



Winter 2018 WINGBEATS

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

Our Annual Meeting

*Saturday, February 24, 2018, 1:00pm
Five Rivers Environmental Education Center*

Join ASCR for our annual meeting and elections where Tom Lake will present on the Hudson River Flyway. See Upcoming Events on the next page for more details.

Volunteers Wanted!

ASCR relies solely on the time and effort of volunteers to keep the chapter operating. We need people like you to get involved. No time commitment or activity is too small. If you have a passion for nature and the desire to make a difference in your community, we do too!

*Come volunteer with us at the
Audubon Society of the Capital Region!*

Looking to have an greater impact in your community?

Become an Audubon Society of the Capital Region Chapter Supporter. This is a special opportunity for those living in the Capital Region to directly support their chapter beyond their support to National Audubon Society. See the back page for more information.



Audubon's Early Years

Written by: Mark Silo

(Editor's note; this is a continuation from the article "Audubon's Origins" in the previous newsletter)

Once the first Audubon chapters took hold in the 1890s and the National Association was founded in 1905, Audubon's leaders faced one overarching priority: stop the carnage. Commercial interests continued the wanton slaughter of wild birds for food and feathers. Audubon advocates energetically sought additional protective laws at the state and federal levels and initiated a warden system to enforce existing laws and preserves. They also aspired to an educational program aimed at instilling respect for wildlife and natural areas in the next generation of Americans, but that did not share the same urgency.

The passage of state protective laws and set-asides of sanctuaries accelerated with Audubon's organized lobbying, but loopholes abounded, the birds did not respect state boundaries, and the states offered little enforcement. Federal protections were needed. The first national bird protective law to be enacted was the Lacey Act of 1900, which used federal authority to regulate interstate commerce to make it illegal to ship across state lines any bird or animal killed illegally. William Dutcher, who later became the National Audubon Society's first chairman, had worked tirelessly to support passage of the Lacey Act.

By 1900 there was also a growing number of private and public wildlife sanctuaries, especially in Maine and Florida and elsewhere along America's coastline. But enforcement was minimal and mass killings continued and the market for feathers and eggs persisted. Dutcher endorsed a proposal by naturalist and artist Abbott Thayer to raise funds to hire wardens to safeguard the sanctuaries, benefactors responded, and Audubon began a widespread warden program. It was dangerous work — warden Guy Bradley was murdered in cold blood by feather hunters in Florida

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Winter Events

The Coyotes of North America

January 27, 2018, 2pm

Peebles Island State Park, Visitor Center

Come join ASCR and the Friends at Peebles Island SP, as we explore the history of coyotes of North America. Presented by Dan Bogan, PhD and Assistant Professor at Siena College, this 1 hour presentation will discuss his research into coyote behavior and ecology in suburban landscapes where people and coyotes coexist. Come learn about coyote biology and behavior, and ways to reduce issues between people, pets and coyotes.

Great Backyard Bird Count —two of them!

Saturday, February 17, 2018:

10am at Five Rivers Environmental Education Center

1pm at Schodack Island State Park

Come learn about the history of the GBBC and learn how to conduct a bird count in your own back yard! Call the park to register for the event.

ASCR Annual Meeting with Presentation by Tom Lake

Saturday, February 24, 2018, 1pm–3pm

Five Rivers Environmental Education Center

Join ASCR for their annual meeting and elections where Tom Lake will present: Changing Ecology of the Hudson River Flyway. During the presentation, Lake will outline and explain some of the changes already affecting the quality of the flyway as well as those that are looming ahead. After the presentation, stick around while ASCR presents: Bird Trivia! Snacks and beverages will be provided to celebrate ASCR's changing of the board!

The Night Shift: Moths, Birds and Landscaping

Saturday, March 31, 2018, 2pm

East Greenbush Library

Local naturalist Catherine Klatt will present her stunning photographs to illustrate the diversity and beauty of moths. Her talk will explore the tight links between moths and birds, and unexpected ways that our home landscaping choices affect bird and insect populations. Far from being just little brown nuisances, moths play a key role in the functioning of our plant and animal communities.

