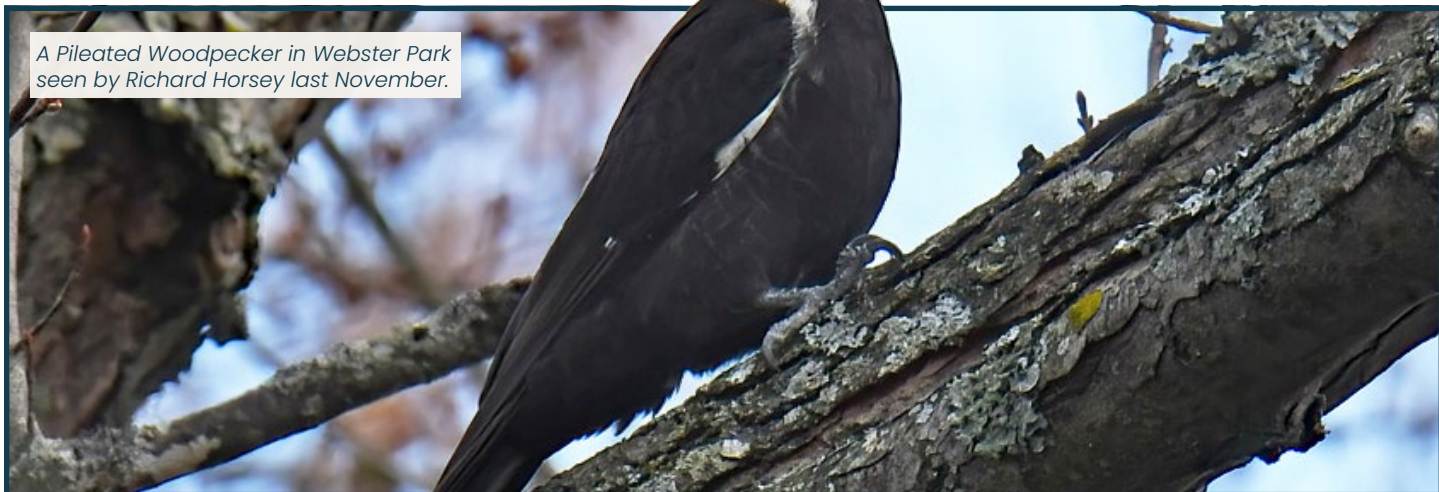




Rochester Birding
Association

Little Gull

A Pileated Woodpecker in Webster Park
seen by Richard Horsey last November.



NOV 2025 FIELD TRIP



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!

NOV 30
Sunday

NIAGARA RIVER (JOINT TRIP WITH THE BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY)

The Niagara River area is famous for the variety and number of gulls in winter. Join us on our birding venture along the Niagara River in the US and possibly Canada—if rarities are being seen there. We will start at Lake Ontario and work our way south to the Falls. Our focus will be on waterfowl and gulls, including Bonaparte's Gull and Little Gull, with possible late migrating Common Tern, with additional stops for Red-headed Woodpecker, Black Vulture and late migrating passerines. This is a joint trip with the Buffalo Ornithological Society. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the large parking lot next to the swimming pool of Fort Niagara State Park Beach, 1 Scott Avenue, Rt. 18F, Youngstown, NY. Bring beverages and lunch for this is an all day trip. Carpooling would be very helpful, especially if we cross into Canada. Participants MUST bring passports or Enhanced Driver's licenses to cross into Canada. Dress warmly and in layers. Spotting scopes and FRS radios (walkie-talkies) would be very helpful.

Leaders: Tom O'Donnell of the Buffalo Ornithological Society 716-622-5185 or tmodonnell@roadrunner.com and Neal Reilly 518-256-9147



Fire and Water

Fall birding can be somewhat frustrating. In spring, birds are trying to attract mates and stake out territories, so the air is full of songs and calls. Many are sporting their colorful breeding plumage, and so are readily identifiable. Leaves are still budding, so birds flitting from branch to branch are easily spotted. Contrast that with fall. Most birds are relatively quiet, so easily discernable songs give way to chips or silence. Many species take on drabber plumage. Leaves block sight lines. It certainly takes more patience to go birding in the fall. It's also a great time to learn more about something other than birds – heresy from the president of a birding association, right?

Recently, my spouse and I were driving back from Massachusetts, and because it was very late, we chose to stay overnight in Albany. The next morning, we spontaneously decided to check out the Pine Bush Preserve, a 3400-acre collection of properties just west of Albany. We only planned to stay a couple of hours, but we got on a 2.5-mile loop trail, and since birders can't just hike, it took us more than 4.5 hours to complete our circuit. The birding was great. We ran into mixed flocks of migrating warblers, there were lots of Eastern Towhees calling, and we saw several raptors soaring, including a Red-shouldered Hawk and Bald Eagle. What struck me the most, however, was the terrain and the plant life—it was different than what we are used to in the greater Rochester area, and I was curious about its natural history.

