



THE OSPREY

Summer 2021 — Vol. XLVI, No. 2

Westhampton Woody or The Stork Who Strayed!

By Eileen Schwinn



Photo: Eileen Schwinn

We, at ELIAS, receive – and answer – a good number of questions through our website. On May 4th, 2021, a little after 10 pm, the following arrived, “If anyone is interested, I photographed a Wood Stork today in Westhampton.” Most birders are asleep by then, so the message wasn’t read until the following morning..... And after it was read, a number of wheels started turning! Folks got in touch with other folks, more information – and a photo (from the sender) was received – and even more wheels started turning. A handful of birders hit the road – in the rain – to see if the bird could be relocated, no easy task when there are scores and scores of waterfront marshland miles to check out, from Eastport to East Quogue (not to mention all of Dune Rd...) No Joy – in birder terminology. A posting went out on the New York Rare Bird List-serve, alerting the all-Long Island birding community of the possibility of the bird being seen anywhere along the LI shoreline. By 11 am or so, the next morning, a notification went to subscribers of a facebook listing: STORK!

And, at that point, many, many wheels started turning – all headed to Westhampton to see an extremely unique bird for the area!

Anyone who has traveled to Florida or any of the Gulf states, has, most-likely seen a Wood Stork, usually along the shoreline of muddy ponds. Weighing in at a little more than 5 lbs, 40 inches from bill to tail, and with a wing-span of over six feet, this long-legged, black wing-tipped, white bodied,

huge billed bird, (and, to many, a rather ugly fellow), why, this bird is just NOT supposed to be here. Historically, the last Wood Stork seen on LI, was on April 2, 1962 (when a flock of 15 were reported at Jones Beach). Before that between Aug 17-18, 1958, Orient, East Marion, and Riverhead all “hosted” a flock of between 10-13 Wood Stork – most likely, the same flock. All these sightings were one day wonders. In June 21, 1890 (that’s 1890!!) a Wood Stork was SHOT in East Marion! And 65 years later, almost to the day, on June 25, 1955, in the very same East Marion wooded swamp, another solitary Wood Stork was reported. *And that’s it!*

Our Westhampton Wood Stork spent most of it’s time “migrating” north and south, between the head waters of Beaver Dam Creek, along Montauk Highway, along the marshland of South Road, and the shallow waters along side of Bayview Ave. The bird was seen roosting in a tree, feeding on small fish/frog/???, and escaping into a tree top, when approached too closely by some excited humans! By

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Photo: Sausan Saunders

FOR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL SEE BACKCOVER!

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Progress and the Future!

Byron Young

We have had a wonderful series of bird walks beginning in March with Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge, and then the North Fork Preserve in April. May saw us hold one walk a week starting in Rocky Point Area, then Hunters Garden, followed by a nice stroll around the western trails at EPCAL, then concluding with a walk at Manorville Hills County Park. It was great to be able to hold these walks reconnecting with our feathered friends and fellow birders. Bird walks are scheduled into the late summer focusing on the shorebirds on and around Moriches and Shinnecock Bays. Those walks will be announced via Constant Contact on our Facebook Page and on our web page.

With the gracious support of the Quogue Wildlife Refuge Staff, we have been able to hold monthly Members Zoom meetings. I would like to be able to say with some certainty when we will get back to in person Members meetings, but we have not reached that point yet. I am hopeful that we will be able to commence in person meetings soon. We will hold the Zoom Meeting options open for the late Fall and Winter in case of inclement weather and continued health related issues. We have been able to record many of them and they are available on the website.

I, unfortunately, do not believe that we are in a position to hold our Annual Dinner this Fall but the Board of Directors is beginning to look at options for a future dinner event. The Annual Dinner is one of our major events of the year. The company is always great, the venues are always nice, the food is delicious, our Dinner Committee always manages to find a great speaker and the raffle prizes fill out the agenda. Plus, everyone gets to wear their finest casual dinner outfits.

We are again planning on producing the ELIAS Annual Calendar, so save your best bird photos. We have been collecting some photos but will be reaching out to Members for additional submissions toward the end of the summer. Our calendar is not a competition for the best photos but a recognition of the photographic talents of our members and a reminder of the wonderful birds that we encounter in our travels around Eastern Long Island. Keep your cameras at the ready as you get out this summer and fall.

