



SUMMER 2023

WINGBEATS

Newsletter of the Audubon Society of the Capital Region of New York State

ANNUAL BIRD SEED SALE (FALL 2023)

The annual bird seed sale, which begins on September 1, 2023, is one of our largest undertakings. Teresa, Fred, and Carol have been a great team in coordinating the sale from orders to delivery these last few years, but it takes a team and some serious planning to really run smoothly. If you are interested in helping set up this fall's sale, we will be looking for volunteers to arrange for the rental truck, pick up the seed, and deliver the seed to the Sanford Library in Colonie.

We will no longer be taking orders via mail/check. Orders must be placed online through our website, www.capitalregionaudubon.org.

As was the case last year, there have been a few changes in the products being offered. Due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, sunflower seeds are in shorter supply, and supply chain issues continue to impact product and shipping costs. More information, including the 2023 price and product list and ordering instructions, is on page 6 of this newsletter as well as on our website.

ASCR MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

TO RESUME IN SEPTEMBER

Second Monday of every month

Unless otherwise notified, meetings will be held in person. We'll be meeting at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 510 Albany Shaker Road, Loudonville, 12211 at 6:30 PM, beginning September 5, 2023. This is an easy and meaningful way to get involved and learn more about what the Board does and help plan future activities. We welcome all who have interest in our chapter, what we do, how we do it and how you might contribute.

Contact us at capitalregionaudubon@gmail.com for more information.

BARRENS BIRDING BLITZ

TO BE HELD AT APBP

We are excited to announce the inaugural Barrens Birding Blitz at the Albany Pine Bush Preserve, a new special event created by volunteers, community partners and preserve staff. The scheduled date is Saturday, September 16, 2023. The team birding competition will take place from 6 am - 12 pm, culminating in an awards luncheon in the Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center at 12:30 pm. This is a fun and inclusive contest that will consist of multiple teams with a maximum of 80 individuals. The purpose of the Birding Blitz is to bring the Pine Bush community together for a fun event and to acknowledge and celebrate the conservation work that is being done in the Albany Pine Bush to preserve this globally rare, nationally significant, and locally distinct ecosystem.

The teams, both traveling & sit and spot, will divide and conquer the preserve in all regions. The teams' eyes and ears will provide a snapshot of the birds in the preserve. Teams will compete to identify as many species as possible in the time allotted. The Albany Pine Bush Preserve has over 200 bird species who call the Pine Bush home. The Albany Pine Bush Preserve is hosting this exciting birding event along with our partners from Hudson Mohawk Bird Club and Friends of the Pine Bush Community.

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National Audubon Photo Contest Winners

on Display at KAC

The winning photographs from the National Audubon Photo Contest are now on display at the Kelly Adirondack Center, 897 St. David's Lane, Niskayuna. The exhibit will be on display through August 9. The Center is open during their summer hours, Monday through Thursday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. This is an excellent opportunity to see award-winning photographs in a beautiful setting. Weather permitting, you can also walk the trails adjacent to the Center (the 111-acre Reist Wildlife Sanctuary) and do some birding. Some of you will remember the bird walk we conducted there in February, where we were thrilled to see a total of three Barred Owls, in addition to several other species of songbirds. The ASCR annual meeting was also held at KAC in late April. The photos below show just a small portion of the beautiful Center, which is a hidden gem in our area.



The patio at Kelly Adirondack Center



The beautiful Adirondack Room, KAC

Upcoming Events and Programs

Below is a list of various events and programs from ASCR and other like-minded organizations, along with information on how to register or attend.