The Pine Bush Preserve is somewhat unique. It is an inland pine barrens ecosystem, and has rolling sand dunes covered in pitch pines, scrub oaks, heath and prairie grasses. So not only were we taking our time birding, we were also constantly stopping to identify unfamiliar plants with the iNaturalist Seek app. The area reminded me of places I've been to in Florida where you'd expect sandy soil. So how did this ecosystem come to be in the middle of New York State? Fortunately, there was a wonderful visitors center that explained the geological origins.

About 20,000 years ago, a glacier covered almost all of present-day New York State. The glacier is estimated to have been a mile thick over the area where the preserve sits today. As the climate warmed, the ice melted, and the meltwater was trapped by glacial sediment to the south, and the remaining ice to the north, creating a huge lake called Glacial Lake Albany (apparently geologists are very literal). One of the rivers running into this lake was the Mohawk, and this sandy area we see today is actually from the river delta as the Mohawk emptied into the lake. After the glacial lake drained, this sandy delta was exposed to wind and dunes were formed. Water and nutrients quickly drain through sand, so the soil is dry and nutrient-deficient (hence, the name "barrens"). Only certain plants can thrive in this type of soil, giving rise to the unique ecosystem.

Fire plays an important role in maintaining the pine barrens. The thick bark of the pitch pines and the extensive root systems of the scrub oaks protect these plants. It is thought that Native Americans and early settlers used fires in the area to increase blueberry and blackberry fruit production. In the visitors center, a fascinating description of the controlled burns used to maintain the ecosystem appealed to the latent pyromaniac in me. Evidence of these burns could be seen on our walk by the charred bark of the pines and the wide-open areas where new growth was renewing the landscape.

If you haven't been there already, I highly recommend putting the Pine Bush Preserve on your New York State bucket list.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER, BRIAN ROHRS

Some RBA highlights for this month:

We have one field trip scheduled for November along the Niagara River, jointly sponsored by the Buffalo Ornithological Society. Join your fellow birders in the field!

Our speaker at 7 pm on November 13th is Andrea Patterson, talking about what we've learned from 40 years of banding birds at the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory. Please join us in person at Asbury First Methodist Church or on Zoom.

Our November Birds and Brews is at Rising Storm Brewing Co. on the 17th from 6-9. Come out and join us for some lively conversation.

Until next month, Happy Birding!

October and November are excellent months to observe the parade of waterbirds on Lake Ontario. Several experienced birders are active at the lake watch many mornings during these months. Go to the lakeside of the Lakeshore Pavilion at Parking Lot 4, Hamlin Beach State Park. Bring binoculars and spotting scopes, if you have them. Visitors are welcome!

Canada and Snow Geese at Hamlin Beach State Park. Photo by Alan Bloom.



Birds and Brews

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

Monday, November 17, 2025
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Rising Storm Brewing Co.
1880 Blossom Road, Rochester

The former Daisy Flour Mill has been transformed into a spacious brew pub! Beer, wine, cider, and cocktails are all on the menu, as well as an imaginative selection of meals for your dining pleasure.

We'll be on the upper level.

www.risingstormbrewing.com



TIME TO RENEW!

What is your favorite reason for being part of the RBA Community? Attending field trips? Monthly speakers sharing unique insights into the world of birds? The Little Gull newsletter? Knowing you are supporting local conservation efforts? Whatever the reason, your annual RBA membership makes all this possible.

As the year-end approaches, it's time to renew your RBA membership. This will help set RBA up for another rewarding year in 2026.

In 2020, we started transitioning to all-online membership renewal. You responded! Over that time the percentage of renewals made online went from 45% to nearly 70%. When you renew your membership online, you're making even more of an impact with your contribution. Renewing online reduces paperwork and saves our membership chair and treasurer multiple trips to the post office and bank, and helps lower your carbon footprint.

If you are comfortable making an online payment, please go to rochesterbirding.org, and click on the "[Join/Renew](#)" button at the top of the home page. If you prefer to mail in your payment, you can print off the renewal form from the "Join/Renew" button on the RBA home page.

Please renew now! Renewing early saves the RBA the printing and mailing costs and volunteer time needed for sending out membership reminder letters, and your renewal is good through December 31, 2026.

Membership levels for 2026:

Individual – *one person* **\$30**

Family* – *two persons and family living at same location* **\$40**

Supporter* – *Higher level of support* **\$75**

Sponsor* – *Greater level of support* **\$150**

Corporate Member **\$250**

Optional Hardcopy Little Gull newsletter **+\$15**

For young birders, ages up to 18 years of age, please contact Doug Rabjohns at dtrabjohns@yahoo.com.

