Rochester Birding Association, 5 Cranswick Lane, Rochester NY 14618

EARLY SPRING 2018 EVENTS & BIRDING FIELD TRIPS

MAR 4 Sunday

BEGINNER BIRDER TRIP—CHARLOTTE, BRADDOCK BAY, LAKESHORE FIELDS

Warmer weather is on its way and with it, bird activity picks up. We'll check water for ducks, fields for inland birds, and watch the skies for raptors as well. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Ontario Beach Park in Charlotte in the northeast corner of the parking lot beside the Genesee River outlet. **Extra spotting scopes would be very helpful.**

Leaders: Cindy Marino 585-454-8051 and Norma Platt and John Boettcher 585-671-9639

MAR 8 Thursday

RBA General Meeting, 7:00 p.m., the Baptist Temple, 1101 Clover Street, Rochester NY 14610 (in Brighton). Speaker: *Lynn Braband*. Title: *Protecting Yourself from Ticks & Tick-borne Disease*. See the article on p. 2 for more information.

MAR 10

HAMLIN BEACH STATE PARK

Saturday

Starting at Hamlin Beach State Park we will be looking for migrating waterfowl. We will move to the Braddock Bay Hawk Watch in hopes of spotting Rough-legged and Red-shouldered Hawks and eagles. We will stop at the Owl Woods in search of migrating owls. Dress warmly as the lakeshore can be cold this time of year. Meet at Parking Lot 1 at 9:00 a.m.

Leaders: Kimberly Sucy 585-503-2534 and Co-leaders TBA

MAR 17 Saturday

LAKE SHORE MARSHES EAST WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

This extensive driving tour of the large natural area to our northeast always turns up some great birds! We'll look for unusual ducks, late winter birds, and interesting migrants like Fox Sparrows. Bring a snack to munch on to keep your energy up, and dress for the weather! Meet in Webster Plaza at the junction of Route 404 and Hard Road near Starbucks at 7:30 a.m. **Extra spotting scopes and FRS radios would be very helpful.**

Leaders: Kinsley Whittum 585-872-7334 and co-leaders TBA

MAR 25 Sunday

BEGINNER BIRDER TRIP—OWL WOODS AND HAWK WATCH SITE

We'll look primarily for our smallest visiting owl, the Northern Saw-whet, which returns to this spot on a yearly basis. Long-eared Owls generally put in an appearance, too, although they're quite shy and great at hiding. After the owl walk, we'll head to the Hawk Watch site to learn how to identify raptors on the wing. At this time of year, we might witness spectacular flights of thousands of raptors! Meet in the parking lot on the right side of Manitou Beach Road across from the Owl Woods trail head at 7:30 a.m. The Owl Woods trails may be wet and muddy in spots. **Boots are STRONGLY recommended; they're almost mandatory!**

Leaders: Jim Adams 585-594-2366 & Kimberly Sucy 585-503-2534

APR 20 Friday

OWL WOODS ("PEAR ORCHARD") WOODCOCK COURTSHIP FLIGHT

This will be an evening trip for woodcock courtship flight. If you've never seen this spectacle, prepare to be amazed: birds call noisily from the ground in grassy fields before spiraling rapidly up high, descending back down in a zig-zagging noisy frenzy, only to start the cycle anew. An amazing sight! Meet in the parking lot on the right side of Manitou Beach Road just off the Lake Ontario State Parkway and across from the Owl Woods trail head at 7:00 p.m. The Owl Woods trails may be wet and muddy in spots.

Boots are STRONGLY recommended. Leader: Kimberly Sucy 585-503-2534



Welcome to the Flock

Join me in welcoming these 5 new members to the RBA.

Ellen Kneut Laura Martin Anne Moss Joe Oddi Mary Winants

Current RBA Membership is 318.

We also have Young Birders (6), one corporate member, Little Gull subscribers (4) and Little Gull complimentary subscribers (22).

Membership Status

I have refreshed the database. omitting members who have not renewed for 2018. As in years past, we lost a bunch of people. This year it was 86. We will get some of these folks back as late renewals. With this Little Gull you will also be getting the current roster of members which can also be found in the member's area of the website.

John Boettcher Membership Chairman

President's Column

Amy Kahn



March picks up with the beginning of spring migration. We have 4 field trips this month, including 2 trips for beginning birders. All trips will be looking for late winter and early

spring migrating birds along the lakeshore. Our March speaker, member Lynn Braband, will be talking about deer ticks and how to bird protected. See the article on this page for more information.

