



The *OSPREY*

July/August, 2008 — Vol. XXXVIII No. 4

NATURE PROGRAMS

Brian O’Keeffe

Join us for nature programs and membership meetings at the Quogue Wildlife Refuge. All are welcome. *(Directions are on our website.)*

- 7:15 pm – Nature Chat
- 7:30 pm – Chapter News
- 8:00 pm – Speaker

Monday, July 7, 2008

Birds of Central Park

by **Cal Vornberger**



Cal Vornberger is a professional nature photographer whose work has been published in books, magazines, newspapers and calendars around the world. His article, "Birds of Central Park," was published in the March 2007 issue of *Outdoor Photographer* magazine. Cal spends much of his free time roaming New York City's Central Park with his camera. Central Park has its own wildlife and also serves as an oasis for migrating birds, especially in the fall and the spring. Thus it is a significant attraction for birders. His book, "Birds of Central Park," was published by Abrams in September, 2005. We will raffle off an autographed copy of his book at the end of the program.

Monday, August 4, 2008

The Baiting Hollow Hummingbird Sanctuary

by **Paul Adams**

Paul Adams, a scientist specializing in neurobiology, was born in 1947 in Leeds, England, and educated at Cambridge University. He moved to Stony Brook in 1982, where he is still a professor. He relaxes by watching, and gardening for, hummingbirds, at a three acre "sanctuary" overlooking Long Island Sound just north of Riverhead. The sanctuary was first opened to the public in 1999 for a single day, to prove that there were indeed lots of hummingbirds. This was so popular it has continued ever since. Since then hummingbird numbers have plummeted, but some are still around.

Searching for Horseshoe Crabs and Red Knots

Sally Newbert

ONE EVENING, AROUND the time of a new moon, I went to one of Westhampton's bay-side beaches hoping to see Red Knots and horseshoe crabs. There, right on schedule, on the rising tide, the shadowy shapes began slowly coming out of the water. I watched the shapes emerge. As I got closer, they seemed to see me and they would descend back into the bay. I was happy to see that they were afraid of me, maybe they wouldn't be as easy for the crabbers to catch. So I stood back and watched. A witness to an event that has been going on since before humans walked the earth and more surprisingly, is still going on, in the shadows of the elaborate houses of Westhampton.

I am sure by now you know that the eggs of these crabs provide an important food source for the Red Knots that make the amazing

journey from the southern tip of South America to extreme Northern Alaska, Canada, Greenland and Russia. That is what has aroused the birding community to become so concerned with the excessive harvesting of these primitive creatures.

Alone, on the small stretch of bay beach, I watched as flocks of Sanderlings ran up and down the shoreline feeding. I was hoping to see a Red Knot, but on this beach, that day, I did not find any.

Mating and egg-laying had quite a fatality rate, the beach had several dead horseshoe crabs. Some females dug in, others smaller, probably males, perhaps just not able to turn themselves over.

When I got home, I received this email from Eileen Schwinn, ELIAS President, detailing the limits fishermen are allowed to take: "After seeing a couple of heavy-duty HS

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Portraits of Birds of EPCAL/Calverton on page 5

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Field Trips

Saturday, July 12th.

DUNE ROAD

Trip Leader: John McNeil

This will be a half day trip to catch the early shorebird migrants as they move through the area. We will start at Shinnecock Inlet and work our way west along the mud flats. On the 12th of July, low tide will be about 10:30 am, so let's meet at the Inlet at 9 am. For details, contact your trip leader John McNeil at 631.281.2623 at home. On the day of the field trip call my mobile telephone at 631.219.8947.



Saturday, August 9th

THE ISLANDS OF MORICHES INLET

Trip Leader: John McNeil

This trip is always a big hit with our members; let's catch the wave of shorebirds as they pass our area on their migration along the south shore of Long Island. Low tide is at 7:15 am at Moriches Inlet. This means we will have an incoming tide for the morning, bringing the birds closer to our view. Let's meet at the parking lot of Cupsoque Beach County Park at 7 am, before they start collecting tolls for parking and spend the morning birding the islands off the inlet. Be prepared to get wet. We will be wading across to the islands. Wear appropriate footwear, bathing suits and/or shorts that can get wet. On the way back it will probably be waist deep. For details, contact your trip leader John McNeil at 631.281.2623 at home. On the day of the field trip call my mobile telephone at 631.219.8947. 

