



Rochester Birding  
Association

# Little Gull



An Indigo Bunting  
photographed last  
June at Oatka Creek  
Park by Alan Bloom.

## JUNE 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](http://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!

**JUNE 6**  
Saturday

### GANONDAGAN STATE HISTORIC SITE, A FIELD TRIP FOR ALL AGES

This trip is open to all ages (ages 15 and younger must be accompanied by a responsible adult). This trip has generated large species lists due to the many habitat types we will travel through. Ganondagan has miles of trails for the leaders to choose from. We will walk wide mown or packed dirt trails through fields, woods, and shrubland. The round trip is about 2 miles and includes some hills. Restroom facilities are available at the Seneca Arts and Culture Center (SACC) at the end of the trip. Meet at **10:00 a.m.** in the main parking lot situated below the SACC, 7000 County Road 41 (Boughton Hill Road), Victor, NY 14564.

**Leader:** Amy Kahn 585-310-2330 and co-leader Neal Reilly 518-256-9147

Field Trips continue on [page 3](#)



## Sad News

I had a story all ready for May's column when I heard about the death of Tom Nash, a long time RBA member and volunteer. He passed away on May 13th. I wanted to say something in his memory, and it seemed an odd juxtaposition to have a lighthearted story next to words of remembrance, so I'll save the initial story I wrote for a later issue and share the thoughts I've had over the last couple of days since hearing the news about Tom.

First, I was shocked, and as I write this, I still am. I had just talked with Tom a few days before at the Amy's Pond field trip. It points to how fleeting our lives are and how we never know when the last time will be when we see someone.

Whenever I saw Tom, it was related to birding or the RBA. He and his wife Sheryl were almost always together in the field, to the point that in my mind "Tom-n-Sheryl" was their moniker. It is a blessing to have a spouse with whom you can share a passion. My heart goes out to Sheryl.

Tom was very generous with his time in support of our organization, and he and Sheryl received the Little Gull Award in 2020 for their contributions to the RBA. For years, he was part of the Circulation committee getting the Little Gull mailed out to members, and Tom was a co-leader on countless RBA field trips. Volunteer organizations are only viable because of people like Tom.

Tom was a fixture on field trips. If he wasn't co-leading, he was usually there as a participant. In fact, I have a hard time thinking of a field trip I've been on when Tom wasn't there too! Tom was always eager to help, and he would often gravitate to less experienced birders to get them on birds and explain field marks and bird behaviors to them. His absence on future field trips will be one of the first things I'll notice.

I knew Tom casually – we'd see each other out in the field or at a member's meeting. We'd say 'hi' and exchange pleasantries and maybe some bird sightings. I would venture to say that's how interactions are with most people. It takes time to get to know someone more than superficially. The moments I got to know more about Tom were at our RBA Birds and Brews outings. I found out that he worked for Xerox, that he had kids, that he was a woodcarver. We need to take advantage of those kinds of opportunities to connect.

As a final thought, one of the things I loved about Tom was his wry sense of humor. He was somewhat soft-spoken and you had to pay attention, but once in a while he would get this little twinkle in his eye, and you could tell he was about to slip something funny into the conversation. That's how I'll remember him most fondly.

The RBA lost a good friend. We will miss you, Tom.

Tom's obituary can be found at [anthonychapels.com/obituaries/Thomas-Nash?obId=48423992](https://anthonychapels.com/obituaries/Thomas-Nash?obId=48423992)

### **Some other RBA news for this month:**

June 11th is our annual picnic. Come and connect with your fellow birders – I hope to see many of you there! Our Social Chair, Niki Banke, would appreciate an RSVP if you plan to come. Please see details elsewhere in the Little Gull or on our website.

We have 5 field trips scheduled for June. Get out and join your fellow birders!

# FIELD TRIPS

**JUNE 7**  
Sunday

## LETCHWORTH STATE PARK

This trip frequently garners one of the higher bird lists among RBA field trips. Of course, it gets an early start! We'll look for birds not frequently seen on other trips, such as the Acadian Flycatcher. We'll do a fair amount of walking: one somewhat steep but short forest trail and a dirt road down to the river level, as well as some roadside birding. Restrooms are available at several locations along the way. Meet at **5:30 a.m.** at the Dam Overlook Gifts and Grill parking lot (use the Route 36 entrance to Letchworth State Park). Pack a lunch and snacks, as the trip will likely last well into mid-afternoon. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.**