Thank you,

Doug Rabjohns, RBA Membership Chair

Great Horned Owl © Candy Giles,
April 15th, 2025

40 Years of Banding At Braddock Bay: What Have We Learned?

Speaker: Andrea Patterson

Braddock Bay Bird Observatory has been banding birds on the south shore of Lake Ontario since 1986, and we've collected data on more than 300,000 birds. Thanks to a platoon of collaborating researchers including local professors and their undergraduate and graduate students, our data has been used to answer a variety of questions concerning the behavior, ecology, and biology of birds. Join us for a romp through 40 years of research, as we tackle questions like:



- Have we noticed any changes in bird populations or migrations over time?
- Are migrating flocks just associations of birds that happen to be coordinated by time, place, and species, or is there something more meaningful at work?
- Why do birds carry extra fat in the spring?
- Why do some insectivores switch their diet to fruit in the fall?
- Is it possible to distinguish individual Magnolia Warblers just by their night flight calls?
- What is that thing on the chin of that Great Crested Flycatcher?

We promise that you don't need a knowledge of statistics or the scientific method to understand and enjoy this fun overview of our work.

Andrea Patterson began volunteering at Braddock Bay Bird Observatory in 2009, and banded her first bird in the spring of 2010 when she took a bander training class from Elizabeth Brooks. Since then, she has handled more than 20,000 birds as part of the Observatory's long-term migration study and has been lucky enough to spend time banding Saltmarsh and Nelson's Sparrows in New Hampshire, rails (including one Black Rail!) in Louisiana, and Tawny-crowned Greenlets in Belize. Now the executive director of the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory, Andrea coordinates the migration, summer, and owl monitoring programs; facilitates the use of the Observatory as a field site for a half-dozen research affiliates; and teaches four banding classes annually.

Ms. Patterson will be presenting in person at Asbury First Methodist. If you will be attending by Zoom, look for the Zoom link in your email prior to the meeting. The Zoom Room **will open at 6:45 PM**. Don't wait until the last minute to sign on, you might be left out!

*Photo from Braddock Bay Bird
Observatory Facebook page*



ROCHESTER CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The 122nd Rochester Christmas Bird Count (RCBC) will be held on **Sunday, December 21, 2025**. Please consider contributing to this national birding event, which is a coveted annual RBA tradition.

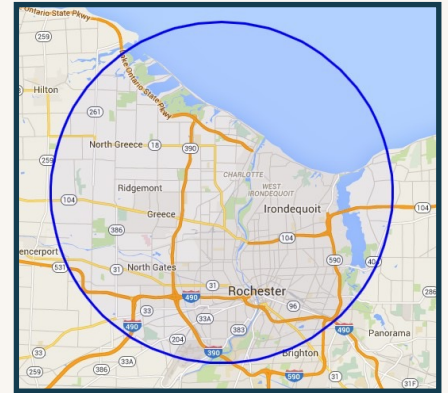
Sunday, December 21, 2025

Participation in the RCBC enables in-field skill development, connections within the birding community, and the ability to contribute to a citizen science project that directly influences National Audubon Society policy.

Note that in this year of leadership transition, the location of the tally dinner is still to be determined. Please look for an update in December 2025's Little Gull for a final decision.

We need your help and welcome all skill levels. Please join us!!!

These sector leaders (below) have agreed to coordinate the field work "boots-on-the-ground" for the count. To participate in the count, contact them or Nick Kachala. Be sure that your sector leader gives you an individual or group assignment.



John Boettcher 298-3404
john2w3b@gmail.com

Braddock Bay to Long Pond Road

Greg Lawrence
glaw-rence21@yahoo.com

Long Pond Road to Dewey Avenue
Dewey Avenue to Charlotte Harbor

Andy Garland
andrew.garland@yahoo.com
585-329-1577

Summerville to Culver Road
& Seneca Park

Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash
sheryl.gracewski@rochester.edu
tnashny@earthlink.net

Culver Road to Baker Road (Webster)

VACANCY – to be determined

Parks and neighborhoods
(Highland, Genesee Valley, Mt. Hope Cemetery)

Rosemary Reilly
reilly.rosemary@gmail.com

Maplewood & Turning Point Parks,
Holy Sepulcher and Riverside cemeteries

Brian Morse
brianmorse2000@gmail.com
269-9576

West of airport/south of the canal/
north of the river

Rob Buckert 269-4206
avbro@hotmail.com

Crow Roost

Nick Kachala, Compiler
nicholaskach@gmail.com or 585-750-5536



White-throated
Sparrow at
Mendon Ponds.
Photo by Alan
Bloom.



FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Ganondagan State Historic Site September 20, 2025

We (14 people) met at 9:00 a.m. in the main parking lot and had six species before we left the lot, including Common Yellowthroat. Our 2-mile walk on a lovely sunny day took us through meadows, new and old wooded areas, wetlands, and shrublands. We had late breeders and many migrants, including a fun mixed group of warblers hanging around with Chickadees and Titmice. Warblers were Yellow-rumped, Chestnut-sided, Palm, Blackpoll, Common Yellowthroat and American Redstart. Other highlights for the day were a number of Eastern Bluebirds, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, a cooperative Eastern Towhee and numerous flying flocks of Canada Geese in V formation.