**S·A·V·E
T·H·E
D·A·T·E**

for

Eastern Long Island Audubon

Annual Dinner on

Wednesday, October 22

Look for ELIAS bumper stickers!



Reports from the Field

Saturday, April 19

Earth Day at Quogue Wildlife Refuge

ELIAS members manned a table and led nature walks. Many canoed and kayaked on the pond, while others enjoyed a visit with a female Great-horned Owl, who is imprinted on humans, and now lives at the Rescue Center of the Hamptons.



Saturday, May 3, 2008

Trip Leader: Beth Gustin

Into the woods at Terrell River County Park



Wednesday, May 7

Eileen Schwinn, ELIAS President, spoke at a press conference sponsored by Long Island Pine Barrens Society. A coalition of environmental groups is asking for a fair assessment of the EPCAL/ Calverton property. Dick Amper from LIPBS is behind and to the right of Eileen.

May 17, 2008

Bashakill Marsh (Sullivan County) and Shawangunk Grassland (Ulster County) NY

Trip Leader: Carl Starace

Highlights at Bashakill Marsh were a Yellow-Throated Vireo and, 3 Warbling Vireos, Red and White-eyed Vireos, 3 Least Flycatchers, an Alder Flycatcher, 2 Wilson's Warblers, a Wormeating Warbler, 5 Magnolia Warblers, 2 Chestnut-sided Warblers, numerous American Redstarts, many Bluewinged Warblers, 3 Swamp Sparrows, 2 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Chimney Swifts, 2 Eastern Bluebirds, Wood Thrushes, a Veery, 2 Wood Ducks, and a Blackbilled Cuckoo. At Shawangunk National Grassland there were dozens of Boblinks, Eastern Meadowlarks, Eastern Kingbirds, Killdeers, 2 Upland Sandpipers, a Kestrel and a Broadwinged Hawk. On the return trip a Peregrine Falcon flew overhead as we drove over the Tappen Zee Bridge.



Sunday, May 18

The group listened for Willets at Indian Point on the William Floyd Estate.

Trip Leader: Mary-Laura Lamont on the right

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crab harvesters driving around Shinnecock Bay today," she wrote "I called DEC to ask about the season. Seems it is still OK to harvest, at least until the end of June — unless they (DEC) closes it down early, as they did last year. But, starting early June, the limit is down from 200 crabs per day to only 100 crabs per day per permit. The enforcement guy I spoke with said a normal flatbed pick-up truck holds about 500 crabs (then you see them popping over the top) and a small skiff holds about 500 when the crabs are filled to the gunnel. 200 crabs would fill approx. 4-5 household garbage cans.

DEC is very happy to be called by anyone who might feel too many crabs are being taken. The limit is now one 100 load a day. If you see a boat filled, go ashore, and then return to pull more out — feel free to call DEC. They are understaffed (who isn't these days?), but will try their best to follow-up and investigate. To report an environmental violation call 1-800-TIPP DEC (1-800-847-7332).

I will say, for the legitimate fishermen, this is a heck of a hard way to make a living. The guys I saw out in the marshes were probably being eaten alive by the mosquitoes — no wind, damp and really buggy."

ELIAS members have been putting up fencing and signs at crucial flooding zones on Dune Road in Quogue and Southamp-

ton to remind people to try to avoid running over the crabs during the Spring high tides. Historically the crabs have been the most active during this time.

Dowling College Study

Dr. John T. Tanacredi, Chairman of the Department of Earth and Marine Sciences at Dowling College is conducting their second annual Super-Inventory of Horseshoe Crabs (HSC) on Long Island. The study is trying to find out if the horseshoe crab population on Long Island is dwindling, as has been reported by some experts.