I just got back from a fabulous trip to Cuba where I met many local bird guides, researchers and artists. Many bird researchers and guides there are in need of good used equipment. There are 2 organizations that work to connect donors to researchers in need of binoculars. spotting scopes, cameras and tripods. RBA has long worked with the Birder's Exchange at the American Birding Association. Also, see the BEX notice on p. 4. The other group is Optics for the Tropics. Both support research projects in Cuba.

If you are fortunate to have a yard, consider planning this month to expand your landscaping with shrubs and other plants which produce nectar, fruits, seeds or nuts for the birds. Look at incorporating a water feature such as a bird bath or a recycled baking dish to provide fresh water. You will increase your yard bird watching by doing these simple things; more on the subject at a later time.

March Talk and Speaker

After a brief description of tick biology, we will look at the 4 species within New York State and the diseases vectored by each, with an emphasis on the black-legged tick and Lyme disease. Procedures for reducing risk of disease by property management and personal protection will be delineated. Resources for more information will also be presented.

RBA member Lynn Braband, a Certified Wildlife Biologist®, joined the NYS Community Integrated Pest Management Program in May 1999 as an Extension Educator.

From 1986 through 1997, Lynn was a company vice president and franchise owner/manager with Critter Control, Inc. which is the nation's leading firm specializing in nuisance wildlife control. He has been an active participant and leader in both state and national vertebrate pest control organizations. Lynn has also taught several college biology courses since 1980.

Since joining the Community IPM Program, Lynn has had major responsibilities in assisting New York State schools and municipalities in the implementation of IPM.

An avid and accomplished birder, Lynn regularly runs U. S. Geological Survey Breeding Bird Survey routes and is a trustee of the Bergen Swamp Preservation Society, chairing their Taylor Marsh Committee. Taylor Marsh is locally famous for its Sandhill Cranes and other marsh birds. Lynn leads the annual Taylor Marsh Pilgrimage which is now also a RBA field trip.



Editor's Corner Jay Greenberg



Contributions for this issue were very sparse. Of course, it has the usual features, including the

event calendar, membership article, (a short) president's column, an article on the talk for the March general meeting, and a sightings report. These take only a bit over 3 pages. It is enough to make an editor feel like quitting! Surely, the RBA can do better than this. There were no field trips in February. Therefore, there are no trip reports.

So what is the unfortunate editor to do? I improvised by writing an article on live bird cams on the Internet (pp. 4-5), along with a few photos. The result is a 6 page issue, which is the smallest one during my 8+ year tenure as editor.



January 2018 Sightings Report

January continued December's cold for the first week. then jumped to well above normal, with snow melt, heavy rains, and ice jams leading to some flooding. This was followed by Arctic cold and more snowfall from the 12th to 18th, then back to a longer stretch of cold and warmth through month's end. Temperatures averaged 25.0 °F. 0.3° above normal. Records were set both directions. with a record low high of 5° on the 5th, a record high low of 44° on the 11th followed by a record high of 60° on the 12th. Precipitation totaled 3.11", 0.70" above normal, with snowfall at 32.9", 4.7" above normal. But again, distribution was uneven, with 2-3" of snow each day from January 4-6th, heavy rain on the 11th & 12th, with flooding both east and west of Rochester, then cold and 12.8" of snow on the 13th. After that, <1" of snow on any day until 6.7" on the 29th-30th. So, it was average overall, but riding a seesaw.

The annual NYSOA Waterfowl Count was again impacted by the waterfowl hunting season, snow, cold, and wind, resulting in one of the lowest totals in 30 years. Still, a decent variety of 29 species was recorded. For the month, generally waterbird numbers were low, though some lingering, relatively rare species kept birders searching, with King Eider, Harlequin Duck, female Barrow's Goldeneye, and Great Cormorant seen and documented photographically. Most puddle ducks, including Mallards, were scarce. We were back to only one Snow Goose report and no other rarer goose species other than two Cackling Geese on the 10th. Most birds moved out with the early freeze, and only low numbers returned to areas that opened later, often only briefly. Lake Ontario remained mostly open, with some shore ice and otherwise coverage varying with wind direction. Loons and grebes were very scarce, and Great Blue Heron was hard to find. Up to 9 Double-crested Cormorants plus an immature Great Cormorant lingered at the usual Newport Marina site on Irondequoit Bay until dropping off after mid-month.

Wintering raptors were generally scarce, yet we had high numbers of Bald Eagles at local sites, especially Irondequoit Bay and the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge complex, a rare immature Golden Eagle on Irondequoit Bay, a Red-shouldered Hawk at Burger Park, and good numbers of reports for Merlin and Peregrine Falcon for winter. American Kestrels, by contrast, were scarce. Only one Northern Goshawk was reported, in the Town of Gates. No Black Vulture was found, and Turkey Vultures were again scarce.

