Volume LI Number 10 November 2026

Rochester Birding Association

Little Gull

Purple Sandpiper at Braddock Bay East Spit. Photo by Candy Giles.

NOV 2026 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!

NOV 29
Sunday

NIAGARA RIVER (JOINT TRIP WITH THE BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY)

The Niagara River area is famous for the variety and number of gulls in winter. Join us on our birding venture along the Niagara River in the US and possibly Canada--if rarities are being seen there. We will start at Lake Ontario and work our way south to the Falls. Our focus will be on waterfowl and gulls, including Bonaparte's Gull and Little Gull, with possible late migrating Common Tern, with additional stops for Red-headed Woodpecker, Black Vulture and late migrating passerines. This is a joint trip with the Buffalo Ornithological Society. Meet at **9:00 a.m.** at the large parking lot next to the swimming pool of Fort Niagara State Park Beach at coordinates: 43.264037, -79.056969. Bring beverages and lunch, as this is an all-day trip. Carpooling would be very helpful.

Field Trips continue on page 5

Zen Moment

Earlier this year, Gayle and I toured Manas National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the northeast Indian state of Assam. It is home to Bengal Tigers, Indian Elephants and Rhinoceros, and has a population of wild Water Buffalo and Gaurs, the world's largest wild cattle. It also hosts more than 450 species of birds, the primary reason for our visit.

The northern boundary of the park borders Bhutan, and by a cartographical quirk, there is a small segment of Bhutan you can visit without having to go through the hassle of a guarded checkpoint. Being avid eBirders, the attraction of putting in a list from an entirely new country for us was too good to pass up, so one morning our group convoyed north to a stopping point just beyond the India-Bhutan border overlooking the Manas River. The view was spectacular. The wide river flowed quickly and a few rapids were visible. On the opposite side was a rocky shore which gave way to grass and scrub, then a dry forest spreading out and up into the Himalayan foothills, the individual trees gradually losing definition until they coalesced into a blue-gray swath disappearing up into the clouds.

As we explored the area, a uniformed man came up to me. He appeared to be in his twenties and sported an old rifle. He started gesticulating at me and spoke in heavily accented English. Because of his rifle, I was somewhat wary until I realized from his gestures that he wanted to take a selfie with me. After a few pics, I called Gayle over and he took a few more with the both of us. Gayle had been a frequent target of selfie requests because her long curly blond hair was a novelty in an area that didn't receive many Western visitors. I told Gayle that I was singled out first this time because of my chiseled features and movie-star good looks. (Should I be hurt that she shook her head and rolled her eyes?)

At any rate, we were there to put in an eBird list and wouldn't you know it, there was virtually no activity. Since we were in Bhutan, it was only fitting that we needed to take a Zen approach to our birding. Patience. Allow nature to unfold. Let the birds come to us. Four distant birds flew away and out of sight – from their shapes, we could see they were swifts but not which species. A Common Tailorbird called from behind us, its loud, persistent tuui-tuui-tuui-tuui-tuui-etc. call unmistakable. Soaring high was a Mountain-Hawk Eagle, identifiable according to our guides by its large, banded tail, huge wings and small head. In the far distance, we could see a dark blob stationary in the canopy of a tall tree. Closer inspection revealed a Great Hornbill.

Great Hornbill photo by George Armistead.

Great Hornbills are large, charismatic birds. Perching upright, they are about 4 feet tall with a huge bicolored bill and bright yellow helmet called a casque. They typically live in small groups, and sure enough, scanning the river valley we found another. Then another. A fourth one flew between two trees. Great Hornbills have a 5-foot wingspan. Their wing beats are slow and heavy, and when they're within an audible distance, the sound is like the puff of a steam locomotive starting up. We eventually located 7 individuals. I could have stayed there for hours, just drinking it all in.

Have you ever seen a picture that just brilliantly captures the essence of a place and a moment? One of our group photographed a Great Hornbill flying against the distant forest, its bill outstretched, its wings near the nadir of the downbeat. The slaty background appears infinite,

distant massive tree trunks barely discernable. You can sense the power in the bird's flight, the vastness of the landscape. We were brief observers in the timelessness of nature. Our Bhutan eBird list contains only 3 identified species, but that experience will stick with me for a long time.