National Audubon Photo Awards Exhibit

April 12 through May 2, 2018

Kelly Adirondack Center, Union College, Niskayuna

A beautiful photography exhibit of the award winners from the National Audubon photography competition.

Bird Walk! at Albany Rural Cemetery

April 21, 2018, 7:30am

Cemetery Ave, Albany, NY 12204

(main entrance is off of route 378 in Menands)

Don't miss the mating and migration rites of Spring in the bucolic and historic setting of the Albany Rural Cemetery! Join us in the Chapel with local historian Dr. John Pipkin for an intro to the history and design of this National Historic Landmark, featuring the resting places of John Boyd Thacher and President Chester Arthur. Then walk the cemetery's rolling terrain and various paved surfaces to listen and look for spring migrants and avian denizens, guided by ASCR volunteer and expert birder - Tristan Lowry. Bring binoculars and wear comfortable shoes and clothing. This walk can last up to 2.5 hours. Space is limited and *registration* is required! Please call the Albany Rural Cemetery Office at 518- 463-7017 to reserve your spot!

The Adirondack Archipelago: Bird Evolution at the Edge of the Boreal Forest

Thursday, April 26, 2018, 7pm

Union College at the Old Chapel

Jeremy Kirchman, Curator of Birds at the New York State Museum, will describe his work catching and sampling birds in the field and sequencing their genes in the DNA lab, examining the geographic patterns of genetic diversity in the boreal forest archipelagos of northeastern North America.

**Be sure to check back on our website
or Facebook page as more programs
may be added!**



“What’d I Miss?”

ASCR Hosts First Volunteer Happy Hour

Volunteering for ASCR doesn't have to be all work – we have fun too!

On Wednesday November 15th, ASCR hosted its first Volunteer Happy Hour. Three ASCR Board Members and six volunteers got together in Latham to eat, drink, get to know one another and have fun. In an effort to support volunteerism for the organization by engaging new volunteers and connecting with and getting to know our current volunteers, ASCR hopes to do more Volunteer Happy Hours in the future.

Come eat, drink and be merry with us at our next ASCR Volunteer Happy Hour! Even if you have not volunteered for ASCR, but are interested in getting involved, you are welcome to attend. Hope to see you there! Contact volunteer@CapitalRegionAudubon.org or [sign up](#) to be on the Volunteer list to get the word on the next happy hour meet up!

For more of what we've been up to, check out “ASCR Year in Review” on page 6!

— but Audubon recruited many rugged, dedicated wardens and the system proved very successful.

Audubon's early efforts on the education front consisted mainly of lectures and literature aimed at shaming ladies who persisted in buying hats and clothing adorned with feathers and other animal parts. But more formal and institutionalized efforts aimed at America's youth finally got kick-started in 1910 thanks to philanthropist [Margaret Olivia Slocum Sage](#). Margaret attended the Troy Female Academy (later Emma Willard) before her family fell on hard times, and she spent 22 years as a teacher and governess before meeting and marrying wealthy financier Russell Sage. Margaret became deeply and generously involved in social and women's causes when Russell died in 1906 and left her \$75 million, founding Russell Sage College and working for women's suffrage.

Mrs. Sage offered to fund youth conservation efforts through Audubon after witnessing the indiscriminate shooting of robins in North Carolina, and with Mrs. Sage's money, Gilbert Pearson, who was to become Audubon's second chairman, initiated the very popular Junior Audubon program. By 1915 there were 7,700 Junior Audubon classes in the U.S. and Canada, serving 152,000 children. The program brought incalculable benefits. One example: a Junior Audubon teacher in Jamestown, NY showed an 11-year old named Roger Tory Peterson some bird drawings and encouraged him to pursue his own art.

By this time the efforts of Audubon and many others were bearing fruit, crowned in 1918 by the Migratory Bird Treaty, which we will hear more about during its 100th year. 🐦

Sources:

1. Graham, Frank Jr. *The Audubon Ark*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1990.
2. Line, Les, ed. *The National Audubon Society: Speaking for Nature*. New York, National Audubon Society, 1999.
3. Klem, Monica. *Margaret Olivia Sage*
Accessed Online January 2018:
www.philanthropyroundtable.org/almanac/hall_of_fame/margaret_olivia_sage



Margaret Olivia Slocum Sage
Courtesy of Philanthropy Roundtable

How can you help to conserve birds and their environment? By joining National Audubon Society and by supporting your local Audubon Chapter! The Audubon Society of the Capital Region welcomes you to join the cause by becoming a [Chapter Supporter](#).