Audubon Society

- ♦ August 14, 11:00 AM — Backyard Bird Feeding Talk for the Guilderland Garden Club, Guilderland Town Hall, Route 20 (Western Avenue), Guilderland
- ♦ September 5, 6:30 PM — Monthly meeting of the Audubon Society of the Capital Region, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 510 Albany Shaker Road, Loudonville, 12211
- ♦ September 22-24 — New York State Birders Conference/New York State Ornithological Association 76th Annual Meeting, Sleepy Hollow Conference Center, Westchester County. Registration due by August 31, 2023. To register and for more information, visit https://www.nybirders.org/?fbclid=IwAR0w3pz2xVan4ttKjeHY8c3mr6lg2Hxb_df12RuvvVLrbMD-LYPLrHJzJcq.
- ♦ October 15, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM, Fall Festival at Scho-dack Island State Park, admission is free for attendees

Wild Ones Capital Region NY

- ♦ August 26 — Mabee Farm Arts & Crafts Fest, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM
- ♦ September 9 — Hawk Watch, John Boyd Thacher State Park, hours TBD
- ♦ September 23 — Five Rivers Environmental Center Fall Festival, hours TBD
- ♦ November 11 — Native Plant Celebration and Seed Swap, location and hours TBD

Visit Wild Ones at <https://capitalregionny.wildones.org/> for more information.

Albany Pine Bush Preserve

- ♦ August 11 — Dragonflying, 10:00 AM
- ♦ August 14 — Sssnakes in the Pine Bush, 10:00 AM
- ♦ August 16 — Wildflower Stroll, 11:00 AM
- ♦ August 24 — Common Nighthawk Watch, 6:00 PM
- ♦ September 16, 6:00 AM-12:00 Noon — Albany Pine Bush Preserve Birding Blitz

Visit the Albany Pine Bush Preserve website at <https://albanypinebush.org/visit-calendar> for more information.

Conservation Corner

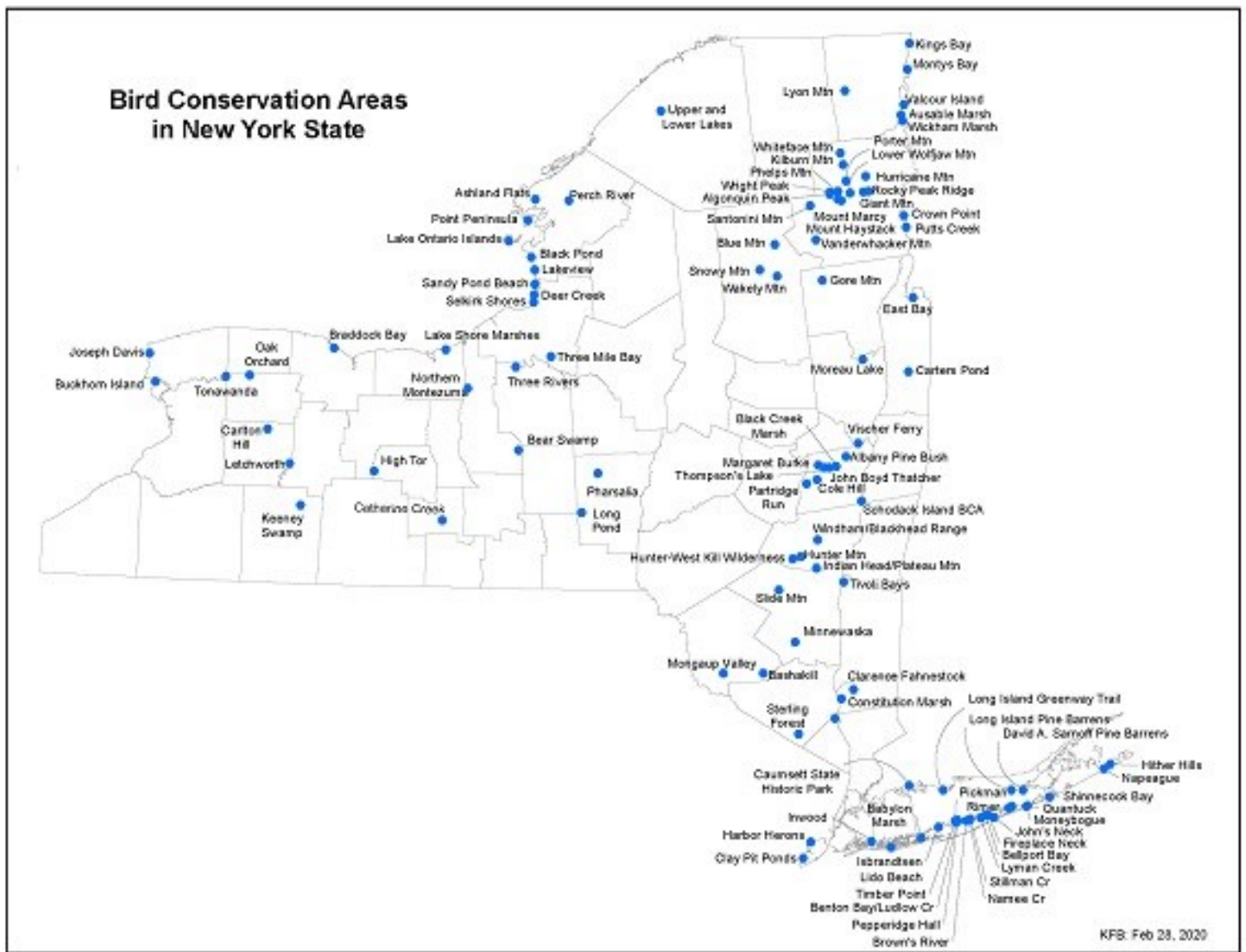
(Reprinted from the New York State Department of Conservation Website)

