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www.rocklandaudubon.org

**Rockland Audubon Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 404, New City, NY 10956-0404
845.639.9216**

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Rockland Audubon Society Meeting and Potluck

Date and Time: Friday, May 6, 2011, 6:00-7:30 PM (Member Recognition Awards and Gulf of Mexico Restoration film to follow)

Location: Congers Community Center at Congers Lake Memorial Park, 6 Gilcrest Rd., Congers, NY 10920.

See www.rocklandaudubon.org for directions.

Pre-register to attend the dinner. Call Hospitality Chairperson, Julia Warger at home, 845.947.4453 in the evenings with your name, phone number, and what you are bringing (i.e., main dish, salad/side dish, or dessert). Remember to bring your own plate and silverware. Coffee, tea, and cold drinks will be provided, as well as cups to use.

Rockland Audubon Society Birdathon

Date and Time: Friday, May 13 (evening) through Saturday, May 14 (evening)

It's almost that time again—for Rockland Audubon Society's annual Birdathon event and fundraiser. You might already know about our Birdathon, but if not, here are some details!

Birdathon participants form teams that scour the corners of Rockland County for as many bird species as they can find. The goal is simple: see and/or hear more species than any of the other team. Afterwards, participants join together on Saturday evening for the traditional Birdathon dinner and countdown.

Team members and sponsors can make a set pledge, or a pledge for each species seen within the 24-hour period. After the Birdathon, contributors receive a letter with the list of species seen—and the final tallies of “per species” pledges.

These donations will help fund RAS activities, such as our monthly programs. Two examples are Evan Pritchard’s recent presentation on the importance of birds in Native American spirituality and Trudy Battaly and Drew Panko’s program on the Northern Saw-whet Owl.

Donations also pay for environmental projects, such as RAS’s rain garden at the Piermont Library and the Rockland Audubon bluebird nesting box project. [Click here to download a donation form](#) (use donate button is at lower left of RAS home page.)

To join a Birdathon team, or to create a team of your own, please call 845.351.2893 to register.

Owls of Rockland County

By Alan Wells, RAS Webmaster



(c) Alan W. Wells

Probably more than any other bird, owls are endowed with an aura of mystery, intrigue, legend, and myth. Throw in a few tall tales, an old wives tale, and a Hollywood movie or two and you have a group of intensely fascinating creatures. Their popularity was clearly demonstrated by our recent program on Saw-whet Owls by Trudy Battaly and Drew Panko, and the Stony Point Battlefield Owl Prowl. During the Owl Prowl, over 60 people braved snow, ice and freezing temperatures to stand around in the dark for the chance to see an owl. Luckily the owls cooperated, or I suppose, we could have easily had an angry mob on our hands! So how much do you really know about owls? Here is a brief overview of the eight species known to occur in Rockland County.

Barn Owl – A locally rare owl, probably extirpated from Rockland by 1976. We recently had a tantalizing report of a possible sighting from the Pomona area, but the identity could not be confirmed (*See Jan 22 entry in Notes & Sightings*). The disappearance of this species locally is probably the result of the loss of open

grasslands, meadows, and agricultural fields.

