



Rochester Birding
Association

Little Gull

Great Egret, Braddock Bay East Spit
Photo by Candace Giles



SEPT 2024 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 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!

SEPT 7
Saturday

WHITING ROAD NATURE PRESERVE

This preserve includes about 240 acres of land that is made up of a variety of birding habitats. This results in decent birding lists throughout the year. The trails are well marked and maintained. However, they do get muddy at times, so appropriate footwear is recommended based on the weather leading up to the trip date. Most of the trails are flat, but there definitely will be a bit of up and down trail climbing in some sections. Our trek will take us on parts of the blue, brown, orange, and red trails. Moderate difficulty in a few spots, length about 2.5 miles. No restrooms. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot on Whiting Road in Webster, 0.6 miles south of Lake Road.

Leaders: Candace Giles 585-281-1643 and co-leader Dick Horsey 585-435-2837

SEPT 8
Sunday

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 local resident birds and fall migrants. 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

Field Trips continue on page 4

Check it out! We redesigned the Little Gull newsletter over the summer. I am pleased to introduce Dan Hosek, our new Little Gull editor/graphic artist, who has taken over the newsletter from the dedicated Leah Mould. We can't thank Leah enough for her three years of service as newsletter editor. When her schedule changed with a new career move, we decided to take a bold step forward and engage a professional graphic artist to update the design. Please continue sending your submissions to editor@rochesterbirding.org, with the firm deadline of the 15th of the month before the next issue.



Photo by Nic Minetor

I had to laugh out loud when I came across a story in the Washington Post late last spring, titled "Why birds and their songs are good for our mental health" (Richard Sima, May 18, 2024). Apparently new research, published in 2023 in the digest Scientific Reports, brought to light something that you and I have known since we were children: Listening to birdsong—even recordings of it through headphones—has the power to "alleviate negative emotions." The article went on to tell us, "Everyday encounters with the bird kind are associated with better mental health."

Well, how about that. Science imitating life.

Indeed, a weekly trip to Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge with my husband throughout this summer helped me feel better about ignoring the book I'm writing, which in turn made me more eager to get the darned thing done so I could bird more. Whether we were picking out honeycreepers in the forests of Maui (yes, here's one more mention of our May trip to Hawai'i) or hearing Greater Yellowlegs sing as they drifted around Montezuma's Seneca Flats, birding continues to be a source of improved mental health, blocking out all distractions as we parse out shorebirds or sift through confusing fall warblers.



Greater Yellowlegs
Photo by Nic Minetor

I'm writing today in hopes that I can channel some of this passion we all share into filling some positions that have opened up within RBA. One of this organization's strengths is in its department chairs, people who just do the job they've taken on with tremendous grace—and who make it very easy for me to do my job as well. Two of these positions will open up this fall.

- The incredible Jo Taylor has decided to step down as **Membership chair** at the end of 2024. This data management job requires someone who is facile with Excel and other database functions, and Jo is willing to train her replacement. It would be great to find someone before the fall membership drive, so you can work with Jo to see how this is done.
- The equally incredible Kim Denise is stepping down as the head of the **Last 30 Days Gallery** (rochesterbirding.org/galleries/last-30/). This gallery allows our members to show off their wonderful photography, and its monthly collection is one of the most viewed pages on our website. Kim is also willing to train her replacement, so if you love seeing photos and are comfortable with uploads to Flickr, this may be the place for you.

Can you help? Drop me a line at writerrandi@gmail.com if you would like to learn more.

We have an exciting fall lineup of speakers, field trips, and other events, so check them all out in this issue, as well as on our website at rochesterbirding.org. Welcome back!

NOW OPEN: DEPARTMENT HEAD POSITIONS

Would you like to help keep Rochester Birding Association strong by leading one of the functions of this great organization? Two of our dedicated volunteers, Kim Denise (**Last 30 Days Gallery**) and Jo Taylor (**Membership Data Chair**) are stepping down at the end of 2024, and they are both willing to help train their successors. Job descriptions are below.

If you're ready for a leadership role, please contact Randi Minetor at writerrandi@gmail.com

LAST 30 DAYS GALLERY MANAGER

TIME COMMITMENT: 3-4 hours/week, more during spring migration

DUTIES:

- Monitor RBAbirdphotos email account
- Download photos
- Resize, crop, and edit photos as necessary
- Confirm IDs given by photographers
- Upload to RBA Flickr account and write captions
- Ensure photos and captions are displaying properly on RBA website L30D gallery
- Periodically update featured image on RBA website L30D gallery
- Send thank you emails to all photographers for their submissions
- Make periodic reminder posts on RBA Facebook page

REQUIREMENTS:

- Computer with internet access
- Access to and basic knowledge of photo editing software, whether paid or free
- Familiarity with (or willingness to learn) Flickr and WordPress
- Intermediate level bird ID skills

MEMBERSHIP DATA CHAIR

TIME COMMITMENT:

- Assemble and send packets to prospective and new members – 2.5 hours per month.
- Drive membership renewal process October-January – 3.5 hours per month
- Update membership database – 1 hour per month February through September, 4 hours per month October through January.
- Generate labels and email list for Circulation Chair: 0.5 hours per month
- Generate membership roster (Jan. and June) – 4 hours per year.

