



Little Gull

Visit the RBA's website at www.RochesterBirding.com

Rochester Birding Association, 5 Cranswick Lane, Rochester NY 14618

FALL 2018 EVENTS & BIRDING FIELD TRIPS

New York State Ornithological Association 71st Annual Meeting

**Hosted by Burroughs Audubon Nature Club & Rochester Birding Association
October 5—7, 2018 at the RIT Inn and Conference Center**

5257 West Henrietta Road, Henrietta, NY 14467

Saturday Night Banquet Speaker: Greg Miller

A Big Year: Life After

For more information and registration, go to <https://tinyurl.com/NYSOA>

OCT 11
Thursday

RBA General Meeting, 7:00 p.m., the Baptist Temple, 1101 Clover Street, Rochester NY 14610 (in Brighton). Speaker: Kyle Horton. Title: Using Radar to Quantify and Forecast Migratory Patterns.
See the notice on p. 2 for more information.

OCT 13
Saturday

IROQUOIS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

We'll look for migrant ducks, owls, and various passerines in this "get to know Iroquois in autumn" trip. Meet at the Brockport Park and Ride on Route 31 (west of Wegmans/Route 19) at 11:00 a.m. Bring a lunch and beverages as needed.

Leaders: Sheryl Gracewski & Tom Nash 585-360-4537.

OCT 14
Sunday

HAMLIN BEACH STATE PARK

We'll start off walking wooded and brushy areas of the park, looking for thrushes, sparrows, and maybe a half-hardy warbler or two. After that, we'll stop by the lake watch to view ducks on the water and in flight, learning about the lake watch process as we share scopes. Dress appropriately for cooler weather along the lake, and wear comfortable footwear. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in Hamlin Beach State Park, Parking Lot 1.

Leaders: Dominic Sherony 223-7353 and co-leader TBA

OCT 21
Sunday

BATAVIA WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

Why a wastewater treatment plant? Open water and a great location mean that this spot appears regularly on the fall birding mailing lists. Learn how to navigate the terrain (all driving) and discover the great opportunity this spot (and its helpful staff) offers. We will carpool. Meet at the parking lot of the 7-11 Gas Station at the junction of Routes 33 and 19 at 9:00 a.m. Drive about 20 miles west of Rochester on I-490 to exit 2. Turn right (west) on Route 33 and go about one mile to the junction with Route 19. Turn left (south) and then immediately left into the parking lot.

Leaders: Rick Stevens 585-689-1882 and Cathy Ballard 585-322-2621

NOV 11
Sunday

DURAND EASTMAN PARK

Waxwings, winter finches, and lingering migrants are possible as well as Snowy Owls. We may visit Irondequoit Bay to look for waterfowl. Meet in the Lakeshore Blvd. parking lot between Zoo and Log Cabin Roads (Parking Lot D) at 8:00 a.m.

Leaders: Tom & Jeanne Verhulst 585-473-9229

Welcome to the Flock



There were no new members this month.

John Boettcher

President's Column

Amy Kahn



Happy Fall, everyone! The 70th Anniversary NYSOA conference is almost upon us! Thanks to our 3 delegates Cathy Ballard, Dave Strong and Wanda Thistle. Thank you also to the many RBA members who have helped tirelessly for the last 2 years to put this conference on. I especially want to thank Shirley Shaw, who co-chaired with Bob Spahn; Chita McKinney, treasurer; John Boettcher and Wanda Thistle, who were liaisons with the conference center; Carolyn Ragan and Mary Gordon, who found many advertisers; Norma Platt, who organized the raffle; Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash, who organized field trips; Dominic Sherony and Greg Lawrence, who arranged papers; John Shaw, who designed the conference program. I organized the vendor exhibit. There were many others who played a role as well. Thanks again to all for representing RBA so well.

I also want to thank our nominating committee which has been doing an excellent job recruiting for our 2019 board of directors. Stay tuned for more information next month.

September was a busy month for our conservation committee in challenging the siting of the Lighthouse and Heritage wind projects. As an alternative, I encourage members to

find out more about the Kohilo wind system. It is a bird-friendly design built in upstate NY and sold overseas in the Philippines, Brazil, Israel and other places. They also make units suitable for individual homes.

