



Rochester Birding
Association

Little Gull



A pair of Bald Eagles photographed in Mumford by David Laiacina.

A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker spotted in Fairport by Clyde Comstock.

AUG 2025 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!

AUGUST 2
Saturday

CONESUS INLET STATE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

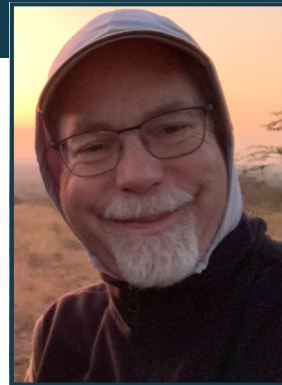
Explore this expansive wetland for Virginia Rails and Wood Duck families. We've seen eagles on a reliable basis, Cliff Swallows and more. This trip is a combination of driving, stopping at overlooks, and short walks on dirt trails and dikes. Length about 1.5 miles of walking. Restrooms are available at the meeting place only. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** at Vitale Park on Route 20A in Lakeville. The Park entrance is by the Lakeville post office on the south (lake) side of Route 20A and across the street from Smith's Hardware. There's a possibility of a trip extension to the Geneseo Airport area. **Spotting scopes would be useful.**

Leaders: Jim Kimball 585-519-9211 and co-leaders Nick Kachala 585-750-5536 and Andrew Consler 585-991-2154

Field Trips continue on [page 4](#)

It's the Journey

It's a birding milestone to get a "lifer", a bird that you see and identify for the first time ever. Some of us may remember the first time we identified a Northern Cardinal, a Blue Jay, an American Robin or others of our common backyard birds but for most of us, those lifer moments are lost in the distant past when we were learning bird names from our parents/grandparents/teachers or whomever started us down this path. The earliest lifer I remember is a Killdeer. My fifth grade teacher Mrs. Vermeulen took us outside for a science class and showed us how the Killdeers at the edge of the playground would drag their wing and give a plaintive distress call to lure us kids away from their nests. While I remember finding that interesting, I think the memory was solidified by the fact that we got to GO OUTSIDE FOR A CLASS! Now that was exciting! Fast forward 50-some years and I can tell you where I got most of my lifers (made much easier by consulting location on my eBird list), but the number of memories of the exact moment I "discovered" the bird is relatively small. Those moments seem to always be accompanied by one of two things: either I figured out the ID on my own rather than having someone just telling me what the bird was, or there's a story of adventure or hardship.



At the end of May, my spouse Gayle and I drove to Maine for the Acadia Birding Festival. Our main goal was to see Atlantic Puffins in the wild for the first time. Puffins are cute, colorful and charismatic – seriously, who doesn't like puffins? A highlight of the Acadia festival is a pelagic (open sea) trip to off-shore islands where sea birds congregate and nest. Of course we signed up – our chance to see our target bird! Leading up to the Saturday boat trip, we checked the weather frequently. Wind and rain predicted. An email from the organizers came out warning that conditions were worsening and the trip might be cancelled. Our fate was in the hands of Mother Nature. Friday 6 pm email – the pelagic was on, but conditions would be assessed in the morning. Next day, alarm at 4 am, look outside – it's foggy, dress in four layers of clothing, grab some coffee, out the door into the fog, 30 minute drive through the fog, find parking, queue at the launch in the fog, then... "Everybody gather 'round, we have some tough decisions to make." Uh oh. The trip leader explained that the captain was hesitant to go out, dense fog prevailed even out to sea, swells were high, conditions rough with a good chance of folks losing breakfast to the fishes. Not ideal conditions to get sea birds. What did we want to do? "Let's go," someone shouted and a chorus of agreement followed. I think the captain muttered something about crazy birders.

Now, my stomach tends to do the bossa nova on boats, but as long as I have a view of the front horizon, I'm usually OK. So where is the horizon in dense fog? It's that line between the dark gray and the darker gray. The catamaran jet boat had a top speed of about 30 mph. We were only doing 20, so standing on the bow meant my face got numb in 10 minutes rather than 5. The mist collected on my glasses and streamed off in rivulets. This made the oncoming swells difficult to see so riding up them and crashing down was a chiropractor's dream.

After 40 minutes, the boat slowed. A murmuring undercurrent swept through the passengers as Petit Manan Island gradually revealed itself out of the mist. I wiped down my glasses and dried off my optics. Sharp-eyed spotters pointed to terns and gulls. Through the mist, we could make out shapes and gradations of gray. Pelagics use the boat as a clock face, and we saw a couple of razorbills traverse from two to eleven o'clock. Black Guillemots in the water at ten o'clock,

PRESIDENT'S CORNER, BRIAN ROHRS

then five o'clock, then eight o'clock. Eiders in the distance off the stern. Finally, someone yelled, "Puffins on the water at two o'clock!" And there they were. Two of them, about a foot in length, black body, white face and distinctive triangular bills. Our first look. Wow! For the next hour, more puffins, guillemots, razorbills, eiders, gulls and terns eventually emerged as the fog lightened from pea soup to fish chowder. We could even start to make out the orange color on the puffins' bills. And then it was over – rain was moving in and the captain pulled the plug. As we headed back to shore, I climbed up to the open top deck. The rain droplets felt like little needles as they hit my face at 20 mph. Soon there were only four of us fools up there getting soaked, shouting our conversation above the noise of the wind and water, and having the time of our lives.