DUTIES:

- Send membership information packets to new members:
- Welcome letter
- List of beginner field trips for the year
- RBA tips for beginning birders
- RBA Bird checklist
- ABA Code of Birding Ethics
- Notify membership of renewal time by articles in Little Gull, email, or USPS mailing. Follow up with email and ultimately USPS mail for those members not responding.
- Notify Board of new members monthly with contact, payment and volunteer interests.
- Forward membership checks to the treasurer.
- Generate mailing labels for the Circulation Chairperson before the Little Gull goes to the printer each month.
- Process queries, as requested by BOD, against membership database and present results.
- Maintain updated membership list:

REQUIREMENTS:

- A penchant for accuracy.
- Computer skills to manage membership database
- Interest in welcoming new people and enthusiasm for RBA
- Able to work closely with the Treasurer and Circulation Chair and Little Gull Editor
- Access to a printer



FIELD TRIPS

BEGINNER BIRDER TRIP (CONTINUED)

parking lot, beside the Genesee River outlet. Bring binoculars and, if you have them, spotting scopes.

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

SEPT 11
Wednesday

SANDRA L. FRANKEL NATURE PARK (BRICKYARD TRAIL)

The wide, flat, multi-use Brickyard Trail winds between Elmwood Avenue and Westfall Road 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 migrating fall warblers, kinglets, sparrows, wrens, and finches. There might even be a late Green Heron hanging around. 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



Green Heron photo by Barbara Smith

SEPT 14
Saturday

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 are available at the Visitor Center. Meet at 10:30 a.m. at the Montezuma Visitor Center. Pack a lunch. Spotting scopes would be very useful.

Leaders: Mike and Joann Tetlow 585-748-5838 and Dominic Sherony 585-298-4260

SEPT 15
Sunday

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 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 optional and dependent on water levels. Restrooms are 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 useful.

Leader: Neal Reilly 518-256-9147 and co-leaders Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash 585-261-6975



A Sharp-shinned Hawk seen at Braddock Bay East Spit in April of 2021. Photo by Alan Bloom.

FIELD TRIPS

SEPT 21
Saturday

GANONDAGAN STATE HISTORIC SITE

This trip goes through many habitat types and has the potential for many birds including fall migrants. We will start from the parking lot to the longhouse and walk wide mowed or packed dirt trails through grasslands and then head down hill through shrub land, and wetland to travel back up the hill in hardwood forest. The round trip is about 2 miles and includes hills. Restroom facilities are available at the museum center at the end of the trip. Meet at 8:30 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

SEPT 22
Sunday

IROQUOIS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

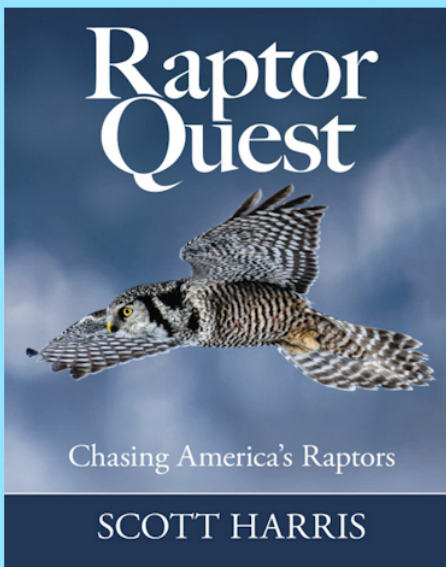
We'll look for migrant ducks and various passerines in this "get to know Iroquois in autumn" trip. This trip is a combination of driving and walking and includes a boardwalk, forest trail, and dirt road. Length about 3 miles total on mostly flat trails. Port-a-john available about midway through trip. Meet at 11:00 a.m. at the Brockport Wegmans' parking lot (restroom). For those traveling from the west, meet at the Upper Stafford Marsh Overlook near 5999 Albion Road, Oakfield, NY at 11:30 a.m. Bring a lunch and beverages as this trip can go into the afternoon. Spotting scopes would be very useful.

Leaders: Neal Reilly 518-256-9147 and co-leaders Doug and Elizabeth Rabjohns 585-690-6296



Osprey seen at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge by David Liaocona in August of 2021.

New York State Ornithological Association's 2024 Annual Meeting



Gather with us online this fall!

Sunday, September 15, 5:00 to 6:30 pm

NYSOA Annual Elections and Committee Reports

Featured Presentation: **Scott Harris, Author and Photographer**

Raptor Quest: Chasing America's Raptors

PLUS Another challenging bird quiz by NYS Young Birders Club

Over 30 New York State bird clubs & Audubon chapters will be in our roll call. Make sure yours is online with us!

Get Zoom link and reminders: www.nybirds.org/2024

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING • Thursday, Sept 12th, 2024 @ 7 PM

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

Free and open to the public. Parking and entrance at rear of church.

Land Management and Preservation Along Important Bird Migration Routes in New York vs Texas

Michael Adriaansen, New York State Department of Parks

This presentation will compare the land management in New York and Texas along bird migration routes and how it affects bird species diversity.

Michael Adriaansen has a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from Binghamton University, and a master's degree in environmental interpretation from SUNY-ESF. He worked as an environmental educator for NYSDEC at Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve in Buffalo for more than 15 years. Presently, he works as an environmental educator with NYS Parks at Niagara Falls. He recently took a trip to the Rio Grande Valley in Texas and recorded many life birds. His presentation will be filled with pictures and a few videos from this trip.