Amy Kahn and Neal Reilly



A Yellow-rumped Warbler spotted on the Ganondagan State Historic Site field trip by Alan Swire.

Hamlin Beach State Park October 4, 2025

We were hoping for favorable winds conducive to sea-watching, but unfortunately, the day started unseasonably mild with moderate southerly winds, making the conditions far from ideal for observing migrating waterfowl. Not to be deterred, nineteen birders set up in front of the Area Four pavilion to scan the lake. After about 30 minutes, it became quite apparent that almost nothing was moving save a few

Cormorants, Red-breasted Mergansers, and a handful of Ruddy Ducks. The best bird was an immature Common Loon spotted by Rick.



Red-breasted Merganser photographed on a previous trip to Hamlin Beach Park by Eunice Thein.

Stubbornly refusing to leave Area Four, we decided to walk over to the "island" that runs between the entrance and exit roads. This spot can be quite productive, and indeed, we picked up a few migrants and a smattering of both summer and winter residents. Everyone in the group enjoyed good looks at both Purple Finches and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. The chatter from White-throated Sparrows was nearly constant. The only warbler was a Magnolia spotted by the keen eye of Carson! We totaled a respectable 43 species at our first stop despite the rapidly warming morning. Seeing (or not seeing as the case may be) that the birds were becoming increasingly still, we decided to head on over to the woodlands of Devil's Nose.

We began by walking down the maintenance road that runs along the south side of the woods. This stretch provides easy walking down a wide service road that can be very rewarding. There wasn't a large number of birds or species at this spot, but it did yield the "best" bird of the day, a Yellow-billed Cuckoo which was an amazing spot by Carson! Not surprisingly, the cuckoo was sitting perfectly still and well-camouflaged by a large cottonwood tree before stealthily slipping out of sight. Unfortunately, only a lucky few got to see it. We finished the morning by slowly

working our way along a trail that dissects the middle of the woods. It's a great trail because there are both woodland species as well as those denizens of second growth and thick understory. There were a few pockets of birds, and we slowly added several species to our day list. An obliging Blue-headed Vireo was seen by everyone in the group. Less obliging were flitting Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes and an all-too short appearance by a Winter Wren. The White-throated Sparrows continued to scratch about in the underbrush, and most in the group got on both nuthatches along with a Brown Creeper. This area is teeming with Gray Catbirds in the summer, but only one was observed today. A true team effort identified a solid 33 species. It was nearing noon, and it had been a splendid morning of birding, but there was no quit in this group! At this point, it was an easy decision to head on over to the trail at Yanty Marsh.

I think the highlight here was the amazing raft of Canada Geese that stretched out west along the shore. Hard to estimate, but perhaps there could have been over 2,000 birds! By now, there was a pleasant cool breeze coming in off the lake, which made for an enjoyable walk in the woods and along the marsh edge. We pushed a couple of Hermit Thrushes along the sides of the trail as we ambled along. Another skulking Winter Wren managed to frustrate most of the group as it made a quick appearance near the beginning of the boardwalk. Carson did an

excellent impression of an Eastern Screech-Owl hoping to lure it out. No luck with that, but the consolation prize was a close by Screech-Owl responding loudly. It was now after one o'clock. After a most enjoyable stroll on the impressive Yanty Marsh boardwalk, we headed back to the parking area. Our best efforts only managed 13 species at this site.

Despite the day's warm weather and unfavorable winds, we had a great birding adventure! The total tally of 58 species was pretty remarkable and reflected a true team effort!

Roger Clark and Rick Stevens

Ganondagan State Historic Site October 4, 2025

One positive of our extended drought was another spectacular day for birding. Though the dry vegetation may have been why we only had 26 species, it was sunny and easy to see color on birds, even in the woods. We had six species of migrants and 20 local breeders. Highlights were a mixed flock of warblers following Tufted Titmice and Black-capped Chickadees, and we also had Eastern Towhees, Bluebirds, a Blue-headed Vireo, and several V formation flocks of Canada Geese. We had a lovely group of 18 people of all ages and birding abilities. We got to loan out all 3 pairs of our new donated binoculars, which were very appreciated.

Amy Kahn and Neal Reilly

High Acres Nature Area October 12, 2025

Our morning started off mostly sunny and in the low 50s as 17 people met us at the southeast parking lot. A couple of early birds arrived before us and reported there had been a steady stream of Ring-billed Gulls passing overhead. As we were all signing in, our parking lot birds included Blue Jays, American Crows, Red-winged Blackbirds, European Starlings, many more gulls and a Northern Flicker.



*A Blue-headed
Vireo seen at
Hamlin Beach Park
by Rosemary Reilly.*



A Green Heron spotted at High Acres Nature Area last year by Dick Horsey.

