

October - December 2005



WINGBEATS

Audubon Society of the Capital Region



Audubon NY Monitors Invasive Species Report



In late July, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of Agriculture and Markets released a much-anticipated Draft Report of the New York State Invasive Species Task Force. The Draft Report describes economic and environmental problems associated with invasive plants, animals and pathogens, discusses existing mitigation efforts by government, conservation groups, and industry, and also makes recommendations about how New York can more effectively combat this growing and expensive threat.

Invasive species are non-native species that can cause harm to the environment or to human health. ASCR members may be familiar with such invasive species as zebra mussels, Eurasian milfoil, Asian long-horned beetle, purple loosestrife, giant hogweed and black swallowwort. As a threat to biodiversity, invasives have been judged second in importance only to habitat loss. These and a variety of other invasive species can harm natural ecosystems and can impede all manner of human commerce from infrastructure and agriculture, to landscaping

and gardening. Invasives come from all around the world, and the rate of invasion is increasing as international trade broadens. In fact, since the Task Force began its work in 2004, at least six new species have invaded New York.

Creation of the New York State Invasive Species Task Force was Audubon New York's top priority in 2003, and the legislative initiative, sponsored by Assemblyman Thomas DiNapoli and Senator Carl Marcellino, was passed due in large part to Audubon New York's early advocacy and strong grass efforts. The Task Force convened a series of public review meetings throughout the state in August to gather input on the Draft Report, and Audubon New York has submitted comments, which were due September 14. A Final Report is due to the Governor and the Legislature by November 30th, 2005.

The public is encouraged to review the full Draft Report on the web at <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/habitat/istf/istfdraft.pdf>

For those without access to the web, copies can be obtained by calling Steve Sanford at 518-402-8924, or requesting the report by mail at:

Attn: ISTF Report

NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-4756

For more information, please contact Sean Mahar (smahar@audubon.org), Associate Director of Conservation for Audubon New York, at 869-9731.

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Audubon Society of the Capital Region



**Cordially Invites You To Attend Our
Year 2005 Programs & Field Trips**



Audubon Programs

All Programs To Be Held At:

*William K. Sanford
Colonie Town Library*

Thursday, October 13, 2005, 7:00-9:00 pm

Our Desert Southwest

Speaker: Denise & Scott Stoner

From the most delicate flowers to the gangly Joshua tree and stately saguaro, our deserts support unique and highly specialized life in starkly beautiful settings found no place else. Across the Southwest, we'll explore the Mojave, Colorado, Sonoran, Chihuahuan, Great Basin, and the Four Corners' painted deserts. From those who carved petroglyphs to modern city dwellers, people as well have faced the challenges of life in the harsh desert environment. Join us for the evening as we explore the beauty of Our Desert Southwest!

Scott Stoner is past president of both the Audubon Society of the Capital Region and of the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, and lived in Arizona for several years. His work has been published in Birder's World Magazine. Denise is a Director and past officer of the Bird Club. Together, Scott and Denise have explored and photographed North America from Labrador to the Everglades to Hawaii, and have presented slide programs to local groups on a variety of natural history destinations.

Thursday, November 10, 2005, 7:00-9:00 pm

Raptors of New York State

Speaker: Scott Crocoll

Fall is a great time to go hawk-watching, and there are plenty of species to look for in New York State. In fact, golden eagles should be coming thru right about now!

Join DEC raptor specialist Scott Crocoll for an overview of the breeding biology, physiology, habitat usage and migratory behavior of the hawks and owls of New York State. And keep an eye on the skies!

Refreshments will be served. As always, we encourage you to bring your friends and family. For directions or details, call Greg Rucinski at the Colonie Library at (518) 458-9274.

Thursday, December 8, 2005, 7:00-9:00 pm

Audubon: A Century of Achievement

Speaker: Richard Haley

For one hundred years, the National Audubon Society has been without question America's pre-eminent conservation organization. Come celebrate Audubon's centennial as Richard Haley, Audubon NY's Director of Centers and Education, recounts Audubon's many accomplishments, from the passage of the "Audubon Model Law" in 1901 protecting water birds from plume hunting, to the recent Important Bird Areas and Smart Growth initiatives. There will be a quiz question, with prizes, for every decade of Audubon.