WELCOME TO THE FLOCK

Join us in welcoming these new or returning members who joined over the summer.

Tracy Merchant & Family (Meg, Jon)
Anne Dunford
Marion Overslaugh & Bryan Bedell
Joyce Wagner
Mandy Knutson
Cate Gordon

As of August 15, total membership is 387

363 Household memberships

1 Junior member

1 Corporate member (The Bird House)

22 Complimentary

Jo Taylor, RBA Membership Data



*Mallards at Ontario Beach Pier
Photo by Eunice Thein
July, 2024*



NEED ELECTRICAL WORK?

Here's an RBA member who wants to help!

Hello all! My name is Andrew Romanowski and I'm going on my second year as an RBA member. I'm also starting my second year as a volunteer at Braddock Bay Bird Observatory. I love going on field trips when I can and hanging out at Birds & Brews with the lovely people there. I grew up in Livonia and am currently situated in Irondequoit.

I wanted a way to give back to RBA members, as so many of you have created a welcoming, fun community for me to be a part of.

I've been a residential service and install electrician for almost 10 years and am currently working for Isaac Heating. I've done thousands of various projects and wanted to offer my discounted services to anyone in, or adjacent to, the local birding community.

I may not have the availability to do every project as I am working full-time. However, I'll do my best to work with anyone who's interested.

Feel free to contact me through email at andyromo7@gmail.com, or text at (585) 690-6695. I look forward to hearing from you!



Birds and Brews

Join us for craft spirits and conversation!
A chance to meet up and socialize with
people who love birds.

Thursday, September 19, 2024

6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Black Button Distilling

1344 University Avenue

(between Culver and Winton Roads)

This time it's **Birds and Booze!!**

Known best for its bourbon and gin, Black Button is growing fast, and its new dining area and full bar provide plenty of space. Check out the food and cocktail menus at blackbuttondistilling.com/tasting-room/cocktail-food-menu/

Oatka Creek Park

May 14, 2024

Eleven enthusiastic birders gathered at Oatka Creek County Park on a gorgeous Tuesday morning, which was much warmer and sunnier than expected. The party started out by walking the main park road from the upper lot to the cabin parking area, taking advantage of the sunlit forest edge to hear several species of warbler, including the first Blackpoll Warblers of the season for many participants. Typical to warblers and a consequence of the maturing foliage, almost all of the warblers in this first feeding flock were heard only. Fortunately, the group intercepted a large feeding flock just upon entering the woods that consisted of at least ten Bay-breasted Warblers, a couple Black-throated Green Warblers, and a Scarlet Tanager pair. Just as we were about to move forward, an adult male Hooded Warbler, a target of this trip, came in low and gave stunning looks as it sang from a bare snag. Eagle-eyed participants picked out a Great Crested Flycatcher carrying nesting material. We all watched it enter a cavity right off the trail, place the material, and fly off to likely gather more! Other highlights included a pair of Northern Rough-winged Swallows at the bridge over Oatka Creek, two Spotted Sandpipers at the same spot, an adult male Indigo Bunting perched up over the trail in perfect light, and a cooperative Blue-winged Warbler. Overall, an interesting mid-May outing with what seemed like peak migration mixed with early signs of the breeding season.

Nick Kachala & Bill Haake

Thousand Acre Swamp

May 16, 2024

As seven of us gathered in the parking lot, there was quite a bird chorus but few birds to be seen. A thick fog obscured all but the nearest trees. Wood Thrush, Warbling Vireo, Baltimore Oriole and Carolina Wren predominated.

A walk down the Entrance Trail and Founders Way, with a short diversion to Duck Pond, produced a few more species as the fog gradually lifted, but the usual Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were absent. Yellow Warblers and American Redstarts were the only representatives of their family. (We were not to see or hear any migrating warblers for the whole morning.) The most prolific birds were the numerous Gray Catbirds singing. Two Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were the first of the season for several participants, and we heard three Least Flycatchers.

Swamp Sparrows were much in evidence from the Boardwalk and we added Common Yellowthroat and Pileated Woodpecker. Our walk through the woods along Hermit Walk was largely uneventful, except for one Scarlet Tanager and a remarkable number of calling Red-eyed Vireos, which we were totally unsuccessful in seeing.

At the Meadows there were, as usual, Tree Swallows at some of the nestboxes, but no Eastern Bluebirds, and nothing of note was seen at the Way Pond.

Back at the parking lot we reviewed our sightings, with a total of 34 species, somewhat less than this trip in past years. However, we enjoyed a pleasant morning walk.