**Leaders:** Neal Reilly 518-256-9147 and Matt Nusstein 716-238-3274

**JUNE 13**  
Saturday

## BERGEN SWAMP

A trip to this unique place is by special permit from the Bergen Swamp Preservation Society and will feature nesting birds. The mix of vegetation zones provides secluded nesting habitat for the usual western N.Y. species as well as those more characteristic of the Canadian zone, such as Blue-headed Vireo, Hermit Thrush, Ovenbird, and other warblers. This is a walking trip of 3 miles on possibly wet and slippery corduroy trails that must be followed closely for safety reasons and because of the fragile habitat. **Sturdy boots** (rather than sneakers) **are strongly recommended**, and hiking or ski poles may be useful. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** at the main trailhead entrance to Bergen Swamp: 6646 Hessenthaler Rd, Byron, NY 14422. From Rochester, take I-490 west to Exit 2. Take Rt. 33 west and turn right (north) onto Route 19. Turn left at the fire station onto Hunter Road; it becomes Swamp Road. Follow Swamp Road west past Pocock Road and turn right onto Hessenthaler Road. The swamp entrance is at the kiosk on the right. Park along the right shoulder, but do not park in front of the caretaker's house.

**Leader:** Greg Lawrence 585-730-2553 and co-leader Neal Reilly 518-256-9147

**JUNE 21**  
Sunday

## ODONATA SANCTUARY

The 100-acre privately owned Odonata Sanctuary, 20 Parrish Road, Honeoye Falls, NY 14472, is the former home of Joseph W. Taylor, who was a founder of the American Birding Association and president of Hawk Mountain Association. The sanctuary participates in the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) that provides nesting acreage for grassland nesting birds such as Eastern Meadowlarks and Bobolinks. The sanctuary is an access point for the observation of migrating birds and monarch butterflies, and is also home to one of the largest Eastern Bluebird nest box trails in the USA. The trails pass over streams, around a pond and through woodlands. No restrooms available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** at the sanctuary. Enter the sanctuary at 20 Parrish Road and drive up the long, one-lane driveway.

**Leader:** Sheryl Gracewski 585-261-6975 and co-leader Steve Melcher 585-746-8078



*Red-eyed Vireo at  
Odonata Sanctuary.  
Photo by Jeanne Verhulst.*

## FIELD TRIPS

**JUNE 28**  
Sunday

### BARNHART'S CAMP AND KEENEY SWAMP

Beginning with Keeney Swamp, we will spend the morning birding as we drive (and stop) along forest roads and ponds. As we make our way to Camp, we will stop to look for the Prairie Warbler. After lunch, we will make our way back towards Nunda, driving back roads to cover the diverse landscapes of northern Allegany County. Grassland, woodland, pond and swampland species such as Mourning and Hooded Warblers, Eastern Bluebirds, Indigo Buntings, and maybe a bittern could be seen. This trip has very little walking and generally goes all day, so we can see as much as possible! Meet at **7:30 a.m.** at the Shop-n-Save on Route 408 (Mt. Morris-Nunda Rd) Nunda, NY. Restroom at Barnhart's Camp. **Spotting scopes and FRS Radios would be useful.** Lunch at Barnhart's Camp is a trip tradition—they grill the hot dogs! Bring a dish to pass—your choice (but this is optional).

**Leaders:** Jerry and Carolyn Barnhart 585-385-4026 and Rick Stevens 585-689-1882 and co-leaders Tom and Jeanne Verhulst 585-362-0803



*A Prairie Warbler seen by Rosemary Reilly on a previous trip to Barnhart's Camp and Keeney Swamp.*

# RBA Annual Picnic

*Join us at*



**Thursday, June 11, 2026**  
**Rain or Shine!**

301 Railroad Mills Road  
Pittsford, NY 14534

Picnic and an after dinner bird walk  
for those interested.

We gather at 5:30, hot dogs  
ready by 6:00. Bring your own  
beverages and a dish to pass!

Please RSVP for a head count—  
**volunteer opportunities available!**

**Email Niki:** [jacksons.mama@hotmail.com](mailto:jacksons.mama@hotmail.com)  
or text 585 317-3751

*Eastern Bluebird*  
*by Richard Ashworth*



# BIRDING CRUISES

*Aboard the*

# RIVERIE

Cruise with birding experts Randi and Nic Minetor and observe some of the 100 species of birds that make their home along the Genesee River. Perfect for every bird watcher from novice to die-hard enthusiast, you'll see local birds in their lush habitat and learn to identify them by sight and sound.

These 75-minute cruises are appropriate for all ages. Participants are encouraged to bring their own binoculars, though binoculars will be available on board for use during the cruise.