Bird Conservation Area Program and Sites

The New York State Bird Conservation Area Program was established in 1997 to safeguard and enhance bird populations and their habitats on state lands and waters. The goal of the Bird Conservation Area (BCA) Program is to integrate bird conservation interests into agency planning, management and research projects, within the context of agency missions.



The BCA Program is modeled after the National Audubon Society's Important Bird Areas (IBA) program, which began in New York in 1996. The BCA Program applies criteria developed under the IBA program to state-owned properties. To date, fifty-nine BCA sites have been designated.



Hum, Hum, Hummingbirds!

We've been spotting them since mid-May, those little flying jewels called hummingbirds. In our region, the only resident hummingbird is the Ruby-throated hummingbird. These tiny, feisty flyers can be seen sipping nectar from brightly-colored (mostly red or orange), tubular-shaped flowers such as trumpet vine blooms, foxglove, cardinal flower, royal catchfly, red bee balm, and jewelweed. Iridescent green with a white breast, it is named for the male's scarlet throat (the female has a white throat – as do this year's little ones of both genders). Ruby-throats weigh only 0.1 to 0.2 ounces, less than a nickel. Kent McFarland of the Vermont Center for Ecostudies, who has banded these birds, commented, "when you have one in your hand, it is shocking how small they are."

Ruby-throats feed both on nectar and small insects caught on the wing or near flowers, such as fruit flies, mosquitoes, gnats, small bees and spiders. In spring, before most flowers are blooming, they visit holes drilled in trees by yellow-bellied sapsuckers to drink sap and consume insects attracted there.

Of course, many people assist them in their search for nectar by providing them sugar-water in commercially-available or handmade feeders. Below are some guidelines for good stewardship of these tiny creatures:

1. The proper formula for nectar is 3 to 4 parts water to one part white sugar (do not use brown sugar, honey, or molasses). Avoid using commercial preparations, as many of them contain red dye, which is harmful to hummers.
2. The best hummingbird feeders have bee guards to keep bees from entering the feeding ports and built-in ant moats, which you fill with water to keep ants from raiding the nectar.
3. Change the sugar-water solution every three to five days, especially in extreme heat and humidity.
4. Keep the feeders clean! It's pretty easy to clean hummer feeders, but caution should be taken to make sure that you clean them thoroughly to avoid endangering the health of your little visitors. This means taking the feeders down, emptying any leftover sugar water, and scrubbing them with hot water and dish soap. You can also use a bleach solution (made from 1 part bleach to 9 parts water) or a vinegar solution (1 part vinegar to 2 parts water). Make sure you rinse all parts thoroughly with clean water before refilling them.
5. You'll need to clean hummingbird feeders more frequently than other feeders. Aim to scrub them once a week in cooler weather and twice a week when temperatures soar. If you're crunched for time, Emma Grieg, project leader for the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Project FeederWatch, has a tip. "Running them through a dishwasher will do the trick," she says. However, you should run the dishwasher without detergent—just hot water to prevent scouring and damage to the feeders.
6. Plant flowers to attract hummingbirds. A successful hummingbird garden should include their favorite flowers, have flowers in bloom all season long, contain trees and shrubs that provide cover and perching spots, and include a shallow water source with a dripper or mister. Favorite hummingbird flowers include scarlet sage and other salvias, red bee balm, cardinal flower, spotted jewelweed, red zinnia, trumpet honeysuckle, columbine, Mexican cigar plant, honeysuckle fuschia, and trumpet creeper.