Some other RBA news for this month:

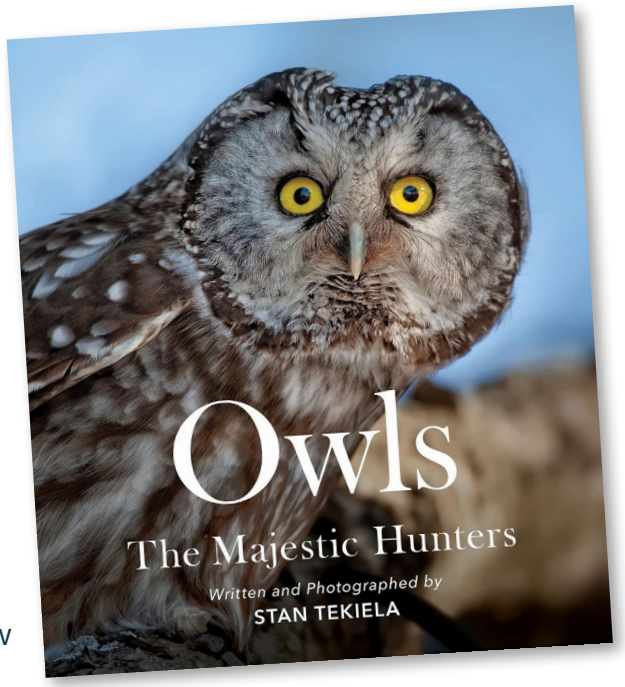
Our November speaker is Stan Tekiela, a well-known columnist and radio personality. We are co-sponsoring his visit with The Bird House. We expect a lively talk on bird migration. Please join us in person or on Zoom for what looks like a very interesting presentation. Stan will also present a talk on owls at the Henrietta Public Library on November 13 at 10 a.m., followed by a meet-and-greet and book signing at The Bird House from 2–6 p.m.

We have a joint field trip this month with the Buffalo Ornithological Society to the Niagara River. Check out details elsewhere in *The Little Gull*.

Birds and Brews this month is at Swiftwater Brewing on November 18th. I hope to see you there!

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13TH STAN TEKIELA PRESENTS OWLS: THE MAJESTIC HUNTERS

10AM AT THE HENRIETTA PUBLIC LIBRARY
625 CALKINS RD, ROCHESTER, NY 14623



Nocturnal birds and animals have intrigued people since the dawn of time. This presentation is filled with eye-popping images of every owl species found in the United States. For over 20 years Stan has traveled across the US to study and photograph owls. In this presentation Stan will explain the many intriguing aspects of these nocturnal birds in plain and simple terminology. You will learn just how well owls see in the dark along with their amazing hearing abilities. If you are like most people and you are fascinated with owls then this presentation is sure to delight!

This talk is co-sponsored by the Henrietta Public Library- please reserve your seat at this event by visiting the Henrietta Public Library's website: https://hpl.libcal.com/event/17403494

THEN, JOIN STAN FOR A BOOK SIGNING AND MEET & GREET AT THE BIRD HOUSE!

Meet author Stan Tekiela and have your books signed! Stan will be in the store from 2-6 p.m. to show off his books and photography, and chat about all things nature.

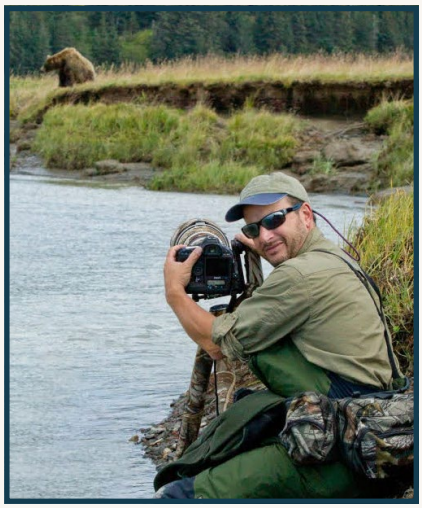
The Bird House, 3035 Monroe Ave, Rochester, NY 14618

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING • Thursday, Nov 12th, 2026 @ 7 PM

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

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

Bird Migration: The Incredible Journeys Of North American Birds



Speaker: Stan Tekiela

Migration is still a mystery in many ways. In this program, Stan will show magnificent award-winning photographs of bird migration and discuss fascinating facts that unlock many of the secrets of bird migration. How do migrating birds find their way? How do they know when they've arrived? How do they find their way back? These questions and many more are answered in this lively presentation.