**All of last year's birding cruises sold out early, so choose your dates and get tickets soon!**



For more information and to book your cruise, visit

[https://rochesterbywater.org/public\\_cruises/genesee-river-erie-canal-birding-cruises/](https://rochesterbywater.org/public_cruises/genesee-river-erie-canal-birding-cruises/)

*Upcoming dates:* All cruises depart from Corn Hill Landing at 9:30 a.m.

Saturday, June 20

Sunday, June 21

Saturday, June 27

Sunday, June 28

Saturday, July 11

Sunday, July 12

Sunday, August 2

Saturday, August 29

Sunday, August 30

Saturday, September 19

Sunday, September 20

Saturday, September 26

Sunday, September 27

Saturday, October 17

Sunday, October 18



## High Acres Nature Area

April 18, 2026

Our morning started off mostly sunny and in the low 50s as 15 people gathered at the southeast parking lot. We had several Ring-billed and one Herring Gull fly over, in addition to Red-winged Blackbirds, Brown-headed Cowbirds, some Turkey Vultures and a Cooper's Hawk, before heading out. It was very quiet at Frog Pond, but we managed to pull out some Black-capped Chickadees, Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Golden-crowned Kinglets at the old picnic table area. There was a lot of water on the Woodland Trail, so we headed directly towards the wetland ponds where there were surprisingly few waterfowl, only Canada Geese and Mallards.

As we entered the causeway, two Wood Ducks were spotted flying low and away over the cattails. Several annoyed Canada Geese on the pond honked at us and a couple of Double-crested Cormorants flew over. We had plenty of Swamp Sparrows serenading us, and an early Yellow Warbler gave us some nice looks while checking us out from a willow. As we continued out towards the Vernal Pools and Western Wetlands, we heard more Swamp Sparrows and a few Song Sparrows. Several people saw a distant Red-tailed Hawk, and a Great Blue Heron flew by. Beyond the Quonset Hut, we climbed to the Overlook trail to avoid the muddy trail by the Quarry Pond. From the



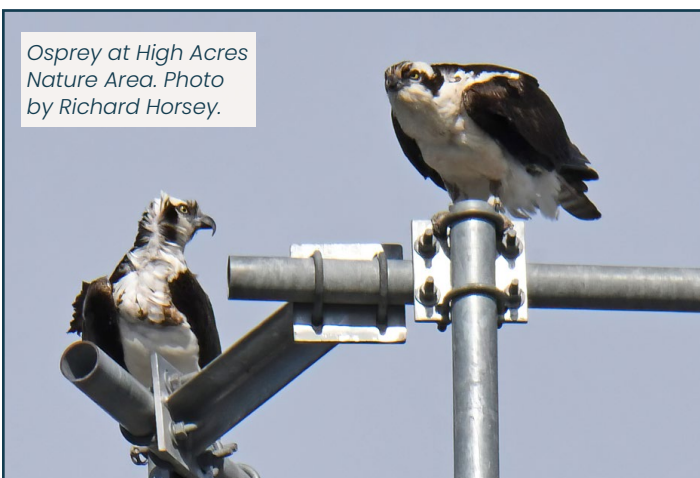
A Northern Yellow Warbler photographed by Richard Horsey at High Acres Nature Area.

hill we could see Tree Swallows darting over the pond. As we moved toward the North Marsh, we got great views of a pair of Osprey nesting on the cell tower. We followed a high Broad-winged Hawk riding the southwest winds. Two Bald Eagles were spotted to the north, and we followed them until they disappeared behind the tree line.

Making our way along the western perimeter, we picked up some Common Grackles, American Goldfinches and a lone Cedar Waxwing. It was quiet through the Western Woodland, and we joked that we had more Garter Snakes than warblers. The birding gods heard our lament and soon after, we found a flock of five Yellow-rumped Warblers and had some fun watching them flit about even knowing that in a few weeks, about every other warbler we see will likely be a butter-butt. As we returned to the parking lot, a Common Raven and Chipping Sparrow were heard.

BirdCast estimated 1.2 million birds passed over Monroe County on the previous night, so we anticipated a lot of bird activity for our field trip. It turned out to be rather quiet compared to previous years – we got 41 species – but it was a beautiful morning for a bird walk with a great group of folks. Thanks to everyone who joined us!

**Brian Rohrs and Gayle Lazoration**



Osprey at High Acres Nature Area. Photo by Richard Horsey.