Ruby-throated Hummingbirds: male, left (courtesy of Georgia Audubon Society; female, right (courtesy of USDA).



Sources for this article include Birds & Blooms Magazine and Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Photo Gallery

Regeneron Pollinator Garden

What a pleasure it is to publish these photos of the pollinator garden on the grounds of Regeneron Pharmaceuticals in Troy. Teresa Murphy and Carol Quantock consulted with several employees of Regeneron to plan and create a garden for birds, butterflies, and insects. While the garden sustained a lot of browsing by deer and rabbits, most of the plants survived the “raids” and bloomed beautifully this summer. Plans will begin this week to expand the garden and make plans to install a native plant meadow to reduce turf grass surface area and decrease mowing time and use of gasoline.



Tiger Swallowtail — proof of success!



Just a few of the native plants in the garden



Rare leucistic American Robin;
photos courtesy of Jock Elliott



Eastern Bluebird pair in Teresa
Murphy's backyard; photos
courtesy of Teresa Murphy



2023 BIRD SEED SALE FUNDRAISER ORDER WORKSHEET

ORDER DEADLINE: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 5 PM

PRODUCT PICKUP: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 9AM - 11AM William K. Sanford Library, 629 Albany-Shaker Road, Loudonville, NY

Please ensure that you pick up your bird seed on the pickup day. **ASCR is unable to store any bird seed.**

Seed and Suet Purchases are TAX EXEMPT and support the mission of the Audubon Society of the Capital Region.

Bird Seed selection features products from Aspen Song—All Natural Wild Bird Aspen Song mixes are designed to provide the best possible nutrition with the broadest possible appeal to our backyard visitors. **Price**

Black Oil Sunflower—20 lb. bag

The soft seed hulls allow the food value of the nutmeat to be easily accessed by all of the seed-eating birds.

\$25

Sunflower Kernels—25 lb. bag

Sunflower seeds with the shell removed means that every bird species can access the nutritional value of the kernel. No accumulation of empty shells here!

\$50

Safflower Kernels—20 lb. bag

Sunflower seeds with the shell removed means that every bird species can access the nutritional value of the kernel. No accumulation of empty shells here!

\$40

Value Blend—30 lb. bag

This general purpose mix is great for attracting ground-feeding birds like Dark-eyed Junco, Mourning Dove,

\$25

Ultimate Blend—20 lb. bag

\$35

Ultimate Blend—40 lb. bag

\$65

A corn-free mix that includes Black Oil Sunflower, White Proso Millet, Black Stripe Sunflower, Peanuts,

Choice Blend—20 lb. bag

\$30

Choice Blend—40 lb. bag

\$50

Over 30% Sunflowers & Peanuts, and includes White Proso Millet, Black Oil Sunflower, Cracked Corn,

Mealworms—1 lb. container Protein-rich mealworms provide much-needed energy in winter.

\$12

Nut and Fruit Suet—11 oz. Cakes (1/2 CASE)

\$15

Nut and Fruit Suet—11 oz. Cakes (CASE OF 12)

\$30

A mix of seeds and nuts will satisfy woodpeckers, sapsuckers, buntings, and more!