Walking into the woods and heading toward Frog Pond, Yellow-rumped Warblers and White-throated Sparrows were seen, and a distant White-breasted Nuthatch could be heard. At the old picnic table area, we pulled in Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Black-capped Chickadees, a Hermit Thrush and more Yellow-rumps. Our trek to the east end of the Woodland Trail was relatively quiet, but we enjoyed the forest lit up by yellow-green light filtering through the fall foliage and could hear the occasional quack of Mallards and call of Red-winged Blackbirds. The opening at the end of the trail overlooking the eastern wetlands afforded looks at many Mallards and Wood Ducks, a Black Duck, and several Great Blue Herons. A Green Heron was spotted in the open, but quickly chose to slink behind some bushes that made for challenging viewing.

Back along the Woodland Trail, we stopped across from Newt Pond to look north over the wetlands and added Green-winged Teal and American Wigeon to our waterfowl count. Continuing on the red trail, we ran into a mixed flock of chickadees and yellow-rumps, as well as a flock of Rusty Blackbirds sporting their piercing white eyes. A raptor flew into the top of a dead ash tree almost directly above us, and we discussed whether this was a young Cooper's Hawk or a Merlin. Fortunately, several folks got pictures before it flew off, and post-trip

debate about wing/tail length, stripe width and bill size confirmed Merlin.

On the causeway, we had more Mallards, Wood Ducks and a nice view of a Great Blue Heron perched on a branch across the marsh. A Turkey Vulture was spotted in the distance, and soaring high above us were two Red-tailed Hawks and a Cooper's Hawk.

Just beyond the Quonset hut, we spotted a Northern Harrier above the hill. We followed its glide south and east as it dropped down and became barely visible through the pine trees.. We climbed the trail to the top of the hill to overlook the Quarry Pond and found a large flock of Canada Geese. We heard the call of a Greater Yellowlegs, and we were able to find it moving through the middle of the goose flock. At the top of the cell tower to the west, we could see a collection of sticks signaling that an ambitious Osprey had some unrequited hopes for romance. On the North Pond, two Pied-billed Grebes were spotted as well as a couple of Hooded Mergansers. Around the pond, we found more White-throated Sparrows, a couple of Swamp Sparrows, and lying in the middle of the path, a Northern Short-tailed Shrew that had clearly seen better days.

Just beyond the South Marsh, we pulled out Hermit Thrush, American Robins, Downy Woodpecker, kinglets and chickadees, and one of the best birds of the day—a very cooperative Blue-headed Vireo looking back at us through its white spectacles. As we continued back to the parking lot, we collected as new species Carolina Wren and Common Raven by ear.

In all, we had 44 species over the course of our field trip. We had a few enthusiastic beginner birders join us, which made the morning especially fun, and it was quite a treat to introduce them to some new life birds. Thanks to everyone who participated!

Brian Rohrs and Gayle Lazoration

On view: **Smash the Crash** • October 10 – November 6

Frontspace Gallery | Closing Reception: November 6, 4–6 PM

Located on the ground floor of Rush Rhees Library at the entrance to the Art and Music Library

University of Rochester

755 Library Road

Rochester, NY 14627

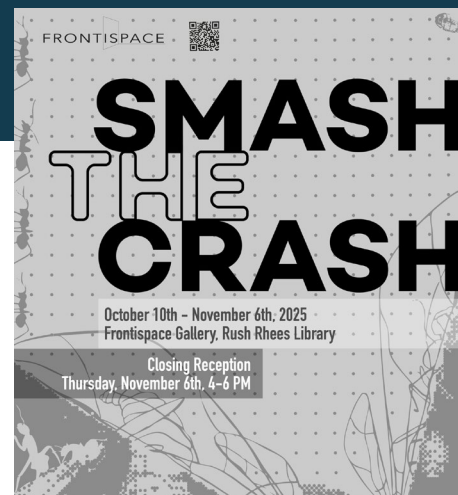
Mizin Shin + Richard Fadok

Rochester is a major hotspot for birds. Over 300 different species live in this city or migrate through the region every fall and spring, some 1 million birds in total. Nevertheless, tens of thousands of these very same birds will collide with our windows, meeting an untimely end as they attempt, and fail, to navigate our urban landscapes.

This is nowhere truer than here at the University of Rochester's River Campus, where we estimate that 1000 birds die a year after crashing into Hutchinson Hall, Wilson Commons, and other buildings. Since the early 1980s, members of our own community have had the harrowing experience of seeing these strikes first-hand on the way to class or outside their offices, studios, and labs. Sometimes they encounter birds alive but mortally wounded; at other times, they are already long since deceased.

Smash the Crash asks what it means to live in an era of rampant and oft-unrecognized animal death and dying. Through printmaking, photography, and computer visualization, the artworks gathered here grapple with this question. Made by students, faculty, and staff, they evoke the grief of witnessing bird-window collisions and the fury of living amidst such slow, structural violence. At the same time, they gesture toward the joy of being with these animals, the obligation to commemorate their former lives, and the possibility of becoming otherwise. Crash Course thus invites reflection on how we might yet find new and more just ways to build, not simply for us, but also for the birds.