Richard Ashworth and Jay Greenberg

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge

May 18, 2024

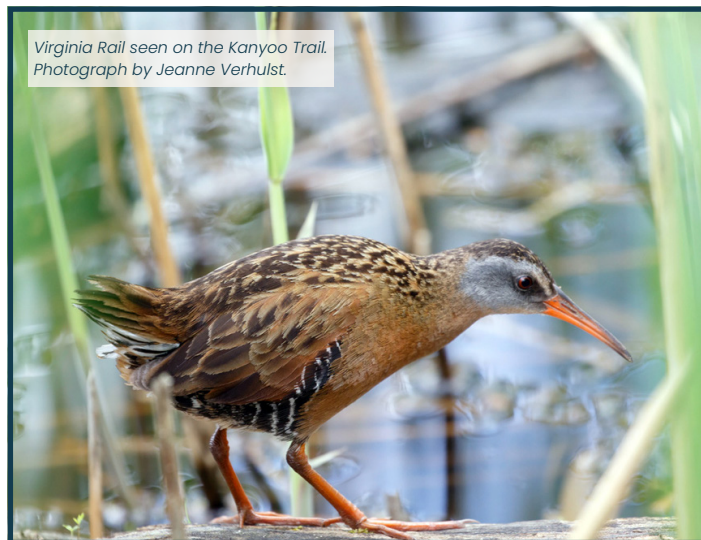
Eight people joined us for our annual trip to Iroquois National Wildlife Reserve. We were first greeted by great views of some Common Gallinules. One of the leaders, then spotted a flying Least Bittern, that landed in view along the rushes. With the help of several scopes most people got a look at this beauty. The Purple Martin nest housing was full of birds, while tree swallows flew by. Other species seen were Osprey, Blue-winged Teal, and a Great Blue Heron.



FIELD TRIP REPORTS

We then proceeded to the Swallow Hollow Trail, where we had an abundance of warblers: Yellow, Bay Breasted, Blackpoll, and Chestnut-sided. After some searching, we found a Canada Warbler and some very cooperative Cerulean Warblers. Still on Swallow Hollow trail, with some calibrated clapping, we got a loud response from a Sora. In the wooded sections we heard Ovenbirds and a Wood Thrush.

We then went to Tonawanda WMA-Meadeville Marsh, where we found Marsh Wrens, Warbling and Yellow-Throated Vireos, and (the target bird) a short-lived but open view of a Prothonotary Warbler. There was a nice variety of ducks at the Cayuga Overlook, along with a Trumpeter Swan, a Least Bittern, and a number of Black Terns.



Virginia Rail seen on the Kanyoo Trail.
Photograph by Jeanne Verhulst.

Rick continued leading what was left of the group to the Kanyoo Trail where we had close and long views of a Virginia Rail on the boardwalk. At Krumpf Marsh, we were delighted to find a Glossy Ibis near the beginning of the trail. EBird Trip Report:

<https://ebird.org/tripreport/241814>

Tom Nash, Sheryl Gracewski, and Rick Stevens

Taylor Road—Headwaters of Irondequoit Creek May 21, 2024

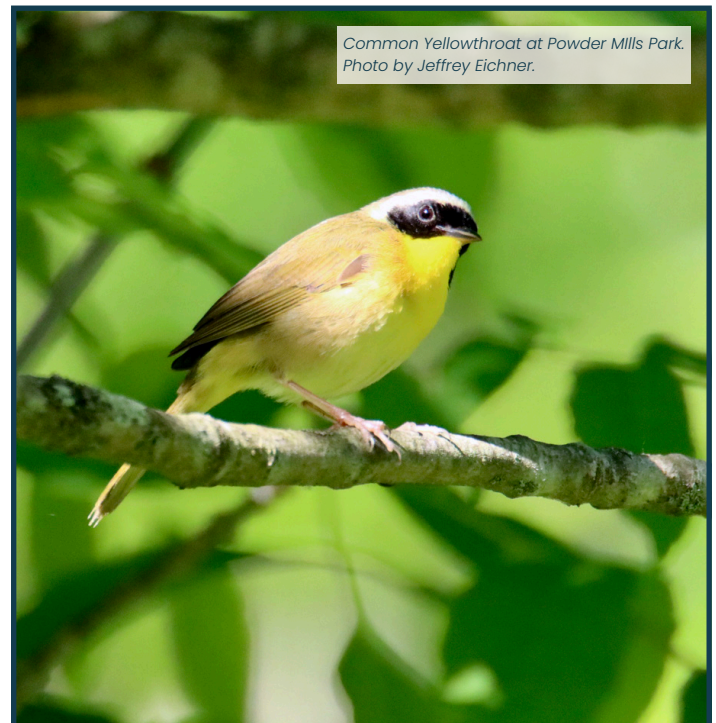
A beautiful, warm, sunny day set the tone for a stroll around the lovely trails and woods of Linda

and Charlie Kenyon. Baltimore Orioles, Eastern Bluebirds and American Goldfinches at feeders greeted the small group five, including leaders. A couple of Wild Turkeys were glimpsed as we headed down the first trail. Many Common Yellowthroats sang along the creek. House Wrens and Tree Swallows occupied nest boxes. We had good looks at an Eastern Towhee and Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and an Indigo Bunting made a distant appearance. We tallied 30 species for the morning. Thank you to Linda and Charlie for opening their property for a field trip.

Jeanne Verhulst and Linda Kenyon

Powder Mills Park and Burroughs Audubon Nature Club (BANC) May 25, 2024

A number of species including a Baltimore Oriole were spotted from the fish hatchery parking lot as seventeen birders and two leaders assembled on a cool and sunny morning. As we walked the hatchery area, a pair of Eastern Phoebes were busy fly-catching to feed young, a Red-tailed Hawk perched on a distant conifer and the usual Great Blue Heron flew in hoping for a free meal. A Common Yellowthroat gave great close views.



Common Yellowthroat at Powder Mills Park.
Photo by Jeffrey Eichner.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

On the Daffodil Meadow Trail, an occupied Ruby-throated Hummingbird nest was a highlight, as was mother Hooded Mergansers with young seen on the creek and the pond.