## Highland Park – A Joint Trip with the Highland Park Conservancy April 22, 2026

We could not have asked for a more beautiful spring day, with temperatures in the high 40s, calm winds, and sunshine. The birds seemed to be pleased as well—we were greeted with much bird song and activity while 32 of us assembled near the Conservatory. Everyone enjoyed watching a busy pair of Northern Flickers tending to their nest, a hole high in a large tree in front of the Conservatory. Dark-eyed Juncos and a Chipping Sparrow sang and browsed in the grass nearby, and a Hermit Thrush sat quietly on a low bush giving everyone excellent views. Further along Reservoir Road, a Killdeer was heard calling, a Pine Siskin was seen by some, and a Pileated Woodpecker and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker showed well. In the Pinetum, a singing male Ruby-crowned Kinglet flitted around a low bush within eight feet of us, amazing many who had never seen one before, much less one that close. White-throated Sparrows, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, a pair of Eastern Phoebes, and Tufted Titmouse were seen and heard near the flagpole area. Along the lilac walk, a pair of Purple Finches were seen mating. We tallied 30 species for the day. Interestingly, the resident Common Ravens were absent. Thanks to all who attended, it was a great group. Thanks, too, to Joanne French, a member of the Highland Park Conservancy, for her help with attendees.

**Jeanne Verhulst and Amy Kahn**



*This photo of a Ruby-crowned Kinglet was taken by Jeanne Verhulst at Highland Park.*

## Braddock Bay Hotspots April 25, 2026

Despite a cold and rainy day, eight birders gathered at Braddock Bay Park to explore the area. Hogan Point Road pond had Green-winged Teal and Wild Turkey. Burger Park had Osprey, Bald Eagle, and a Caspian Tern flying by. Salmon Creek had Bufflehead, Double-crested Cormorant, and Mute Swan among other species. Several birders continued to the parking lot of the East Spit after the end of the trip and lucked into good looks at a breeding plumage Common Loon and a more distant Red-throated Loon. Thanks to everyone who participated!

**Neal Reilly and Bob Crandall**

## Young Birders Trip – Tinker Nature Park April 26, 2026

Three birders gathered at Tinker Park on a bright sunny April morning. We walked a loop past the pond and through the marsh before walking through the woods. A Mourning Dove on a nest in a gazebo allowed good looks. Canada Geese were everywhere including a nest with eggs and a very fluffy group of young goslings. A female Pileated Woodpecker was spotted peeking out of a nest cavity. Red-bellied Woodpecker and Northern Flicker gave good looks. Rusty Blackbirds on the ground in the swampy woods was a nice surprise. Thank you to both of the guest birders who were enthusiastic and eager to learn!

**Neal Reilly**

## Cobb's Hill Park – Washington Grove April 29, 2026

The attendance at this year's field trip was quite a bit lighter than usual, presumably due to the cool and cloudy conditions and the prediction of impending rain. Nevertheless, the eight participants and four leaders carried on and proceeded to find 38 species of birds.

# FIELD TRIPS REPORTS

Our first sighting was an unexpected but very welcome Blackburnian Warbler high in the conifers near the parking area, and we later added Pine, Yellow-rumped, and Black-throated Green Warblers as well. The usual Red-bellied, Downy, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers were noted, as were lots of Northern Flickers. Recent arrivals included Eastern Phoebes, a Great Crested Flycatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, a Brown Creeper, and a single Hermit Thrush.

In the end, the rain held off, and we all managed to have a very enjoyable time.

**Tom and Jeanne Verhulst, Amy Kahn, and Sue Robertson**

## Braddock Bay Hawk Lookout May 2, 2026

Sunny and cool conditions made for a pleasant walk and hawk watch. Since the birding at the hawk platform was initially quiet, the group walked a circuit of Braddock Bay Park. Two Eastern Phoebes were seen with their distinctive tail wagging. A number of sparrows were seen and heard including Song, White-throated, Swamp, and we had good looks at White-crowned near the platform. At the end of the marsh board walk the group had nice looks at several Bufflehead. Raptors seen from the hawk watch platform included Osprey, Bald Eagle, along with Red-tailed, Cooper's, and Sharp-shinned Hawks. Thanks to everyone who participated and thanks to the hawk counter for hosting our group!

**Neal Reilly**

## Taylor Marsh - Joint trip with the Bergen Swamp Preservation Society May 2, 2026

The trip started out quite chilly, with an air temperature of 37°, and a hint of frost on the ground. Temperature-wise, it felt more like a Christmas bird count than a spring bird walk. It never rose above 46° during the 2.5 hour trip.