So was it the best look we could hope to get for Atlantic Puffins? No. But if I ever see Puffins again, I'll always remember the adventure in the fog and the rain and the thrill of seeing them for the very first time.

Some RBA highlights for this month:

We have a couple of upcoming field trips. Aug 2nd is Conesus Inlet State WMA and Aug 9th is a Beginning Birder trip to Montezuma NWR. Join your fellow birders in the field!

It was great to see so many folks at our annual picnic! We couldn't have asked for better weather. A warm thank you to our Social Committee Chair Niki Banke for organizing and for Doug Rabjohns, hotdogging it on the grill.

Finally, our Birds and Brewmaster, Nic Minetor solidified some dates for our monthly get together in July and August. Check our calendar and hope to see you there.

Until September, Happy Birding!



**Rochester Birding
Association**

Annual Picnic



FIELD TRIPS

AUG 9
Saturday

BEGINNER BIRDER TRIP – MONTEZUMA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Learn more about the fall migration of shorebirds in this nearby birding treasure. We'll visit key spots you'll want to revisit again and again! There will be a number of stops during this mostly driving trip. Restrooms are available at the Visitor Center. Meet at 1:00 p.m. in the Bushnell's Basin Park and Ride lot. The lot is off Route 96 just south of Exit 27 from I-490. Alternatively, meet up with the group at the first stop, the Montezuma Visitor Center at **2:00 p.m. Bring binoculars and, if you have them, spotting scopes.**

Leaders: John Boettcher 585-671-9639 co-leaders Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash 585-261-6975

SEPT 6
Saturday

WHITING ROAD NATURE PRESERVE

This preserve includes about 240 acres of land that is made up of a variety of bird habitats, resulting in decent bird lists throughout the year. The trails are well marked and maintained, however, they can 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 will be a bit of up and down in some sections. Our trek will take us mainly on the Blue and Black trails. Moderate difficulty in a few spots, length about 2.5 miles. No restrooms. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** in the Preserve parking lot on Whiting Road in Webster, 0.6 miles south of Lake Road.

Leaders: Tom and Jeanne Verhulst 585-362-0803 and co-leader AP Salverda 585-957-6064



Photo by Dick Horsey



Photo by Candace Giles

A Gray Catbird and Philadelphia Vireo seen on previous trips to the Whiting Road Nature Preserve in September of 2022.

SEPT 7
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 miles total. Restrooms are available at Charlotte only. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at Ontario Beach Park in Charlotte in the northeast corner of the parking lot, beside the Genesee River outlet. **Bring binoculars and, if you have them, spotting scopes.**

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



NYSOA 2025

Hosted by the Cayuga Bird Club

New York State Ornithological Association Conference ~ Ithaca, New York 2025



September 19-21, 2025 • Ithaca Downtown Conference Center

Birds will be on the move, and there will be plenty of field trips to local hot spots from Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge to Sapsucker Woods. There will also be behind-the-scenes tours at the Cornell Lab and time to explore the newly renovated Visitor Center. At the Ithaca Downtown Conference Center, there will be vendors, a silent auction, and a Breeding Bird Atlas luncheon. The Friday night speaker, **Dr. Adriaan Dokter**, will present a talk on Birdcast and bird migration. The Saturday evening banquet features keynote speaker **Peter Kaestner**, an active bird conservationist and the first person to have seen 10,000 birds from around the world.

The conference is open to the public and attendance is encouraged for all with an interest in New York State birds, birding, and conservation. Early Bird Registration before June 30th is \$70. Young birders 21 and under may register for \$5, thanks to sponsorship provided by Visit Ithaca.

www.nysoa2025.org

WELCOME TO THE FLOCK

Please welcome our new members:

Jen Baker	Donna Kowal
Denise Doyle & Gennaro	Carla Krenak
Polverino	Judy Marcus
Erica Englert	Cindy Schmitt
Robin Hurley	John White



Black-bellied Whistling Duck seen in Lyndonville by Candy Giles.

As of June 15, total 2025 membership is 374

Individual Members: 238
Family Members: 97
Supporters: 3

Sponsors: 3
Corporate Sponsors: 1 (The Bird House)
Complimentary Memberships: 32

Doug Rabjohns, RBA Membership Data



Amy's Pond and Woodsmith Joint Genesee Land Trust / RBA Trip May 11, 2025

A group of 21 visited the private conservation lands of Amanda Smith-Hatch, protected by Genesee Land Trust, for the annual Mother's Day Field Trip. The trip began this year at Deer Creek Woods East, a new nature preserve owned by the Land Trust, then led across private property to the ponds. Beginning from the Deer Creek Woods parking lot, a Yellow-throated Vireo was a nice welcome along with several other species including Baltimore Orioles.