About the Speaker:

Naturalist, wildlife photographer and author **Stan Tekiela** is the originator of the popular state-specific field guides such as *Birds of New York Field Guide* and *Trees of New York*. Over the past four decades Stan has authored more than 300 field guides, nature appreciation books and wildlife audio CDs for nearly every state in the nation, presenting many species of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, trees, wildflowers and cacti. Holding a Bachelor of Science degree in Natural History from the University of Minnesota and as an active professional naturalist for more than 40 years, Stan studies and photographs wildlife throughout the United States and has received various national and regional awards for his books and photographs. Also a well-known columnist and radio personality, his syndicated column appears in over 20 newspapers and his wildlife programs are broadcast on a number of Midwest radio stations. He is a member of the North American Nature Photography Association and Canon Professional Services along with many other professional organizations.

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

Some stunning images from Stan's Facebook page

FIELD TRIPS

NOV 29
Sunday

NIAGARA RIVER (JOINT TRIP WITH THE BUFFALO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY)

If the trip moves into Canada, participants who wish to join **must bring passports or Enhanced Driver's licenses**. Dress warmly and in layers. **Spotting scopes and FRS radios (walkie-talkies) would be very helpful.**

Leaders: Tom O'Donnell, Buffalo Ornithological Society (BOS) 716-622-5185 or tmodonnell@roadrunner.com and Neal Reilly, RBA 518-256-9147

DEC 5
Saturday

CONESUS LAKE AREA

We'll be looking for Tundra Swans, Canvasback, Redhead and other waterfowl. This trip is a combination of driving, stopping at overlooks and short walks on mostly level dirt trails and dikes. Length is about 1.5 miles walking. Dress warmly and in layers. Restrooms are available at Vitale Park only. Meet at **8:00 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 20A and across the street from Smith's Hardware. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.**

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

DEC 6
Sunday

BEGINNER BIRDER TRIP – NATIONS ROAD

Sharpen your skills on wintering hawks and Short-eared Owls. Other wintering birds such as Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, and Lapland Longspurs are often present. This trip is a combination of driving and viewing at stops along roads. Length about .5 miles walking along the road. Restroom facilities are available at Tops. Meet at **2:00 p.m.** at the Tops Plaza in Avon on Routes 5 and 20, 2 miles west of I-390. The roads in this area are narrow and busy. Please plan to carpool from Tops, as the number of cars allowed will be limited to ten. **Bring binoculars, dress warmly and in layers. Spotting scopes and FRS radios would be very useful.**

Leader: John Boettcher 585-671-9639 and co-leaders Niki Banke 585-317-3751 and Robert Crandall 585-278-3455

WELCOME TO THE FLOCK

Please welcome our new members:

Cong Ming
Julie Oldfield
Samantha Smith
Annette Teng

As of October 15th, members in good standing: 359

Individual Members: 245
Family Members: 93
Supporters: 17
Sponsors: 3
Corporate Sponsors: 1
Additional Complimentary Memberships: 39

Doug Rabjohns, RBA Membership Chair

Dunlin seen at Braddock Bay East Spit by Candy Giles.

Rochester Academy of Science
Lawrence J. King Memorial Lecture
Dr. Gregory Cunningham
Keynote Speaker at Scientific Paper Session

Professor, Biology Department
St. John Fisher University

Life as a Field Biologist: Remote Places and Questions Worth Chasing

ST. JOHN FISHER UNIVERSITY

Public Lecture

▫ **Saturday, November 7, 2026** ▫

ST. JOHN FISHER UNIVERSITY

Kearney Hall, Cleary Auditorium
3690 East Ave, Rochester, NY 14618

9:00 a.m. ▫ Free

Scan for more information

Sandra L. Frankel Nature Park (Brickyard Trail)
September 9, 2026

Just eight participants joined the two leaders at the Brickyard Trail on a moderately cool day with rain in the forecast. The number of bird species seen—15 in total—was also lower than expected. But among those were a Merlin and a fairly rare Olive-sided Flycatcher, both seen well, so we all agreed the trip had been successful as well as lots of fun.