On the political front, we have been active in contacting local Town Leaders regarding projects or event proposals in our area. Recently, the Board of Directors sent a letter to the Town of Riverhead regarding the proposed Drag Racing events that

were scheduled to start in late June. We expressed our concerns over the timing of the event and suggested moving the dates to later in summer. A few folks from other Audubon Chapters who attended the Riverhead Town Board Meeting offered the same suggestion which the Town and the event organizers agreed to. While we would still rather not have drag racing on the EPCAL runways this compromise allows the racing fans the opportunity to race their vehicles in a place other than our roads and streets. We will continue to monitor this activity and would encourage everyone who lives near EPCAL to record their observations and views for another letter to the Town Board summarizing our observations and reaction to the event.

Finally, I would like to thank each and every Member for their continued support and patience as we return to more normal and traditional activities. Please feel free to reach out to us with suggestions for meeting speakers, interesting topics that we might explore, and new places to birds.

Good Birding

Byron

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Join Our Zoom Programs

September to December

It does not look like we will be able to schedule in-person meetings this year. But we are happy to bring you these programs which we hope you will enjoy from the comfort of your home. They are on Monday nights, like our regular meetings. Quogue Wildlife Refuge is helping us by hosting these Zoom meetings. We are grateful to Cara Fernandes for her help to make these programs possible.

You will need to register for each program in order to receive a link.

The invitations are available on the web site:

easternlongislandaudubon.org

go to the program page and click on the link. You will receive an acknowledgment from Quogue Wildlife Refuge and on the day of the program, a reminder.

We have recorded some of our past meetings and those recordings are available on the program page.



MONDAY, SEPT. 13 AT 7:00 PM

Creating Wildlife Gardens

Ecologist Amanda Furcall will discuss the conservation value of small garden-style habitats, show examples of the diverse ecosystems they produce and guide you in starting your own wildlife garden.

Amanda's degrees in Conservation Biology and Public Administration have informed her work, stewarding habitat on Long Island with nonprofits. She is currently the Landscape Ecologist for the Sisters of St. Joseph, caring for their 212 acre Brentwood campus.



MONDAY, OCTOBER 4 AT 7:00 PM

What Makes A Birder A Birder?

Jody Enck, Avian Biologist &
Conservation Social Scientist

More information to come. Check the website.



MONDAY, NOV. 1 AT 7:00 PM

Bluebirds & More...

John Rogers
Co-founder NYS Bluebird Society

John's presentation includes the life history of the Eastern Bluebird and other birds that nest in bluebird

boxes. He also touches on nest box management. He shares his love for the natural world in hopes the audience will take away some broader and deeper messages about nature. Sprinkled throughout are a few wildflowers, butterflies, other birds, with quotes by some of the great naturalists of the past. With beautiful photographs, sounds, this program is of interest to anyone who appreciates nature.

John has maintained a trail of bluebird nest boxes in central NY north of Syracuse for over 4 decades. He was a co-founder of the New York State Bluebird Society and has received numerous awards for his bluebird conservation work. In 2010 he was a recipient of the Hero of Conservation Award from the Syracuse Post Standard. An experienced birder and member of the Onondaga Audubon Society in Syracuse. BA in Biology, SUNY Oswego. He is a retired banker. He and his wife Sue live in Oneida.



MONDAY, DEC. 6 AT 7:00 PM

Wild Long Island

Chris Paparo, The Fish Guy

Chris will talk about some of the fascinating wildlife that can be found on the land, in the air, and in the waters of Long Island. He is a wildlife photographer, writer and lecturer who enjoys bringing public awareness to the diverse wildlife on Long Island. Currently he manages the new Marine Sciences Center at the Southampton campus of Stony Brook University.

An award winning member of the Outdoor Writers Association of America and the New York State Outdoor Writers Association, Paparo is a freelance writer for several fishing and wildlife related publications. Although his work tends to focus on marine life, everything in the natural world is fair game.

When the Wildlife comes to you!

Backyard Adventures

Sally Newbert



Female Evening Grosbeak, photo by Eileen Schwinn

Below: Box turtle comes for help.
Photo by Sally Newbert



Every now and again, a really nice bird will just show up at your feeder. This spring I was treated to just that. Late one afternoon I looked out and there was a bird I did not recognize. I saw immediately that it was a grosbeak, but not one I had ever seen before. I rushed first for the camera and then the bird book. The National Geographic bird book was in the living room, but there was no bird that looked like this one. Could it be that rare? *Humm*, probably not.