As we walked through the property we saw many of the usual suspects you would expect including Red-winged Blackbirds, American Goldfinches, sparrows, grackles, and crows. As we got to Deer Creek we heard Yellow Warbler and got some great views of male and female Rose-breasted Grosbeaks along Deer Creek. Baltimore Orioles were plentiful on the day, with a grand total of 14. As we approached the ponds, we got more warbler activity including Common Yellowthroat, Black-and-white Warbler, and Black-throated Green Warbler. One of the highlights of the trip were some great views for most everyone of Blackburnian Warbler hopping midway up on one of the trees south of the ponds. Additional birds along the hedgerows of the ponds included Nashville Warblers, Palm Warblers, an American Redstart, a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Yellow Warblers, and Yellow-rumped Warblers. Additional observations around the ponds

included a Bald Eagle overhead, Great Blue Heron, Wood Duck, and Tree Swallows. On our way back to the parking lot we had our one Eastern Bluebird of the day. Thanks to Niki Banke for the delicious brownies at the end of the trip and to Amanda Smith-Hatch, Keith Hatch, and Bob Smith for their hospitality and invitation to visit their family lands.

Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash and co-leader Kevin Farrell

Norway Road May 18, 2025

Despite the cool, windy, and misty conditions, a small group of dedicated birders joined me for an unexpectedly good morning along Norway Road in the town of Kent on 18 May. We spent most of our time standing along the wooded section of road between NY104 and CR43, where Cerulean Warblers are known to nest. We had three, possibly four Cerulean Warblers here. In addition, a Mourning Warbler sang at close distance and Tennessee Warblers dripped from the trees. Continuing northward, we stopped at the meadow, instantly picked up Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark, then continued north to the Sandy Creek bridge. A keen-eyed observer picked up a roosting Common Nighthawk sitting on a branch, eye-level, over the creek. All had excellent scope views. The last stop was the Lake Ontario overlook, where we rounded out our checklist with a small flock of Long-tailed Ducks and a flyby Horned Grebe. We finished with 82 species, one of the, if not the highest species counts for this trip, and unexpected given the unideal conditions.

Nick Kachala and co-leader Cathy Ballard

Powder Mills Park and BANC Sanctuary May 24, 2025

Unfavorable weather conditions—very cool and gloomy, with occasional light rain—did not dissuade 11 keen birders from joining the leaders for this annual trip.



The group on the Amy's Pond field trip. Photo by Kevin Farrell.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

The fish hatchery area, where we began our wanderings, produced Eastern Phoebe and a perched Belted Kingfisher as well as Pileated Woodpeckers and the seemingly resident Great Blue Heron. Rough-winged Swallows and a Barn Swallow darted around, and Red-eyed Vireos and Tennessee and Bay-breasted Warblers revealed themselves, as did, eventually, a singing Common Yellowthroat, while brilliant Baltimore Orioles and Scarlet Tanagers added some welcome color.

Moving to the Daffodil Meadow Trail, we encountered Great Crested Flycatchers, more Red-eyed Vireos, Cedar Waxwings, an American Redstart, a Magnolia Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, another Scarlet Tanager, and an Eastern Bluebird. For many, however, the highlight here was waterfowl—six beautiful Wood Ducks and a family group of ten Hooded Mergansers.

The morning was waning when we finally arrived at the Burroughs Audubon Nature Club, where board member Derek Pulhamus



Common Yellowthroat seen by Jeanne Verhulst on the Powder Mills Park field trip.

graciously agreed to take over as leader. Along the trail, he pointed out the newly constructed boardwalk (RBA helped fund this project) and also some birds we had not yet noted—an Osprey, Eastern Wood-Pewees, Song and Swamp Sparrows—plus more Yellow Warblers and Common Yellowthroats. We finished the walk with the addition of several loudly singing Yellow-throated Vireos and another Eastern Bluebird, bringing our grand total for the day to 51 species.

Tom and Jeanne Verhulst

Sandra L. Frankel Nature Park (Brickyard Trail)

May 25, 2025

We were spared rain, and forty-eight degrees and little sunshine did not surprise anyone this late May day. Cool temps have been the trend for the month. As 17 of us gathered in the Temple parking lot, a number of birds flitted in the maple and oak trees nearby: Tennessee Warbler, American Robin, House Sparrow and a Chipping Sparrow hopped on the ground. Moving onto the Brickyard Trail, a Red-bellied Woodpecker that seemed to be guarding a hole in a tall, dead tree where a pair nested last year, was seen well by all, although no mate or young were seen. Further along, one of a number of Gray Catbirds, Northern Cardinals, and Song Sparrows were heard or seen. As we approached the marsh, Red-winged Blackbirds were plentiful, a Willow Flycatcher sang, and Swamp Sparrows, Common Yellowthroats, and a Yellow Warbler were heard. Opposite the larger pond, Marsh Wrens were heard, and as we scanned the cattails watching for one of them to pop up, a few people, who happened to be looking in the right direction, saw a Least Bittern fly briefly and drop down into a small greening area of the marsh! Although we all hoped for another view, the bittern did not show again. (AP Salverda, one of our group, found it the next morning foraging at the edge of the smaller pond. It was seen by many birders over the next few days.)