"Over the last 10 years there has been considerable controversy over the extent to which horseshoe crab harvesting has impacted the species' existence," explained Dr. Tanacredi.

There is a form available on the Dowling College website so that the public can make a detailed report of their observations. The information on the website describes how to tell the difference between male and female HSCs. All data collected will be recorded on the Long Island Map of Horseshoe Crab habitats which they are creating. This is a multi-year study will help identify the trends with regard to Horseshoe Crabs around Long Island.

The HSC Network invites everyone to join in and help protect a species 350 million years in the making. 

Signs and fencing was placed in strategic flood prone areas of Dune Road by ELIAS members Gigi Spates, Dan Wilson and Allyson Dyer, signs were produced by ELIAS.



New Hats are now available!



The new hats are available at ELIAS meetings & events

Birds of Calverton/EPCAL

CHRISTINA DALY AND PHILIP JERMAIN enjoy hiking at the EPCAL/Calverton Grasslands. Christina has captured a wonderful portrait gallery of EPCAL residents. Clockwise: a Long-eared Owl, a Brown Creeper on the tree trunk, an Eastern Screech Owl, a threatened Northern Harrier hunts over the grasslands, the endangered Short-eared owl stands on his hunting grounds, a Saw-whet Owl on a perch, and center, a well hidden Long-eared Owl. Opposite page, a Great Blue Heron is perched overlooking a pond.

Thank you Christina for sharing your wonderful photos.

Continued Good Birding! 



Warblers & Longfellow... Just a normal weekday in Boston

Eileen Schwinn

GHOULS, WALKING THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD FOG, weaving around the tombstones, aimlessly. Only it was 6:00 am and some carried cameras, many had books in hand, and almost all had binoculars. No ordinary ghouls these folks — just a normal weekday morning in May at Mount Auburn Cemetery with the Brookline Birding Club. I had the pleasure of this company of birders for three mornings while on a recent trip to Boston.

To quote Birder's Digest: "A national historic landmark, the cemetery has been a mecca for birds and bird watchers since its founding. Mount Auburn Cemetery is the nation's first garden cemetery and played a significant role as a model for urban parks across the country. Even before its creation, young Harvard students would stroll the area to observe and collect birds. Bostonians founded Mount Auburn Cemetery in 1831 for both practical and aesthetic reasons: to provide a better option for the increasing number of burials and to create a beautiful natural setting where families could commemorate their loved ones. Mount Auburn quickly became the model for the "rural" cemetery movement that inspired public parks and open space planning across the country. Today, the cemetery draws over 200,000 visitors a year, many of them avid bird watchers. Its 175 landscaped acres feature over 5,300 trees representing over 630 taxa as well as an historic collection of 19th, 20th and 21st century architecture and memorials."

Birding has been central to Mount Auburn since its beginnings. A long list of "Who's Who" in the 1800's and early 1900's birding lore, either lived nearby, studied or taught at one or another of the prestige colleges located in Cambridge. The Cemetery is located 1.5 miles from the Massachusetts Atlantic coast and sits in a bend of the Charles River. Ponds, marshes, tall trees coming into leaf, berry-filled shrubs, with shade and sunshine and lots of bugs a island of green in a sea of cement — has made Mount Auburn a wonderful respite

for the weary migrating birds making their way up the coast. Central Park has the same reputation, however, in Central Park you compete with bikers, strollers, joggers, dogs and just plain lay-a-bouts! In Mount Auburn, you only compete with the Dearly Departed and personally, I believe they love having the company.