Tom and Jeanne Verhulst

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge
September 20, 2026

Our annual fall trip to the Iroquois refuge area has the potential for all sorts of bird species due to diverse habitat and seasonal movement of migrating birds. Waterfowl migrants start moving around, shorebirds are still coming through and warblers can still be found.

Twenty-two birders started out with a specific destination in mind, just a few minutes from our starting point because of a scouting trip the day before. Shorebirds were the goal, but as we arrived at the site, the wet spots very close to the road were empty of birds. Not giving up, we all exited our vehicles and as if on cue, our intended shorebirds flew into the closest wet spot next to the road, directly in front of the entire group. A Wilson's Phalarope with a few yellowlegs had the cameras clicking with a few oohs and aahs. The Wilson's Phalarope was a life bird for several in our group. A group of Sandhill Cranes called from nearby and flew across the road directly overhead. First stops seldom get better than that.

We moved along to our other stops, enjoying the good weather and adding to our species count. Warblers proved somewhat challenging with only a few Yellow-rumped Warblers picking through the poison ivy fruits and a nearby Common Yellowthroat. We did find the

This Common Yellowthroat was seen earlier this year at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Rebekah Earthwalker.

mosquitos during our walk on Sour Springs Road, rather, abundant would be the word. Kumpf Marsh produced some varied waterfowl species with Green- and Blue-winged Teal, Northern Pintails, Northern Shovelers, and Mallards, and finished with a female Northern Harrier hunting at the edges of the marsh. Our day ended with 54 species and our group helping several birders add a few life species to their lists.

Rick Stevens, Doug & Elizabeth Rabjohns

Young Birder Trip—Sandra L. Frankel Nature Park (Brickyard Trail)
September 20, 2026

The Brickyard Trail can produce some surprising and unexpected birds, and this trip showed it. We started from the north end and walked almost all the way to the southern end. We got up-close looks at some Canada Geese on a lawn near the north end of the trail. A Swainson's Thrush gave quick looks in the shrubby area before the bridge. In the open marsh, we spotted Northern Flickers, a high flying Osprey, and a female Red-bellied Woodpecker. A Cooper's Hawk zipped by very fast, chased by some smaller birds. Close to the southern end of the trail, we ran into Tom, Jeanne, and A.P. who pointed out a group of warblers and vireos. Here we found Magnolia and Black-throated Green Warblers and our best birds of the walk,

two Philadelphia Vireos. This species can sometimes be a challenge to identify, but these two birds gave good views and showed all the field marks. Thanks to the young birder and her grandparent for their enthusiasm!

Neal Reilly

Ganondagan State Historic Site
October 3, 2026

On a sunny, cool fall day we had a lovely group of 8 people of many experience levels. Our walk took us through grasslands, wooded edges, past several wetland areas and finally into mature mixed forest. We had overhead migrating raptors and a nice variety of warblers and sparrows. Highlights were nice looks at Field Sparrows, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Eastern Bluebirds, Golden-crowned Kinglets, 50 Blue Jays, and resident Red-tailed Hawks screaming at migrants passing through. A total of thirty-four species were seen.

Amy Kahn and Neal Reilly

Durand-Eastman Park
October 4, 2026

Our group of 18 could not have asked for a more beautiful, crisp, Rochester fall day to walk paths and stroll parts of Log Cabin and Zoo Roads. From the meeting place of Parking Lot D, we had a surprising Northern Mockingbird in some brush as well as several Mute Swans flying low overhead with their characteristic rustling wing sounds. At the beginning of Horseshoe Road by the golf course, we were greeted by a couple of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Yellow-rumped Warblers, both Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets, a Chipping Sparrow, and nice looks at a Red-tailed Hawk. Further along, American Robins, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, and American Goldfinch were seen. (The mosquitoes made it difficult to stop for long.) At the bridge, as we took the path to the right, a Winter Wren was heard and sharp eyes spotted a late Chestnut-sided Warbler! Song Sparrows,

This Northern Mockingbird was seen on a previous trip to Durand Eastman Park by Eunice Thein.

White-throated Sparrows and a Downy Woodpecker were seen in the marsh area.

