



Spring 2018 WINGBEATS

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

Welcome New Board Members!

Back in February Tom Lake presented Changing Ecology of the Hudson River Flyway at our Annual Meeting and Open House. What a great turn out! Thank you to all who attended. During this annual meeting we presented the slate and vote on the board members presented for the 2018-2019 term. We welcome Erin Allen to the board as our new Vice President! She is currently pursuing a Masters in Biodiversity and Conservation at the University at Albany. She has a background in education and loves birds, wildlife and the environment! We welcome Erin and all her energy she brings to this Audubon chapter! Returning officers of the board are Craig Thompson, as Recording Secretary, Rene Faschetti as Treasurer, and Rebecca Allmond, who has changed positions from Corresponding Secretary to chapter President! Other returning members of the board are Ryan Henderson, Eric Latini, Mark Silo, and Aimee Brunelle. We thank former board members Lindsay Hominick and David Covey for their service to our chapter!

We do have open seats on the board, so if you're interested in contributing to the conservation of birds and their environment, come join us for a board meeting or two! We meet first Wednesdays of every month at the Five Rivers Environmental Education Center. Next meeting is May 2! Contact Rebecca, chapter President if you'd like to sit in on a meeting! Email: president@capitalregionaudubon.org.

~Together, we CAN make a difference!~

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Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918: The Crown of Audubon's Early History

by: Mark Silo

The early decades of the Audubon Society, and other pioneers of America's conservation movement, were crowned in 1918 by the passage of the [Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#) (MBTA), signed into law by President Woodrow Wilson in 1916 and implemented in 1918¹. Its creation was one of the Audubon Society's first major victories, and in the years since its enactment, the MBTA has saved millions, if not billions, of birds.

Stated most simply, the MBTA is a law that protects birds from people. When Congress passed the MBTA in 1918, it codified a treaty already signed with Canada (then part of Great Britain) in response to the extinction or near-extinction of a number of bird species, many of which were hunted either for sport or for their feathers. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "The MBTA provides that it is unlawful to pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill, possess, sell, purchase, barter, import, export, or transport any migratory bird, or any part, nest, or egg or any such bird, unless authorized under a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior."

The Audubon Society, and the other early conservationists, led the charge to secure the treaty and pass the MBTA in order to protect rapidly-declining bird species from threats such as the plume trade, market hunting, and habitat loss. It came too late to save some species, including the once-ubiquitous Passenger Pigeon, the Carolina Parakeet, and Heath Hen which became extinct, while other species fell to the brink as a result of these activities. The MBTA turned the tide and is credited with saving additional species from extinction, such as the Wood Duck, Sandhill Crane, and Snowy Egret. It continues to protect nearly all native birds in the U.S, covering more than 1,000 species. *(continued on page 3....)*

1. <https://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/migtrea.html>

Upcoming Events

National Audubon Photo Awards Exhibit

April 12 through May 2, 2018 , Mon-Fri 10am-4pm

Kelly Adirondack Center, [897 St. David's Lane](#), Niskayuna

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

Bird Walk! at Albany Rural Cemetery

Saturday, 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 with local historian Michael Radlick for an intro to the history and design of this National Historic Landmark. We will walk the cemetery's rolling terrain and various paved surfaces to listen and look for birds, guided by ASCR volunteer and expert birder- Tristan Lowery. Bring binoculars and wear comfortable shoes and clothing. This walk can last up to two hours. Space is limited and *registration* is required! Please call the Albany Rural Cemetery Office at 518-463-7017 to reserve your spot! A \$10 donation is recommended for the bird walk to support the Friends of Albany Rural Cemetery.

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

Thursday, April 26, 2018, 7:00pm

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.

Raptor Fest!

Saturday, May 19, 2018, 10am- 4pm

ASCR and Schodack Island State Park present their second annual Raptor Fest! A celebration of birds of prey, their habitat and the local communities in which they live!

Guests of all ages will be fascinated by live birds of prey along with music, food, beverage and kids activities. Make it a day starting with a Bird Walk at 8am, followed by a Raptor Walk, Live Eagle program, another Bird Walk at noon while Sharon (CT) Audubon presents Hawks and Owls, followed by more live birds and seining for eagles. Cost of admission is entry to the State Park.

Landis Arboretum Native Plant Sale

Sunday, May 20, 2018, 9am

Come out and support this annual plant sale by purchasing native plants for birds. ASCR will have a table available to promote Audubon's Native Plants for Birds initiative.

Want ASCR to host more events for birds? Consider joining our Program Committee! You can help shape all the awesome events we offer to the community for the 2018-2019 year! Send us an email if interested:

info@capitalregionaudubon.org

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

“What’d I Miss?”

In February, Audubon Officer and longtime volunteer Craig Thompson got some great press for Audubon's Great Backyard Bird Count this year. He conducted one at the Grafton Lakes State Park and Five Rivers Environmental Education Center. See the article in the Times Union [here](#).

Over 50 folks turned out for the ASCR Open House and Presentation by Tom Lake. ASCR thanks all who attended and became Chapter Supporters during this event! Those who partook in the coffee got to experience how good bird friendly coffee can taste!