RBA is still looking for volunteers to join a committee in each of the following 4 areas: membership outreach, field trip planning and leading, and newsletter writing and layout. Please contact any of the committee chairs mentioned on the back cover of this newsletter or me if you are willing to pitch in.

October Talk and Speaker

Using Radar to Quantify and Forecast Migratory Patterns

The notion of hundreds of millions, if not billions, of migratory birds passing in and out of broad geographic areas is of considerable public and ecological interest and of conservation concern. Capturing and quantifying these large-scale movements has remained a principal challenge. Kyle Horton, Cornell Lab of Ornithology Postdoctoral Fellow, will discuss how he uses weather surveillance radar to quantify and forecast migratory movements across the United States.

Kyle Horton received his B.S. in Biology from Canisius College in 2011, M.S. in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Delaware in 2013, and Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from the University of Oklahoma in 2017. He is currently a Rose Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. His work on migratory birds employs a range of tools and approaches, including the use of radar, acoustics, and citizen science data. He is currently working on understanding avian flight strategies, long-term phenological change, population estimates, the impact of artificial light, and migration forecasting.



Editor's Corner

Jay Greenberg

Summer Yard Highlights



Now that fall is upon us, it seems like a good time to reflect on the past summer. Without a doubt, the birding highlight in my

yard was seeing a fledgling Green Heron on July 21. Its parents must have nested nearby. One possibility is Lac de Ville, a man-made drainage pond only about 1/4 mile from my Brighton home where I also saw Green Heron fledglings on August 15 (a second brood?). Other possibilities include the Erie Canal, ponds at Brighton Town Park, and drainage ponds at the Intersection of I-590 and I-390, and the Brickyard Pond. All of these man-made habitats are within a mile of my house. The latter 3 are actually eBird hotspots. The state population of this adaptable species is stable, according to the federal Breeding Bird Survey.

In Janet Allen's talk at the Sep. RBA meeting, I was pleased to hear her stress the importance of gardening with native plants to attract insects that sustain birds. Following my own advice in a previous column to save bugs one at a time, I raised monarch butterflies from eggs that were laid on a couple of milkweed plants in the tiny patio area of my mostly grass suburban townhouse yard. Eight of 9 eggs brought inside were raised to healthy adult butterflies that were released to propagate the species. Caterpillars reared indoors have a much better chance of surviving to maturity than ones left outside. Although they are seldom eaten by birds, monarch butterflies and their larvae have their share of predators and parasites.

A Different Style of Birding

by Nick Kachala, RBA Young Birder

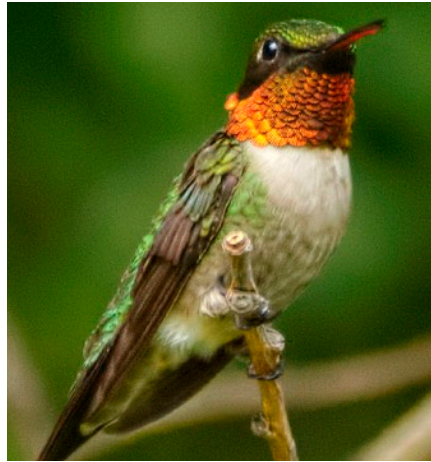
My dad and I decided to take an evening paddling trip on Black Creek on August 18, and it did not disappoint! I took a group of friends out on the water Wednesday, but the birds were far in-between. That evening was the exact opposite. The day was forecasted to be in the upper 80's, but atmospheric smoke drifts from northern Ontario and Manitoba resulted in the daily temperature just merely scraping into the low 70's. This must have come as a relief to the birds, and this break from the monotonous heat gave them the perfect excuse to be more active.

We launched our kayaks from the state boat launch site at the intersection of River Road and Ballantyne Road. Historically known as Genesee Junction, this area was where the West Shore Railroad and the Pennsylvania Railroad intersected, just south of our current airport. Almost immediately after getting into the water, we started to notice great birds.

As we paddled westward, exploring the nooks and crannies of each bend and dead end, the most obvious avian activity was the abundance of Belted Kingfishers. I counted at least 7, but I'm sure there must be more in areas we didn't explore. They would perch a few hundred feet from us, and as we approached, would fly slightly farther upstream, while rattle calling, and find another perch. Some Green Herons entertained us at close distance. We observed an Osprey successfully snag what looked like a largemouth bass a mere 50 feet away from us. Passerines were good along the wooded edges. A calling Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was a surprise. Male Baltimore Orioles were still singing. We even got good listens at an Ovenbird singing not too far off in the woods (I rarely hear them beyond June). Flycatchers were strong, with multiple Eastern Wood-Pewees still singing off in the thick shagbark hickory and black oak woods. Perhaps the most fascinating encounter

we had was paddling underneath a male Ruby-throated Hummingbird sitting on a snag over the water.