Together we can make a difference!



Supporting our NYS Bird: The Eastern Bluebird

Written by: Linda, ASCR volunteer

There is no lack of drama for the novice monitor of bluebird nesting boxes. I discovered this after ASCR donated six boxes to Peebles Island State Park, a ten-minute walk from where I live. Installed by an Audubon volunteer in 2016, my task was to monitor these nest boxes about once a week throughout the nesting season.

As noted by Thomas Hartman in “Bird Boxes and Conservation” (see the Spring 2017 issue of this newsletter), the placement of boxes is of benefit to birds by offering better protection from predators and greater warmth during cold periods. As I understand it from the many sources of information easily available on bluebirds, monitoring boxes and clearing out the old nests make it more likely that productive new nests will emerge.

The most dramatic moments were the mornings I learned about the following:

Dive-bombing. Imagine how formidable even a wimpy human such as myself would appear to these tiny creatures. Yet, they are undeterred if you appear to threaten the nest. If someone had described this experience, I don't think I would have believed them. My first response was shock, and my next thought was, “dang— this will be difficult to explain to the ER nurse.”

The limits of politeness. Nest monitors are advised to knock on the box to allow the adult to leave before lifting open the front of the box. During the first year, a couple of friendly knocks did the job. There were two occasions when an adult did exit (a total surprise after so many knocks on so many boxes without that outcome). Then one morning this past season, I did my habitual knocks at one of the boxes, waited a bit, and started to open it. An adult flew out as I was opening the door! Yikes. After processing the appropriate amount of guilt and self-loathing, I modified my behavior. Now, it's a very substantial couple of knocks, wait, and open the door oh so slowly.

Less dramatic, but really interesting, were lessons about habitat. Of the six boxes (over two years), one has never been used. Four have been used by other birds at some point, and one box has been used fairly consistently by the lovely bluebirds. It is placed at a spot where trees meet tall grasses.

These are difficult times for those concerned about the ongoing destruction of habitat as well as human impact on climate. Offsetting some of this worry with observing the marvels that evolution has created is a welcome respite. Does this activity of monitoring these nest boxes have a measurable positive impact? Since for me, no carbon emitting vehicle is involved, there is no need to face the dilemma of determining whether I'm doing more harm than good in the big picture. I remain hopeful that removing old nests and cleaning the boxes is of benefit, and over time, I am learning how to monitor with as little disruptive effect as possible. What I can say with confidence is that I have grown to really love our sweet NYS bird -- well, sweet most of the time.

I encourage novices to get involved with ASCR and other environmental advocacy organizations. And even better, if you can find a place for your volunteer efforts that is within walking distance, or at least close to home, you will eliminate or reduce the carbon footprint associated with your environmental work.



Baby birds nest in one of ASCR's nest boxes at Peebles Island



Conservation You Can Do: **DRINK BIRD-FRIENDLY SHADE-GROWN COFFEE!**

Can you protect the environment and the birds by sipping coffee? Yes, if you choose bird-friendly shade-grown coffee.

Traditionally, coffee was grown in the shade which is the preferred environment of naturally-occurring coffee plants. However, with staggering demands for coffee worldwide, corporate coffee found ways to grow coffee beans faster and cheaper by developing sun-grown, chemically-fueled hybrids and deforesting thousands of acres of mature tropical forest. Thousands of birds perished along with this critical habitat, including dozens of songbird species

that overwinter in Central America, but summer in the USA.