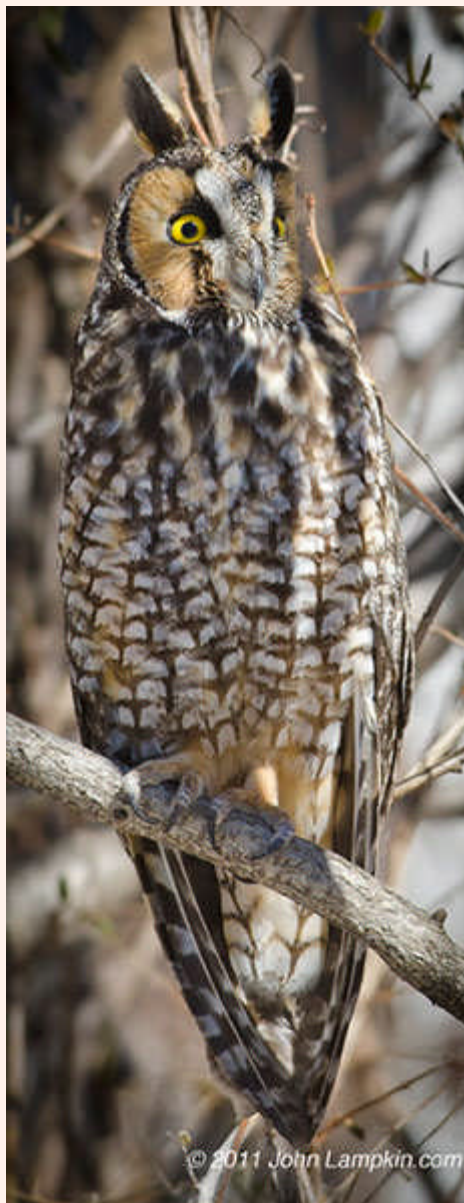
Eastern Screech Owl – Our most common owl is undoubtedly the Eastern Screech Owl. Pete Dunne, of the Cape May Bird Observatory, refers to this little bird as the “The Owl Next Door”. More than any other owl, it has adapted to tree-lined suburban streets and neighborhoods. During daylight hours it is usually well hidden, but if you look very closely you may see it sitting in a cavity of a tree. Its gray or reddish brown coloration blends perfectly into the bark and foliage. The best indicator of their presences in your neighborhood is their eerie nighttime whinny (a territorial call) or a long quiet trill. While calls are most often heard during April through September, they can be heard throughout the year. In Rockland County nesting generally occurs during April and young are fledged through July. Nest sites are tree cavities, but they also adapted well to artificial nest boxes, including Wood Duck and American Kestrel boxes.

Great Horned Owl – The Great Horned Owl is a large nocturnal predator of the woodlands. Ecologically, it is the nocturnal equivalent of the Red-tailed Hawk. While relatively common in Rockland, it is unlikely to be seen during daylight when it hides in tree tops and dark crevices. But at night, its stereotypical *who-who-who* call may be heard over considerable distances. While calls may be heard throughout the year, they are most frequently heard during the winter courtship period when pairs may participate in call-response duets. Nesting usually begins in February and the young hatch by March or April. Fledging occurs in April or May. Great Horned Owls are powerful predators, preying on small mammals such as squirrels, raccoons, opossums, rabbits, skunks (a favorite, phewww!), and even an occasional housecat (another reason to keep your cat indoors!)

Snowy Owl – A very rare winter visitor to Rockland County. The last documented occurrence is the “famous” Snowy Owl that took up residence at Piermont Pier in January through early April of 2007. It could often be seen sitting on the remnants of the old barge or on top of a telephone pole. These white northern owls sometimes stray south when their normal food source populations are low. During its approximately 3-month long stay at Piermont, it feasted on the abundant overwintering ducks and coots.

Barred Owl – The “Who Cooks for You” bird is an uncommon resident of the county. It prefers old growth deciduous or mixed deciduous-coniferous forests, particularly near water. This large owl is a nocturnal counterpart of the Red-shouldered Hawk and like the hawk, it is disappearing locally as a result of loss of appropriate habitat. While primarily nocturnal, its distinctive “*Who Cooks for You*” call may sometimes be heard during the day. Nesting begins around April with young fledging by about July.

Long-eared Owl – According to the naturalist Edgar A. Mearns, this owl was an abundant local resident and breeder in the late 1800s. Now, it is an extremely rare winter visitor. The recent occurrence of up to four of these birds at Piermont Pier had Rockland birders excited for nearly a month. (If you didn’t hear about it, you need to check the RAS website more often!). Check out the fabulous photograph below taken by RAS member John Lampkin.



Short-eared Owl – The Short-eared Owl is a medium sized predator of the grasslands and other open spaces. Easily recognized at a distance by its moth-like flight, it can be seen in the daytime or dusk/dawn as it hunts just over the vegetation tops for small mammals and birds. It typically perches on the ground. It is rare in Rockland County and listed as an Endangered species by New York State. Populations have been declining as grasslands disappear across the state. The Short-eared Owl is primarily a northern species, but it moves south during the winter. We see this species in fall and spring during migration and during the winter when a few individuals take up residence. You can sometimes see them at Piermont Marsh or the Haverstraw Landfill. The best place to observe them, however, is at the Shawangunk Grasslands NWR (Galeville) or the Walkkill River NWR (Oil City Road). RAS leads field winter trips to both of these locations.