I'd highly recommend this place for anyone looking to do a little different style of birding. Kayaking is a great way to explore places not normally accessible to foot birders. Black Creek is a perfect location to get a great variety of birds as fall migration picks up. Given the easy access and wonderful diversity of that area, Black Creek is sure not to disappoint!



A male **Ruby-throated Hummingbird**. Photo by Jay Greenberg.

RBA IN THE FIELD

Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge 8/26/2018

We gathered at the Bushnell's Basin Park and Ride and set off for the visitor's center at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge for our annual late August shorebird trip. We met 10 additional participants there, bringing our group to 22. Today, there were no other organized groups birding the refuge. Our first goal was the Wildlife Drive, and we made several stops including Seneca Flats and Benning Marsh. On the drive we had good views of 6 species of shorebirds, including Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral, Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, and Semipalmated Plover. A few people in our group were fortunate to see a molting adult

White-rumped Sandpiper, but this bird flew with a large group of small sandpipers before everyone could get views. We had good opportunities and good light to show the differences in the Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers and the 2 yellowlegs.

Another focus at Benning was the ducks in basic (eclipse) plumage. Ducks are always a challenge to separate at this time of year, but we saw 6 species with close views, including Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall, Mallards, Northern Pintail, and Black Ducks. In addition, we had good numbers of American Wigeons, American Coots, and Pied-billed Grebes on the main pool. Although they were present, we did not focus on Wood Ducks and Common Gallinules, in order to avoid being outside of the cars on the drive. Bald Eagles and Ospreys are always a treat on the drive. We had several of each, as well as an adult eagle later at Knox-Marcellus Marsh. A highlight of the drive was a Cooper's Hawk that soared overhead and lingered for views showing the shape. A few cars on the ride spotted Green Heron and Black-crowned Night-Heron.

After a lunch stop at Tschache Pool where we watched a Northern Mockingbird, we headed to Knox-Marcellus Marsh. We were unable to get permission to walk down in spite of many attempts. There were many shorebirds there, but we made no effort to identify them because of the extreme distance and the afternoon light. We did spend time on the 6 Trumpeter Swans, a number of Sandhill Cranes and Northern Harriers. A Peregrine Falcon came in and put the ducks and shorebirds up. This display of repeated chases went on for some time.

It was getting late in the afternoon, and most of our group left, but 6 participants stayed on, and we went to Van Dyne Spoor Rd. marsh. The muskrats have eaten away most of the cattails. There were hundreds

of easily seen Common Gallinules, but the most interesting bird was an adult Black-crowned Night-Heron that flew in, and we had excellent scope views.

Late in the afternoon we returned to Knox-Marcellus. By then, the sun had dipped lower in the sky and we could see and identify some of the shorebirds, but most people had left by this time.

Dominic Sherony and Mike Tetlow



A **White-rumped Sandpiper**. Photo taken by Dick Horsey during the Aug. 26 field trip.

Charlotte, Badgerow Park, and Salmon Creek 9/8/2018

We 2 leaders were joined by 16 others for the annual beginner birding trip to Charlotte and Badgerow Park. The day was overcast and cool (in the 60's) with a strong wind from the east, which frustrated some of the birding by ear. One of the highlights of the trip was a Merlin harassing a Fish Crow in the Ontario Beach parking lot meeting place. It was a great way to start a trip. The beach provided Ring-billed, Herring, and Great Black-backed Gulls of various plumages and a few lingering Caspian Terns, but no shorebirds. From the beach, we proceeded to the Slater Creek outlet, but this was pretty disappointing compared to years past. Our visit to Badgerow Park provided a few glimpses of birds, most of which resulted when we played the mobbing tape. A number of birds were noted by ear. Our final stop

was at Dockside's Bar and Grill on Manitou Road adjacent to Salmon Creek where we found no shorebirds, but got to watch an actively hunting Belted Kingfisher. The day ended at noon with a total of 35 species noted.