Escaping the mosquitoes, we moved on to Zoo Road, taking the stairway down, then walking up into the end of the orchard area. Several Northern Flickers were busy eating berries from vines and a few Yellow-rumped Warblers were seen. We then took the Blue trail, where some saw a Hermit Thrush and heard a Pileated Woodpecker. Coming out onto Log Cabin Road, we had Ruby-crowned Kinglets and another Sapsucker. Alas, no Wood Ducks at Pat Lake, but just a little further along, a few folks caught brief looks at a very late Ruby-throated Hummingbird! Walking back to the parking area on Zoo Road, a Brown Creeper and both White- and Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen. Thanks to all who came—it was a congenial group with everyone helping each other getting onto birds. Much appreciated! Total species: 36.

Jeanne Verhulst and Doug Rabjohns

High Acres Nature Area
October 11, 2026

Our morning started off cloudy and in the low 50's with remnants from Hurricane Isaias heading towards us as 22 people met us at

the southeast parking lot. We had a couple large flocks of Canada Geese fly over before everyone arrived, and some Ring-billed Gulls, American Crows, Red-winged Blackbirds, American Robins and European Starlings were seen and heard while we all gathered and signed in.

At Frog Pond, we pulled out Black-capped Chickadees, Yellow-rumped Warblers, White-throated Sparrows and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. Our trek to the east end of the Woodland Trail was quiet, but we enjoyed the fall foliage and a couple of deer fleeing from us. Some Golden-crowned Kinglets were calling in the canopy and a Swamp Sparrow called from the wetland. At the trail end overlook we had a brief view of a Belted Kingfisher. Many Mallards and Canada Geese were feeding as well as Green-winged Teals. Scanning the wetland, we found a Green Heron posing on a log.

A Belted Kingfisher at the High Acres Nature Area. Photo by Dick Horsey.

At the promontory overlook halfway back along the red trail, we had to look around the leaves and branches, but were able to spot American Black Duck, American Wigeon, and Gadwall. A Green Frog in Newt Pond was a fun non-avian diversion. As we reached the causeway, a Blackpoll Warbler gave us nice views in a bare ash tree, and a lone Tree Swallow darted away over the west marsh. Further out on the causeway, we had a group of black birds perch up behind us, and on

American Wigeon seen at the High Acres Nature Area by Candace Giles.

close inspection, we identified Red-winged Blackbirds, Brown-headed Cowbirds and a Rusty Blackbird with its prominent white eye.

We followed a Downy Woodpecker alongside the Quonset hut, and in the wooded area beyond, a flock of Cedar Waxwings moved around the tops of the trees, along with Yellow-rumped Warblers and Rusty Blackbirds. At the top of the hill overlooking the Quarry Pond, we spied more geese and Mallards, plus we had great looks at both male and female Wood Ducks. As we were preparing to move on, three Ring-necked Ducks emerged from behind the cattails and into view, so we lingered for everyone to get looks through the scopes.

North Pond had some Mallards and a Great Blue Heron tucked in the back. From there, it got very quiet with only an occasional Northern Flicker, Red-Bellied Woodpecker and White-throated Sparrow calling. Near the end of the loop, we pulled in more Chickadees, White-throated Sparrows and Yellow-rumps.

In all, we had 37 species over the course of our field trip. To our great relief, the hurricane remnants stayed to the south of us. We had a few enthusiastic beginner birders join us which made the morning especially fun, and we had several folks get some new life birds. Thanks to everyone who participated!

Brian Rohrs and Gayle Lazoration

TIME TO RENEW!

To renew your membership online, scan the QR code or go to:
https://rochesterbirding.org/get-involved/join-renew/
To renew via hardcopy mail, complete the form below and mail to:
Rochester Birding Association
P.O. Box 92055, 1335 Jefferson Road, Rochester, NY 14692-9998
Your contact information will appear in the RBA's Membership Roster. Please print legibly or use an address label. Check here to opt out of roster inclusion →◯

Member name: _____
Member address: _____
Member phone number & email: _____
Alternate address: _____
Use alternate address between (dd/mm to dd/mm): _____

Membership Level: all levels include electronic *Little Gull* newsletter

Individual – one person	$30	☐
Family* – two persons and family living at same location	$40	☐
Supporter* – Higher level of support	$75	☐
Sponsor* – Greater level of support	$150	☐
Corporate Member	$250	☐
Optional Hardcopy Little Gull newsletter *Due to printing and postage cost increases, this option will increase to $20 as of January 1st, 2027*	$15	☐
Optional donation to support the RBA's projects on education, research, local conservation, and accessibility	$_____	☐
I have enclosed a check for membership, optional hardcopy *Little Gull* newsletter and optional donation totaling	$_____	

* Additional Name & email: _____

Volunteer interests. Training provided.