Well, upstairs I went and pulled out the Sibley's. There she was a lovely Evening Grosbeak. I believe that they were more common years ago on Long Island, but this is the first I have ever seen. Then, on our walk at SOFO I spoke to Gigi Spates who confirmed that, although, not rare, they were in years past more plentiful than they are now.

My beautiful girl hung around for about 3 days, visiting briefly morning and evening, and then she was gone. The morning after I listed her on ebird Eileen Schwinn and her friend Mike made it over to get a look at her. A nice confirmation of the sighting.

Safe travels, Mrs. E. Grosbeak. Come on back on your way south. I will be waiting and oh, yes, bring the kids and stay awhile.

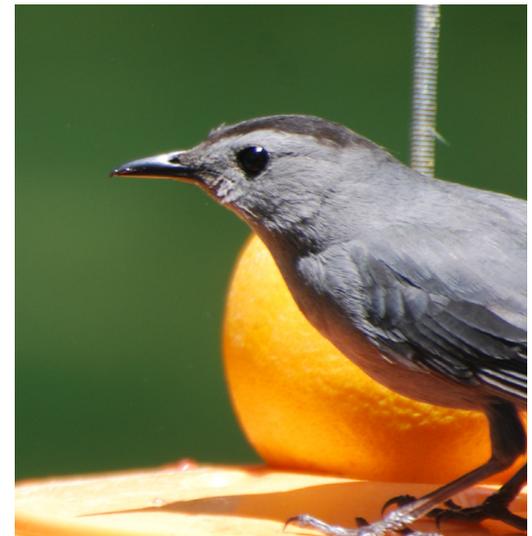
I was also pleased to welcome several Gray Catbirds to my feeders this spring. Such nice birds. They are much more sociable than most. With all their cat-like noises, they are not shy about complaining if the service is not up to snuff. Unlike other birds they really seem to enjoy the food we put out. They are constantly back and forth to get to the orange and love the grape jelly. Lately they seem to prefer suet. I have only gotten a glimpse at one of the babies.

To top off the backyard show I was delighted when several Baltimore Orioles showed up and took up residence somewhere nearby. The male Oriole is just like a ray of sunshine flying through the trees. I just never get tired of him. One day I had two males

and one female feeding on the orange. Unfortunately they did not stay long.

To top off the backyard events, once again I was watching the feeders, this time in the morning, and I saw a box turtle coming across the lawn toward the feeders. First I ran for the camera. As I got closer I noticed he had some evil looking iridescent flies around one of his legs, but I did not really know what to make of it. I kept an eye on him. After a short visit to the bird feeder he took off down the driveway, *ugh*, toward the road. I followed him down the driveway, then he crawled along the side of lawn for a bit and then tried to cross the road. About 2 years ago the field across the street had been fenced. I was not sure if the turtle could get through the fence. I picked him up to take him across and see if he fit through the openings. As I picked him up I saw my hand was covered with blood. Well, I thought, I guess you are not going across the road, my friend. After putting him in a flower pot, out of harms way, I came inside to call Turtle Rescue. I was quickly able to make a plan to bring him (I am pretty sure it was a male) to The Turtle Rescue of the Hamptons. Off we went to their sanctuary in Jamesport where the turtle is recovering under the care of Karen Testa the Executive Director of The Turtle Rescue of the Hamptons. She told me he has to come back to the place he was found when he has recovered. After all, my land has probably been his home longer then it has been mine. We named him Captain Marvel and we will welcome him back to his neighborhood when he has recovered.

Catbird comes for a snack. Photo by Sally Newbert



Neonicotinoid Insecticides

What are they & why we need legislation

Byron Young & Gigi Spates



As massive numbers of bees and other pollinators keep dying across the globe, study after study continues to connect these deaths to neonicotinoid pesticides (A.K.A. “neonics”).

From NRDC

Neonicotinoids, neonics for short, are a somewhat recent class of insecticides chemically related to nicotine. Like nicotine, the neonicotinoids act on certain receptors in the nervous system and were originally thought to be toxic only to invertebrates, like insects. Recent investigations have found them to affect mammals, birds and other higher organisms as well. Neonics are water-soluble, so a small quantity applied to a seed will dissolve when in contact with water and be taken up by the roots of the developing plant. Once inside the plant, the chemical enters the circulatory system traveling throughout the plant, providing protection against herbivorous insects. Almost all of the agricultural corn and about 1/3 of the soybeans planted in the US in 2013 were treated with a neonic seed coating. There is growing concern over neonic impacts on non-target species of insects, specifically pollinators, also on birds and even human beings, given the level of use.