To learn more about how shade grown coffee supports bird conservation, please see the reports by the [Smithsonian](#) and [Scientific American](#)

You may have heard of, or are already drinking fair trade and organic coffees (thank you!); increasingly there are options available to purchase bird-friendly shade-grown coffee, and the shade-grown coffees are usually also both fair trade and organic. You can find these types of coffee online through the Cornell Lab of Ornithology who sponsors [Birds & Beans Coffee](#), or the American Birding Association who aligns with [Song Bird Coffee](#), or even [Grounds for Change Coffee](#), who only

Here are a few local places we found where you can buy bird-friendly coffee:

- 🐦 Wild Birds Unlimited in Saratoga sells Birds and Beans Coffee
- 🐦 Trader Joe's has a "Shade-Grown Ground Espresso Blend"
- 🐦 Target sells a Costa Rican shade-grown certified coffee by Gevalia

If you know of any other places to get bird-friendly coffee in the Capital Region, let us know at info@capitalregionaudubon.org so we can spread the word.



ASCR 2017 a Year in Review:

Thank you to all of our partners, co-sponsors, volunteers and friends of the Audubon Society of the Capital Region. We cannot do this without you!

- Hudson Valley Bald Eagles, E. Greenbush Library
- Mid-Winter Eagle Survey, Schodack Island
- Annual Meeting and Beginner Ornithology Program, E. Greenbush Library
- Great Backyard Bird Program, Schodack Island SP, Five Rivers EE, and Grafton SP
- Bird and Nature Photography from the Adirondacks Program, Bethlehem Library
- Free Screening of *Audubon: The Film*, Guilderland Library
- Bird Walk at Albany Rural Cemetery
- Blue Bird House Construction and Walk Installation, Schodack Island SP
- Raptor FEST!, Schodack Island SP
- Birds & Beer Walk with the RLT, Hoosic River Greenway
- Bird Blind painting, Sign development and installation, Schodack Island SP
- Butterfly Census, Five Rivers
- Peregrine Falcon Survey, Thacher State Park
- Introduction to Ornithology Programs (4), Five Rivers EE
- NYSDEC Whippoorwill Survey
- National Audubon Convention, Utah
- Installation of new bird education signs, Mohawk Towpath Byway
- Audubon Table at Five Rivers Fall Festival
- Audubon Table at Schodack Island Fall Fest
- First Time Birder Program, Schodack Island SP
- Focus On Nature: Natural History & Cultural Illustrations, Bethlehem Library
- Fifth Annual Birdseed Sale and Fund Raiser;
- Audubon Volunteer Social Event Brickhouse
- Audubon Fall Council, Montezuma Wildlife Refuge

Call For Volunteers!

Program Chair Needed

We are looking for a highly motivated and creative individual to help get involved with creating and sustaining current programs for ASCR. For details about this please contact the current Programs Chair, John Loz, programs@capitalregionaudubon.org.

Bald Eagle Nest Watch Coordinator Needed

Our current coordinator, Drew, has done a wonderful service in the Capital Region, but he is moving on! We do not want to lose all the effort he's gone through to start and run this nest monitoring program. We are looking for a coordinator to keep this program running next winter! If you would like to know more about this opportunity please contact volunteer@capitalregionaudubon.org

Movers and Shakers Needed

We still need assistance in retrieving and preparing the wood for Bird Box construction. ASCR creates bird box kits with pre-cut wood pieces and hardware. ASCR donates them to organizations and leads workshops to assemble the kits. ASCR sells them as a fundraiser at various events. All these bird boxes are prepared by ASCR volunteers, like you! But it takes a big team effort. Currently, we are looking for volunteers for two tasks:

1. Help with Picking up Wood
2. Cutting Wood to Assemble Kits

If you are interested in helping in any way please contact

volunteer@capitalregionaudubon.org

CALL FOR BOARD MEMBERS!

All of our programming each year would not be possible without the volunteer efforts of our Board.

Audubon Society of the Capital Region is looking for reliable, dedicated people to serve on our Board of Directors who are committed to the organization and the best interests of birds and their habitats in the Capital Region.

The ASCR Board is comprised of five Officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary) and six Directors. The Board meets monthly to plan activities for the membership and the public as well as guides the Chapter in growth, communication with membership and volunteer management. Board member terms are for one year.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the ASCR Board or have questions about serving on the Board, please contact President@CapitalRegionAudubon.org or any current members of the Board. Anyone interested in serving on the Board (or just volunteering for ASCR!) is also welcome to attend the monthly Board meetings, the first Wednesday of each month from 6-8pm at Five Rivers Environmental Center.