It's always a treat to walk the trail at Burroughs Audubon Nature Club, the second part of this trip, and a reduced group kept a good pace as clouds gathered. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was seen across the marsh on a distant tree and a Common Yellowthroat showed. A Pileated Woodpecker was seen by some and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was heard just as the first raindrops began to fall. The total species for the day was 45. The eBird Trip Report can be viewed at: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/245141>. Thanks to all who attended!

Tom and Jeanne Verhulst

Sandra L. Frankel Nature Park (Brickyard Trail) May 26, 2024

A cool 60° and overcast morning kept both people and birds less active than usual. Eight people joined the walk on this popular urban trail. Near to the trail entrance, we were treated to a pair of Red-bellied Woodpeckers coming and going out of their nest hole to feed their young. A Tufted Titmouse showed well, as did a Northern Cardinal. A Wood Thrush was heard. Around the marsh area, a Green Heron and Great Blue Heron gave good views. A Belted Kingfisher zipped by but didn't land and a Ruby-throated Hummingbird was spotted briefly. A Common Yellowthroat was seen very well, but both a



Belted Kingfisher photographed on the Brickyard Trail by Alan Bloom in July, 2024.

singing Marsh Wren and a Yellow Warbler refused to show themselves. We tallied 35 species in all. Thanks to all who joined in!

Tom and Jeanne Verhulst

Ganondagan State Historical Site, Ontario County, New York June 1, 2024

On a lovely sunny morning we had a great group of 15, including the leaders. Most folks are members of and learned about the trip through Friends of Ganondagan. We walked about 2.3 miles through meadows, over a stream and along several wetlands, ending by walking through mature woods. We had 45 species including 5 flycatcher species. We had fun looks at baby Blue Jays being fed and watched four other species bringing food and/or on occupied nests, including Bluebirds and Tree swallows using nest boxes.

Amy Kahn and Neal Reilly

Letchworth State Park June 2, 2024

The RBA field trip through Letchworth State Park typically sees more species of birds than most other trips. This year's trip through Letchworth certainly did not disappoint, with just over 70 species tallied for the day. The group of a dozen birders got a 5:30am start at the Mount Morris Dam at the north end of the park and made several stops throughout the park while slowly making their way south under mostly sunny skies. The group enjoyed wonderful looks at Scarlet Tanager, Acadian Flycatcher and Black-throated Green Warbler. Though some did not get a chance to see Hooded Warbler, several were heard by the group throughout the day. An especially exciting observation was a pair of Peregrine Falcons soaring with a group of Turkey Vultures over the gorge.

This year's trip also included a journey to the east side of the park. There, the group was able to pick up Tree Swallows and Red-winged Blackbirds, as well as a surprise female Hooded



Merganser. Songs of gray tree frogs and a soft rain called out the ending of the field trip after roughly 8 hours of birding.

Elijah Kruger and Neal Reilly

Odonata Sanctuary

June 16, 2024

Ten people joined for this annual Father's Day trip on the former Taylor property in Honey Falls, NY. We had one of our target birds, before even getting out of the cars, an adult male Eastern Bluebird in a tree nearby. Only one of many sightings of this beautiful bird.

After sign-ins and introductions, we also found Cedar Waxwings, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Yellow Warblers, and Barn Swallows. We then proceeded up the road finding Tree Swallows and Bluebirds on nest boxes. Proceeding along the trail to a grassy field, we found a second target, a Bobolink. The field is used for agriculture, but intentionally harvested late so the Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark have time to nest before the grass is cut. The field also had Eastern Kingbirds, Mockingbirds, and a distant Eastern Meadowlark heard by some.

In the deep woods, an Eastern Towhee was heard. Red-bellied, Hairy, and Piliated Woodpeckers were also present. The flycatchers also put in an appearance: Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, and the ever illusive Willow Flycatcher. Later in the morning the larger birds like: corvids and raptors, started to appear. We had American Crows, Turkey Vultures, and a Red-Tailed Hawk.

We'd like to, again, thank Steve and the Odonata Sanctuary for sponsoring this lovely trip.

Tom Nash, Sheryl Gracewski, Steve Melcher

Barnhart's Camp and Keeney Swamp

June 23, 2024

An enthusiastic group of birders assembled at the Shop'n Save in Nunda, eagerly anticipating a full day of birding. Forty-two species were

found before we left the parking lot! The trip began with driving directly to Keeney Swamp. (Often missed on previous trips by those who couldn't stay for what was formerly an afternoon/evening destination.) Ovenbirds were frequently heard, a Mourning Warbler was coaxed out of the woods (a big highlight!), and Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Pine, and Canada Warblers were heard or glimpsed as we drove and stopped along the gravel roads. At the Black Creek impoundment area, Bald Eagles on a nest replaced last year's Ospreys. Mallards, a flock of Canada Geese, a Belted Kingfisher, Green and Great Blue Herons, and a Common Yellowthroat were all present.

Moving on to a spot on Old State Road where Prairie Warblers are regulars, we were not disappointed. One was spotted almost immediately, but by the time everyone (now 29 people!) assembled, it was gone. We had almost given up looking when two showed up, one staying long enough for great looks. After a successful morning, we feasted on grilled sausages and hot dogs with all the trimmings, provided by Carolyn and Jerry, and the many contributed side dishes and desserts. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and American Goldfinches among others visited their feeders while we munched.