The scientific literature is quite large containing studies that both tout the benefits and the growing levels of concerns relative to the use of neonicotinoids. Because of these concerns, Europe has recently banned several of the generic brands of neonics. In addition, Maryland and Connecticut have both enacted legislation banning the use of neonics. The Maryland bill was brought forward based on the concerns that neonic pesticides are contributing to the mortality of bees and other pollinators. According to a 2015 USDA

survey, Maryland lost about 60% of hives in 2014, which is much higher than the national average of approximately 42%. But many researchers remain uncertain if there is enough evidence to prove that neonicotinoid pesticides have a fatal impact on pollinators. One theory is that low level exposure to neonicotinoids does not kill bees directly but impacts their ability to forage for nectar and find their way back to the hive.

A Natural Resources Defense Council article describes neonics as insecticides that are designed to kill insects by attacking their nerve cells. These chemicals, as stated above, enter the plants circulatory system, meaning they dissolve in water and are absorbed by plants. This will make all portions of the plant toxic, including the nectar, pollen, and fruit. Neonics are also used as a coating—which the plant soaks up as it grows—for certain plant seeds. In high concentrations these chemicals can make a plant toxic for years.

Neonics are now one of the most widely used insecticides and are used to replace older chemicals developed in the 1990's. The neonics were thought to be a safer chemical because they targeted specific insect brain receptors. These perceived benefits led to widespread use in agriculture and residential areas. Recent research has brought into question the benefits of these chemicals due to their persistence in the soil, ability to leach into

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Continued from page 5

the environment, high water solubility, and potential impacts on non-targeted species. For example, the impact on honeybees has raised a red flag given the decline in these important pollinators. Researchers have also indicated that neonics could impact birds that consume treated crop seeds, and indirectly by feeding on insect populations that feed on the plants. Consumption of just a few seeds may be enough to cause long-term damage to the birds' reproductive system.

While researching for this article, it was found that seventeen states, including New York, have proposed legislation to restrict the usage of neonicotinoids. However, only eight states have enacted some level of restrictions. Those restrictions primarily focus on residential usages.

During 2020 and 2021 the New York State Legislature considered two companion pieces of legislation proposing controls regarding the usage of Neonicotinoid Insecticides (S699B and A7429). Unfortunately, these two legislative proposals were not finalized before the end of the 2021/2022 session. The Senate bill (S699B) was passed by the Senate but the companion bill in the Assembly did not make it out of Committee. A previous attempt at drafting this legislation failed to make it out of Committee (2020/2021). The 2021 actions in the New York Legislature, while not the desired outcome, can be viewed as progress.

The purpose of this legislation is to prohibit the sale of certain neonicotinoid pesticides and the use of seeds coated with those neonicotinoid pesticides. The legislation would have required the Department of Environmental Conservation to review the latest scientific information concerning certain pesticide-active ingredients plus to establish dates for those actions to be required under the proposed amendments. The suite of chemical insecticides commonly called neonicotinoids include the following active ingredients: clothianidin, imidacloprid, thiamethoxam, dinotefuran or acetamiprid. Please do not ask us for the chemical formulas!

While the proposed legislation is a step in the right direction, the language leaves much wiggle room, serving to undermine the effectiveness of the restrictions. For anyone interested in the exact text of the proposed legislation, it can be viewed by a simple Google search for either of the Legislative Bill numbers (S699B or A7429).

It is anticipated that New York State Legislators will once again put forward proposals restricting the use of neonicotinoid pesticides, entitled the Birds and Bees Protection Act (S699B and A7429).

What can we do? We can reach out to our elected representatives stressing our support for this legislation and expressing our concerns for the loss of pollinators and the potential impacts on birds.

This issue seems to be becoming gaining momentum NY Audubon in conjunction with NRDC will be Please save the date: On Thursday, September 9th at 4pm our office will have a joint presentation with our friends at NRDC on the impacts of neonicotinoid pesticides on birds. Please join us to learn more about this issue and

how your chapter and our partners can help with efforts to ban wasteful uses of neonics in the next legislative session. Stay tuned for more on this as we get closer.