Saw-whet Owl – As noted by Pete Dunne, this is the “You just want to put it in your shirt pocket and take it home with you” owl. If one looks deeply into the boughs of small evergreens during the colder months of the year, you might be surprised to see a pair of huge yellow eyes peering back at you. As your eyes adjust, you may notice that those gigantic eyes actually belong to the diminutive Saw-whet Owl. You really DO want to reach out, grab it, and put it in your pocket! (Although the fact that it is probably holding a dead mouse in its talons is just another reason to resist this impulse.) This owl is another northern forest species that overwinters in more southerly areas such as New York. It is rarely seen in Rockland County, but it may be in part a result of its secretive habits.

Check our website, www.rocklandaudubon.org, for field trips targeted to see owls!

IMPORTANT! – If you are lucky enough to find any owl, please respect its privacy. Do not approach it closely or harass it in any way. Do not advertise its presences. Undue disturbance may cause it to flush. This is especially harmful during the winter when energy reserves are low. Flushing may also expose the owl to predators and mobbing from other birds.

Buying Wild Bird Food

By Philip Yacuk, RAS Member

If you are like me, you spend a fortune on wild bird food, constantly looking for the best price and quality. So I thought RAS members might be interested in comparing notes about prices and local sources for the best deals.

Of course, the best way to save is to buy in bulk and avoid small sizes, which by the pound are much more expensive.

Here's my shopping list: 50 pound bags of black oil sunflower seed; cracked corn; thistle; safflower seed; a mixed blend of millet, corn, safflower, and black oil sunflower seed; and suet. I use tube feeders for the sunflower and thistle seeds. The blend is broadcast on the ground for birds that don't like to eat on the perch, and for the squirrels and chipmunks.

When I travel to Orange County, where I find some of the best deals, I buy in volume to make the trip worthwhile.

If you have a good source to recommend please let me know. And if you are interested in buying cooperatively, also let me know and I will investigate available options. We may be able to save and raise some money for RAS programs at the same time!

You can e-mail me, Philip Yacuk at philvacu@optimum.net or call me at 845.639.9302.

Of course prices fluctuate, but here are some current prices and sources:

Type of Food	Source	Price + tax	Price per lb
Black Oil Sunflower	BJ'S - 40 LBS	\$18.00	\$.45
	Red Barn, Middletown NY – 50 Lbs 845.343.1009	\$18.00	\$.36
Cracked corn	Red Barn – 50 Lbs	\$9.50	\$.19
	Rowe Farm, Maybrook, NY – 50 lbs 845.427.2254 Grow their own	\$7.50	\$.15
Thistle	Red Barn - 50 lbs	\$39.00 usually Range \$30 -\$60	\$.78
Safflower	Gourmet Pet Supply, Tappan, NY – 50 Lbs 845.680.6868	\$30.00	\$.60
Mixed Blend – black oil, cracked corn, white millet, safflower	BJ'S – 40 Lbs.	\$16.00	\$.40
Suet	Christmas Tree Shop, Spring Valley Marketplace	\$.89 per cake 11oz	

Springtime Means Questions About Birds

By Caroline McDonald, RAS Board of Directors

Longer days mean more light—a signal for birds that food sources are changing and nesting season is arriving. It also means that Rockland Audubon Society will get more calls and inquiries about fledgling birds and what can appear to be strange bird behavior. People wanting to help birds in distress sometimes don't know where to turn. If you find an injured bird, call the Wildlife Hotline, 866-945-3331, and they will put you in contact with the nearest Rehabilitator. This number is also posted on our website, www.rocklandaudubon.org. **Remember that permits are required to legally handle or keep wild birds.**

- At the top of our list of phone inquiries are questions about chicks that seem to have fallen from their nest. Obviously these little guys are vulnerable and time is of the essence.