John Boettcher and Rosemary Reilly



A **Fish Crow** at Charlotte. Photo by Jay Greenberg.

Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge 9/9/2018

In some ways, this field trip was a repeat of the RBA trip of 2 weeks ago. But then there were some differences. It was an unusually cold day, cloudy with a high temperature of only 60 °F and a cool east wind. Up until 2 days ago, we were experiencing very high temperatures locally, and the heat shimmer at Montezuma in August made viewing at Knox-Marcellus very difficult. Another big difference was that only 5 participants attended. One of the similarities was that the bird list was very close to that of the previous trip.

We covered the Wildlife Drive, viewed Knox-Marcellus from the overlook, and finished at the Van Dyne Spoor Rd. marsh. Again, we covered the identification of ducks in basic (eclipse) plumage. We had some close shorebirds at Seneca Flats and Benning Marsh that provided good scope views. At Knox-Marcellus, we were able to see a flock of Least Sandpipers and Semipalmated Plovers. But the

marsh is drying up, and most of the shorebirds previously reported were gone. We had views of 3 Black-crowned Night-Herons. There were hundreds of swallows at Montezuma, and we had them at every stop we made. One of the highlights was a Cliff Swallow at the visitor's center impoundment. We saw only one Purple Martin at Knox-Marcellus. But the other 4 species of swallows were found in multiple numbers including: Barn, Bank, Northern Rough-winged, and Tree. Bank Swallows were the most numerous.

For those who stayed through to the end, we had all 3 possible species of falcons. On the Wildlife Drive, we watched a young Peregrine Falcon attack and kill a Common Gallinule. At Van Dyne Spoor Rd. marsh, we saw both Merlin and American Kestrel. The Merlin was attacking swallows in flight. Another highlight of the trip was finding a small bush at Tschache Pool that was covered with many monarch butterflies that were apparently trying to ride out the cold temperatures.

The trip checklist had 55 species. It was a late start and a late finish, but everyone seemed to enjoy the trip.

Dominic Sherony & Mike Tetlow



A **Peregrine Falcon**. Photo taken by Dominic Sherony during the Sep. 9 RBA field trip.

August 2018 Sightings Report

It was a hot humid, month, relieved periodically by cold fronts and showers. Temperatures averaged 73.6 °F, 4.3° above normal and the eighth warmest on record. On 23 of the days the average temperature was above normal, and on 18 days it stayed above 65°. Still, the only record was a record high low on the 29th. Rain fell off and on through the 14th, but precipitation totaled just 2.67", 0.80" below normal. There were heavy rains to our south and east on the 8th and 2-4" fell in the metro area on the 14th, but only 0.84" was actually recorded at the airport on that peak date.

The total number of species reported was down a bit but still above average at 196. The only misses were species that require extra effort to search out late in the breeding season. That said, much of the time migration seemed slow and numbers low. A total of 338 new bands at the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory (BBBO) banding station is a slow start, but this year started later, on the 15th. Only 16 species of warblers were banded, but again observers reported 26 species total for the third year in a row. About 23,712 eBird records were downloaded, up about a third from last year.

Again, waterfowl numbers were low and dominated by puddle ducks. The only diving ducks were Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, and a Long-tailed Duck, and a few reports each of the 3 merganser species. Red-throated Loon, Horned Grebe, and Red-necked Grebe arrived on the 23rd and 24th, and Common Loon sightings were scattered through the month.

Double-crested Cormorant was again reported in good numbers, all along the Lake Ontario shore and elsewhere in the region. Great Egrets were scattered about, but there were no really high counts. Once again, there were no reports of rarer, wandering, post-breeding herons.

Again there was no formal hawk watch, but interested observers caught some good movements of Red-tailed Hawks and small numbers of other species. Merlin and Peregrine Falcon sightings were again typical of recent years. Again this year, the only details on likely Merlin nesting success in the region came from Geneseo.

A special event for this late summer was the apparent killing off of the cattails at Van Dyne Spoor in the Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area (NMWMA), resulting in great visibility of some of the marsh species there. Counts of Common Gallinule approached 300, limited really by the time it would take to do an accurate count. In contrast, observations of Sandhill Crane families were down.