In conclusion, while many of us refrain from using chemicals around our yards—a great move on our part—we must remain vigilante. Most of the chemicals used in pesticides are long lived, meaning that they remain in the environment for extended periods of time affecting insect life, plant life, and potentially bird life, mammal life and even human life. If you find the need to resort to the use of chemicals, make sure that you check the labels of any pesticides used and avoid all that contain any of the following: clothianidin, imidacloprid, thiamethoxam, dinotefuran or acetamiprid. *(I know it would be nice if the label just said contains neonicotinoids!)*

Could the Mystery Illness Affecting Birds in the South & West be a Result of Neonics?

We have recently been advised about increased bird mortalities in the mid-Atlantic States (Maryland, Pennsylvania, and into Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio) and it has been suggested that people stop feeding birds and filling birdbaths because these actions concentrate potential sick birds. While New York has not had any reported outbreak of bird diseases we would encourage folks to make sure that their bird feeders and birdbaths are clean and to take them down if diseased birds are observed. It is interesting to note that this bird disease outbreak coincides with the recent 17 Year Cicada hatch.

It has been reported that many of the cicadas themselves demonstrated some level of illness. One has to wonder whether there is some connection between the Cicada hatch, the diseased birds and the use of neonics. Could the cicadas, while underground all those years, have ingested enough neonicotinoids to cause their own illness; then in the food chain, cause birds that are eating the cicadas to become ill too?

Just a question, there is no definitive evidence at this time.

Darkened Windows Save Migrating Birds

*New study finds
decreasing lit windows
could reduce bird
collisions by 60%*

Building lights are a deadly lure for the billions of birds that migrate at night, disrupting their natural navigation cues and leading to deadly collisions. But even if you can't turn out all the lights in a building, darkening even some windows at night during bird migration periods could be a major lifesaver for birds.

Research published this week in PNAS found that over the course of 21 years, one building sustained 11 times fewer nighttime bird collisions during spring migration and 6 times fewer collisions during fall migration when only half of the building's windows were illuminated, compared to when all windows were lit.

In the study, the factors that had the strongest effect on bird collisions were the intensity of the migration (more birds migrating = more collisions), the wind direction (westerly winds = more collisions), and area of illuminated windows (more surface area lit = more collisions).

The authors also calculated that if half of the building's windows had been darkened during peak migration periods, bird kills would have been reduced by around 60% over the past two decades.

The sheer strength of the link between lighting and collisions was surprising,"

says Benjamin Van Doren, a postdoctoral researcher at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and lead author of the research. "It speaks to the exciting potential to save birds simply by reducing light pollution."

To reach their conclusions, researchers from the Cornell Lab, the University of Michigan, and the Field Museum in Chicago, Colorado State University, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst examined bird data from McCormick Place, a 3-story convention center in the eastern section of Chicago, over 21 years (2000-2020).

At the heart of the study were the records of over 40,000 dead birds—including when they were killed, which window, and what species—collected at the convention center since 1978.



Selection of birds found at McCormick Place, from the scientific collections of the Field Museum. Image courtesy of Karen Bean, Field Museum.

Since 2000, these records have also included information about which windows bays were illuminated when each bird kill happened. By comparing this data from McCormick Place with other potential collision-risk factors such as weather conditions, moonlight, and migration intensity, researchers teased apart which conditions were deadliest for migrating birds.

Building strikes kill hundreds of millions of birds a year, and many of these occur at night and during the migration seasons, when hundreds of species of songbirds are moving across the hemisphere under the cover of darkness.

In response, a growing number of "lights out" initiatives and green building guidelines call for reductions in lighting

to aid migrating birds. Lights Out Chicago is among the oldest of over 40 initiatives across North America and brings together building managers, local conservation organizations, city staff, and scientists at the Field Museum. The results of the study strengthen the science behind lights out programs by showing that darkening windows can directly reduce bird mortality.

The researchers also aim to engage people in lights-out efforts with local migration alerts, which give advance warning of nights with large bird migration events. "Although permanently reducing light pollution is the ultimate goal, we hope to raise awareness through BirdCast migration forecasts. These forecasts predict the nights when large numbers of migrating birds will be at risk and turning off lights is critically important," says Van Doren.

Previous studies have shown that lights from city buildings, installations and events can attract and disorient migrating birds, shifting migration routes toward urban areas. And a 2018 study showed Chicago is the highest-ranked U.S. city for light pollution exposure risk to night-migrating birds; as many as 100 million birds pass through the greater Chicago area in the spring, and over 150 million in the fall.

The study also speaks to the importance of natural history collections in documenting global change. "These collision data are even more valuable because they are backed up by specimens that are available for study in the Field Museum," Winger says. "This will allow future scientists to go a step further in connecting different aspects of avian biology to the hundreds of millions of birds killed each year by window strikes."