WEBSITE: www.SmashtheCrashROC.com



WELCOME TO THE FLOCK

Please welcome our new members:

Jeff Baker & Mary Jo Meteyer

Jody Behrbaum

Ffion Collinsworth

Elise Lieberman

Steven & Nina Lupo

Christopher Mejia

As of October 15, total 2025 membership is 393

Individual Members: 254

Family Members: 99

Supporters: 4

Sponsors: 3

Corporate Sponsors: 1

Complimentary Memberships: 32



A group of Dunlin spotted at Braddock Bay East Spit by Richard Horsey in October 2024

Doug Rabjohns, RBA Membership Data



MAY 2025 RECORDS SUMMARY

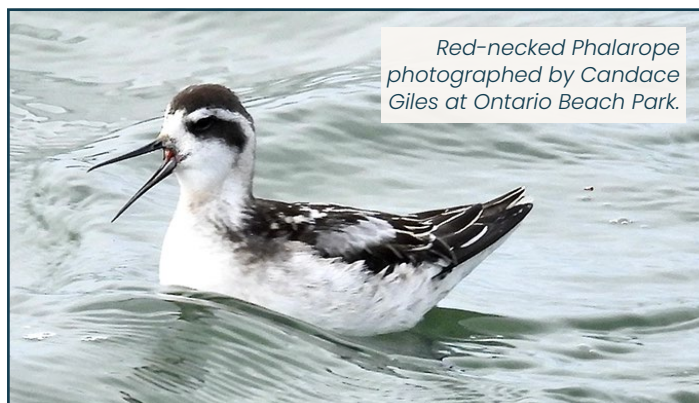
May 2025 was cloudy, cool, and wet – the exact opposite of May 2024. Temperatures averaged 56.4°, 2.4° below average. There were only 10 days with temperatures at or above 70°. Nightly lows were even cooler, with 13 nights having low temperatures in at most the 50s. Rochester's airport recorded 4.95" of precipitation, 2.09" above average. Measurable rainfall was recorded on 20 days. A surge of moisture on 6 May brought heavy rains to the southern part of the Region, which caused road closures and house flooding in southern Livingston County, among several Southern Tier counties. Another round of unpleasant weather tore through the Region on 16-17 May, bringing severe thunderstorms, which caused small amounts of damage in Ontario and Wayne counties. Only three days of the entire month were recorded as "mostly sunny."

The Region continued to see the seasonally expected decline in waterfowl numbers and diversity. Many of the non-breeding dabbling and diving ducks, which peaked in migratory numbers in March or April, continued to be found in small groups at the beginning of the month, but were only found as stragglers by the month's end. 15-20 May appeared to be the major departure period for the last flocks of non-breeding dabbling ducks. Long-tailed Duck migration seemed interesting this year, with the species being reported infrequently in small numbers (<25 individuals per observation) and then a large disjunct in the data with five reports of 500-1350 individuals. Among the rarer waterfowl, Carmen Gumina found a Eurasian Wigeon at the Railroad Marshes in the NWMWA, seen on 13 and 19 May. Chris Wood found and photographed an exceptionally rare TAVERNER'S CACKLING GOOSE, a western subspecies of Cackling Goose, around Braddock Bay on 22-23 May.

Virginia Rail and Sora numbers were generally low. Sandhill Cranes were found in the typical locations, plus some small migratory groups in the first half of the month. There were only two reports of Red-necked Grebes and one report of Horned Grebe, all in the first half of the month. Common Loons were still on the move early in the month, with a maximum of 173 passing the Hamlin Beach Lakewatch on 4 May. The NWMWA hosted a smattering of ibises in May. Brad Walker reported seven Glossy Ibises along Carncross Road on 2 May, alongside one

(photographed) Glossy x White-faced Ibis. Two more Glossy Ibises were reported from Morgan Road on 19 May. A single Glossy Ibis was reported from 28 May through the end of the month at the Railroad Marsh. Two American White Pelicans were reported from Braddock Bay on the evening of 25 May, which stayed overnight and were observed only in the morning on 26 May.

Shorebirds were exceptional this May, in direct contrast to 2024, which was a dismal year for spring shorebirds. Lake Ontario water levels rose throughout the month, exceeding the 2024 levels by six inches by 31 May. Despite these high waters, observers found plenty of other places to observe shorebirds, of which 27 species were reported. Montezuma became progressively better for shorebirds throughout the month once the high water and minor flooding in the first half of the month started to dry up, with spots such as the Railroad Marsh hosting extraordinary numbers and diversity. The Genesee River valley in Livingston County also held high numbers and diversity of shorebirds in flooded farm fields. Among the rarer finds, Jeremy Pete found a BLACK-NECKED STILT on Hogback Road in Savannah on 25 May, seen by many. 16 Whimbrel flew over Railroad Marsh on 22 May. Brad Carlson reported a Hudsonian Godwit along Jones Bridge Road in Leicester on 19 May, which was observed through 20 May by many. A Marbled Godwit was seen by several observers from 3-5 May on Carncross Road. Pairs of Long-billed Dowitcher showed up at several spots in Livingston County and the NWMWA. A Wilson's Phalarope was observed in Railroad Marsh on 24 May. Three separate Red-necked Phalaropes were reported: Railroad Marsh on 18 May, Brad Carlson + mob; Jones Bridge Road on 21 May, Cliff Dekdebrun + mob; and Railroad Marsh on 26 May, Mark Miller + mob. Gary