☐ Leadership
☐ Conservation
☐ Computer/Website
☐ Communications (*Little Gull*, website, social media)
☐ Field Trip planning/guide
☐ Finance
☐ Membership
☐ Monthly Programs
☐ Bird Records/Statistics
☐ Social
☐ One-time activities

Birds and Brews

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

Wednesday, November 18, 2026
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Swiftwater Brewing Co.
378 Mt. Hope Ave.

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

swiftwaterbrewing.com

This neighborhood favorite brew pub has a menu of sandwiches, pizza, and snacks, as well as a robust list of beers, ciders, and other libations.

SAVE the DATE!

Annual RBA Winter Dinner

Saturday, January 9, 2027, 5 pm to 9 pm
Asbury First United Methodist Church
1050 East Avenue Rochester, NY

Northern Cardinal seen at Irondequoit by Eunice Thein last December.

Annual elections will be held and member presentations will provide the entertainment.

Reserve your seat for the potluck dinner! Everyone brings a dish to pass. Gluten Free, Vegetarian or Dairy Free dishes are welcomed or bring your favorite!

Main Entrees provided will be Roasted Turkey and Ham.

Contact Niki Banke. **Please include name, number of guests and the dish you plan on bringing.**

Please remember Asbury has a strict **no alcohol** policy.

Many hands make light work – we need volunteers to help set up and clean up! Contact Niki for details.

Email Niki: jacksons.mama@hotmail.com
or text 585 317-3751

ROCHESTER CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

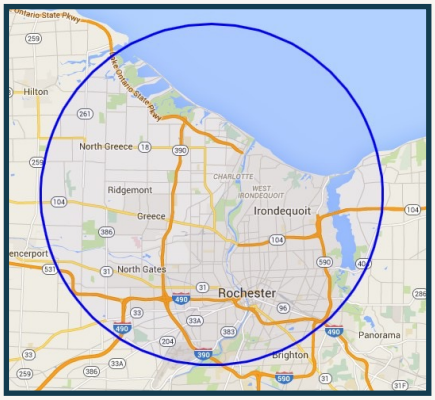
The 123rd Rochester Christmas Bird Count (RCBC) will be held on Sunday, December 20, 2026. Please consider contributing to this national birding event, which is a beloved annual RBA tradition.

Sunday, December 20, 2026

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

The location and time of the count dinner will be shared in the December 2026 Little Gull

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



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

John Boettcher 298-3404	Braddock Bay to Long Pond Road
Greg Lawrence glawrence21@yahoo.com	Long Pond Road to Dewey Avenue Dewey Avenue to Charlotte Harbor
Andy Garland andrew.garland@yahoo.com 585-329-1577	Summerville to Culver Road & Seneca Park
Sheryl Nash Gracewski sheryl.gracewski@rochester.edu	Culver Road to Baker Road (Webster)
Charlie Plimpton plimptonc@gmail.com	Parks and neighborhoods (Highland, Genesee Valley, Mt. Hope Cemetery)
Robin Morey 973-715-6049	Maplewood & Turning Point Parks, Holy Sepulcher and Riverside cemeteries
Brian Morse brianmorse2000@gmail.com 269-9576	West of airport/south of the canal/ north of the river
Rob Buckert 269-4206	Crow Roost

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

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

MARCH 2026 RECORDS SUMMARY

March 2026 contrasted sharply with the arctic months that preceded it, with temperatures averaging 39.4°, or 4.2° above average. The colder airmass that had plagued most of February continued through the first few days of March, but temperatures rose sharply to a record-breaking 73° by 7 March. 10 March also broke a record at 69°. Remarkably, the six-day stretch from 6-11 March averaged 20.5° above their normal daily high temperatures. March 2026 was also notoriously wet, with precipitation totaling 5.89", or 3.40" above average—the fourth wettest March on record. The Rochester airport only recorded 6.2" of snowfall for the month, which was 11.7" below average. Most of this snowfall occurred during a single event mid-month. 1.65" of rain recorded on 31 March broke the daily record for precipitation. The period of 7-11 March was noted for continued rounds of thunderstorms. 11-17 March was particularly windy, not so uncommon for March, with five of the seven days recording wind gusts over 50 MPH. A round of severe weather on 31 March brought excessive rainfall that flooded creeks and produced damaging winds.