Least Bittern photographed by Jeanne Verhulst a few days after the trip.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

After that excitement, continuing along, a Common Loon flew low overhead—a first for Brickyard! Great Blue and Green Herons, and a Red-tailed Hawk were also seen flying. A Mourning Warbler was heard by two people, and a Magnolia Warbler was seen by many. Retracing our steps, we came upon a flock of warblers in the wooded area: Chestnut-sided, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted Warblers, American Redstart, and Northern Parula were all flitting around us. Even a Northern Waterthrush was heard by a few. Good views were enjoyed by many and it was a great way to finish the trip. Thanks to the many good eyes and ears, we tallied 52 species! Thanks to all who joined us, it was a fun trip!

Jeanne and Tom Verhulst

Ganondagan State Historic Site **May 31, 2025**

Fourteen folks showed up at 8 am despite dropping temperatures in the low 50's, misty rain and a steady breeze. We still had fun and saw 25 species of birds. We had some nice looks at Eastern Kingbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Gray Catbirds and Great Crested Flycatcher. Birds were lower with the crummy weather. We turned back halfway through our planned trip when we encountered flooding on the trail.

Amy Kahn and Neal Reilly

Letchworth State Park **June 1, 2025**

The Letchworth RBA field trip on June 1st was once again a big success! A tour that started at the Mount Morris Dam Overlook at 5:30am lasted well into the afternoon, as the group caravanned south down the west side of the park before ending beside a large pond on the east side. Highlights included good looks at Acadian Flycatcher in a hemlock ravine, close-up views of a Chestnut-sided Warbler, and watching recently fledged Peregrine Falcons fly through the gorge with mom and dad. After a

good day of birding the species total was an impressive 78 birds.

Elijah Kruger and co-leader Neal Reilly

Taylor Marsh **June 7, 2025**

It was a day with hazy sunshine due to smoke from Canadian wildfires. That morning, the Air Quality Index in Rochester was 146, which is deemed unhealthy for sensitive groups. However, the poor air quality did not deter 9 people from participating in the field, including the leaders, Lynn Braband and me. At least, it didn't rain, and the temperature was a comfortable 60° to 70° with light winds. After birding for 2.5 hours, we ended up with 37 species. One of the highlights was an American Woodcock that flushed and gave us a brief glimpse of it flying away. Another was a Bald Eagle soaring in the distance. We also saw a few Bobolinks in a hayfield adjacent to the marsh. The hoped-for Sandhill Cranes did not put in an appearance, nor



*The Taylor Marsh group
by Lynn Braband.*

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

were they heard. Some of us enjoyed looking at and photographing butterflies, moths, and other insects, although that was not the primary purpose of the field trip. Perhaps the entomological highlight was a pair of mating little wood satyr butterflies. The entire bird checklist can be viewed at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S247791787>.

Lynn Braband and Jay Greenberg

The mating pair of little wood satyr butterflies seen on the trip. Photo by Jay Greenberg.



Ganondagan State Historic Site Family Trip June 7, 2025

On a sunny, smokey, warm morning we had 17 people join us for a second chance to enjoy birding on the trails at Ganondagan. We were able to walk our whole planned 2 mile walk through shrub scrub, an overview of grasslands, wetlands, old growth forest and young woods. In each habitat type we had different species with 43 total. Highlights included 7 species of breeding warblers- Ovenbird, Chestnut sided, Hooded, Redstart, Blue-winged, Yellow and Common Yellowthroat. We also had great views of 4 woodpeckers, 5 flycatchers, Wood thrush, Eastern Towhee, Indigo Bunting, Cedar Waxwing and Great Blue Heron. Thanks to Wendelin Long for the photograph of the Wood Thrush.

Amy Kahn and Neal Reilly

Wyoming County Fields and Forest New Compehner Farm June 8, 2025

It was a calm and sunny beautiful Sunday morning at the homestead of Hans and Leslie Kunze when 33 people gathered for some great birding. We did introductions and were pleased to have several first timers present who heard about this field trip and the RBA in

A Savannah Sparrow seen on a previous trip to Wyoming County New Compehner Farm. Photo by Niki Banke.



Hans' bi-weekly bird and nature column which runs in several WNY newspapers. A quick appearance of the Cliff Swallow zooming by its former nesting site, helped start things off along with plenty of action at the feeders by some of the regulars including several Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Baltimore Orioles, Orchard Orioles, and American Goldfinches. We took a walk around the lawns and gardens and saw and heard many familiar species – Great Crested Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Field Sparrow, Tufted Titmouse, Cedar Waxwings, House and