Again, there was a miss on the Mendon Ponds Virginia Rail, and no other rails were reported. American Coot numbers were again poor, with 24 on Irondequoit Bay the maximum. This month's only shorebird report was a lone Wilson's Snipe in the Town of Ogden on the 12th.

The only Bonaparte's Gulls reported were 5 on the 30th at West Port Bay in Wayne County. Interestingly, other than the usual wintering gulls, only a lone adult Little Gull at Sodus Bay on the 27th highlighted that part of the check-

list. There were no more hours of searching for "Thayer's" Gull; or at least no reports.

There was only one report of Eurasian Collared-Doves at the Greenwell farm in Hamlin on January 3. Lots of Snowy Owls continued in the area, with over 125 distinct reports representing over 40 individuals at more than 26 locations across the region. Long-eared Owl is rarely reported in mid-winter, so a nice surprise was one found in the Town of Nunda. Again, Short-eared Owls were found in good numbers at many of the usual sites, with the Department of Environmental Conservation again running organized counts every 2 weeks. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were found at 7 locations, above average for winter.

Much of the time wintering passerines seemed scarce, yet there were quite a few lingering half-hardy species. The fairly regular ones included Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Savannah Sparrow, and Rusty Blackbird. Less common to rare were a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Chipping Sparrow, and Fox Sparrow. Among the potential irruptive species, Northern Shrikes were scattered about. Red-breasted Nuthatch was around, but only one tally over 10 was reported and only one Bohemian Waxwing at Hamlin Beach State Park. A nice rarity late in the month was a male Yellow-headed Blackbird on Huston Road in the Nations Road area. Wintering blackbirds were few, but a small mixed flock on King's Highway in Durand-Eastman Park provided some listers with some early ticks. Again this winter, the only winter finches were a few Purple Finches, Common Redpolls, and Pine Siskins scattered about. The forecast potential crossbill invasion has not yet reached our area.

As usual, a table with more detailed records will be posted to the RBA website. Please submit reports to eBird, post them on geneseebirds, and/or send by the 5th of the month to Andrea Patterson, 144 Greystone Lane, #24, Rochester, NY 14618.

			10-year Average			
	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>	(2008-2017)			
Species for January	129	126	126.3			

Bob Spahn and the RBA Records Committee

Observers: Jim Adams, Kate Adams, Janet Akin, Carolyn & Jerry Barnhart, Jessie Barry, Sue Barth, Doug Beattie, Don Bemont, Steven Benedict, Linda Clark-Benedict, Mike Bergin, Lynn Bergmeyer, Barry Bermudez, Shawn Billerman, Johnathan Blades, John Boettcher, Terry Bohling, Lynn Braband, George Briggs, Joe Brin, Robert Buckert, Sara Burch, Bruce Cady, Brad Carlson, Paul Carney, Chris Choate, Jill Church, Kelly Close, Andrew Consler, Lydia Culbert, Kathleen Dalton, Doug Daniels, Willie D'Anna, Deborah Dohne, Joe Fell, George Ford, Kyle Gage, Andy Garland, Candy Giles, Chris Goetz, James Goetz, John Gordinier, Shannon & Tessa Gordinier, Sheryl Gracewski, Jay Greenberg, Kevin Griffith, Bill Gruenbaum, Ralph & Georgia Guenther, Michael Gul-

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Live Bird Cams

by Jay Greenberg

Have you ever, in the midst of a frigid, gloomy, snowy Rochester winter, wished that you could be instantly transported to a location with balmy tropical breezes and a variety of colorful birds? Thanks to modern technology, it is possible to take a virtual trip to such a location and many others. There are now many live bird cams available on the Internet. If you already have an Internetconnected device and a (preferably unlimited) data plan. you can watch at no additional cost. However, you should be aware that if you pay for Internet data by the gigabyte, high definition streaming video can quickly use up your quota. There follows a list of some of the interesting live bird cams I have found along with links and some comments. In addition to providing entertainment, these cams can help with bird identification in case you are planning an actual trip. This is just a sampling. More can be found by going to YouTube.com and searching on "live bird cam". Of course, there are also many prerecorded bird videos at YouTube.com.

Cornell Lab of Ornithology Live Bird Cams

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology operates several live bird cams.