It had been a nagging drive of mine to visit this special place, and finally, this year, I had the opportunity. Driving through a still-sleeping downtown Boston to Cambridge took a scant 7 minutes. "Just park the car anywhere. Watch out for the 'Local Permit Required' spots. We meet inside the front gate" — I joined a group of about 20 — people of all ages, and every niche and stratum of Boston society. Men in full business suits, students dressed in baggy sweats and wool caps, ladies from Back Bay, visitors from England, and a guy in painter's pants. And yours truly, a grandma from Long Island! You know, typical birder group. Each morning the group was different but strangely the same. Informally led, we moved from spot to spot, with folks

splintering off at times to dash over to "try for the Wilson's by the Spectacles", or "there's a Cape May by Harvard Hill", or a just plain "I gotta go to work (or class) now — good luck, you guys". On two mornings, I found myself with Patience, a lovely lady from Cambridge, who made sure I got to see every hot spot in the Cemetery. With her, I was lucky enough to see a good number of Warblers and other migrants, with my best birds being a wonderfully out in the open singing Wood Thrush, three Cape May Warblers, and a small flock of tree-top Bobolinks. Good birds, good company, good time — what more could anyone want?

By the way, don't dismiss the joy of birding inside the city. I was pleasantly surprised to find 12 Ovenbirds, just hanging out, inside the small grass courtyard of the Prudential Center Shopping Mall, located deep in the heart of Downtown Boston. And they were the only birds I took pictures of!



From Kaler's Pond Nature Center

Jay Kuhlman

We held the Earth/Arbor Day celebration on April 27. Despite a cloudy day 45 people came out and helped plant native trees and shrubs, sing and learn about live raptors from the TR Sanctuary. Suffolk County Legislator Ed Romaine and Brookhaven Town Councilman Keith Romaine gave proclamations recognizing the efforts of the Nature Center.

The summer is in full swing with our programs. The nature center is open Thursday through Sunday from 12 through 4 in June, July and August. Adam McHeffy is back again this year to lead the programs.

On Sundays there is a *Just for Kids* program from 1:00 to 2:00 for K-5th. Pro-

grams include, seine netting, dinosaurs, creepy crawlies, scavenger hunt and take a hike to Moriches Bay.

This year we will have the Audubon Fun Weeks. This is a camp-like experience from 9:00 to noon, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, July 7, 8, 10, 11 and July 14, 15, 17, 18. This experience will have qualified counselors at a 1:8 ratio and have short hikes, pond, bay and woodland explorations as well as games, music and crafts. To sign up call 631-878-5576 or get full details of all programs at www.kalerspondauduboncenter.org, or click the link on the ELIAS web page.

There will be more programs and an end of summer event, check the website for updates.



Conservation Column *"Nobody can do everything but everybody can do something"*

Beth Gustin

There are dozens of family farms on the East End and there are lots of great reasons to buy locally grown produce from these farms.

The best reason to buy locally is that produce is much fresher and tastes better. Most produce grown in the U.S. travels 1500 miles and is stored for several days before reaching the supermarket. The distances are even greater for produce grown in Mexico and Central America. Some fruits and vegetables are sprayed with post-harvest pesticides just for storage and shipping! The amount of fuel required to pack and ship produce is also greatly reduced by purchasing locally.

Another reason to buy local produce is to support family farms and preserve the rural character of eastern Long Island.

The East End is constantly threatened with increasing development and it is important to help farming remain a viable way of life. Many farms grow their crops organically, without using synthetic pesticides and fertilizers that can be harmful to the environment and to our health.

We purchase much of our food in pre-packaged or prepared form from supermarkets, delis, fast food joints, and wholesale stores. It is a good thing to get back to where food really comes from—the field! Bring a kid to a local farm stand or farmer's market to show them where we get our food from and the role that farmers play in producing food for us.

The Westhampton Beach Farmer's Market is a great place to start. It is open on Saturdays from June 21 - November 15 and is located on Mill Road in Westhampton Beach. Some of the farmers here also

offer Community Sustaining Agriculture program, where you pay a set fee and get a generous box full of seasonal produce every week. This is a great way to keep your cupboard full of fresh veggies and fruits and to try some things you may not have purchased otherwise. Most of us know where our local farmstands are located but if you need help finding one check out the Long Island Farm Bureau website www.LIFB.com.