*Red-necked Phalarope
photographed by Candace
Giles at Ontario Beach Park.*

MAY 2025 RECORDS SUMMARY

Kohlenberg reported 16 Red Knots from Railroad Marsh on 25 May, an extraordinary count anywhere and anytime in Region 2.

There was a decent push of Franklin's Gulls into New York this spring. Within Region 2, Rick Stevens reported a (widely seen) adult on Jones Bridge Road on 21 May, the first record for Livingston County, at least in eBird. Several observers reported 1-2 Franklin's Gulls from the Lake Ontario shoreline on 24-25 May. Andy Guthrie found a Laughing Gull from Ontario Beach on 22 May. Small numbers of Great Black-backed Gull (1-3 per observation) suddenly appeared on 21 May and were reported through the end of the month, despite being absent prior to that. Maili Waters and Luke Seitz reported a jaeger, unidentified to species, from the West Spit on 15 May (any jaeger in the spring is very rare).

Hawk counter Maili Waters added 16,818 new raptors to the season total for the Braddock Bay Hawkwatch this month. Maili finished the official count window (March-May) with 71,750 raptors for the season. 2, 7, 16, 26, and 29 May all stood out as days with counts over 1,000 individuals. Of the 16,818 new raptors, 9,433 were Broad-winged Hawks, 1,407 were Sharp-shinned Hawks, and 698 were Bald Eagles. A Mississippi Kite passed the hawkwatch on 25 May. Glenn Wolford, once again, spent a considerable amount of time watching raptor migration from the Lake Shore Marshes WMA in Wayne County, having good counts of the expected species.

Passerines were decent for May, with a handful of uncommon, yet expected species reported, plus two unexpected rarities. The weather surely impacted passerine movements. The data shows an abrupt surge in numbers around 14-16 May (coinciding with one of the only good stretches of weather for the month). Among the rarer finds, Jay McGowan reported a EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE along Pratt Road in Sodus on 10 May. Robert Buckert and Nick Kachala discovered a second Eurasian Collared-Dove along Pratt Road the next morning and determined that they were a nesting pair. These represent the first Eurasian Collared-Doves in Region 2 in about a decade. The pair continued to be reported intermittently throughout the month. Pat Martin found a White-eyed Vireo at the West Spit on 13 May, which was widely observed through 17 May.

Blue Jay migration was evident along the lakeshore, with Andy Guthrie reporting a maximum of 3,000 on the morning of 6 May from the West Spit. Andy Guthrie reported the first and only record of Sedge Wren for the month on 13 May, singing from a farm field adjacent to his property in Hamlin. Numbers and frequency of Gray-cheeked Thrush were very low, with only one report of two individuals and a handful of single reports. Chris Wood reported as many as four Grasshopper Sparrows in an unmowed field in Caledonia on 9 May. Chris Wood, spending a significant amount of time in Livingston County this spring, then reported a LECONTE'S SPARROW along Perry Road in Leicester on 24 May. The bird was not relocated despite considerable effort from others. LeConte's Sparrow is always exceptionally rare in Region 2. This record is the first spring record for the Region, at least in eBird. Drew Weber reported a Yellow-headed Blackbird from Railroad Marsh on 26 May, which was seen by several others. For warblers, observers reported 31 species. Nothing exceptionally rare stood out among the warblers, although migratory Prairie Warblers were found at several locations, and about nine Golden-winged Warblers were reported. It was also a good month for Orange-crowned Warbler, with 20-25 individuals reported Regionwide.

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: Ryan Ballard, Niki Banke, Timmy Banker, Jessie Barry, Mitchell Barry, Lynn Bergmeyer, Linda Birkel, Robin Blakesley, Alan Bloom & Lisa Bloom, John Boettcher, Terry Bohling, Scott & Janet Brooks, Robert Buckert, Sara Burch, Ian Campbell, Brad Carlson, Robert Cicotta, Roger Clark, Sara Close, Lorenzo Colantoni, Robert Crandall, Doug Daniels, Thomas Davis, Cliff Dekdebrun, Peggy Dempsey, Grace Dowdall, Diane Egan, Rob Fergus, George & Katie Ford, Kyle Gage, Andrew Garland, Matthew Gavette, Janis George, Candy Giles, John Gordinier, Sheryl Gracewski, Kevin Griffith, Austin Groff, Michael Gullo, Carmen Gumina, Andrew Guthrie, Bill Haake, Helen Haller, Kim Hartquist, Christina Hoh, Dick Horsey, Bill Howe, Lynn Howes, Pam Inzinna, Nick Kachala, Amy