Fortunately, it was partly sunny, and the wind was moderate. In spite of the cold, and in spite of the fact that there were two other RBA field trips at the same time, we had a decent turnout of 14 participants, including leaders Lynn Braband and Jay Greenberg.

Even with the cold, it was a pretty good day of birding. Taylor Marsh is known for its marsh birds, especially Sandhill Cranes. Sora and Pied-billed Grebe were heard, but we didn't get any visuals on marsh birds except for very common ones like Red-winged Blackbirds and Swamp Sparrows. There was a shortage of migrating warblers, but perhaps the best sighting of the trip was an unusually cooperative Blue-winged Warbler that flitted about for minutes in plain sight at the top of a flowering tree as it searched for bugs to eat. It even posed for photos. We ended up with 38 species, not including a Dark-eyed Junco that was heard by the Merlin app, but disallowed by an eBird referee because it wasn't confirmed by human eyes or ears. The eBird checklist can be viewed at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S331215098>.

**Jay Greenberg and Lynn Braband**



*Blue-winged Warbler  
at Taylor Marsh. Photo  
by Jay Greenberg.*

## Beechwood State Park and Olga Fleisher Wildlife Preserve May 3, 2026

Our annual trip to Beechwood State Park, fondly remembered by two participants as the former Girl Scouts Camp, had sunny skies, but a brisk breeze off Lake Ontario made for temperatures in the high 30s and kept everyone bundled up to start. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak provided brief views and cheerful song from the parking lot. Warblers were few and far between, but Ruby-crowned Kinglets were plentiful. A single Wild Turkey was a nice surprise near the former swimming pool area and a kettle of 10 Broad-winged Hawks were seen overhead. At the lake edge and Maxwell Bay, a group of Red-breasted Mergansers and a Caspian Tern flew past and a large dead tree sported 20 or so Double-crested Cormorants. A few Tree, Bank, and Rough-winged Swallows swooped through the wind. An Eastern Phoebe took up residence under the roof of one of the picnic structures, wisely protected from the wind. Among the stand of Red Pines on our way to the old apple orchard, a Brown Creeper, a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and a Hairy Woodpecker were found. The orchard was quiet, though our third Bald Eagle of the day was seen. The beaver pond had Mute Swans, a Belted Kingfisher, Mallards, Canada Geese, and our only Northern



*A Red-bellied Woodpecker, seen at Beechwood State Park by Jeanne Verhulst.*

Yellow Warbler. We ended the trip with 45 species. It was an excellent group of eight hardy and enthusiastic birders. Thanks to all who came!

*Jim Wood and Jeanne Verhulst*

## Ontario Pathways (Flint Creek Section) May 5, 2026

We really lucked out on our trip to the Ontario Pathways trail at Flint Creek. A warming sun brought temperatures up and birds out. There is such a nice variety of both migrants and nesting birds in this location.

Six of us strolled on this flat, level path with much anticipation. We took our time in this corridor of hardwoods, thickets and flowering trees. The leaves weren't too developed yet, so it was relatively easy to get people on the birds. Also in our favor was the creek level. It was high but not the raging river it was last year. With some gravel edges exposed, we found one of the Spotted Sandpipers that forage around the creek.

Besides the ten warbler species we observed, we had wonderful looks at other birds who had things to crow about. Baltimore Orioles were abundant. There were no fewer than six Rose-breasted Grosbeaks squeaking and doing their grosbeak interacting. A male Scarlet Tanager took our breath away, and let's not forget those little Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers that sometimes just seem to adorn the branches. All are capable of making us smile just by their showing up.

As the day went on, it became increasingly windy. But, our timing was good. We heard many different birds and eventually saw most of them before the wind had any impact. It was such a lovely day birding this 'Phelps Treasure.' We out-scored all of our previous trips with 60 species. Amazing!

*Rosemary Reilly, Doug and Elizabeth Rabjohns*

## Whiting Road Nature Preserve May 6, 2026

As predicted, rain, wind and cold was the morning's theme. Knowing that chances were good that the outing would be canceled, three participants showed up anyway and were ready for the fun. It was the lure of the birds. We all asked ourselves, "why not?" And off we went.

The blue trail was good to us, yielding Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Black-throated Green and Yellow-rumped Warblers. White-throated Sparrows were making their little lisp sounds from under the shrubbery while Song Sparrows belted out a tune from the tops of the shrubs. We then picked up the brown trail.

Heading out into the big field we were greeted by an Eastern Phoebe pumping its tail perched in that first big tree. The rain was a little lighter then but the mown edge of the field was just water-logged. It didn't stop a Brown Thrasher from telling us all about it, though.