Wood Thrush photo by Wendelin Long

Purple Finches, and various woodpeckers. The Mockingbirds were providing plenty of mimicking calls which we were able to decipher from true bird calls and songs. Eastern Bluebirds were checking out a nesting box and several species of birds were calling from the nearby woods. We then took a walk out on the farm where we found several Tree and Barn Swallows, Savannah Sparrows, Brown Thrashers, Willow Flycatchers, and Bobolinks. We then took to the quiet country roads to explore nearby other habitats. The road right behind the farm yielded us American Redstart, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Indigo Bunting, Vesper Sparrow, Wild Turkeys and Common Raven. As we worked our way south, we found Hooded Warbler, Wood Thrush, Veery, Green Heron, and Marsh Wren. Upon

arrival at nearby Silver Lake, we were greeted by a large colony of Purple Martins, a Great Blue Heron, 2 Common Loons, a Belted Kingfisher, a Bald Eagle, and Mallards. Back at the farm, I wish we had actually taken the short trail up the hill where there are dozens of Bobolinks nesting right now and the view is spectacular! Next time! It was a wonderful birding trip and all had a great time – teaching several novice birders and enjoying fellowship. Thanks for the cookies, Niki – and my wife Leslie! We ended the all-morning field trip with 71 species and several of us settled in for a nice lunch at the popular Charcoal Corral at Silver Lake.

Thanks for coming!

Hans Kunze and Rick Stevens

Wednesday Warblers Wrap Up

by John Boettcher

I just love alliteration. The idea of these trips was to afford members an additional opportunity to follow the spring migration by meeting in the evening. Things went pretty well with sometimes as many as 20 people showing up. [Warbler migration] started slow the first week in May, but then got active in the later weeks tapering off in the end. Although listed as the leader of these walks, I did very little and relied on sharper eyes and ears of the group to find the birds and be the leaders of the moment. I would like to especially thank Neal, Niki, Kim, Dick, Sheryl, and Tom for finding and getting people on the birds. There was some confusion about the time with some folks hearing 6:30 and not 6:00, but this was not a big problem since the group stayed in a relatively small area and was pretty easy to find.



Blackpoll Warbler
by Jeanne Verhulst



Magnolia Warbler
by Jeanne Verhulst



Yellow Warbler
by Richard Horsey



Canada Warbler
by Alan Swire

July and August

Birds and Brews

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

Monday, July 14, 2025

6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Fifth Frame Brewing Co.

5370 St. Paul Blvd.

In the building that was the Summerville Grill, just before the Summerville Pier

Come enjoy the creative menu and a wide range of beers, as well as a full bar!

<https://fifthframe.co>



Birds and Brews

Join us for craft beers and conversation!

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

Tuesday, August 19, 2025

6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Three Heads Brewing

186 Atlantic Avenue, Rochester



We'll enjoy sitting outside, weather permitting, at this neighborhood favorite brew pub. Three Heads doesn't serve meals (just some limited snacks), but you are welcome to bring your own takeout.

(Old Pueblo Grill is right across the street.)

www.threeheadsbrewing.com



Monthly **ECO-CHALLENGE**

GROW NATIVE PLANTS TO HELP BIRDS & POLLINATORS!

If you've ever admired a Monarch butterfly on milkweed or marveled at a hummingbird's quick hovering maneuver going from flower to flower, you've already seen the magic of native pollinator plants in action. Did you know that planting native wildflowers doesn't just help pollinators, but birds as well?

This month's **Eco Challenge** encourages you to plant three native New York species that exemplify the true balance of nature by fueling pollinators and providing critical resources for birds. Meet your new garden heroes:

1. Common Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*)

For Pollinators: This fluffy-topped perennial is a bee and butterfly magnet, blooming late in the season when nectar sources dwindle. Native bees especially love its wide landing pads and copious nectar.

For Birds: After blooming, boneset produces seeds that attract finches and sparrows in fall and winter. Plus, it hosts caterpillars and beetles, which are essential insect protein for nestlings during breeding season.



2. New York Ironweed (*Vernonia noveboracensis*)

For Pollinators: A towering beauty with vibrant purple blooms, ironweed is a nectar oasis for monarchs, swallowtails, and long-tongued bees.

For Birds: Its seeds are relished by finches and buntings, and it shelters insects that fuel many insectivorous birds. Ironweed also provides late-season cover for foraging.



3. Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)

For Pollinators: The poster plant for monarchs — and deservedly so! Milkweed supports more than 450 insect species, including bees, butterflies, and beetles.

For Birds: Milkweed is an insect buffet. Birds like wrens, bluebirds, and chickadees rely on these protein-rich bugs to feed their young. In fall, the fluffy seed fibers are gathered by chickadees and orioles for cozy nests.

Native plants are the foundation of healthy food webs. Without them, native insects, which birds depend on, can't survive and the system deteriorates.



Monthly **ECO-CHALLENGE**

GROW NATIVE PLANTS TO HELP BIRDS & POLLINATORS!

Your Challenge: Plant 1 (or all 3!)

Start small. Add a patch of milkweed, a corner of ironweed, or a clump of boneset to your yard, container garden, or community space. You'll be helping restore essential habitat right where you live and the birds will thank you. Check out Amanda's Native Garden in Dansville where you can buy all three plants!

Bonus: We'd love to see pictures of your native gardens! Share a photo of your plantings!

References

Tallamy, D.W. (2007). *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*. Timber Press.

Audubon. (n.d.). Native Plant Finder by Zip Code

Xerces Society. (n.d.). Pollinator Conservation Resources

National Wildlife Federation. (n.d.). Native Plant Encyclopedia

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. (n.d.).