Also, don't forget to purchase fresh flowers, cheese, jams and honey from local farmers. Next time you are on the North Fork, stop at Oysterponds Farm in Orient for just-picked organic raspberries and blackberries—they are the best. Here on the East End of Long Island we are blessed with so much wonderful locally grown food—*enjoy it!*



Where the birds are...

Larry Penny

Chief East Hampton Natural Resources

On the May 28th I went into the city. My wife Julie drove. She grew up in the Bronx and she drove a bus between the South Fork and New York. The taxi cabs, horns, bike riders and the jaywalkers do not faze her. I fear them all. So it gave me the chance to use the line of roads as my transect to record the birds, road kills (and the state of the vegetation). I've been doing this assiduously since 1980. It's one measure of the transition from rural to exurbia to suburbia to urban metropolis.

Between Sag Harbor and Sunrise, I observed 8 Grackles, 2 Crows, a Starling and a raccoon road kill. The beach plum blooms were waning, the black cherries were just coming into flower and the white oaks were just beginning to foliate, the blacks and scarlets already fully expanded two weeks earlier. Along 27 to CR 111 there were at least 8 Cowbirds, 2 Robins, a Starling, a Crow, another Grackle and another raccoon road kill. The pitch pines were sprouting, birds that I usually record along this stretch, Blue Jays and

Mourning Doves were absent. On 111 only a Starling.

The LIE to the Nassau County line produced 5 Cowbirds, 2 male Red-winged Blackbirds, 3 Grackles and a bunch of very large tent caterpillars. The black locusts and wild cherries were in full bloom and loaded with white flowers. Nassau County proved to be just as unproductive, a Starling, 4 Red-wings, a Grackle and 2 Flickers, the latter 2, looping across 495, about 40 feet off the ground. NYC beginning in Queens and ending in midtown Manhattan fetched me only 2 Starlings and 2 Blackbirds, probably Red-wings. Two hours of driving, very few birds. One of the most birdless rides into the city in 27 years.

Julie stayed for a meeting, I took the train back to Bridgehampton. It was a grand opportunity, I had never taken a west-to-east transect count by train. I saw lots of Japanese Knotweed, mugwort, oriental bittersweet, Norway maples and a slew of other exotics along the tracks, but no birds until after Jamaica. Between Jamaica and Bay Shore things a Cowbird, 7 Red-wings, a Starling, a Herring Gull, and 10 Crows. Between Bay Shore and Speonk

one pond had four Mallards, another, just after Bellport, 10 Cormorants, 15 Canada Geese and 5 gulls. Over land there were 3 Crows, 3 Starlings, 2 Grackles, a Red-wing, and, perhaps, a pheasant. The last leg, Speonk to Bridgehampton was the barest one of all, only one Osprey on a platform.

The last transect on the way home was the best, the walk from the Bridgehampton station ending at my house five miles north in Noyac. The walk took me past farm fields, tree farms, woodlands and residential neighborhoods. My ears counted as many birds as my eyes. There were 5 male Red-wing Blackbirds, a Grackle, 3 Catbirds, 2 Great-crested Flycatchers, 2 Wood Thrushes, a Carolina Wren, a Canada Goose and at least 10 Robins. I discovered a wonderful stand of Jack-in-the-pulpit on the shoulder of one of the roads. While the last transect was by far the most tiring, it was also the one that certified my love of the countryside, and my despair when placed in an urban or suburban environment. I felt uplifted and maybe the gentle hand of a higher being when I finally reached the door to my home.



Adventures from Birdathon 2008

Beth Gustin

When my alarm goes off at 3:30 am it can only mean one thing — Birdathon!

On May 10, three intrepid birders, Jay Kuhlman, Richard Kaskan and I ventured out well before dawn to tally as many different bird species as possible in one day. Pearl Kuhlman, who has joined our team for the past several years as our sole canine participant and is an accomplished birder herself, was also with us. When we arrived at our meeting place at 4:15, we already had two species recorded — American Robin and Eastern Screech Owl.