While large migratory flocks of Snow Geese and Canada Geese had arrived in the Region in the last week of February, their movements continued strongly through the first two weeks of March. The largest reported flocks of both species approached 10,000 individuals. Observers reported several Ross's Geese regionwide this month, with one or two birds reported from multiple locations within the NMWMA during the first 10 days of the month, one at Braddock Bay on 8 March and then again on 19 March, two in Webster on 11 March, and one in Hamlin on 21 March. Dominic Sherony found a Barnacle Goose on Lake Edwards near High Acres Nature Area on 10 March, which was observed by four others shortly after discovery before flying away. This is the second year in a row that Barnacle Goose was reported in Region 2, and this occurrence represents about the sixth Regional record ever. Tundra Swan migration peaked on 9 March with a count of 1,121 passing Braddock Bay. Duck migration continued strong through March, as expected, with large numbers of puddle ducks concentrated in the NMWMA throughout the month. The NMWMA was also the only spot in March to host Eurasian Wigeons, with multiple individuals reported from multiple impoundments throughout the refuge. A count of three male Eurasian Wigeons on 15 March from Railroad Road Marsh stood out as high. A hybrid Mallard x Northern Pintail was reported from Railroad Road Marsh on 7-8 March. There has been a hybrid of the same species appearing off and on now for the past few years. Nothing stood out among the diving ducks as noteworthy, either species or count-wise.

Barnacle Goose and Ring-necked Duck on Lake Edwards in Fairport. Photo by Dominic Sherony.

Sandhill Crane at the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. Photo by Alan Swire.

A Virginia Rail was reported from High Acres Nature Area on 21 March. Whether this represents an early arrival or a late-discovered overwintering bird is hard to judge, given that Virginia Rail has overwintered at High Acres Nature Area in the past (the latest was 10-14 March of 2025). A maximum of 98 Sandhill Cranes were counted from Railroad Road Marsh on 18 March. Large numbers of Horned Grebe and Red-necked Grebe were observed migrating along Lake Ontario on 25 March, with counts of 156 and 384, respectively. Common Loon and Red-throated Loon numbers also increased throughout the month, with a maximum of 14 Red-throated Loons noted migrating along Lake Ontario on 30 March.

MARCH 2026 RECORDS SUMMARY

Great Black-backed Gull by Alan Bloom.

Killdeer migration peaked in the first week of the month, as expected, with a maximum of 112 tallied passing the Braddock Bay Hawkwatch on 7 March. Wilson's Snipe and Greater Yellowlegs were the only two new species of shorebird for March, which is less than usual.

Abundance of Ring-billed Gulls increased throughout the month, which is seasonally expected. Observers reported a decent number of Great Black-backed Gulls throughout the month, with a maximum of 24 counted on Irondequoit Bay on 9 March. Abundance of Glaucous Gull and Iceland Gull increased in March compared to the previous winter months. Five Iceland Gulls at LaSalle's Landing Park on 11 March stood out as one of the higher single-location counts for this species in recent years in the region. Chris Wood, Mitchell Barry, and visiting birders Brian Sullivan and Ashwin Viswanathan reported a very rare spring adult Black-legged Kittiwake passing the Greece lakeshore on 7 March.

Maili Waters returned to Braddock Bay for a second year as the official hawk counter. The hawkwatch season started slow except for a single Golden Eagle on 1 March, but picked up with an influx of Red-shouldered Hawks that started on 8 March. 9 March was the first day of the season with decent numbers of Turkey Vultures moving. Noteworthy days included 9 March (558 raptors, Turkey Vultures, 155 Red-shouldered Hawks), 16 March (1005 raptors, 80% Turkey Vultures), 26 March (808 raptors, mostly Turkey Vultures), and 29-30 March, which featured just under 5,000 Turkey Vultures between the two days. The count tallied 15 Golden Eagles for the month and three Black Vultures. Several observers relocated (presumably) the same Black Vultures east of the hawkwatch at locations such as Irondequoit Bay Outlet, Bear Creek Harbor, Cornwall Preserve, Beechwood State Park, and Lake Shore Marshes WMA. Two American Goshawks were noted passing Braddock Bay, one on 9 March and another on 19 March. Joe Mitchell reported the last Snowy Owl of the season in Perry on 5 March. There were ten times fewer eBird lines of Northern Saw-whet Owl this March compared to March of 2025. The 15 eBird lines of Saw-whets were all from Owl Woods. Reports from 7-9 March may have even been the same individual. If so, there were only three individuals reported the whole month, with the later two being on 25 and 30 March.