- *Eupatorium perfoliatum* profile
- *Vernonia noveboracensis* profile
- *Asclepias syriaca* profile

New York Flora Atlas. (n.d.). Native Plant Database for New York



UPCOMING CONSERVATION-RELATED EVENTS

If you're interested in events that focus on environmental conservation, here's a list of upcoming opportunities happening in the Rochester area during July and August 2025, outside of those hosted by the RBA.

POLLINATOR PALOOZA

Celebrate pollinators with native plant sales, kid's activities, games, and educational info.

Amanda's Native Garden, 8030 Story Road, Dansville, NY

Friday–Sunday, August 1–3, 2025

9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

amandasnativeplants.com

Trail Keepers: Shade Building Day 1 and 2 – Cornwall Preserve

Volunteer event to build shade structures and improve trails.

Cornwall Preserve, Williamson

Thursday, July 17 and 19, 2025

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

geneseelandtrust.org

TRAIL WORKDAY – FRIENDS OF WEBSTER TRAILS

Volunteer workday to maintain and improve trails at State Road Nature Preserve. Check their calendar for official July/August dates.

State Road Nature Preserve, Webster, NY

July & August 2025 (Dates TBD)

webstertrails.org



MATCHING GRANT FINAL RESULTS

Our Access to Birds and Birding Fund campaign was a success! Our goal was to reach **\$8500** from contributions above and beyond membership dues over the time period of our membership drive initiation in October 2024 through May 1, 2025. As of May 1st, our final total was **\$9060**. Even more heartening than reaching our goal was that we had **over 42% of our membership** contribute, demonstrating broad support for our organization and its mission! Thank you to the **TASK Charitable Fund** who supported us with their matching funds and a **HUGE thank you** to everyone who supported this fund drive. We look forward to using the funds to support access to birds and birding in our community.

We would like to thank the following donors for their support:

Richard & Donella Ashworth	Regina Gortych	Mery McEvoy	Gary & Bobbie Reif
Janet & Tom Bachmann	Sheryl Gracewski & Tom Nash	Ann McMican & Jack Mould	Rosemary Reilly
Catherine Ballard	Kevin & Colleen Griffith	Colleen McNair	Nancy Rice
Stephanie Bane	Charles & Carol Grotke	Lynda McPartland & Timothy Gersey	Linda Riordan
Ted & Carol Barnett	Melody Guadagnino	James & Marth Miller	Michael & Isaac Rizzo
Deborah Bauer	Richard Gudgel	Randi & Nic Minetor	Suzanne Robinson
Lynn Bergmeyer	Judy & Lew Gurley	Joseph Missler	Brian Rohrs & Gayle Lazoration
Lisa & Alan Bloom	Christian & Helen Haller	Patrice Mitchell	Andrew Romanowski
John Boettcher & Norma Platt	David & Giovanna Harding	Mary Moore	Donald Ross
Keith Bonnlander	Scott Hecker	Robin Morey	Diana & Andy Ryan
Lynn Braband	Susan Hicks	Anne Moss & William Kingston	Anne Pier Salverda
Marta Brewer	Highland Park Conservancy	Sheila Mumpton & Kevin Koss	Linda Schriever & Jean Oswald
Elaine Cain	Linda Howell	Carl Murano	Shirley & John Shaw
Lawrence Capizzi	Susan Jansen	Sheila Murphy	Dominic & Monica Sherony
Carolyn Cass	Leo & Cheryl Kellett	Brittany Murphy	Janet Siegel
Lynn Caulkins	Linda Roca Kenyon	John & Christine Norris	Ann Smith
Lorenzo Colantoni & Elizabeth and Gabriele	Carol Klinger	Aaron Olden	Ann Spencer
Clyde Comstock	Kate & Greg Kremer	Philip Opdycke	Jim & Dora Stauffer
Susan Comstock	Hans Kunze	Kristopher Palermo	David Strong
Robert Crandall	Iris & Robert Kunzer	James & Erin Park	Lisa Talpey
Fred Cromey	Amy & John LaGambino	Sally & Charlie Parmigiani	Jo Taylor
Glenn Cummings	David Laiacona	Shelley Patterson	Stephen Taylor
Melanie Cunico & Lori Logothetis	Fred & Holly Lawrence	Richard Pecora	Sally & George Thurston
Doug Daniels	Jerry LeBlanc	Thomas Penner & Anne Hayes-Penner	Diane Turner
Jayne Dean & Charlie Woodruff	Alex Levin	Aggie Perry & Jim Grattan	Tom & Jeanne Verhulst
Catherine DeMaria	Audry Liao	Leslie Phillips	Nancy Viola
Judy Dobles & Barry Akin	Maryjane Link	Luanne Pignataro	Jennifer & Larry Wagner
Anna Dobson	Patricia & Andrew Lovallo	Thomas & Nancy Poeth	Gail & Thomas Walder
William Ebersbach	John Loz	Tarrell (Terry) Preston	Veronica Walker
Kathy Edelman	Peggy Mabb	P David & Ada Marie Prill	Malcolm White
Kevin Farrell	James Maginn	James & Christine Quackenbush	Paula Wojtowicz
Michele & Ed Fisher	Liz Magnanti	Doug & Elizabeth Rabjohns	Kathy & Steve Wolf
Daena & Emily Ford	Bill & Virginia Maier	Mary & Royce Racinowski	Paul & Maureen Wolter
Julia Garver	Eugene Mancuso	Carolyn Ragan	Jim Wood
	David & Linda Marsh		Judith Wood
	Judy Massare		



ACCESS TO BIRDS AND BIRDING FUND IN ACTION

Hi Brian,

We want to let you know that the RBA's generous check arrived safe and sound on Saturday, June 7 and will be deposited tomorrow, June 10.