Panama Fruit Feeder Cam at Canopy Lodge (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hHX9l2cvw-E). This is one of my favorites, and one of the most popular live bird cams, judging from the number of people watching at any given time. Some of the common species include: Claycolored Thrush, Crimson-backed Tanager, Collared Araçari, Dusky-faced Tanager, Gray-headed Chachalaca, Palm Tanager, Spot-crowned Barbet, Buff-throated Salta-

tor, Red-crowned Woodpecker, Chestnut-headed Oropendola, Blue-gray Tanager, Flame-rumped Tanager, Green Honeycreeper, Thick-billed Euphonia, Gray-cowled Wood-Rail, Rufous Motmot, Silver-throated Tanager. Like other Cornell bird cams, it records the past 4 hours of video as well as having a live feed. It is available in both a full screen HD version and a small version. It is even visible at night in black and white, although the only identifiable creature I've seen at night is mouse opossum. Some of the birds are ones also present in Costa Rica that I have seen in person.

Cornell Lab Feeder Watch Cam at Sapsucker Woods (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjALrXRNzGE). It's about what you would expect for a feeder that is fairly close to Rochester. I haven't spent much time viewing it, but what I have seen could be seen at just about any bird feeder in the Rochester area. There is a pond in the background with waterfowl, but they are too far away to see clearly. Fortunately, there is a separate bird cam for the pond (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mfn1Ue-j5LQ). When I viewed it in February, there was only a little open water that had only a few Mallards and Canada Geese.

Cornell LabOntario Feeder Watch Cam at Manitouwadge, Ontario (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiT-oQBW4Lc). Located north of Lake Superior near Thunder Bay, this cam seems to specialize in winter finches. In just a few minutes of watching in February, I saw numerous redpolls and several Pine Grosbeaks.

Cornell Nesting Red-tailed Hawks Cam (https://www.y-outube.com/watch?v=uAYJl85qCDQ). There are cams at 2 locations on the Cornell University campus. When I looked in February, nest building was underway, and both adults could be seen together at times. However, there were no eggs or nestlings. (continued on the next page)

Birders Exchange

Birders' Exchange collects and redistributes new and used binoculars, spotting scopes, digital camera equipment, old and new field guides, and other relevant material. Sponsored by the American Birding Association, it supports critical research and conservation programs in the Caribbean, Central and South America. Won't you help? Please bring your donations to the RBA monthly meetings or contact Lucretia at 671-1310 or lucretia@frontiernet.net for alternate arrangements. Remember to include a list of the items and your name and address with your donation.

Lucretia Grosshans

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(Live Bird Cams, continued)

Cornell Lab's Savannah, GA Osprey Nest Cam (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjT1EcpCBfo). The nest is located at a golf course on Skidaway Island near Savannah. When I looked in February, there were 2 Ospreys at or near the nest, but no eggs or nestlings.

Cornell Lab Kauai Laysan Albatross Cam (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4AiosQFyU8). This cam is located on the island of Kauai in Hawaii. When I looked in February, there were 2 nests with a total of 3 nestlings and 2 adults tending to them.

Explore.org Live Bird Cams

Bald Eagle Nest Cam at Decorah, Iowa (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4b_1rUNCUY). When I looked in February, there was an adult on the nest acting as though it was incubating. However, I did not see an egg. Decorah is located in northeastern Iowa near the Mississippi River and the Minnesota border.

Explore.org has several other bird cams, but they tend to be seasonal, such as a puffin cam, a hummingbird cam, and a Great Horned Owl cam. In February, they were off line, although past highlights could be viewed.

Miscellaneous

Little Gull, March 2018

Live Aviary Cam—Monterey Bay Aquarium (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=phZ6t-WfYew). These are captive birds, but they are shorebirds native to the Monterey Bay CA area such as American Avocets, Blacknecked Stilts, Black Oystercatchers, Red-necked Phalaropes, Western Sandpipers, etc. These birds were taken in when found injured or sick. They are either being rehabilitated, or are unfit to live in the wild. I visited this world-famous aquarium years ago, and the aviary was one of the highlights for me.

Rochester Falcon Cams (http://rfalconcam.com/rfc-main/streamView.php). These cams have given live views of Peregrine Falcons nesting in downtown Rochester for several years. The cameras were on line, but nothing was going on, when I looked in February.



Left: A Collared Araçari. Below: A Claycolored Thrush. Bottom: A Blue-gray Tanager. Photos taken by Jay Greenberg near the village of San Luis on the southwestern shore of Lake Arenal, Guanacaste Province, Costa Rica.









We're on the Web www.RochesterBirding.com

The Little Gull is published monthly at the beginning of the month, except that the July and August issues are combined and published at the beginning of July. RBA members are encouraged to contribute. Please send contributions by the 15th of the month to Jay Greenberg, Editor, conservationist@earthlink.net. Contributions can consist of original birding-related nonfiction and fiction articles, poems, photos, and artwork. Humor is welcome. If you have any questions, please contact the editor.

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