To get out of the weather and hopefully find birds, we ducked down onto the green trail and took that to the distant side of the field. It paid off quite nicely with more Gnatcatchers and Yellow-rumps, American Redstart, Black and White, Magnolia and Nashville Warblers. We heard Gray Catbirds in every shrubby cluster. Sometimes those little valleys are my favorite places to bird.

When we emerged from the green trail, as also predicted, the weather moderated nicely and it was actually becoming a decent day. Our small group went on to cover all of the red trail, parts of the orange and black trails, before coming back along the blue trail to the parking area.

What a fun time seeing and hearing birds while defying Mother Nature. Some of those birds were being put on our check lists for the first time this year. Our total count was 56 species.

**Robert Crandall and Rosemary Reilly**

## Manitou Beach Preserve May 9, 2026

I want to thank Jeanne Verhulst, Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash for stepping in last minute to assist on this walk. We had a lovely group of 14 people on a mid 40s F, mostly sunny, calm day. We reversed our usual trip order and started on the West Spit where we had lovely views of a male Cerulean Warbler and a Canada Warbler. The other highlight of the spit was a circling Cooper's Hawk.



*Cerulean Warbler seen at the West Spit. Photograph by Jeanne Verhulst.*

In the very muddy Manitou Beach Preserve, most people had nice looks at a Least Flycatcher, Blue-grey Gnatcatcher and our two common resident warblers - Northern Yellow Warbler and Common Yellowthroat. A few of us got brief views of a singing Marsh Wren.

**Amy Kahn**

## Amy's Pond and Woodsmith – Joint Genesee Land Trust/RBA Trip May 10, 2026

Sixteen people joined for the annual Mother's Day field trip on May 10, 2026, led by RBA and Genesee Land Trust to the private lands of Amanda Smith-Hatch in Ontario. The weather began overcast, but the sun eventually came out; the temps stayed relatively cool in the mid-50's. The walk began at Genesee Land Trust's Deer Creek Woods Nature Preserve where we were greeted by several Baltimore Orioles, Red-winged Blackbirds, and Song Sparrows. As the group continued back towards the private land of Amanda Smith-Hatch and Deer

Creek, we began hearing chatter from Northern Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Brown-headed Cowbird. As we continued west along Deer Creek, a group of Cedar Waxwings flew in along with a Hermit Thrush. At this time, an Osprey flew overhead along with an accipiter. Baltimore Orioles made appearances throughout the trip including one gorgeous bird observed at the top of a flowering cherry tree. Just before crossing the driveway, the group observed several warblers including a Black-throated Blue and Back-and-White, mixed in with lots of Yellow-rumped. Around the ponds we saw three Great Blue Herons, a Belted Kingfisher, Wood Duck, Barn Swallows above the field, and Tree Swallows above the second pond. A Palm Warbler hopped around the edge of the brush opposite the second pond providing good looks. There was a cooperative Ruby-throated Hummingbird that sat on the highest point of a tree for all to see and a Wild Turkey in the nearby field. Some people heard a Wood Thrush and saw a Northern Parula and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks around the turnaround point. A total of 50 species were heard or observed. Thank you to Amanda Smith-Hatch, Keith Hatch, and Bob Smith for their hospitality and stewardship of these beautiful properties.

**Kevin Farrell, Sheryl Gracewski, Tom Nash**

## Oatka Creek Park May 12, 2026

Braving a cold start, 18 intrepid birders came together for a morning trip to this beautiful county park. Although the temperature was about 30 degrees at the start, and there had been a heavy frost, the sky was cloudless, the sun quickly warmed the air, and it turned out to be a wonderful morning. The early cold led to a bit of a slow start with little activity in the east-facing treeline by the lodge where we usually find many warblers and vireos, but Yellow-throated Vireos greeted us early with their persistent singing. The park's trails were

in remarkably good condition considering the amount of rain we've had this spring. As we walked the trail to the north from the lodge, we were treated to a lengthy serenade by a beautiful Wood Thrush that posed nicely for great views. A few American Redstarts were present singing along with a number of Northern Yellow Warblers. There were several Black-throated Blue Warblers in the same area and with persistent searching everyone had good looks. Also nearby were Magnolia, Nashville,