So appreciated!

We are on a schedule to mow when birds are not nesting nor searching for nesting. The fields will be a haven for them and the mower will also help us continue to keep invasives at bay.

We are finishing up with the USDA Forest Service grant this fall and will have planted about 700 trees or more at that time, all native trees that provide habitat and food for birds and the insects they enjoy eating.

In addition, we are continuing to get native bushes and perennials planted, which will contribute to a "food forest" for birds and the insects they eat!

The established hedge rows provide habitat for tree nesting birds. In addition, the 50 acres of forest have been accepted into the Old Growth Forest Network!

In gratitude for all the work you do on behalf of birds and habitat!

Janet Chaize, Treasurer and Vice-President

Rush Recreation and Park Association

Another message of gratitude from one of the beneficiaries of the Access to Birds and Birding Fund.

MARCH 2024 RECORDS SUMMARY

A mild and windy March started off the spring season. Temperatures averaged 40.7°, 5.5° above average. March started off bitterly cold, but before we knew it, temperatures topped over 70° for three days in a row right before the equinox. A high of 77° on 19 March tied the record high set in 1903. Twenty days came out above average. Precipitation totaled 2.30", 0.19" below average. Most of this precipitation fell in three major rainfall events. The first event on 4-5 March brought a half-inch of soaking rain, which melted any remaining snowpack that had accumulated in January and February. The second event brought severe weather on 16 March. A stalled frontal boundary closed out the month on 28-30 March, bringing intervals of rain and finally about a quarter inch of ice accumulation closer to the Lake Ontario shoreline. The Rochester airport recorded 4.0" of snowfall, which is 13.9" below average for March. Of note, this month was particularly windy, with winds averaging 11.0 miles per hour, more than one mile per hour above average. Twelve days recorded gusts of 40 miles per hour or greater, which is the greatest amount since 2007.

Waterfowl seemed strong this March. Species that move on the early side, such as Canada Goose, Snow Goose, Tundra Swan, Northern Pintail, and Green-winged Teal, peaked in the second week of the month. This is more aligned with the historical trend. For the past two years, these numbers have peaked in February. Generally, waterfowl migration was about three weeks later than 2024 – a direct result of the harshness of this past winter. Ross's Geese were occasionally seen mixed in with Snow and Canada Geese, with a maximum of two individuals spotted by Andy Guthrie in Hamlin on 6 March. Andy Guthrie and Jim Miles reported two Greater White-fronted Geese in Hamlin on 6-7



Greater White-fronted Goose found by Dominic Sherony in Lyndonville.

MARCH 2024 RECORDS SUMMARY

March. Mike Gullo reported another Greater White-fronted Goose from Malone Marsh in the NMWMA on 9 March. Wade and Melissa Rowley photographed a BARNACLE GOOSE flying over the impoundments off VanDyne Spoor Road in the NMWMA on 10 March. Despite much effort by others, it was not relocated. This represents likely the fifth record of Barnacle Goose for Kingbird Region 2. Observers reported four Eurasian Wigeons, one from Conesus Inlet on 27-30 March, another from Braddock Bay on 15-16 March, and two from the NMWMA in the last days of the



*Barnacle Goose in Lyndonville.
Photographed by Candy Giles
on March 14th.*

month. Bill Howe reported a Tufted Duck on Honeoye Lake on 30 March, which was seen by two others. An adult male Harlequin duck frequented the Mill Creek Outlet at Webster Park on 3 and 21-25 March, perhaps the same bird, and seen by dozens of birders. Diving ducks were found in healthy numbers throughout the western Finger Lakes, Silver Lake, and the Lake Ontario shoreline alike.

Silver Lake, like last year, held the highest numbers of grebes, with 62 Horned Grebes reported on 29 March. Red-throated Loon numbers were lower than expected, with a maximum of two on Silver Lake on 29 March, although this species does not enter peak migration until the third week of April. Sandhill Crane numbers built in the NMWMA throughout the month, with a maximum of 38 reported on 22 March. There were a decent number of Sandhill Crane reports from elsewhere in the Region as well. Austin Groff reported a Virginia Rail at High Acres Nature Area on 10-14 March, perhaps the overwintering individual from the previous months.

Killdeer arrived on 1 March. American Woodcock arrived on 8 March. There were no February reports of either of these species this year. Again, a factor of

the "true" winter. Observers reported nine shorebird species for the month, with an early Solitary Sandpiper on 17 March, an early Greater Yellowlegs on 9 March, and a count of 36 Pectoral Sandpipers (NMWMA) all standing out as noteworthy. 16 March was noted as a good day for migrating Killdeer, with 57 tallied passing the Braddock Bay Hawkwatch.