MAY 2025 RECORDS SUMMARY

Kahn, Laura Kammermeier, David Kennedy, James Kimball, Cindy Kindle, Hans Kunze, Greg Lawrence, Joan Lindberg, Peggy Mabb, Peggy Macres, Cynthia Marino, Patricia Martin, Judy Massare, Lauri Mattle, Jacob McCartney, Ryan McGinty, Jay McGowan, Ann McMican, Scott Meagher, Jim Miles, Kent Millham, Phil Mills, Celeste Morien, Brian & Brooke Morse, Matt Nusstein, Dave Nutter, Luanne Pignataro, Derek Pulhamus, Doug & Elizabeth Rabjohns, Rosemary Reilly, Neal Reilly, Michael Rizzo, Susan Roberts, Chris Rockwell, Brian Rohrs, Andrew Romanowski, Wade &

Melissa Rowley, Robert Ryan, Shawn Ryan, Jennifer Rycenga, Anne Salverda, Greg & Shannon Sanda, Mickey Scilingo, Luke Seitz, Dominic Sherony, Judith Slein, Robert Spahn, Rick Stevens, Reuben Stoltzfus, Stephen Taylor, David Tetlow, Michael Tetlow, Eunice Thein, Nathan Ukens, Tom & Jeanne Verhulst, Brad Walker, Mike Wasilco, Maili Waters, Bridget Watts, Mamie Weed, Kim Weeks, Glenn Wolford, Chris Wood, Jim Wood (all 839 observers could not be listed here).

	2025	2024	10-year Average (2015-2024)
Total species for May	245	239	243.7
New species for the year	50	41	53.9
Total for the year to date	270	274	269.2



Monthly **ECO-CHALLENGE** THE BIRDS AND THE BEANS

How much do you know about where your coffee comes from? Shade-grown and sun-grown coffee are the two primary growing techniques used worldwide. However, in parts of Central and South America, traditional shade-grown coffee plantations are being destroyed to make space for sun-tolerant coffee.

High-quality shade-grown arabica coffee has been hybridized to withstand the sun and is more resistant to disease. Sun-grown coffee also yields a higher crop since it can be grown at higher densities. In Latin America, nearly half of the shade-grown plantations were converted to sun cultivation.

While sun-grown coffee offers some benefits, it also raises significant concerns for biodiversity in the ecosystem. Removing the canopy from a coffee plantation also removes the other naturally occurring organisms. Shade-grown coffee promotes a healthy ecosystem that supports a diverse array of insects, birds, lizards, and arthropods. Although the shade-grown plantation is managed by a farmer, its high diversity of vegetation still mimics a natural habitat and serves as a critical habitat for migratory birds.

Numerous studies have shown that birds can reduce the number of harmful insects on coffee by up to 80%. On sun-grown coffee plantations, birds had less access to forage for insects, causing the amount of damage to the plants to increase dramatically. Other studies have shown that birds excel as a natural pest control for coffee's most significant pest: the Coffee Berry Borer.



Monthly **ECO-CHALLENGE**

THE BIRDS AND THE BEANS

Lacking the natural canopy of trees and birds, many sun-grown coffee plantations are forced to use pesticides to ward off pests.

Your coffee choice can help protect birds and forests. The Smithsonian's Bird Friendly® certification is the most rigorous standard for sustainable coffee, developed by scientists at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center. To earn this label, farms must maintain a canopy of native trees that provides essential habitat for migratory birds while also producing high-quality beans.

When you buy Smithsonian-certified coffee, you're supporting farms that protect wildlife and forest ecosystems. Some roasters offering Smithsonian-certified coffee include Birds & Beans, American Birding Association SongBird Coffee, Dean's Beans, and Jim's Organic Coffee. You can also explore more Bird Friendly® coffee brands at:

nationalzoo.si.edu/migratory-birds/buy-bird-friendly-coffee-online.



References

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BIRDS RECENTLY SPOTTED IN AND AROUND ROCHESTER

Merlin seen at the Whiting Road Nature Preserve.
Photo by Richard Horsey.



Wilson's Snipe seen on the Brickyard Trail by Jeanne Verhulst.



Ruby-crowned Kinglet on the Brickyard Trail.
Photo by Alan Swire.



Great Blue Heron in Williamson.
Photo by Bruce Goranowski.



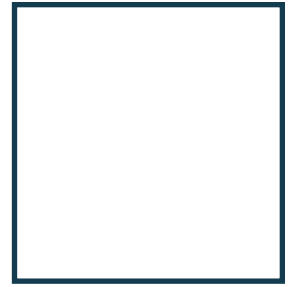
Semipalmated Plover seen at Braddock Bay East Spit by Wendelin Long.





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