As a rule, it's a good idea not to interfere with any nests or chicks—all birds are protected by state and federal laws. Picking up a bird is illegal, even if intentions are good. If a chick is in imminent danger, such as being stalked by a nearby cat, however, shoo the cat away and try to shuffle the chick to nearby protective shrubbery. And remember, the parents as a rule are nearby. If in doubt, call the Wildlife hotline.

- Birds flying at their reflection, thinking it's another bird.

The best way to solve this is to cut down the reflection on the outside of the window. Try pulling the blinds, putting strips of paper on the outer glass or attaching non-sticky decals to the outside, such as a large fake spider web, to reduce reflection. This activity should cease around the middle of May at the latest.

- Another question we get is about birds dive-bombing pets or even people in certain areas.

This usually happens when a bird's nest is nearby. Once the birds in the nest have hatched and fledged, however, this will no longer be an issue. Using a different entrance to the home or yard, keeping pets away and avoiding the area for a time is generally all that is needed.

- Later in the summer we get calls about hawks that seem disoriented.

Because hawks tend to be territorial, juvenile hawks may not yet have a hunting ground and can sometimes starve. Rehabilitators can revive these hungry, dehydrated birds and give them a second chance.

- We occasionally get calls about woodpeckers pecking homes and decks.

This is generally one of two things: The male woodpecker could be making a loud "drumming" sound to attract a mate and announce his territory. It also may mean the woodpecker has located insects in wood siding or decking. If insects aren't the problem, our most recent recommendation is to discourage woodpeckers by covering the area with shiny, reflective tape.

For more information about birds, visit www.audubon.org or www.rocklandaudubon.org. Our RAS website has a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section, as well as the RAS program and field trip guide.

President's Message

If you read the last issue of *The Observer*, you learned about the Audubon Council of New York State, comprised of a board of directors and the 27 Audubon chapters throughout New York. The chapters meet twice yearly to discuss issues of concern and to learn from each other. Rockland Audubon participated in the latest council meeting, March 25-27. I always learn something new at these meetings, or I'm reminded of something I haven't thought of in a while.

Here are a few of those things, which I wanted to share with you:

- Overgrazing by deer, new housing developments, feral cat colonies, oh my! Did you know that Audubon has an Action Network that can alert you to pressing conservation issues, even at our local and regional levels? You can sign up to receive these alerts and find out when and how to contact your local, state, and national representatives, and encouraging them to support legislation in the best interest of the environment. Go to <http://ny.audubonaction.org> to find out more about the program and to sign up for e-mail alerts.
- Did you know that in addition to Project FeederWatch, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology runs a program called Project PigeonWatch? You may be saying to yourself "why would I want to watch pigeons?" Even if you are not interested in watching pigeons, schools in metropolitan areas are taking advantage of the program to teach children about nature study and citizen science. Learn more about the program at <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pigeonwatch/>.
- Thump! Oh no! A bird hit my window! What do I do? Did you know that New York City Audubon has a program called Project Safe Flight, which studies ways to prevent bird collisions? Currently, they are working on developing a type of glass that can be seen by birds. To find out more about their efforts, go to <http://www.nycaudubon.org/projects/safeflight/>.
- Did you know that the United Nations General Assembly declared 2011 the International Year of Forests? They did so to "raise awareness on sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests." Events are taking place throughout the world to promote this mission. Learn more at <http://www.un.org/en/events/iyof2011/index.shtml>.
- Our own New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has been working toward this goal in its own way through its "Trees for Tribs" program. As many of us have probably noticed, riparian habitat, habitat along rivers and streams, has been dramatically altered. Trees and shrubs of natural riparian habitat can help prevent erosion and flooding, as well as play roles in the wonderfully interesting riparian ecosystems that we have almost lost here in Rockland.
- Qualifying schools in the Hudson River Estuary can receive mixed tree seedlings and shrubs for planting along rivers and streams. Parts of Rockland are in the qualifying area. Your local schools might be interested in this program. If so, please pass along the NYSDEC website address: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/43668.html#Overview>.

I was glad to be reminded, or to find out about these programs, and hope that you and your family or friends might find them interesting, too.

Yours truly,
Elyse Fuller, RAS President

Welcome New and Returning Members!