A brief downpour began just as we were heading out for the afternoon stops and some folks called it a day. Those that continued made a number of stops along the roads in the area. A Savannah Sparrow, Meadowlarks, and Bobolinks were highlights, but no owls were heard as dusk fell. The day tallied 85 species! A big thank you to Carolyn and Jerry for being great hosts and leaders, and to Rick Stevens and Tom and Jeanne Verhulst who co-led. Thanks, too, to everyone who joined in—you all made it a fun trip! View the eBird trip report and checklists here:

<https://ebird.org/tripreport/255590>

Jeanne Verhulst



FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Conesus Inlet State Wildlife Management Area August 3, 2024

Andrew Consler and I led today's RBA trip to the Conesus inlet swamp area. We had a fine crew of 10 participants and a good time, coming up with 63 species in all and some interesting observations. Most fascinating was an extended squabble between two Ospreys and one of the two Bald Eagles in the inlet area. I don't know who initially caught the fish, but the Eagle had it and the Ospreys gave it no peace! The most unusual find of the day was probably the Bobolink, perched out in the swamp area and seen from the westside board walk out. A few birds of note seen in the inlet area included Yellow-billed Cuckoo, 2 Yellow-throated Vireos, a Purple Finch and a Blue-winged Warbler. An interesting sight at the north-end dike was a female Red-winged Blackbird flying about with a katydid in its beak. Good butterflies in that area, from tiny baby Monarch caterpillars to a large Tiger Swallowtail were added attractions. The most numerous species on the day was American Goldfinch – lots of them!

Jim Kimball and Andrew Consler

Sandhill Cranes seen by David Laiacona at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge on July 19, 2024.



Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge August 11, 2024

We had nice weather with moderate temperature, clear sky and light wind. The eighteen participants formed a caravan of ten cars. This beginner trip focuses on giving new birders good looks at birds. The start of the Wildlife Drive provided some of this, with great binocular views of Bald Eagle, Osprey, and Great Egret. Birds on the water like American Coot and Pied-billed Grebe were distant and best seen through a scope. In contrast to years past, we did not see many very young birds. The only shorebird seen was a distant Lesser Yellowlegs. A stop at Mays Point provided few additional birds. Our final stop at Knox-Marcellus Marsh yielded big counts of several distant species and a cameo appearance of three Sandhill Cranes. The trip finished with 33 species.

Sheryl Gracewski, Tom Nash, John Boettcher

MAY 2024 RECORDS SUMMARY

May 2024 could be described overall as pleasant. Temperatures averaged 63.3°F, 4.5° above average. The month ranked the fourth warmest May since records have been kept (1871), but many nights, especially in the first half of the month and the last few days of the month, were cooler than normal. The Rochester airport measured 3.14" of precipitation, 0.28" above average. Most of this rainfall accumulated in a few large-scale rain events, the largest of which occurred on 17 May, where 1.44" of precipitation was recorded. Major fog events were noted on the morning of 16 May and all day near Lake Ontario on 19 May.

Looking back at April, ideal weather, especially the last two weeks of that month, contributed to some species that normally arrive in the first few days of May arriving in the last few days of April. Likewise, with migration shifted a few days earlier than the historic window, the abundance of neotropical migrants arrived a few days earlier. Consequently, as has been the trend for the past few years, the big push of neotropical migrants seemed to dry up by the last week of the month, leaving few stragglers that dragged into early June. There were just over 162,000 eBird lines in the download, up 0.5% from 2023. 812 eBird observers contributed to these sightings, up 9.0% from 2023.



MAY 2024 RECORDS SUMMARY

Starting with the waterfowl, typical of May, numbers and diversity continued to fall. The last Snow Goose was reported in the first week of May. Canada Geese were already well into their first broods. Movements of Brant were noted on 12 May with 200 migrating past the Braddock Bay Hawk Watch and 500 more seen over the NMWMA on 18 May. As usual, small numbers of dabbling and diving ducks lingered, such as a small flock of mixed scaup (less than 20) on Braddock Bay. The last large push of Long-tailed Ducks (maximum 500) and Red-breasted Merganser (maximum 200) occurred on 12 May, with smaller numbers and individuals lingering through the end of the month.

Among the other waterbirds, Reuben Stoltfus and Tim Lenz found a King Rail along Carncross Road on the night of 23 May during a Big Day. A few observers had luck hearing the bird on 24 May. David Brown spotted an American White Pelican from the Braddock Bay Hawk Watch on 7 May. Four more American White Pelicans moved past the Hawk Watch on 21 May. David Brown, Kim Steininger, and Greg Sanda were treated to an exceptionally rare Tricolored Heron flyby from the Hawk Watch on 11 May. Joe Wing reported a single Western Cattle Egret from Lakeside Road in Ontario on 4 May. The bird took flight before any other observers arrived. David Brown and Kim Steininger also reported a flyby Glossy/White-faced Ibis from the Hawk Watch on 8 May.

High waters along Lake Ontario resulted in few, if any, water crossings to the Braddock Bay Barrier Island via the East Spit in search of shorebirds. Instead, birders relied on scoping the barrier beaches from the end of the West Spit, often with success. Shorebird reports from the barrier beaches that stood out include Short-billed Dowitcher, Sanderling, Willet, and Ruddy Turnstone. Many of the smaller peeps, plovers, yellowlegs, and Short-billed Dowitchers were also found in the flooded fields of the Lakeshore plains east and west of Rochester, flooded fields and shallow ponds of the Geneseo area, and good shorebird habitat along Carncross Road in the NMWMA. Nothing very rare was reported, but the Willet from the East Spit on 10 May (John and Karla Gordiner) and a Whimbrel from Sodus Point on 23 May were noteworthy.