In March, Catherine Klatt gave a great talk about moths, birds and the landscape. Folks learned about the relationship these creatures have with the natural environment and how we can make small changes in our own home landscape to help support them!

April brought us some more recognition for all the hard work ASCR and Schodack Island State Park has done to construct bird blinds and design signage which talks about the birds and their environment at the park. One more blind to go! Check out the park blog here: <https://nystateparks.blog/2018/04/10/schodack-blinds/>.

In March, these two handsome preening birds (ASCR Past President John Loz and current board member Mark Silo) flew to Costa Rica with 8 other locals for the “Neotropical Birding” tour sponsored by the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society. Ten folks spent seven days, where they found 240 species of birds. Trip highlights were the Resplendent Quetzal, Scarlet Macaw, Magpie-Jay, and 25 hummingbird species. Keep your eyes out for the 2019 trip!!



(...continued from page 1) Since its passage, the MBTA has broadened its international scope (via treaties with Mexico, Japan, and Russia) and has protected additional species (adding eagles, hawks, and other birds in 1972, for example). In 1962 it was updated to address how Native American tribes can collect feathers from protected birds for religious ceremonies (a practice otherwise banned by the MBTA).

In 2017 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ceased enforcement of some of the protective regulations promulgated under MBTA and legislation currently before congress would further weaken protections (see accompanying article).

For more information from National Audubon see: www.audubon.org/news/the-migratory-bird-treaty-act-explained or their [fact sheet](#).



Migratory Bird Treaty Act under threat

This article is adapted by Mark Silo from an article by Pat Fitzgerald, Southern Adirondack Audubon Society Conservation Committee; Thank you, Pat and SAAS!

Recently the Audubon Society of the Capital Region endorsed [a letter to members of Congress](#), strongly urging them to defend the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), one of our nation's oldest and most important wildlife conservation laws. The letter called on them to oppose any effort that would undermine the ability to address the accidental killing of birds under the MBTA.

The MBTA is now under serious threat. In December 2017, the Trump administration issued a controversial legal opinion providing an interpretation that the law **does not apply to the incidental or accidental deaths of migratory birds**, reversing decades of precedent. The opinion means that the administration will not hold industries accountable for preventable bird deaths.

In Congress, H.R. 4239 – the “SECURE American Energy Act” – would change the law to cement this interpretation and permanently end the government's ability to address major sources of bird mortality from industrial activities. This change would represent the most significant roll back of the MBTA in its 100-year history. It would dramatically reduce the incentive for industries to implement best practices that save birds, and would limit the accountability and recovery from events and activities that kill substantial numbers of birds. For example, after the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, which killed more than one million birds, BP pled guilty to violations of the MBTA, paying \$100 million to recover damages to birds impacted by the spill. These funds are being distributed through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act to restore habitat for waterfowl and other birds.

As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the law and the incredible gains that have been made to help protect our nation's birdlife, members of Congress are being urged to oppose any effort that would gut the MBTA and turn back the clock decades on bird conservation.

Editor's note: in an [April 2018 article](#) from the Washington Post, it has apparently been made clear that the original “[Solicitors Opinion](#)” piece from [December 2017](#) is now the new rule, despite its rejection from the DOI. At the time this newsletter, a response from National Audubon has not yet been released.



Yellow Warbler, by A. Brunelle

Advocacy in Action:

Great Lakes Restoration Priorities

In addition to supporting the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Audubon Society of the Capital Region has also signed on to support a letter asking the House Appropriations Committee to commit to assuring full funding for Great Lakes restoration priorities for Fiscal Year 2019. The letter asks for support of the following Great Lakes restoration priorities such as \$300 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI); Doubling the funding for both the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund; Full funding for all actions taken as part of the FY2017 Asian Carp Action Plan; Maintenance of full funding for the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Farm Bill conservation programs; and Resist cuts to the budgets of our federal agency partners, without whom Audubon would not meet their restoration goals.



Trail Cameras for Conservation by Griffin Hayes

Ever wonder what is travelling through your property or what is stealing from your bird feeders? With the help of trail-cameras, homeowners like you can gain knowledge of the local fauna whose home range encompass your property. Trail cameras can be bought on the cheaper end at around \$50, like the basic Wildgame Innovations Terra IR Trail Camera or for the larger spender, buying a \$250 kit from Stealth Cam. It comes with: 8MP photo resolution, can record video up to 30 seconds, burst mode with 1-6 images per triggering and includes 3 PX12 trail cameras and one 4.3" stealth cam photo view. This kit could cover the above-average property easily and give homeowners insight as to what is in their yard to either inspire or ease homeowner worries. The advantage of spending more money would give you higher resolution pictures, videos, and a wider camera span to cover more of an area. The Bushnell 8 MP Trophy Cam HD Wireless Black LED Trail camera has night vision and can even send picture updates directly to your phone, saving you a trip to retrieve the SIM card for photo updates. This convenient approach can show photos on the fly. Proper placement is crucial, if it is too high or too low then pictures can be inaccurate and if the camera angle compromises the field of view, the best results will not be received. Placement can be around used game trails, near food sources, or any area where you have seen or think local fauna will pass through. Home ranges can be relatively small or big, depending on the available resources and desired species to be seen.