Moderately high water, dry fields, and a good growing season for cattails have combined to leave us with generally poor shorebird habitat. The regional shorebird hotspot has been the new barrier beach constructed off the East Spit of Braddock Bay. Parts can be viewed from the spit or other distant sites, but serious searching requires a boat of some sort. The usual beaches and piers plus

passing birds did produce reports of 24 shorebird species. Scarcer species included: Upland Sandpiper, Whimbrel, Red Knot, and Wilson's Phalarope. Numbers of individuals were low, other than a couple of good counts for Sanderling.

Gulls and terns were again lackluster. Once more, no jaegers or really rare gulls were reported. Only the now-usual, few Lesser Black-backed Gulls were on the scarcer side. A single report of a Least Tern, possibly the one from July still hanging around, was the only notable tern report.

While there were no particularly special reports among the non-passerine land birds, we can again use a species, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, to illustrate some thoughts around records. In the Noteworthy Records table on the RBA website, you will note 462 eBird lines of records for that species. eBird allows us to gather and archive large amounts of data. However, we cannot use it uncritically. In this case, 314 of the records posted were from just 13 observers reporting 10-39 lists from their home feeders this month. Another 13 reported another 60 times at 3-8 each. Next, to analyze this data we would need to eliminate multiple entries from people birding together and posting separate lists or shared lists or people recording on smart phones in the field and entering the same list more than once by mistake. Finally, we would need to look for the same birds being reported by different people at the same place using different names for their posting location. Trying to really see what is going on can take a fair amount of work.

Again, all of the really expected passerine species were reported. The only ones that might be vaguely called missing were hard to find species or migrants that only occasionally arrive in late August. The relative scarcer species reported this month were: a Prothonotary Warbler lingering in the Armitage Road area where they breed and a Connecticut Warbler banded at BBBO.

Please submit reports to eBird, post them on genesee-birds, and/or send by the 5th of the month to Andrea Patterson, 144 Greystone Lane, #24, Rochester, NY 14618.

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>10-year Average (2008-2017)</u>
Total species for August	196	199	194.7
New species for the year	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5.7</u>
Total for the year to date	273	275	274.9

Bob Spahn and the RBA Records Committee

Observers: Jim Adams, Janet Akin, Ted Barnett, Jessie Barry, Jim Barry, Liz Barry, Mitchell Barry, BBBO (Andrea Patterson), Doug Beattie, Betty Beckham, Don Bemont, Linda Clark-Benedict, Steven Benedict, Mike Bergin, Lynn Bergmeyer, Barry Bermudez, Shawn Billerman, John Boettcher, Terry Bohling, Lynn Braband, Robert Buckert, Sara Burch, Bruce Cady, Brad Carlson, Kelly Close, Kathleen Dalton, Doug Daniels, Mark Fitzsimmons, George Ford, Kyle Gage, Bill Gillette, Jay Greenberg, Kevin Grif-

fith, Candy Giles, Christopher Goetz, James Goetz, John Gordinier, Sheryl Gracewski, Mike Gullo, Andy Guthrie, Richard Guthrie, Chris & Helen Haller, Kim Hartquist, Christina Hoh, Dick Horsey, Bill & Mari Howe, Carolyn Jacobs, Nicholas Kachala, Logan Kahle, Dave Kennedy, Jim Kimball, Mike Laird, Tom Lathrop, Greg Lawrence, Tim Lenz, Joan & Vern Lindberg, Peggy Mabb, Pat Martin, Donna Mason-Spier, Lauri Mattle, Jacob McCartney, Jay McGowan, Kevin McGowan, Jim Miles, Adrielle Mitchell, Brian & Brooke Morse, Chan Nam, Allen Nash, Ann Nash, Tom Nash, David Odell, Andrea Patterson,

Norma Platt, Jay Powell, Bill Purcell, Carolyn Ragan, RBA Field Trips, Wade & Melissa Rowley, Robert Ryan, Jennifer Rycenga, Ed Sailer, Livia Santana, Cindy Scaropoli, Michael Scheibel, Shirley Shaw, Dominic Sherony, Judy Slein, Roger Smith, Tom Smith, Robert & Susan Spahn, Dave Spier, Chris Stanger, Rick Stevens, Dave Tetlow, Mike Tetlow, Mike Wasilco, Ann Watson, Bridget & Gary Watts, Joe Wing, Paul Wolter, Jim Wood, Rochester Young Birders Club. Plus many eBird observers.