Hi Energy Suet—12 oz. Cakes (1/2 CASE)

\$11

Hi Energy Suet—12 oz. Cakes (CASE OF 12)

\$22

These suet cakes from Pine Tree Farms provide top quality seeds, grains, peanut butter, and peanuts to attract a variety of wild birds.

Buy a Bag, Donate a Bag. ASCR has partnered with [Project Growth](#) and [Lawson's Lake](#). Please consider donating a bag of seed or half case of suet to Lawson's Lake through ASCR in order to help them attract birds to their Bird Sanctuary that was created by the youth of Project Growth. Your donation is tax deductible.

Yes—add an additional bag of seed or 1/2 case of suet to the order:

Value Blend 30 lb. bag

\$25

Hi Energy Suet (1/2 Case)

\$11

ASCR Chapter Supporter Membership (1 year)

\$20

Your membership contribution helps to support our mission to protect and maintain ecological systems, promote wise use and conservation

ASCR Additional Donation

Your donation helps to support the many programs of ASCR throughout the year including educational programs, conservation efforts, and

Orders must be placed by ASCR by Sunday, October 15, so please plan accordingly.

To ORDER ONLINE: please visit www.capitalregionaudubon.org/store. Email capitalregionaudubon@gmail.com with questions.

We are no longer accepting mail-in orders. All orders must be placed through our website.

Are Non Native Plants contributing to Insect Decline?

Insect declines have been documented worldwide in recent years.

In a recent publication, 73 historical reports were examined by Doug Tallamy and colleagues that confirm butterflies, moths, bees, beetles, dragonflies and damselflies have suffered dramatic declines.

Threats that severely harmed insects:

- Habitat loss
- Deforestation
- Climate change
- Light pollution
- Rise of industrial agriculture
- Use of neonicotinoid pesticides

One threat that has received little attention is the global trend of replacing native plants with non-native.

His research suggests that insect populations decline and become less diverse as native host plants dwindle. This has a tremendous effect on bird populations. As insects decline, so do birds.

"Widespread preference for non-native plants in the horticultural industry has globally transformed millions of acres from potential habitat into "food deserts" for native insects."



What can you do to help?

Reduce the size of your lawn.

- Lawns consume the majority of water for agriculture, and require high inputs (chemicals) to be maintained.

Consider keystone native plants.

- <https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/About/Native-Plants/keystone-plants-by-ecoregion> local to your geography. Search for native plant nurseries near you, and buy locally sourced native seeds.

As your existing landscape needs replacing, consider a native plant alternative.

- Wildones.org has free native landscape plans online, as well as resources for those who desire to plant wildlife friendly landscapes or meadows.

You can make a difference with a pot on your porch.

- <https://www.homegrownnationalpark.org/g/keystone-container-gardening/>





Audubon Society of the Capital Region

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www.capitalregionaudubon.org

**Board Members of the Audubon
Society of the Capital Region
An All-Volunteer Chapter Organization
Of the National Audubon Society**

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WebAdmin: Vacant

Newsletter Editor: Carol Quantock

**Board Meetings are held on the second
Monday of every month. We discuss up-
coming events and make decisions that
guide the chapter for the year.**

Email

capitalregionaudubon@gmail.com

for more information

**Looking to have an impact in your
community?**

Become an Audubon Society of the Capital Region

Chapter Supporter!

As a Chapter Supporter, 100% of your membership dues stay local. This helps us support local conservation efforts, continue to promote birding and bird education, and to support other special initiatives, such as the construction of bird blinds. There are three Chapter Supporter memberships available:

Individual: \$20.00

Couple (two persons residing in same home): \$35.00

**Family (three or more adults/children residing in same home):
\$50.00**

In return, you get:

- An official ASCR Chapter Supporter Membership card
- An ASCR Chapter Supporter window cling to prevent window strikes
- The satisfaction of knowing you are supporting local birds and their habitats

Click [here](#) for more information on how you can become an ASCR Chapter Supporter!!



Questions?

Email: capitalregionaudubon@gmail.com