Barbara Abramsky, Vera K Aronow, Sheila Asch, Frank Bassett, Brian K Beal, Sam Berg, Debra Birkeland-Kagan, Pierce Bonneau, Jeffrey H & Susan M Brown, Margaret Bryant, Julie A Buffington, Miguel Castillo, Mary Ceccolini, Israel Cohen, Beverly B Colgan, Polly Condit, Holly P Coery, Robert E Cordock, Jennifer L. Curran, Joan Daub, Dorothy S Davis, Shelley L DeClemente, Charlotte Dervish, Frank Fernandez, Lillian S Grossbard, Barbara J Heaney, Mary Hobesil, Alice Hochbaum, Coleen Holbrook, Harry Kagan, Edward Kopf, Joy Macy, Eileen T McCabe, Kay McIntyre, Rae Merkley, George Michaelson, Abby Mor, Ellen Nowell, Dennis O'Neill, Dr Richard A Petix, R Pistolesi, Richard Reidy, Merryl Rothman, Erik Simon, Mary B Spalding, Edmund Spoleti, Thomas Steele, Sheila Stoller, Maxine Titus, Elisabeth Voigt, Ken Voorhis, William Weaver, John D Wilson, Daniel Wolff, Fay Ziegler, Marianne Zimberg

Notes & Sightings: December 2010 - February 2011

Compiled by Carol Weiss, RAS Field Trip Leader and CBC Coordinator

We Rockland birders will long remember this winter season—snowstorms, northern visitors, eagles and owls. Birding was a challenge from Christmas until President's Day, but for those who could get out there, some exciting birds were around. And there were good sightings at feeders throughout the county too. Here is a sampling:

Dec 2: Seven Bald Eagles at the Lake Tappan reservoir, about 3 p.m. Rosemarie Widmer

Dec 3: The drake Eurasian Wigeon was still at Rockland Lake, with Gadwall and American Wigeon. Carol Weiss

Dec 5: Saw a dozen Bald Eagles Lake Tappan. What a comeback these birds have made. Peter Johnson

Dec 14: At 7:30 a.m., I was quite surprised to see a Sharp-shinned Hawk sitting on top of the pole above the suet feeder. On the ground were a couple of Northern Cardinals and Dark-eyed Juncos. Needless to say, they fled into the evergreen bush with the hawk in hot pursuit. One cardinal flew out and went under my deck with the hawk after it. Since they were now out of sight, I don't know the outcome. Bob Burton (Tallman)

Dec 23: A Purple Sandpiper had been found at Piermont Pier on the Christmas Bird Count, Dec. 19. This morning, Veronika Krause relocated the sandpiper on the dock at the very end of the Pier.

Dec 26: During the blizzard, a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker found a suet feeder and stayed there for a couple of hours. On Dec. 29, a Red-breasted Nuthatch landed in the large cedar tree in my front yard. I believe he had just visited one of the sunflower feeders. Carol Weiss (Nyack)

Dec 29: Around 2 p.m. spotted three Redhead Ducks at Rockland Lake, on the East-Northeast side in the open water. Eight Great Blue Herons were sunning themselves on the North side. Veronika Krause

Dec 30: On Thursday I had a mated pair of Bald Eagles at Lake Tappan. They were standing side by side and the smaller male was finishing off a Canada Goose. Very cool! There had been 100s of geese in the open water at the north end as I went by on my way to Piermont Pier; on the way home they were all gone. Rosemarie Widmer

Jan 1: Outside my kitchen window, a Pileated Woodpecker close enough I didn't need my binoculars. What a way to start the year! Bonnie Koop (Garnerville)

Jan 1: The New Year started off right with one lonely Pine Siskin mixed in with a few goldfinches feeding in our backyard in Tuxedo. Tom and Elyse Fuller

Jan 4: At Rockland Lake, two American Tree Sparrows on the lawn, between parking lot #1 and the Nature Center. In the lot were 8-10 Snow Buntings, flitting from snow mound to snow mound. And in the open water at the southwest end was one Lesser Scaup with several other duck species and a host of swans. Carol Weiss