Dave Willard, now collections manager emeritus at the Field Museum, started collecting dead birds around McCormick Place in 1978, and hopes that having a data-driven analysis of the hazards of nocturnal lighting can help inform positive change in the ways cities build and the ways buildings use their lights at night. "This paper brings together weather, radar and bird-collision data and shows unequivocally that reduced building lighting at night can substantially reduce bird fatalities."

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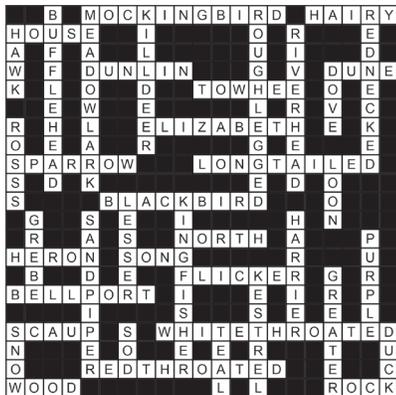
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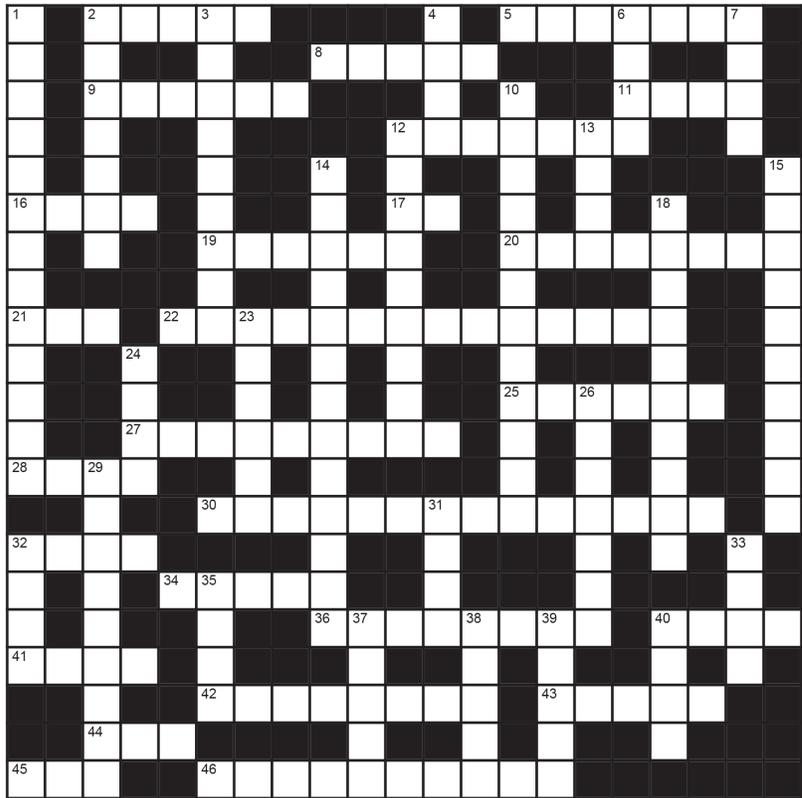
Our mission is to be an inspiration to those who feel a sense of kinship with Long Island by encouraging an appreciation for the natural world and a commitment to the environment.

Winter Sightings

Answers to spring puzzle
by Tom Moran



Summertime Tom Moran



Across

- 2 Purple, House
- 5 Swamp _____, seen & heard this spring at Arshamomaque
- 8 _____ Bay, Lesser Black-backed Gull seen here monthly since April at this South Fork location...*careful about parking*
- 9 _____ Bunting, or plant that produces a blue dye that was very popular in Great Britain in the 18th century
- 11 White-faced, seen at Jamiaca Bay NWR this spring
- 12 _____ River County Park, Center Moriches
- 16 _____ Sparrow or Swallow
- 17 Not Lft
- 19 Shorebird with slightly decurved bill
- 20 _____ Oystercatcher
- 21 Great-horned, Sawhet ...
- 22 _____ Warbler
- 25 _____ Tern, seen at Nickerson Beach this summer
- 27 _____ Vireo, the one with wing bars
- 28 Dabbling, Bay, Sea, Stiff-tailed, (Whistling, not a true one)
- 30 _____ with 32 across
- 32 _____ with 30 across
- 34 Sandhill _____
- 36 _____ Junco, aka Slate-colored
- 40 _____ Swan, not the Black found this summer
- 41 Carolina, House, Marsh, Sedge
- 42 Look for broken wing display
- 43 Not Hairy
- 44 ____ bellied Woodpecker