ASCR relies solely on the time and effort of volunteers to keep the chapter operating. We need people like you to get involved. No time commitment or activity is too small. We'd like to [hear from you](#) how we can better engage volunteers.

The working groups below help to give brief descriptions of all that we do. If you see something you would be interested in exploring, or have other ideas, don't hesitate to [contact us](#).

If you have a passion for nature and the desire to make a difference in your community, we do too!

**Come volunteer with us at the
Audubon Society of the Capital Region!**

Working Group Descriptions

ASCR is dedicated to the protection and conservation of birds, wildlife and the environment.

Membership & Volunteers

Leaders: Fred Bockis & Ryan Henderson
Maintain membership records. Work with other Working Groups to secure volunteers for ASCR events and engage current members.

Programs

Leader: Vacant
Plan, arrange and promote lectures and workshops (i.e., Speaker Series). Plan, arrange and promote field trips (i.e., Bird Walks).

Conservation & Advocacy

Leaders: Eric Latini
Plan, coordinate and maintain conservation activities (i.e., Tangle-tainers). Partner with similar organizations on conservation and advocacy efforts.

Marketing & Communications

Leader: Rebecca Allmond
Review and edit all ASCR publications. Write, design and disseminate communications and information. Advertise events (i.e. press releases, social media). Maintain website. Photograph events.

Education

Leader: Craig Thompson
Conduct educational programs (i.e., Ornithology for Kids at children's camps). Coordinate Citizen Science programs (i.e., Christmas Bird Count)

Finance

Leader: René Facchetti
Create budget for approval (annual). Develop fundraising initiatives (i.e., Bird Seed Sale). Engage in fund development (i.e., grant writing).

Volunteer Spotlight: René Facchetti



Q: Where, or in what field do you work?

A: I'm CEO of Platinum ITS, one of the region's oldest IT Solution companies.

Q: How are you involved with ASCR?

A: I joined in 1987 as a Newsletter Editor. Over the years I have served on the board, produced and managed the website, and have served most recently as Treasurer.

Q: When did you first become interested in birding?

A: From a small boy of five I took great interest in saving and preserving the environment. I always read science magazines and became a member of Green Peace when I was a teen. It was that ongoing environmental interest, including birding, that led me to Audubon.

Q: What made you want to get involved with ASCR, your local Audubon Chapter?

A: My best friend's mother was Chapter President and knew I had great computer skills. She asked me to help with the Newsletter. The rest is history.

Q: What is your favorite bird?

A: I'm quite fond of Loons .

Q: What do you like to do when you are not birding?

A: I'm always active building things with wood or stone, landscaping, planting rare or exotic trees, helping out the school and local community. I also enjoy playing guitar.

Questions?

Email: info@capitalregionaudubon.org

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

OFFICERS

President:	Lindsay Homenick
Vice President:	Open
Correspondence Officer:	Rebecca Allmond
Treasurer:	René Facchetti
Recording Officer:	Craig Thompson

DIRECTORS

Aimee Brunelle
Ryan Henderson
Eric Latini
Craig Thompson
Mike Silo

BOARD MEMBER EMERITUS

Jerry Brown
David Gibson

WEBMASTER:

WebAdmin:	René Facchetti
Info@CapitalRegionAudubon	Rebecca Allmond

WORKING GROUPS AND LEADERS

Conservation & Advocacy: Eric Latini
Conservation@CapitalRegionAudubon.org

Education: Craig Thompson
Education@CapitalRegionAudubon.org

Programs: Open
Programs@CapitalRegionAudubon.org

Marketing & Communications: Rebecca Allmond
Marketing@CapitalRegionAudubon.org

Finance: René Facchetti
Finance@CapitalRegionAudubon.org

Membership and Volunteers: Fred Bockis & Ryan Henderson
Membership@CapitalRegionAudubon.org
Volunteer@CapitalRegionAudubon.org

ByLaws: Lindsay Hominick
President@CapitalRegionAudubon.org

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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 and camp sponsorships for youth. The Chapter Supporter membership is just \$20. In return you get:

- Your support highlighted in the Quarterly newsletter: *WingBeats*
- 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!!