Jan 5: A single American Pipit near the end of Piermont Pier. Carol Weiss

Jan 9: Around 6:20 p.m., my grandparents and I went to Tackamack Park and located two Eastern Screech Owls. One owl dropped in close enough for us to get a light on it; it was a red phase. It put on a nice show of calls and flew around a bit. The other owl was calling in the distance. Chris Healy

Jan 17: During the Waterfowl Count, a distant White-winged Scoter was seen from Haverstraw Bay County Park. Jim Previdi

Jan 16: A surprise at our feeder this morning. Among the finches and other usual suspects was a lone female

White-winged Crossbill. Alan Wells (Tomkins Cove)



Jan 18: One Common Redpoll visited our feeders in Tuxedo among several goldfinches. Tom and Elyse Fuller

Jan 22: My daughters (Ariel and Rebecca Fuhs) and I observed what appeared to be a Barn Owl between 10:00-11:00 a.m., perched on a tree branch, high in the woods behind our home in Pomona. It appeared to be sunning itself until a Blue Jay began antagonizing and eventually attacked it, at which point the bird flew off, relatively slowly. We observed with binoculars yellowish-buff and gray markings, a rounded head, larger and less sleek than a hawk, and a turned down beak. About 18 inches in height while resting and had a very large wingspan. Paula Simmonds

Jan 23: In Haverstraw looking for Bald Eagles, along the water just past Haverstraw Marina, I saw a Bald Eagle in a tree—an amazing sight. I left the car and got as close as I could without disturbing it. The sight of the Bald Eagle was breath-taking. This beautiful creature right in front of me brought tears to my eyes. Never did I think I would see a Bald Eagle in the wild, let alone get a picture of one. Jane Murphy

Jan 29: Three Pine Siskins at my feeder this morning along with a Red-breasted Nuthatch, a White-breasted Nuthatch, two Downy Woodpeckers, three Chickadees, a Tufted Titmouse, 10 Blue Jays, two Cardinals, four House Sparrows, three White-throated Sparrows, five Juncos, and a herd of three squirrels! Chris Healy (Pearl River)

Feb 6: 60-80 American Robins near the bridge at Kakiat Park. Too icy for us to go any farther. RAS field trip

Feb 8: Marsha Meyer watched a Sharp-shinned Hawk outside her window at Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory. One of her colleagues took some fantastic photos.

Feb 11: I left home about 8:30 a.m. hoping to find a good bird or two. I wasn't disappointed. At my second stop, Piermont Pier, I found a few Redhead ducks as I scanned the waters on the south side of the end of the pier. Also there were the Canvasbacks and Ruddy Ducks that have been there for a while, as well as a few distant Bufflehead. I found the Redheads when I decided to count the scaup. I saw a male & female clearly. A few others were in with the scaup and ruddies. Carol Weiss

Feb 13: White-winged Scoter well north of Piermont Pier, but seen well through scopes as the day was bright and crisp. RAS field trip

Feb 16: Drew Ciganek reported seeing two Short-eared Owls in the Tallman Marsh.

Feb 17: Lunchtime at Piermont Pier, I saw a solitary dark speck with my naked eye, that looked uniformly dark through my 8x binoculars. It appeared large and when it briefly pumped its wings I could see white wing patches on black wings, though the bird was otherwise dark. The wing patches were not visible when the bird was at rest. Flipping through Peterson's makes me think it was a White-winged Scoter. Can you think of anything else it could be? Linda Pistolesi

Feb 18: At Piermont Pier, I spotted a Northern Harrier perched in the small tree near the "pond" across the ball field. As I watched it, another flew low behind it over the marsh. In a minute or two the perched bird took off and I watched it hunt a while before disappearing from view. Both appeared to be females. Linda Pistolesi

Feb 19 and 20: A Swamp Sparrow has been feeding on cracked corn in our Tuxedo backyard for two days. This is the first time we've seen a Swamp Sparrow in our yard, and it arrived just in time for the Great Backyard Bird Count! Elyse and Tom Fuller

Feb 20: I received a phone call from my buddy Mike Dolan that he had located 2 Long-eared Owls along the road on the Piermont Pier. I met Mike and his sister Peggy and friend Chuck Purcell at the pier and for 2-and-a-half glorious hours observed these wonderful owls. What made this interesting was that they were sitting at eye level and afforded great views in the spotting scope. The pier, which is quite busy with much walking traffic on a Sunday, was fun as at least 60 people stopped and viewed these beauties in my scope. It was especially neat for the kids! Most of these folks had never seen an owl before. Mike had found them on Feb. 18 at 3:00 p.m., so we know they have been here for at least three days. Scott Baldinger (See *photo above by John Lampkin.*)

Feb 21-22: The two long-eared owls were seen by several RAS birders. On Wednesday, the 24th, there were four owls sitting close together and on Monday, the 28th, three. This is an unusual find for Rockland County.