Griffin Hayes is an Environmental Studies Major at Siena College and is currently interning for the Audubon Society of the Capital Region. Working under ASCR volunteer and past chapter president, John Loz, Griffin is using trail cameras to contribute to local knowledge of crucial species like the Golden and Bald Eagle, while learning about the operation of our non-profit chapter of the Audubon Society.

Call For Volunteers!

Program Chair Needed

We are looking for a highly motivated and creative individual (or set of individuals) to help get involved with creating and sustaining current programs for ASCR. For more details or if you have further questions please contact the current Programs Chair, John Loz, programs@capitalregionaudubon.org.

Upcoming Volunteering Opportunities

1. ASCR is looking to table at the Town of Colonie Conservation Day event May 5 at the William K. Sanford Library. ASCR has tabled at this event in the past and would like to again. Spend the day talking birds and the environment with people looking to making a difference in the community and support conservation efforts in the Capital Region.

2. In anticipation of Raptor Fest ASCR is looking for volunteers to participate in a fun craft project to create bird seed eggs. These eggs will be given as a gift to those who donate to ASCR during Raptor Fest. Egg making is a messy job so this event will be outside. Date is May 5, however, a rain date will be the following Saturday, May 12th.



3. Raptor Fest is Saturday May 19 at Schodack Island State Park. Last year more than 1,500 people attended this event and we need to make sure that we have enough volunteers to make it a success once again. Another email will be going out a few weeks before the event with more detailed information and official sign-ups. We will need volunteers for the following: bird walks, tabling, bird box building, arts & crafts, set up & break down, exhibitor & presenter coordination & assistance, Volunteer coordination & assistance, and more!

If you are interested in helping in any way please contact
volunteer@capitalregionaudubon.org

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE CAPITAL REGION

RAPTOR FEST

At Schodack Island State Park



Brian Wheeler Photography — Schodack Island State Park — Raptor Fest

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 2018

10AM-4PM

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK OR WWW.NYSPARKS.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION

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 & Mark Silo
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: Lindsay Homenick



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

A: *When I am not birding, I work at Samaritan Hospital doing Patient Safety and Quality Improvement for a state program call Health Homes.*

Q: How are you involved with ASCR?

A: *. served as the President of ASCR for two years, ending in February 2018. Now, I work on the Membership and Volunteer Working Group and I help to plan the Second Annual Raptor Fest with Schodack Island State Park staff and other ASCR volunteers (May 19!).*

Q: When did you first become interested in birding?

A: *My parent inherited my grandmother's bird feeders after she passed away several years ago. My husband and I both started to enjoy watching the birds at my parent's house when we were there. Backing up to "forever wild" land, the activity was great and varied. Once we bought our own house, we purchased a feeder and the Birds of New York Field Guide, and a hobby was born. We were amazed with watching and identifying all the birds at our feeder.*

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

A: *Shortly after this new-found hobby was discovered, I read an article in the Times Union about the local Audubon Chapter and their need for volunteers. I love to be involved in my community, so my husband and I joined National Audubon Society and got involved with ASCR by attending Board Meetings.*

Q: What is your favorite bird?

A: *I enjoy watching Pileated Woodpeckers. We don't get them at our feeders often, so when we do it is even more special to watch.*

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

A: *I have always been involved in Girl Scouts and I am currently a troop leader in North Colonie. I also enjoy running, reading and any water activities (swimming, sailing, boating, canoeing) during the few short summer months we enjoy in Upstate New York!*

**Here's a Special Shout out and
THANK YOU to our Chapter Supporters!**

Edward Allmond	Jeffrey & L. English	Mark Silo
Seema Chatusvedi	Patricia Fitzgerald	Barb Treiber
Ian Dare	Elaine Holdridge	Jill Smith
MaryEllen Frieberg	Linda Jach	
Patricia Fuller	Linda Knipper	
Diane Madden	Betsey Kuzia	
Joann McCormick	Debra Moyer	
Teresa Murphy	Ellen Pemrick	
Lynne Shultis	Richard Price	
Sheryl Collins	Pat Shuff	

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

OFFICERS

President:	Rebecca Allmond
Vice President:	Erin Allen
Correspondence Officer:	Open
Treasurer:	René Facchetti
Recording Officer:	Craig Thompson

DIRECTORS

Aimee Brunelle
Ryan Henderson
Eric Latini
Craig Thompson
Mike Silo

WEBMASTER:

WebAdmin:	René Facchetti Rebecca Allmond
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WORKING GROUPS AND LEADERS

Conservation & Advocacy: Eric Latini & Mark Silo
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

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!!

IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATURE'S BEST PHOTOGRAPHY

**2017 AUDUBON
PHOTOGRAPHY
AWARDS SHOW**



Questions?

Email: info@capitalregionaudubon.org

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