45 Cape ____ Warbler

46 40 Down, a pelagic bird

Down

- 1 _____ Sparrow, Oh, Canada, Canada
- 2 Yellow-shafted here
- 3 WC Fields would say "My little _____"
- 4 White-winged _____ seen on South Fork this summer
- 6 Aka Old Dominion _____, seen and heard regularly at 10 Down this spring and summer
- 7 Mae _____, who got to say the line back to Fields at the end of the movie, see 3 Down
- 10 _____ Preserve, Greenport
- 12 Ruddy _____
- 13 Ronkonkoma, good place to get a Common Merganser, but don't swim there if you're a male
- 14 _____ Sapsucker
- 15 Shorebird that runs against the tide
- 18 _____ Grebe
- 23 _____ Gull, dark under-wings
- 24 Buteo
- 26 _____ Caracara
- 29 _____ Bog
- 31 _____ Swallow
- 32 20 Across
- 22 20th State
- 35 _____ Pigeon
- 37 fee bee o
- 38 Great or Snowy
- 39 Hopefully a King _____
- 40 _____ 46 Across

“I Bird NY” 2021 for Adults & Children

The 2021 I BIRD NY Challenges are now open for beginning and experienced birders. Two levels of challenges provide the opportunity to identify birds, learn about bird life, and win birding equipment. Birdwatching is one of the fastest-growing outdoor recreational activities in the U.S, so join in on the fun by getting a start on your life list!

Anyone 16 years of age and younger are eligible to take the Beginner's Birding Challenge by identifying 10 common New York bird species and

submitting their challenge sheet to DEC. Experienced birders can take the I Bird NY Experienced Birder Challenge. Birders of any age must identify at least 10 different bird species found across New York State. All participants in this challenge will also receive a certificate of participation and be entered into a drawing for birding accessories.

The website to download the Pdfs files in order to participate is: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/109900.html>



Westhampton Woody or *The Stork Who Strayed*

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the end of its known two-week stay, this unique visitor to Westhampton was seen by over 105 birders, who recorded their entry on eBird (and probably many, many more people – there's no way of knowing!) Why, one local birder even brought her two little granddaughters to see this once in a life-time-in-your-neighborhood bird.....

A special THANKS to Donn Larson (the First Finder on May 1), Susan Saunders (who contacted ELIAS and sent the photo), Arie Gilbert (who re-found the bird and got the word out via facebook), the Southampton Town police officer who helped direct birders (and the traffic!) and to the ELIAS members who made sure the word got out to the birding community!!

If there's a lesson here, it's KEEP ON BIRDING!!! – you never know who will show up!!



Donn Larson: The first sighting of the Wood Stork was by this wonderful gentleman, who's family owned the north-side marina along South Rd, Westhampton. While driving past his childhood home, he glanced out into the marshland on May 1st, and saw the bird! He told me in a recent phone call, that it's really fitting, since he used to have his breakfast each morning, looking out the window and watching the marshland and the variety of birds! The Town of Southampton recently acquired the marina (as well as the marina on the south side of the "bridge") with Community Preservation Funds. Mr. Larson said he and his family are really honored to be contributing to the preservation of this beautiful piece of marshland and waterfront. *And I agree!*

Susan Saunders: A professional photographer, Ms Saunders contacted ELIAS after a friend identified what she had photographed. Without her notifying ELIAS, we never would have known such a rare bird was in our midst! Ms Saunders beautiful photographs are among those shown here.

It's time to welcome back the female hummers to your feeders

Courtesy of Bob Duchesne

Used with author's permission. This article appeared in the Bangor Daily News.

Bob Duchesne serves as vice president of Maine Audubon's Penobscot Valley Chapter.

It takes a lot of work to make a hummingbird. Small wonder that you haven't seen the females very much this summer. But that should all be changing right about now.

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are fast and agile. They can fly up to 25 miles per hour, yet stop on a dime. They can zip upward, downward and sideways. While some birds are able to hover, only hummingbirds can fly backward. They are able to fly 500 miles nonstop across the Gulf of Mexico.

Let's face it, if you're a baby hummingbird, you'd better be pretty well developed before you get off the nest.