Feb 27: Saw three of the Long-eared Owls at Piermont Pier and showed them, with my binoculars, to a friend who came along, (not a birder). She was so excited, she said she returned the next day with her own binoculars to look at them again. Caroline McDonald

Feb 21: At 10 a.m. I saw a Common Redpoll at my bird feeder! It was a lone male feeding on the ground among Juncos and White-throated Sparrows. It also went to the suet feeder a few times. I have never seen a Common Redpoll before and it was truly an unexpected treat! Kevin Quill (Nanuet)

Feb 28: Tom and Elda Dow discovered three American pipits on the ball field at Piermont Pier, near first base.

Feb 28: After doing a count of birds and plants at South Mountain Park, Caroline McDonald and Jim Previdi spotted a pair of Ravens building a nest in the cliffs on the face of the mountain.

Upcoming Programs

RAS Volunteer Recognition and Gulf of Mexico Restoration Film

Hosted by RAS Board of Directors

Date and Time: Friday, May 6, 2011, 7:30 PM (following annual RAS Members Meeting and Potluck--see announcement above for details)

Location: Congers Community Center at Congers Lake Memorial Park, 6 Gilcrest Rd., Congers, NY 10920.

See www.rocklandaudubon.org for directions.

About the Program: After a special recognition ceremony for RAS's volunteers, join us for a viewing of an Audubon-produced short film on the Gulf oil crisis. The Gulf oil spill in April 2010 was an unprecedented

catastrophe for people and nature in the region. National Audubon mobilized quickly to help rescue and protect birds and wildlife as soon as the toxic slick began spreading toward vulnerable wildlife and habitats. Audubon continues to work to support sound public policy and to meet the long-term challenge of restoring a devastated Gulf of Mexico ecosystem. Learn more about the spill and its impact on the region through a short film presentation and follow-up discussion.

The Erie Odyssey

Speakers: Alan and Della Wells

Date and Time: Friday, June 3, 2011, 7 PM for refreshments, program starts at 7:30 PM

Location: Historical Society of Rockland, 20 Zukor Rd., New City, NY 10956. See www.rocklandaudubon.org for directions.

About the Program: Join RAS members Alan and Della Wells in a photographic journey as they circumnavigate Lake Erie in a search for arriving Neotropical Migrants. Each spring millions of warblers, thrushes, vireos, and their relatives migrate northward across Lake Erie. We'll stop at number of the world famous birding sites surrounding the Lake: Presque Isle, Magee Marsh, Ottawa NWR, Point Pelee, Roundeau, and Long Point to look for these jewels.

Upcoming Field Trips

Note: Please call the trip leader 24 hours in advance if you plan to join the group at the field trip site, rather than at the designated meeting place.

Check www.rocklandaudubon.org for updates!

May 1 (Sun)—First Sunday Walk at Kakiat Park Meet Carol Weiss at 8am at the parking lot off Rte. 202 opposite Viola School. We'll stroll through the meadows and woods looking for warblers, flycatchers, buntings, and sparrows. Over by 10am. 845-358-3659

May 2 (Mon)- A Weekday Walk at Doodletown Meet Elyse Fuller at 9am at the pull-off on Rte. 9W just north of the Iona Island causeway, south of Bear Mountain. Look for spring migrants. Some uphill walking. Over by 11am. 845-351-2893

May 13 (Fri evening) to MAY 14 (Sat evening)—BIG BIRD DAY fundraiser—see announcement above for details.