Nothing particularly rare stood out among the gulls. A count of nine Lesser Black-backed Gulls on 31 March in Hamlin by Andy Guthrie was on the higher side, but not seasonally unprecedented. Numbers of Iceland Gull (~9 Regionwide) and Glaucous Gull (~5-6 Regionwide) were at the baseline for the past few years, despite the colder winter that the Region experienced, in which one might have assumed more winter gulls would occupy the Region. Rosemary Reilly reported the first Caspian Tern of the year from Braddock Bay on 24 March, the earliest record ever by four days.

The Braddock Bay Hawkwatch welcomed first-year counter Maili Waters on 1 March, following David Brown's shift to Derby Hill after six years occupying the platform. Maili's sharp identification skills provided her with a great first month, finishing with 10,870 raptors. Although no individual day counts of specific species stood out as noteworthy, composite day counts of 1,713 on 19 March and 4,010 on 31 March are the two highest. Interestingly, the Braddock Bay Hawkwatch only recorded four Golden Eagles for the month. By contrast, Derby Hill recorded 50 Golden Eagles for the month. More Golden Eagles were observed scattered randomly around Region 2 than at the hawkwatch – very unusual. Maili also consistently monitored all aspects of avian migration, not just raptors, as evident by her eBird checklists. That attention to detail is extremely useful in the preparation of these reports, that is, seeing the day-to-day change in bird composition from a single observation point. Glenn Wolford once again counted raptors from the Lake Shore Marshes WMA and had similar numbers to the Braddock Bay Hawkwatch on good migration days. It appeared to be a good month for Northern Saw-whet Owl, with 155 lines in eBird, mostly from Owl Woods. How many individuals, however, is unclear.

An Eastern Phoebe arrived on 14 March, Tree Swallows arrived on 10 March, and a Barn Swallow

MARCH 2024 RECORDS SUMMARY

arrived on 17 March. Eleven Northern Shrikes reported Regionwide was average. The disappearance of the snow in the first days of the month contributed to a general scarcity of field birds. The highest counts of Horned Lark (168, 15 March) and Lapland Longspur (138, 15 March) were tallies of migrants passing over the Braddock Bay Hawkwatch. Snow Bunting dipped off drastically in the first days of the month as the snowpack finally melted. In direct contrast to 2024, there were no reports of Marsh Wren for the month. The only Ruby-crowned Kinglet of the month was an individual on 31 March, a date at which its status as an overwintering resident or an early migrant is unclear. Chipping Sparrows were reported at multiple locations on 29 March, which is a comfortable arrival date for the species (the few overwintering individuals continued at backyard feeders before this date). Similarly, Fox Sparrows were reported at multiple non-known-overwintering locations on 15 March, another comfortable arrival date. Eastern Meadowlarks arrived on 11 March. Icterid numbers peaked in the second week of the month, three weeks earlier than last year, but numbers generally seemed poor, with maximums of 4,060 Red-winged Blackbirds, 3,842 Common Grackles, and 140 Brown-headed Cowbirds being lower than historical peaks. Many factors could complicate the peak counts: a more spread-out migration with birds moving at lower rates yet the same total, lack of accurate counts/observers not putting in effort to count, or major flocks not intersecting birders. None of these suggests an actual lack of abundance. It is just a commentary on possible explanations for lower counts.

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



Sandhill Crane seen during the Braddock Bay Hawk Watch by Robin Morey.

Observers: Ryan Ballard, Niki Banke, Timmy Banker, Jessie Barry, Mitchell Barry, Frederic Beaudry, Betty Beckham, Don Bemont, Dave Bennett, David Benvent, Mike Bergin, 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, Kim Hartquist, Christina Hoh, Dick Horsey, Bill Howe, Lynn Howes, Pam Inzinna, Nick Kachala, Amy 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, Dominic Sherony, Judith Slein, Robert Spahn, Rick Stevens, Reuben Stoltzfus, Stephen Taylor, David Tetlow, Michael Tetlow, Eunice Thein, Nathan Ukens, Tom & Jeanne Verhulst, Mike Wasilco, Bridget Watts, Mamie Weed, Kim Weeks, Chris Wood, Jim Wood, & Ryan Zucker (There were 444 observers to report data to eBird for September 2024, up 6.3% from September 2023 and 464 individuals submitted records to eBird for October 2024, up 15.7% from 2023. All of them cannot be listed here).

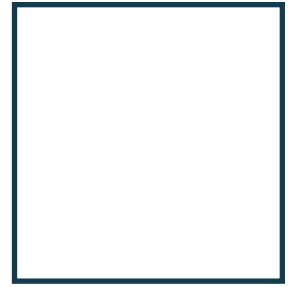
	2025	2024	10-year Average (2014-2023)
Total species for March	147	149	145.0
New species for the year	22	18	18.1
Total for the year to date	154	161	156.2





Rochester Birding Association

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