4:40 am: After a short walk into the pine barrens near Gabreski Airport, we heard a Whip-poor-will calling and a few minutes later a Chuck-will's-widow. We stood silently in the pre-dawn darkness, listening to these calls and appreciating the presence of these birds. As we walked back to the car, Eastern Towhees started calling, signaling the approaching sunrise. We decided to head straight to Cupsogue to try to catch some rails.

5:20 am: At Cupsogue County Park we were greeted by the calls of several Clapper Rails — an amazing thing to hear! We walked through the dunes to the beach along Moriches Bay, where we tallied several shorebird species including Ruddy Turnstone, American Oystercatcher, Dunlin, Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers and the first of many Willets. Along the edges of the marsh were Common Yellowthroat and Yellow Warbler.

6:20 am: After several minutes of cat and mouse with a sparrow, we finally were able to positively identify it as a Seaside Sparrow. Back across the dunes to the ocean side we picked out a Gannet flying and a single Black Scoter in the surf.

6:40 am: We were energized by the fact that we had already counted 40 species — a great start!

6:50 am: We stopped at Widgeon Way in Westhampton Dunes. Here we saw our first Tree Swallows. Richard reaffirmed his reputation for being able to spot great

birds on distant posts by finding a Peregrine Falcon perched out in the marsh. As we were packing up the scope, a Merlin whizzed by overhead, carried by the fairly strong breeze that was keeping the morning feeling quite chilly.

7:15 am: Pikes Beach — We saw a pair of Piping Plovers, one inside a fenced off enclosure designed to protect this endangered species and one nearby. I never tire of seeing these tiny yet resilient creatures!

7:50 am: A quick stop at Quogue Village Wetlands Preserve gave us Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow. On Dune Road we also saw a Least Sandpiper. A Lesser Yellowlegs was kind enough to hang out with some Greater Yellowlegs so that we could be confident in counting it as Lesser!

8:20 am: At Road K we picked up Brown Thrasher, then decided to head back inland to get some woodland birds.

8:45 am: We arrived at Maple Swamp where we met up with two more team members, Michelle and Greg Baron, and tallied several species right away: Baltimore Oriole, Black and White Warbler, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ovenbird, and Black-throated Blue warbler. In the first open field we heard and then saw a beautiful male American Redstart. Upon reaching the small pond at Maple Swamp we caught up with another group of familiar birders out for a field trip. Here we saw a female Scarlet Tanager and Northern Parula. A pair of Wood Ducks flew up off of the pond as we approached. An Eastern Kingbird perched on a branch above the water, giving us all a nice long view. A female Red-breasted Merganser was also

spotted. Coming out of the woods, we saw a Green Heron at another water hole, and a Blue-headed Vireo was a nice last find.

11:45 am: We left Maple Swamp a little bit disappointed about the lack of wood warblers. The day was warming up as the sun got higher and the wind died down and we were optimistic about our next stops.

12:20-1:00 pm: "Woodcock Woods" on County Road 51 — Our disappointment was renewed as we picked up no new species here. Where were all of the warblers?

1:00-1:55 pm: Hunter's Garden. Still quiet, although we did find Magnolia Warbler and a beautiful male Bay-breasted Warbler.

2:15-2:30 pm: CR 51 yielded Eastern Bluebird and Red-tailed hawk. Grasshopper Sparrow was at the bike trail.

2:45 pm: Pepperidge Lake on the border of Eastport and East Moriches is always a sure spot to find Northern Rough-winged Swallow and this year did not disappoint. Tree Swallows were also seen, and we stayed a few minutes to enjoy the show put on by these aerial acrobats. A male Yellow-rumped Warbler was also seen in gorgeous breeding plumage, a much different sight than the yellow-rumps that we see during the winter.