Unlike last May, when New York State's first Herrmann's Gull was reported from Sodus Point, a Franklin's Gull traveled the Lakeshore, Laughing Gulls appeared at multiple locations, and an invasion of Black-legged Kittiwakes stormed into the northeast United States, including the Region 2 Lakeshore, May of 2024 looked dull from the gull perspective. This year, there were two reports of Laughing Gull (12 May at Braddock Bay by Jessie Barry and 28 May from Sodus Point by Mike Gullo). Greg Lawrence reported the only two Great Black-backed Gulls of the month – very unusual not to have any more reports – from Ontario Beach on 1 May. One, or as many as three, Lesser Black-backed Gull(s) (all reports were of a single first cycle individual) traveled the lakeshore from Charlotte to Point Breeze the first half of the month. As many as seven Forster's Terns were periodically seen along the stretch of Lake Ontario from Charlotte Pier to Braddock Bay.

The Braddock Bay Hawk Watch officially ended on 31 May. David Brown finished his sixth season as the official hawk counter with 69,476 raptors, 16,209 of which were counted in May. Species of note included two Black Vultures (5 May and 21 May) and two Mississippi Kites (1 May and 16 May). Two Mississippi Kites made for a great end to the official season. Note that raptors, particularly Bald Eagles, continue to migrate into June, but the official count ends on 31 May. High counts of note from the Hawk Watch include 1,908 Turkey Vulture on 2 May, 108 Bald Eagle on 2 May, 143 Bald Eagle on 21 May, and 2,472 Broad-winged Hawk on 14 May. Adding to the impressive raptors for May, Don Bemont photographed a Swallow-tailed Kite along Lime Kiln Road in Albion on 7 May.

Among the passerines, the diversity and abundance of neotropical migrants seemed comparable to recent years. All of the expected species were reported, with a few rarities mixed in – quite expected for May. Roger Clark found a White-eyed Vireo at Badgerow Park on 9 May. The inconspicuous individual was reported through 11 May, with observer comments often noting how difficult the bird was to spot. One of the best birds of May was a Black-billed Magpie, spotted by David Brown and seen by many in the Braddock Bay area on the morning and early afternoon of 22 May. Interestingly, a Black-billed Magpie was photographed by Jim



MAY 2024 RECORDS SUMMARY

Wood at Beechwood State Park on 27 March (details contained within that monthly report). Whether the Braddock Bay individual represents the same individual is impossible to determine, but Black-billed Magpie as a species experienced an eastward movement last winter into the western Great Lakes, making the possibility of two individuals less remote than any year in recent history. The last Monroe County Black-billed Magpie was seen in 1949, and of all places, was observed at Braddock Bay. Christina Hoh reported a singing Sedge Wren from Martens Tract in the NMWMA on 6 May, which was joined by a second individual by the end of the month. Migrating finches such as Evening Grosbeak were reported in small numbers towards the beginning of the month. Red Crossbills were reported from the Town of Sodus, the Town of Greece, and Hamlin Beach SP. It was a decent spring for Golden-winged Warblers, with several reports from lakeshore hotspots. A homeowner near Summerville photographed a Blue Grosbeak on 6 May. Despite much effort by a few birders who staked out the site, with the permission of the homeowner, the bird was not relocated the next day. The last Blue Grosbeak in Region 2 was seen in Hamlin on 11 May 1991. Neil Reilly and David Brown found a Summer Tanager along the Lakeview Community Church Trail the evening of 4 May. Overall, a fairly average May with some excitement here and there.

See the noteworthy records table posted on the RBA website for more details and records and please send in reports to eBird, the GeneseeBirds listserv, or to Nick Kachala at nicholaskach@gmail.com by the 5th of the month.

Observers: Janet Akin, Osvaldo Araya, Richard Ashworth, Diane Baillargeon, Ryan Ballard, Niki Banke, Tanya Baranov, Ted Barnett, Mitchell Barry, Jessie Barry, Betty Beckham, Don Bemont, Steven & Linda Benedict, Lynn Bergmeyer, Shawn Billerman, Linda Birkel, Robin Blakesley, Alan & Lisa Bloom, John Boettcher, Terry Bohling, Lynn Braband, Christopher