May 23 (Mon)- A Weekday Walk at Kakiat Park Meet Elyse Fuller at 9am at the parking lot off Rte. 202 opposite Viola School. Over by 10am. 845-351-2893

Jun 1 (Wed)—Evening Walk at Piermont Pier Meet Carol Weiss at 6pm at the ball field parking lot at the Piermont Pier entrance. Over by 8pm. 845-358-3659

Jun 4 (Sat)—Dragons and Damsels of Rockland County Meet Alan and Della Wells at 9am at the Park-and-Ride Lot, Rte. 9W in Stony Point (just south of Hogan's Diner) for carpooling. Learn to identify common dragonflies and damselflies at Lily Pond in Harriman State Park (a short drive followed by a short hike). Bring water, snack, binoculars (preferably close focus), and camera to capture these photogenic subjects. If rain or overcast weather is forecasted, please call to confirm. 845-942-5751

Jun 5 (Sun)—First Sunday Walk at Kakiat Park Meet Veronika Krause at 8am at the parking lot off Rt. 202 opposite Viola School. Over by 10am. 845-359-9294

Jun 10 (Fri)—Canoeing at Constitution Marsh Reservations required. Meet Elyse Fuller at 4:30 pm at the pull-off on Rte. 9W just north of the Iona Island causeway, south of Bear Mountain for carpooling. Enjoy a guided canoe trip of Constitution Marsh Sanctuary with one of the Constitution Marsh Audubon Center's expert biologists. Canoes, PFDs, and paddles will be provided. Over by dusk. \$20 per person paid in advance. Limit of 17 people. **Rain Date Jun 24 (Fri).** Make your reservation by calling 845-351-2893.

Jun 12 (Sun)—Doodletown for Beginners Meet Della and Alan Wells at 8am at the pull-off on Rte. 9W, just north of the Iona Island causeway, south of Bear Mountain. Practice bird ID and binocular use. Some uphill walking. 845-942-5751

Jun 15 (Wed)—Evening Bluebird Walk at Kennedy Dells Meet Tom Fuller at 6pm at the gravel lot near the trails and ball fields. Wear long pants as there may be an opportunity to look inside nest boxes. Over by 8pm. 845-351-2893

Jun 19 (Sun)—Galeville Airport During Nesting Season Meet Della & Alan Wells at 7am at the Park and Ride Lot on Rte. 9W in Stony Point (just south of Hogan's Diner). The abandoned airport, now administered as the Shawangunk Grasslands National Wildlife Refuge, is a hotspot for grassland birds. 845-942-5751

Jun 22 (Wed)—Solstice Hike at Sterling Forest Meet Tom Fuller at 6pm at the cul-de-sac at the end of Ironwood Drive in Tuxedo. Celebrate the longest day of the year with a brisk, 4-mile hike to Sterling Lake on a mostly level woods road. Bring water. Biting insects are possible. Over by dark. 845-351-2893

Jun 29 (Wed)—Evening Botanical Walk at Kennedy Dells County Park Meet Jim Previdi at 6:30pm in the North Main Street parking lot for a nature walk, with emphasis on trees and shrubs. Over around dark. 914-656-2509

Jul 3 (Sun)—First Sunday Walk at Kakiat Park Meet Carol Weiss at 8am at the parking lot off Rte. 202 opposite Viola School. We'll stroll through the meadows and woods looking for summer birds. Over by 10am. 845-358-3659

Aug 7 (Sun)—First Sunday Walk at Kakiat Park Meet Veronika Krause at 8am at the parking lot off Rte. 202 opposite Viola School. Over by 10am. 845-359-9294

Aug 14 (Sun)—Birds and Cameras at Jamaica Bay Meet Alan and Della Wells at 7:30am at the Commuter Parking Lot, Rte. 303 N., West Nyack, for carpooling to this birding hot spot. Alan's group will photograph shorebirds and Della's group will not. Full day trip. 845-942-5751

Mission of Rockland Audubon Society

An all-volunteer chapter of the National Audubon Society, Rockland Audubon Society's mission is to promote environmental conservation and foster an appreciation of birds and nature through education programs and activities.

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The Observer

Editing	Caroline McDonald
Graphics	Elyse Fuller
Copyediting	Alan Wells
	Della Wells

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