Six to seven Northern Shrikes occupied the typical spots of Nations Road, the fields of Hamlin, Bloomfield, and the NMWMA. Eastern Phoebe arrived on 31 March, the latest arrival date for the species since 1996. There were also no reports of Barn Swallow, which arrive in March about four out of every five years. American Pipits were migrating strongly by the second week of the month, with a count of 85 at Groveland Flats on 13 March standing out. The Pine Grosbeaks, dwindled to only two, were last reported in Webster (Whiting

A Red-shouldered Hawk seen in Hilton by Candy Giles.

MARCH 2026 RECORDS SUMMARY

Vesper Sparrow on Nations Road. Photo by Alan Bloom.

Road) on 7 March. Chris Wood reported two Pine Grosbeaks along Moscow Road in Hamlin on 8 March. Redpoll was only reported three times, which was not unexpected given how scarce and randomly distributed they were this past winter. Multiple observers were treated to cooperative Red Crossbills at Webster Park from 3-10 March, which numbered as many as 16 on 4 March before dwindling to only a couple of birds for the last few days. There were no rarities this month in the passerine area. Sparrow species such as Fox Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, as well as other species such as Eastern Meadowlark all arrived within their expected windows.

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

Observers: Janet Akin, Niki Banke, Timmy Banker, Jessie Barry, Mitchell Barry, Frederic Beaudry, Betty Beckham, Don Bemont, Steve & Linda Benedict, Mike Bergin, Lynn Bergmeyer, Barry Bermudez, Linda Birkel, Robin Blakesley, Alan & Lisa Bloom, John Boettcher, Terry Bohling, Noah Brickman, Scott & Janet Brooks, Robert Buckert, Sara Burch, Peter Burns, Ian Campbell, Brad Carlson, Donna Carter, Nate Chu, Robert Cicotta, Roger Clark, Sara Close, Holley Coates, Lorenzo Colantoni, Robert Crandall, Doug Daniels, Thomas Davis, Cliff Dekdebrun, Peggy Dempsey, Mark Druziak, Diane Egan, Rob Fergus, George & Katie Ford, Kyle Gage, Heidi Gardner, Andrew Garland, John Garrett, Matthew Gavette, Janis George, Candy Giles, John & Karla 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, Mark Janetos, Nick Kachala, Amy Kahn, Laura Kammermeier, David Kennedy, James Kimball, Cindy Kindle, Cronan Kobylak, Hans Kunze, Greg Lawrence, Susan Lewis, 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, Mark Miller, Phil Mills, Ann Mitchell, Joe Mitchell, Celeste Morien, Brian & Brooke Morse, Tom Nash, Paul Novak, Matt Nusstein, Dave Nutter, Jeremy Pete, Luanne Pignataro, Charlie & Chelsea Plimpton, Derek Pulhamus, Doug & Elizabeth Rabjohns, Rosemary Reilly, Neal Reilly, Michael Rizzo, Susan Roberts, Brian Rohrs, Andrew Romanowski, Wade & Melissa Rowley, Robert Ryan, Shawn Ryan, Jennifer Rycenga, Anne Salverda, Greg & Shannon Sanda, Mickey Scilingo, Luke Seitz, Dominic Sherony, Todd Shusky, Judith Slein, Robert & Susan Spahn, Rick Stevens, Reuben Stoltzfus, Stephen Taylor, David Tetlow, Michael Tetlow, Eunice Thein, Nathan Ukens, Tom & Jeanne Verhulst, Brad Walker, Mike Wasilco, Maili Waters, Bridget Watts, Drew Weber, Mamie Weed, Kim Weeks, Joe Wing, Chris Wood, Jim Wood. (All observers cannot be listed here).

	2026	2025	10-year Average (2016-2025)
Total species for March	144	147	146.4
New species for the year	16	22	19.0
Total for the year to date	151	154	157.0

Tundra Swan over Cayuga Lake. Photo by Alan Swire.

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