October Boo Birds

Did you miss the event last month at Three Heads Brewing? Fear not! We're getting together again in October for a "Boo Birds" edition at K2 Brewing in Penfield. Members and non-members, young and old, experienced

and new, are welcomed out for a fun, early evening night to talk about birds, beer, and more.

Date: Wednesday, October 24th

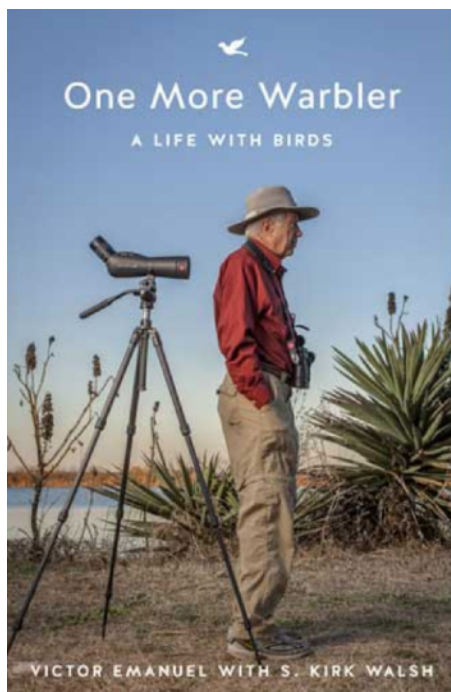
Time: 6 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Location: K2 Brewing, 1221 Empire Blvd., Pen-

Making Friends and Breaking Ground

A book review by Laura Kammermeier of *One More Warbler: A Life with Birds*, by Victor Emanuel with S. Kirk Walsh
University of Texas Press, 2017
273 pages—hardcover

(Pick up your copy at the RBA booth in the vendor hall at the NYSOA meeting.)



The first time Victor Emanuel flew over unbroken tropical forest was in 1969, when he and John Rowlett flew from Tenosique to Yachilan, Mexico. Nearly 10 years later, Emanuel would find himself in southwestern Peru, accompanied by the naturalist Ted Parker. "The view from the plane on the way to Puerto Maldonado was even more thrilling because we flew over an unspoiled forest—no roads, clearings, villages,

the 3-hour ride from Tambopata to the famed Explorer's Inn, then a relatively unknown ecolodge in the heart of the Amazon forest.

"During that first hour of our boat excursion, we saw a few clearings and houses along the river, but soon there was only an unbroken forest of tall trees bordering the riverbanks...." Emanuel and Parker scanned the high branches of ceiba trees in hopes of a Harpy Eagle and watched Scarlet Macaws feeding on erythrina flowers. At Explorer's Inn, they birded rugged trails to a chorus of White-throated Toucans, Spix's Guans, and tinamous. They walked through a soaring canopy of bamboo where Emanuel picked up the call of a bird that sounded like a Fasciated Antshrike, *but not quite*: it was later described as a new species, the Bamboo Antshrike.

This vignette, from Chapter 10 of Victor Emanuel's memoir, *One More Warbler: A Life With Birds*, does more than any other to capture his rich and adventurous life. It captures how passionately he has pursued birds to the ends of the earth, often in the company of other birding legends, establishing new records and even, as in the case of the antshrike, discovering new species. A pioneer of birding ecotourism, Emanuel scouted untapped hotspots and opened them up to birding travelers. The book also captures how he has devoted his life to mentoring young birders, some of whom, like Ted Parker, would become legends of their own.

But most of all, *One More Warbler* captures the thrill of trekking through vast, untouched, unbroken habitats, scanning the forest for movement and tuning one's ear to a sound, any sound, that reveals a bird is near.

Victor Emanuel has lived a life that demands a memoir. He has observed more than 6,000 bird species on all 7 continents. He is the founder of one of the largest and most admired birding tour companies in the world, VENT (Victor Emanuel Nature Tours). He has received numer-

or fields—for almost an hour." The first bird they saw on landing was a Horned Screamer, a large cantankerous bird that blotted the sky. They loaded into a dugout canoe for

ous accolades, including the Roger Tory Peterson Award from the American Birding Association and the Arthur A. Allen Award from Cornell Lab of Ornithology. And he founded the nation's first young birder's camp, Camp Chiricahua.