Brandt, Janet & Scott Brooks, David Brown, Robert G. Buckert, Sara Burch, Brad Carlson, Robert Cicotta, Roger Clark, Sara Close, Kelly Close, Lorenzo Colantoni, Andrew Consler, Robert Crandall, Doug Daniels, Rod Davis, Jayne Dean, Cliff Dekdebrun, Peggy Dempsey, Diane Egan, Adam Farid, Kevin Farrell, Rob Fergus, Annabelle Foos, George & Katie Ford, Kyle Gage, Dan Gallagher, Andrew Garland, Matthew Gavette, Janis George, Candy Giles, James Goetz, John & Karla Gordinier, Sheryl Gracewski, Jay Greenberg, Kevin Griffith, Austin Groff, Lucretia Grosshans, Michael Gullo, Carmen Gumina, Andrew Guthrie, Bill Haake, Kim Hartquist, Jim & Allison Healy, Christina Hoh, Dick Horsey, Bill Howe, Pam Inzinna, Carolyn Jacobs, Nick Kachala, Amy Kahn, Laura Kammermeier, Ryan Kayhart, David Kennedy, James Kimball, Cindy Kindle, Hans Kunze, Michael Laird, Chris Lajewski, Greg Lawrence, Fred Leff, Tim Lenz, Joan Lindberg, Peggy Mabb, Peggy Macres, Liz Magnanti, Melissa Mance-Coniglio, Patricia Martin, Lauri Mattle, Chita McKinney, Ann McMican, Scott Meagher, Jim Miles, Mark Miller, Kent Millham, Phil Mills, Celeste Morien, Brian & Brooke Morse, Jim Mott, Matt Nusstein, Dave Nutter, David Odell, Gabriella Orfanides, Andrea Patterson, Shelley Patterson, Jeremy Pete, Luanne Pignataro, Norma Platt, Jay Powell, Derek Pulhamus, Doug & Elizabeth Rabjohns, Neal Reilly, Rosemary Reilly, Michael Rizzo, Isaac Rizzo, Chris Rockwell, Brian Rohrs, Andrew Romanowski, Wade & Melissa Rowley, Shawn Ryan, Jennifer Rycenga, Anne Salverda, Greg & Shannon Sanda, Karl Schmidt, Shirley Shaw, Dominic Sherony, Rob Sielaff, Robert & Susan Spahn, Dave & Donna Spier, Kim Steininger, Rick Stevens, Reuben Stoltzfus, Kimberly Sucey, Michael & Joann Tetlow, Eunice Thein, Nathan Ukens, Tom & Jeanne Verhulst, Mike Wasilco, Bridget Watts, Kim Weeks, Tom & Eileen Wheeler, Joe Wing, Chris Wood, Jim Wood, Ryan Zucker (all 812 observers could not be listed here).

	2024	2023	10-year Average (2014-2023)
Total species for May	238	243	244.2
New species for the year	41	56	56.3
Total for the year to date	275	271	268.6



A White-eyed Vireo at Badgerow Park on May 9, 2024. Photo by Alan Bloom.



SPECIAL EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

RBA is partnering with our friends at the Seneca Park Zoo and Genesee Valley Audubon Society to bring you two events with Sea McKeon, American Bird Conservancy Marine Program Director, during his consultation visit to Rochester. Join us for two exciting events!

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 6:30 – 7:30 PM

Marine Birds of the Americas: A Conversation with Sea McKeon

facilitated by author and RBA President Randi Minetor

**Brighton Memorial Library Learning Center
2300 Elmwood Avenue, Brighton**

***Free and open to the public; hearing loop system;
wheelchair accessible.***

Join Sea McKeon, Marine Program Director for the American Bird Conservancy (ABC), in a lively discussion with Randi Minetor, as he shares highlights from recent travels to Peru and other destinations, and the conservation work of ABC throughout the Americas. In partnership with the Rochester Birding Association.



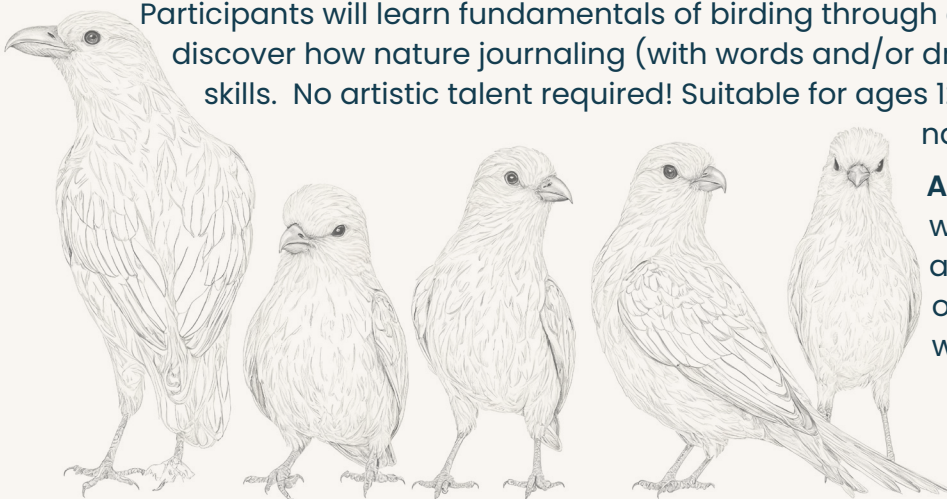
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 8:30 – 10:30 AM

Intro to Birding through Nature Journaling with ABC's Sea McKeon

**Seneca Park, Longhouse Shelter
2222 St. Paul St., Rochester**

Free and open to the public; preregistration required and limited to 16 people

Participants will learn fundamentals of birding through a Sit and Bird session and will discover how nature journaling (with words and/or drawing) helps our observational skills. No artistic talent required! Suitable for ages 12 to 120; binoculars available and nature journals provided.

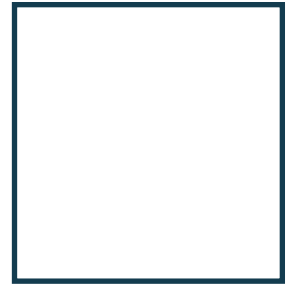


A Birdability event: all paths are wheelchair accessible; participants are encouraged to bring camp chairs or blankets to sit on. In partnership with Genesee Valley Audubon.



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