 6 March 1970 from Braddock Bay. As Chris Wood put it, spring Black-legged Kittiwakes are exceptionally rare. Region 2 has only two other historical records listed (ignoring May 2023's Northeastern U.S. irruption): 6 April 1975 (Irondequoit Bay) and 17 April 1999 (Hamlin Beach SP). Finishing out the gulls, roughly 10 Lesser Black-backed Gulls were found throughout the region this month. Using the same method of location and aging, there were about 10 Iceland Gulls and four Glaucous Gulls – about average, at least for the past few years.

The Braddock Bay Hawk Watch welcomed back David Brown for his sixth season as the official hawk counter. The count runs from 1 March through 31 May. David had a rewarding first month, with a **Black Vul-**

Records Report continued

ture on 16 March, an **American Goshawk** on 26 March, and a record breaking 17 Golden Eagles for the month of March. David remarked that one of the most exciting moments of the month was having a visual on four Golden Eagles at once. The days with the highest counts were 25 March (1340 raptors) and 27 March (1965 raptors), respectively. For daily updates, see <https://hawkcount.org/>. David creates daily YouTube videos summarizing his counts and anything else interesting regarding migration at Braddock Bay: <https://www.youtube.com/@LycoBirds>. Brad Carlson and Kyle Gage reported another **American Goshawk** from a hawk watching vantage point off of Wetmore Road in Springwater on 4 March. Six Northern Saw-whet Owls were accounted for in the eBird download. At least a few Long-eared Owls were found on raptor surveys in Owl Woods, according to conversation with volunteer surveyors. The Records Committee was not privy to the exact numbers and dates of Long-eared Owls as of the writing of this report.

The passerine surprise of the month came on 27 March when Jim Wood photographed a **BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE** at Beechwood State Park. The bird was not relocated despite much effort. Black-billed Magpie has an interesting history with the New York State Avian Records Committee (NYSARC), as many magpies are determined to be escapees or deemed provisional (origin uncertain). Vagrancy in magpies is not well understood. The Midwest has more records deemed natural vagrancy, which makes sense given proximity to the natural range. Decisions get complicated further east, especially in coastal areas, where ship assisted travel is often considered. Magpies are less commonly kept as pets than they were back in the 1960s and 1970s, a common factor considered for urban/suburban records dating from that time period. The fact that this particular bird was a transient to Beechwood State Park and continued eastward shortly after Jim photographed it, positions it more favorably towards being a natural vagrant, but one must apply caution as this individual is the only magpie in the Great Lakes region this year. There are currently two magpies together along the Canadian shore of Lake Erie. These birds are being called “provisional” since they have essentially stayed in the same rural yard for over a month. Whatever the outcome of this

record is, if there ever is a decision, it will be intriguing nonetheless. The only other record of Black-billed Magpie for Region 2 comes from Braddock Bay’s West Spit on 20 March 1949 by Walt Listman. To touch on the rest of the passerines, no other rare passerines were observed this month, but the arrivals of several species such as Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, and American Pipit were welcomed. Half-hardies continued decently. A few Marsh Wrens were noted as singing by the end of the month. Again, whether these represent true arrivals or excited overwintering birds is difficult to determine from a records perspective looking at the long-term trends in arrival dates for this species.

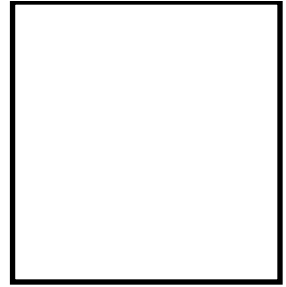
Please submit reports to eBird, post them on gene-seebirds, and/or send them by the 5th of the month to Nick Kachala nicholaskach@gmail.com or 1141 Rush-Scottsville Rd. Rush, NY 14543

Observers: Janet Akin, Osvaldo Araya, Niki Banke, Ted Barnett, Mitchell Barry, Jessie Barry & Chris Wood, Linda & Steven Benedict, Lynn Bergmeyer, Linda Birkel & Roger Clark, Robin Blakesley, Alan & Lisa Bloom, Terry Bohling, Lynn Braband, Christopher Brandt, Scott & Janet Brooks, David Brown, Robert G. Buckert, Sara Burch & Jacob McCartney, Brad Carlson, Robert Cicotta, Kelly Close, Lorenzo Colantoni, Jeremy Collison, Robert Crandall, Doug Daniels, Cliff Dekdebrun, Peggy Dempsey, Grace Dowdall, Diane Egan, Peter Engel, Adam Farid, Kevin Farrell, Rob Fergus, George & Katie Ford, Jim Fry, Kyle Gage, Dan Gallagher, Andrew Garland, Matthew Gavette, Janis George, Candy Giles, John & Karla Gordinier, Sheryl Gracewski & Tom Nash, Jay Greenberg, Kevin Griffith, Austin Groff, Lucretia Grosshans, Michael Gullo, Carmen Gumina, Andrew Guthrie, Bill Haake, Kim Hartquist, Andrea Heine, Christina Hoh, Dick Horsey, Bill Howe, Lynn Howes, Pam Inzinna, Colleen Josh, Nick Kachala, Amy Kahn, Laura Kammermeier, David Kennedy, James Kimball, Mark Kimble, Kathleen Kirsch, Hans Kunze, Michael Laird, Chris Lajewski, Greg Lawrence, Joan Lindberg, Peggy Mabb, Peggy Macres & Jennifer Rycenga, Liz Magnanti, Cynthia Marino, Patricia Martin, Lauri Mattle & Jim Miles, Ryan McGinty, Jay McGowan, Ann McMican, Scott Meagher, Mark Miller, Kent Millham & Susan Roberts, Phil Mills, Brian & Brooke Morse, Matt Nusstein & Claudia Rosen, David Odell, Andrea Patterson, Jeremy Pete, Luanne Pignataro, Jay Powell, Doug & Elizabeth Rabjohns, Neal Reilly, Rosemary Reilly, Michael Rizzo, Isaac Rizzo, Wade & Melissa Rowley, Robert Ryan, Shawn Ryan, Anne Salverda, Greg & Shannon Sanda, Dave & Donna Spier, Kim Steininger, Rick Stevens, Reuben Stoltzfus, Allan Strong, Stephen Taylor, Annette Teng, Michael & Joann Tetlow, Eunice Thein, Nathan Ukens, Tom & Jeanne Verhulst, Jules Wagner, Mike Wasilco, Bridget Watts, Kim Weeks, Cole Weigartz, David Wheeler, Joe Wing, and Jim Wood.

	2024	2023	10-year Avg
Species for Mar.	147	143	143.0
New for the year	18	19	18.2
Total for the year to date	161	159	154.0



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