One More Warbler is full of such enviable adventures as the trip aboard a chartered Russian icebreaker to the Ross Sea, on the "other side of Antarctica" to observe colonies of Emperor Penguins. After seeing 2 colonies, the members of the expedition boarded Zodiaks to travel up an ice canyon where they observed a third, recently discovered nesting site. "As they approached the shore, penguins would burst out of the water like missiles being shot from a submarine, arch over the shore, and land on the ice. They then tobogganed toward the colony, using their feet to push through the snow.... We sat in the small boat, observing these dazzling creatures with sun highlighting their beautiful colors of black, white, and gold." As if that wasn't enough, they were then helicoptered to the top of an iceberg where they enjoyed a cocktail surrounded by snow-capped mountains and towering icebergs—all in the sublime solitude of the Antarctic.

One More Warbler is a book of firsts. It describes Emanuel's first warbler fallout in Galveston Bay, which led to his warbler obsession; it recounts "the phone call that changed my life" in 1970, when a couple offered him \$100 to guide them around Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge. It describes the first VENT tours to Texas, Arizona, and Mexico in 1976, and how, just a year later, VENT expanded to Kenya, Botswana, Peru, and Costa Rica. By 1978, at the urging of the distinguished ornithologist and conservationist Robert Ridgely, Emanuel had discovered the potential of Panama's Pipeline Road and opened it to birding ecotourism. The book also explains how VENT's chartering of trains and ships (including the Russian icebreaker and a luxury windjammer) expanded the reach and comfort of birding tours throughout the world. It also contains accounts of Emanuel's pioneering efforts to establish the Freeport Christmas Bird Count. Among the most exciting stories here are those of the 1959 Galveston Eskimo Curlew ("the bird of my life"), Panama's first-ever Spotted Rail, and a Baikal Teal on Attu.

One More Warbler is a virtual Who's Who of the bird world. Emanuel's mentors include such birding greats as Roger Tory Peterson and the Texas legend Edgar Kincaid, Jr. He developed lifelong friendships with Peterson, Peter Matthiessen, Ted Parker, and George Plimpton, as well as many of the best birding guides in the business today. And

he met Eleanor Roosevelt in Houston, and has led tours for George and Laura Bush.

Above all else, though, *One More Warbler* is a book of love. Love of birds, of course, among them the "exquisitely beautiful" Light-mantled Albatross and the whole suite of warblers, which "helped me to understand the nature of obsession." Love for his companions, who have shared birding experiences with him throughout his life. And love for young birders eagerly absorbing knowledge and carrying on the torch. This book does a fantastic job of demonstrating the fellowship of birding as it honors the people Emanuel has met along the way.

The pages of *One More Warbler* reveal one overarching sadness, however, that of habitat loss. Victor Emanuel represents a generation of birders who experienced some of the world's greatest habitats before they were diminished or destroyed. During his Peru trip with Parker, for example, "Ted told me that someday there would be clearings with cattle grazing almost all the way to Explorer's Inn.... At the time, I found this hard to believe. To be honest, I didn't want to believe that something like that could ever happen to this rainforest. Unfortunately, he was right." At the same time, though, close observation and monitoring by Emanuel and his contemporaries has led to the preservation of several prized biodiversity hotspots, a fact that demonstrates the potential power of watching, documenting, and mentoring.

This memoir will be enjoyed by readers and birders, especially the many who know Victor Emanuel and the other people and places in the book. While it shows how the author's life experiences have informed his character, it is short on opinion and analysis, and not likely to give a reader much insight into how he thinks. That can make the stories feel a bit once-removed, probably a result of having been told through Emanuel's literary collaborator, S. Kirk Walsh. But as its subtitle promises, *One More Warbler: A Life With Birds* does a great job of recounting the lifetime of experiences of a birding legend, a man who has garnered the respect and admiration of untold numbers of people, and who has lived an enviable life traveling the world from end to end.

Laura Kammermeier is the Past-President of Rochester Birding Association, Digital Publications Marketing Manager at Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and the creator and managing editor of *Nature Travel Network*, a multi-author website that provides free information on global birding hotspots. Laura is an enthusiastic birder who travels to watch birds every chance she gets.

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



ROCHESTER BIRDING ASSOCIATION

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Address Service Requested

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, LittleGullEditor@gmail.com. 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.

2018 RBA Board of Directors

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