*A Baltimore Oriole and its nest seen on a previous trip to Oatka Creek Park. Photo by Alan Bloom.*

and Black-and-white Warblers as well as a vocal Ovenbird. A large group of Purple Finches foraged in the treetops. One of the highlights of the trip came in the area of the concrete bridge over the creek. For the second year in a row, we watched as a female Baltimore Oriole brought in some long strands of grass to add to her nest overhanging the trail on the south side of the bridge. We also had a pair of Common Mergansers fly by heading upstream. A mixed flock of warblers fed in the Aspens in the open meadow to the south of the bridge and after a bit of searching, everyone was able to observe a nice Blackburnian Warbler. We ended the trip with a flurry, seeing Chimney Swift, Tree and Barn Swallows and a Sharp-shinned Hawk in the last 3 or 4 minutes in the parking lot. By the end of the trip, we had seen or heard 14 species of warblers and had a total of 68 species. Thanks to all who participated.

**Bill Haake, Doug and Elizabeth Rabjohns**

**Sandra L. Frankel Nature Park  
(Brickyard Trail)  
May 15, 2026**

The sun shone brightly, the winds were calm, and the temperature started at 50 degrees F. (and rose to the 60s at the end) as 17 birders gathered in the parking lot of the Temple B'rith Kodesh. As soon as we entered the trail, a Red-bellied Woodpecker was seen at its nest hole, a Gray Catbird sang, and the first of 12 warblers were seen or heard—a Chestnut-sided and a Nashville. A few yards further on, a Least Flycatcher was spotted and a Swainson's Thrush gave great views while hopping across the trail; we were off to a good start. A Northern Parula was glimpsed by some, but an American Redstart gave fairly good views. The first of five Common Yellowthroats were seen. Northern Yellow Warblers were heard frequently, but gave only glimpses; a Black-and-white

Warbler, a Canada Warbler and an Ovenbird were heard only.

Out in the marsh area, Swamp and Song Sparrows, Red-winged Blackbirds, American Goldfinches, and Common Grackles were fairly numerous. Chimney Swifts, a Barn Swallow and a Northern Rough-winged Swallow were seen. We heard at least four Marsh Wrens, but, alas, the Least Bittern, seen on Wednesday, did not show. A Belted Kingfisher was seen by most before flying off, but a perched Green Heron gave great views—a life bird for some participants. While concentrating on the Green Heron, a Wood Thrush was singing ahead of us, but unfortunately, became quiet as we got to that area. A Baltimore Oriole could be heard, but only provided a quick flyover view. Another Northern Parula and Nashville Warbler were able to be seen, though at some distance. At the south end (Westfall Road) the usual feeder



*This Least Bittern was photographed three days earlier by Ann McMican.*

# FIELD TRIP REPORTS

birds were seen: Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, House Sparrows, and European Starlings.

On our return walk, an Osprey, three Red-tailed Hawks, and Turkey Vultures were seen overhead. A Great Blue Heron had appeared in the large pond giving close views. Back in the wooded section, a Chestnut-sided and a Yellow-rumped Warbler were seen and a Veery gave fleeting looks for some. A Blue-headed Vireo, a couple of Cedar Waxwings, an Eastern Phoebe, and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet were seen well. The trip ended with 60 species. Thanks to all who came, it was a great group and a fun trip.

**Jeanne and Tom Verhulst**



Great Blue Heron seen on the Brickyard Trail trip by Jeanne Verhulst.

## Rush Riverside Refuge/White Springs Farm May 16, 2026

On a gorgeous day, 24 birders experienced the varied habitats that comprise the Rush Riverside Refuge. The group started at the White Springs Farm on River Road and made it all the way to the 100 Acre Park (bordering Rte 251) and back. Seventy-four bird species were encountered along the way. Exceptional experiences included close encounters with a show-off Common Yellowthroat, four species of swallows including Barn, Tree, Northern Rough-winged and Bank, Bald Eagles, and the resident Red-tailed Hawk. At one point, Rose-Breasted Grosbeak, Scarlet Tanager and American Robin were all singing together as a choir in the woods! However, even with all that, the standout birds of the day were the numerous Baltimore Orioles and up to four Orchard Orioles playing in trees near the Virginia Bluebells. Special thanks to Nick Kachala and Susan Robertson for co-leading and sharing their expertise with the group. Kudos also to several additional RBA members on the trip including Bill Haake and his scope, and Niki Banke for bringing cookies!