Audubon Field Trips

H.G. Reist Sanctuary & APA's

Paul Schaefer House

Sunday, October 9, 2005: 2:00 p.m.

Join ASCR Board Members Craig Thompson and Dave Gibson for a tour of the new offices of the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks, and a search for fall migrants at the adjacent H. G. Reist Sanctuary in Niskayuna. Many consider the APA's Paul Schaefer house the "home office" of wilderness preservation. The Reist sanctuary is a 110-acre ornithological treasury featuring many seasonal specialties.

Long pants and sturdy shoes recommended. Call Craig Thompson at 756-3610 for more information or to confirm in the event of inclement weather. From Exit 6 of the Northway, take Route 7 west for about 6.6 miles. As you pass entrance to Bellevue Women's Hospital, turn Left on to Vrooman Avenue. The APA's new office is at the intersection of Vrooman and St. David's Lane. Take a left on to St. David's Lane; the APA office is on the right (#897).



DEC ANNOUNCES WILDLIFE CONSERVATION STRATEGY



maintaining the rich diversity of wildlife species that live in New York.

DEC has been developing the Draft Strategy since the fall of 2001 when federal legislation established a new State Wildlife Grants (SWG) program to provide funds to state wildlife agencies for conservation of fish and wildlife species in greatest need of conservation. The Draft Strategy will provide guidelines to State agencies and lawmakers that will help reduce the potential for fish and wildlife species to be listed as endangered.

David Miller, the Executive Director of Audubon New York, said "Audubon has had an important role in this process. We've been working for years to conserve diversity among New York's wildlife species, and this Draft Strategy will provide a framework to ensure this legacy will continue."

The Draft Strategy, which identifies more than 580 species of greatest conservation need, including birds, focuses using long-term research and survey efforts to identify threats and problems facing these species. The 700-page report contains a tremendous amount of information on threats to these species and trends in their populations, as well information on changes in their habitats and land use. This will allow land managers and interested parties to approach conservation of these species either by habitat preservation and restoration, or by addressing the needs of individual species. A plan for continued monitoring and guidelines for strategy revision, which should be conducted as least once every ten years, is also included in the strategy. Recommendations address both species groups

and habitats, and specifically address the priority efforts needed to maintain, and in many cases increase, wildlife populations. The recommendations call for increased public education, continued population surveys, completion of an Atlas of Reptiles and Amphibians, mapping of specific habitats, habitat protection and management, documentation of species' life histories, toxicity testing, species restoration and more. These recommendations also include filling in information gaps on many species of special concern that require additional study.

The Draft Strategy was developed with extensive public outreach and input from citizens and interested organizations such as Audubon New York. DEC established review teams that included experts in wildlife and habitat conservation to provide input and work with DEC professionals to ensure that the best information available was used to create the strategy and develop the most effective conservation recommendations. A partnership group including other government agencies, non-profit conservation groups and other advocacy organizations and citizens was created to discuss the Draft Strategy and the process used to develop it.

ASCR members can view the Draft Strategy online at:

<http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmmr/swg/cwcsmainpg.html>

or in hard copy at:

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It is also available on CD by calling (518) 402-8920.



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Environmental Announcements

New York State Ornithological Association 2005 Meeting

The 2005 meeting of NYSOA is scheduled for September 23-25 at the Albany Marriott on Wolf Road. The featured speaker will be Dr. David Bird from McGill University who will be addressing avian reproductive strategies ("How Birds Do It"). NYSOA experts will lead guided field trips to birding hot-spots throughout the Capital Region. For more information about NYSOA, go to the NYSOA website at:

www.nybirds.org

Fall Audubon Council Meeting

ASCR members are cordially invited to participate in the Fall Audubon Council of New York State meeting, which will take place October 21-23, 2005 at the Holiday Inn in Ithaca, New York. Highlights of the weekend include keynote speaker John Fitzpatrick, Director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, who will recount the recent re-discovery of the Ivory Billed Woodpecker; a presentation about E-Bird, a new web-site to store and retrieve bird observations; and a tour of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. For more info, contact Audubon NY at 869-9731.

***** For Programs, Field Trip, & Further General
Environmental Information, Visit Us on the Internet at:**

www.CapitalRegionAudubon.Org



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**DATED PROGRAM
PLEASE EXPEDITE**