3:00 PM: Watchogue Avenue in East Moriches. A friend's backyard is home to a family of Black-crowned Night Herons and we saw two juveniles there. A Glossy Ibis also flew over. At the edge of a small pond we saw what was probably a North-

Birdathon 2008

Birdathon 2008, held on May 10th, was a success again this year with 138 species tallied! Thanks to all members of our three birding teams — Jay and Susan Kuhlman, Richard Kaskan, Michelle and Greg Baron, Steve and Thomas Biasetti, Jim and Alice Osterlund, Dan Wilson and Allyson Dyer, and Beth Gustin. Also a huge thanks to all who donated money for this fundraiser. The money that was raised will be shared with the Kaler's Pond Audubon Center and will support our education and conservation programs. A full list of the 138 species can be found on our website.

ern Waterthrush, but none of us got a good enough look to be able to count it. A Least Tern was at the end of Watchogue.

3:30 pm: Two Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were spotted on Sedgemere Road in Center Moriches. We decided to make a pit stop at the Kuhlman's house before making our way to our last destination.

4:30 pm: We arrived at Terrell River County Park with cautious optimism. There were several key species that we thought had a pretty good chance to see, but the time of day was not the best for power birding. We were soon rewarded with what the three of us agreed was the best sighting of the day — a male Indigo Bunting and a male Blue Grosbeak sitting in the same binocular field! What a wonderful sighting and a great opportunity to compare the two species — a real treat for us! After that, we felt that any new species would be icing on the cake. A detour down to the edge of the river gave us another thrill. Two Marsh Wrens started calling then came within few feet of us — too close for binoculars!

We were more than satisfied with the great sightings we had at Terrell River but still missed out on two species that were there in years past — Great Horned Owl and Cooper's Hawk. We did pick up our third vireo of the day, White-eyed Vireo.

6:00 pm: After 14 hours of birding, we decided to split up as a group and go our separate ways. Our wood warbler count ended up at 13 species. Jay came through again this year with some key species he saw on a few detours before heading home — Black Skimmer, Killdeer, Willow Flycatcher, Spotted Sandpiper, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Chimney Swift, and Cedar Waxwing. Richard also had a great tally — Eastern Meadowlark at Calverton. I, on the other hand, had a glass of wine and was asleep probably before my teammates arrived at their homes.

*Birdathon 2008 was a success again this year, but not just because of the 138 total species seen by the three teams that participated or the donations given by our generous supporters. The stories, comraderie, and sharing of wonderful sightings that we will surely recall in years to come are what make us continue to get up before the birds each year for this adventure that we call **Birdathon**.* 

Photos and Observations from our Members

From Bob Murray My Purple Martin colony has settled in for the summer at Apaucuck Point in Westhampton. I have about 20 nesting pairs in my Martin houses. I have been a Purple Martin landlord for about 20 years and enjoy the "music" every morning.



From Beth's East Moriches yard.

First is a female Baltimore oriole collecting fur for nesting material. I have two nesting pairs of orioles in my yard, one pair in a maple and one pair in a locust. The dog is my dog Barley, who is the source of the fur. The third is a gray catbird feeding on an orange in my garden. The oranges are a favorite food of my red-bellied woodpecker also.



365 Days of Spring

There is one,
No, there are two heads
sitting, sunning,
side-by-side.
Viewed broadside
from my bathroom window;
tall, elegant...
Preening one another.

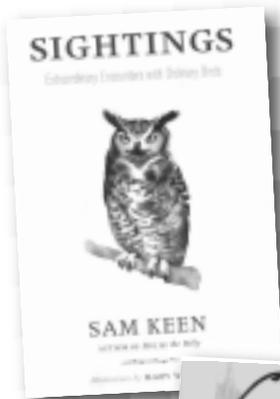
April Easter 07, when first see;
Returning in November's autumn.
Facing East, wintering
in an old tall spreading evergreen...
A pair of roosting

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS.

*From Betty Marie Wybenga
Center Moriches*

On Birds and Books...