**Ann McMican**

## WELCOME TO THE FLOCK

**Please welcome our new members:**

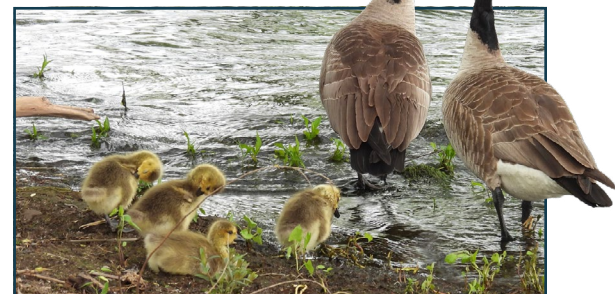
David Alkins	Kathleen Finch
John Bradley & Jennifer Bradley	Joshua Franke
Brian Chin & Rebekah Matos	Kenneth & Lisa Kennedy
Sarah Compter	Megan Murante
Sarah Dyer	John Paalvast

John Peltier
Susan Riblett
Alan Szydlowski & Cathy Miller
Lois Zebelman

**As of May 15th, members in good standing: 334**

Individual Members: 224  
Family Members: 89  
Supporters: 17  
Sponsors: 3  
Corporate Sponsors: 1  
Additional Complimentary Memberships: 37

*Doug Rabjohns, RBA Membership Data*



Canada Geese at Braddock Bay, West Spit.  
Photo by Eunice Thein.



# Birds and Brews

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

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Sager Beer Works & Stoneyard  
Brewing Company  
46 Sager Drive, Rochester

The only place in Rochester to enjoy two breweries under one roof!

The food menu features artisan pizzas, wings, and a variety of bar snacks.

Weather permitting, we'll conclude the evening at sunset to observe a nearby chimney where Chimney Swifts roosted last year.

Let's hope they join us again in 2026!

<https://sagerbeerworks.com/>



Chimney Swift  
photo by  
Nic Minetor

RBA Members save big at The Bird House! Cut out this coupon or show on your phone to save.

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**the Bird House**  
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Prior Sales excluded. May not be combined with any other offer, 4+1 seed sale, 6+1 seed log special or gift certificates.

Expires June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026



# AN EXCITING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!

*Help us create the 2028 NYSOA Annual Conference in Rochester*

For three days in October 2028, RBA will extend our hospitality to members of the New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA). This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase Rochester's best birding experiences for people from all over New York.

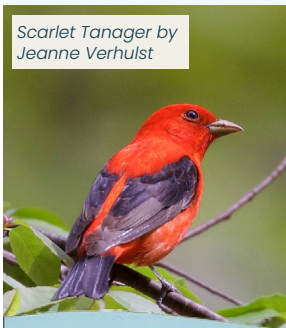
To put this together, we need your help! Randi Minetor is chairing the event, and we're building a committee that can help with these aspects of the weekend:



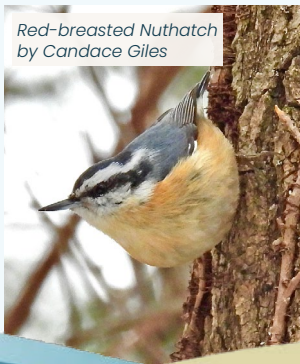
## STEERING COMMITTEE

Finalize the dates, select a venue, and book a terrific keynote speaker for Saturday evening (and possibly an additional speaker for Friday evening). *This small committee must finish its work in 2026.*

Scarlet Tanager by Jeanne Verhulst



Red-breasted Nuthatch by Candace Giles



Black-throated Green Warbler by Richard Horsey



Blue Jay at Hamlin Beach by Alan Bloom



## IN 2027, WE'LL NEED PEOPLE TO CHAIR THESE ACTIVITIES:

-  Publicity
-  Conference Center Liaison
-  Paper Session Planning and Recruitment
-  Registration Management
-  Workshops
-  Field Trips
-  Treasurer
-  Audio-Visual Coordination
-  Vendors and Exhibits
-  Fundraising
-  Event Souvenir
-  Signage
-  Welcome Packet planning and assembly



## CAN YOU HELP?

Get in on the ground floor of an exciting, once-in-a-decade event—and be part of creating that excitement!

*To volunteer, contact:*

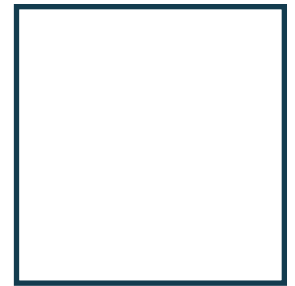
**RANDI MINETOR**  
[writerrandi@gmail.com](mailto:writerrandi@gmail.com)





# Rochester Birding Association

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Rochester, NY 14692-9998



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## Address Service Requested

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<b>Director</b>	Neal Reilly	neal.f.reilly@gmail.com

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