Furthermore, the males play no role in raising the young'uns. They rush back in spring, arriving well before the ladies, looking to set up and vigorously defend a territory. Their courtship displays are energetic, and they'll put on a show for as many females as wander through. By the end of mating season, they're tuckered out.

Thus, the female is stuck with sole responsibility for building the nest. This takes her 6-10 days. Next, she lays an average of two eggs. Incubation takes another 10-14 days, during which she leaves the nest to feed for only about five minutes every hour.

Why the hummingbirds in your backyard are so mysterious

The chicks hatch blind and featherless. It can take up to a month before they're ready to leave the nest. Even then, mom still has to feed them for another few days – a porridge of regurgitated nectar, pollen and insects. The chicks need the insect protein to develop. She needs the nectar for energy. During all this time, she barely leaves her small territory. Through the first half of summer, you don't see her much.

Then you do. After a summer of wondering where your hummingbirds went, there they are. The feeder is suddenly busy. The lone male that claimed it as his own, defending it aggressively, is now overwhelmed by intruders. He gives up. Multiple hummers visit.

Your mileage may vary. Hummingbirds are not dependent on feeders, and they require other nutrients besides sugar water. They catch mosquitoes, gnats, fruit flies and other flying insects in mid-air. They pull trapped bugs out of spider webs, and glean small caterpillars from leaves. They often visit the holes made by sapsuckers to pick insects from the oozing sap.

Weather can have a big impact on feeder visitation. In a warm summer with lots of flowers and insects, they may ignore feeders altogether. In cool, wet weather, they may visit more often. And, of course, your hummers may prefer your neighbor's flowers, ignoring yours. Every year is different.

There are roughly 325 hummingbird species on the planet, all of them in the New World, most of them in the tropics. The length and curvature of the bill for each species is specialized for feeding on the particular blooms in their home regions. Some hummingbirds are larger than sparrows. Cuba's Bee Hummingbird is the smallest bird in the world.

Eight species breed in the United States, though a few others visit. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are the only nesting hummers in the east, but they have the largest range of any North American

hummingbird. Their bills are best suited for tubular-shaped blossoms, and they are particularly fond of monarda, also known as bee balm.

"Live fast, die young" could be the motto for our hummingbirds. Their hearts beat about 50 times per second — up to four times faster for a displaying male. Their average lifespan is only about three years. The oldest known banded bird was 9 years old when she was recaptured. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds winter throughout Central America, necessitating a long migration twice a year. They're bold around bigger birds, except that larger hummingbird species tend to push them around. Rufous Hummingbirds sometimes wander east, and they're known to bully ruby-throated hummingbirds.

Bird populations have been declining generally across the country, mostly due to habitat loss. Not so for hummingbirds. Their numbers have slowly increased, thanks to our fondness for planting flowers and erecting feeders.

Just remember three things. First, avoid food dye. The red color in some commercial products is unnecessary, and can be harmful. Four parts water to one part sugar is sufficient.

Second, clean the feeders often. Mold can build up quickly in midsummer, and the nectar can ferment. I use small feeders that empty quickly, just to force myself to wash them at every filling.

Third, hummingbirds are clever about most predators, but they can be clueless about cats. Make sure feeders are placed where cats can't hide



Working hard to keep the babies fed, she won't be at your feeders until mid to late summer. Photo: Eileen Schwinn

Seed Sale at QWR



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13TH FROM 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

This is a fund-raiser for Eastern Long Island Audubon Society & The Quogue Wildlife Refuge with special thanks for their help to Eastport Feed.

★ Please pre-order your seed. ★ Pre-payment is required ★ **Orders must be received by October 11!**

On-line orders will be accepted from October first to the eleventh at the Quogue Wildlife Refuge web site: www.QuogueWildlifeRefuge.org. There will be a link on the Eastern Long Island Audubon Society web site.

ON THE DAY OF THE SALE

YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DRIVE THROUGH THE REFUGE TO PICK UP YOUR SEED.

Qty	Description	Price	Total
_____	25 lb Black Oil Sunflower	\$30.00	_____
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_____	20 lb Fancy Flight Premium Wild Bird Mix	\$22.00	_____
_____	40 lb Fancy Flight Premium Wild Bird Mix	\$36.00	_____
_____	25 lb Niger Seed	\$32.00	_____
_____	11 oz Suet Cake	\$ 2.50	_____
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Return this order form to Quogue Wildlife Refuge, P.O. Box 492, Quogue, NY, 11959

Orders must be received by October 11, 2021.

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