Reviews by Eileen Schwinn,
ELIAS President



Sightings
Extraordinary Encounters with Ordinary Birds

by Sam Keen, Illustrated by Mary Woodin

This rather slim volume begins with the familiar verse from Song of Solomon 2:10-12 "Arise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land". In the chapters which follow, the author interweaves his introduction to the world of birds and nature, with his spiritual development and growth over a lifetime. The struggles between life and death, love and loss, city and country are accompanied by Keen's observations of birds and birders. He credits the childhood encounter of an Indigo Bunting with setting him along a road of discovery and inspiration for a "never-ending quest for the sacred." Beautifully illustrated, I found the gentleness of this book an inspiration. Birding facts interspersed with poetry, personal diary-like entries and at times, humor, history and ancient myths made this a lovely book to read. A terrific gift for any bird-loving friend to receive.

I give it Four Feathers!

Club George
The Diary of a Central Park Bird-Watcher

by Bob Levy

Written as "self-prescribed therapy" for a recently downsized and out of work Central Park enthusiast, Levy records his mid-April through late July daily "visits" with the birds of the park. Most notable is George, a Red-winged Blackbird who learns to coexist with the human visitors to the park by frequently taking food from extended hands to feed himself and his offspring. The title is the informal name Levy gives the group of birders who come to feed this somewhat tame wild bird. The uniqueness of Central Park in the birding world and the cycle of arrival, mating, caring for the young, and then departing, mixed with little nuggets of birding lore and information, helped round out what truly is the author's birding diary. Personal snap-shots of George and other avian residents are sprinkled through out the book. This might be a book best borrowed from your local library to read, especially if you have ever found yourself in Central Park during the Springtime, looking up at warblers!

I give it Three Feathers out of Five.



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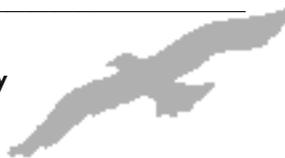
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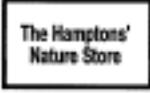
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Fighting Ticks

Sally Newbert

As birders get together, the conversation frequently takes the turn, "What about those ticks?"

There is a new line of clothing out that touts its ability to repel those nasty ticks. It's called Buzz Off and is available at the major sports outfitters (LL Bean, EMS).

Here is what the Gear Guy, an online source, has to say about it:

"The Ex Officio (makers of Buzz Off) folks figured out a way to embed bug repellent within the fabric used in its new line of Buzz Off clothing. The ingredient used is permethrin, a synthetic version of a natural bug repellent called pyrethrin, found in

some flowers. Permethrin is odorless, safe for humans, and extremely effective. A bonus when used in clothing is that you're not dousing yourself in the stuff.

Does it work? Yes, it does. And quite well, at least on late-season Pacific Northwest mosquitoes (admittedly not the most vicious denizens of the insect world). It works best on the areas it covers, of course—ending that annoying problem of bugs that bite through shirts. But it gives off enough of an aura that unclothed areas get some protection, too.

Alas, in time it does wash off. Ex Officio says in 25 washings, which isn't bad. You'll also want to wash Buzz Off clothing separately from regular clothes. And, no dry-cleaning.

Buzz Off does add some to the cost of

a garment, but not too much.

If you spend a lot of time in buggy country, and don't like liquid repellents, Buzz Off is definitely worth a try."

If you try it, let *The Osprey* know what you think.

Some of the other suggestions:

SupHose – ticks can't get through the fine weave.

Vinyl rubber boots (Wellies) – insects don't like the vinyl.

Skin So Soft by Avon

Light clothing, although easier to see the ticks, also seems to attract them.

Bring tape, packing or scotch to trap them, so you are not flicking them back to bite again.

Deet, but don't put it on your body, only your clothes.



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Mark Your Calendars!

July

Mon., July 7

Nature Program: Cal Vornberger, Author of *Birds of Central Park* will speak at the monthly meeting, *see page 1*

Sat., July 12

Field Trip: Dune Road, starting at Shinnecock Inlet *see page 2*

August

Mon., August 4

Nature Program: Paul Adams founder of the The Baiting Hollow Hummingbird Sanctuary will discuss his experiences, *see page 1*

Sat., August 9

Field Trip: The Islands of Moriches Inlet: catch the wave of migrating shore birds, *see page 2*

Events to watch for in September

Sat., Sept. 6

Field Trip: Jamacia Bay



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THE OSPREY

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