



THE OSPREY

March/April 2020 — Vol. XLV, No. 2

Native Plants, A Few Spring Thoughts

Sally Newbert

Native plants are a lovely addition to anyone's garden and maybe with a little help and research we can make our gardens a friendlier place for birds and butterflies, and a more beautiful place for you to enjoy.

What is a native plant?

Pretty obvious but a native plant occurs naturally in a particular area. They provide essential food and shelter for birds and since native plants are adapted to local conditions, they generally require less upkeep, saving you time, water, and money. The key to getting started is picking the right plants for your area.

How can I find Native Plants?

That can be tricky. Last year I stopped at quite a few nurseries, only a few had native plant sections. When you ask many nurseries seem to give you a look like - "well, why would you want that?" The sections usually look rather pathetic compared to the colorful flowering plants being offered in the other sections. So although we all strive to make our gardens into something worthy of Monet's Giverny it doesn't look like it is possible from the ragamuffin plants in the small native plant section. But even the showiest garden can incorporate a few native plants. Knowledge is your first step. Audubon.com offers some help. Put in your zip and it will provide a list of plants for your area and suggest a few sources. Speak up when you go to your local garden center perhaps they will realize that people are looking for these plants and they will try to make them more available.

A local source for native plants and herbs is The Peconic Herb Farm at 2749 River Road in Calverton. It is a wonderful spring trip, they do have an assortment of native plants (and lots of others too). I bought a Viburnum there years ago, it has turned into a large bushy shrub with a very nice symmetrical shape, and best of all it seems to thrive on neglect. Spring brings some lovely white flowers leading up to small red berries which are gone quite quickly.

Some of the other bush-type plantings include American Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) a species of holly native to eastern North America. The berries are an important food resource for some species of bird.

Shadbush, Junebush or Service berry, all names for the same plant, *Amelanchier arborea*. It has spring flowers that attract a variety of insects and it is those insects that supply food for the birds and just at the time when they need it the most. This bush can grow up to 25'.

The low shrub type bushes you might want to consider are High-bush Blueberry and Bayberry. These do not get very large. I have a few Blueberry bushes in pots that I keep for the birds. There were a few berries last year, but I think the birds got to them before I had a chance to admire them. Bayberry has hard little berries favored by the Yellow-rumped or Myrtle Warbler. They do very well by shore.

For a few flowering plants that may be incorporated into your garden, try Black-eyed Susan, *ridbeckia hirta*. This well known plant produces flowers July through October, grows to a height of 2 to 3 feet.

Continued on page 2

Dear Members & Friends,

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in an effort to safeguard the health and safety of our members, field trip leaders and speakers, we have decided to cancel all our events until further notice. This includes our monthly meetings and field trips. We will heed the advice of our health care professionals and return with new dates for these events, when safe to do so.

National Audubon Society advises we follow social distancing guidelines, do not share binoculars or spotting scopes and use hand sanitizer whenever needed.

We will always take into account the health and safety of our members and their families as our first priority.

Please stay connected with us by visiting our Facebook page and our website.

Sincerely,

Byron Young

for the ELIAS Board of Directors

Native Plants, A Few Spring Thoughts

Continued from page 1

It is very attractive to pollinators. If you let the flower heads stay over the winter, it will provide seeds for migratory birds. It is perennial so be sure to plant it where it can take hold. Once established it should do well. OK, if you can't resist they make good cutting flowers too. Usually they are prolific enough to allow you some nice spring/summer bouquets.

Cardinal Flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*, as its name suggests is bright red. An automatic for attracting Hummingbirds. It is tall and once established should create quite a show. If you find a good spot, it may do some reseeding too.

Let's not forget about Bee Balm, *Monarda didyma*, available in a few colors, it attracts bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. It flowers June through August, it is a perennial and it too, does a bit of reseeding.

Another showy flower, a bit shorter and harder to find and get established is the Butterfly Weed. This bright orange flower grows on a compact plant and only get to be about a foot tall. If you can get this plant going, you will be very happy with it, but it is a bit on the fussy side.

Don't forget to get some annuals. The bright colors of the zinnas seem to attract all sorts of insects and birds.

I have gathered information from a variety of sources, including recommendations from Audubon and North Shore Audubon. If you have a favorite plant that you have had a good experience with, please tell us about it. It would be very nice to know what does well here from the folks that are our neighbors. 



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Membership Acknowledgment

Byron Young

I would like to take this opportunity at the suggestion of Tom Moran, our Treasurer, to thank each and every member in good standing for your continued support of our chapter. Your dues are the life blood of the Chapter supporting the publication of *The Osprey*, supporting our monthly meetings and events like Earth Day. We have supported attendance at summer Department of Environmental Conservation, Youth Conservation Camps and in special cases offered partial assistance to young birders to attend educational programs further afield. We have been able to offer limited assistance to adults wishing to attend summer programs.

Your membership dues help defray the costs of materials that we provide for our Annual Dinner, and programs supported by the Chapter. The Annual Calendar is supported by members' photographs and the initial cost is supported by membership monies. Our hopes with the Calendar are to, at a minimum break even, and to make a small profit to benefit the Chapter. To date we have been successful in achieving that goal.

This is your Chapter. While you see the Chapter's Board Members at monthly meetings, or on walks we are working for the Chapter, which is all of you. We like to hear from folks with ideas or suggestions for programs, bird walks, and environmental concerns in our area. Please do not hesitate to reach out to anyone of the Chapter's Board Members. In an attempt to create additional discussion, I will add an open item to our monthly meeting agenda to seek members input.

The board of Directors for the Eastern Long Island Audubon Society has been discussing the need to add an additional Board Member or two. I do not know how it happens but none of us are getting any younger, while our enthusiasm remains high, we find that we need more assistance in meeting what we perceive as the goals of the Chapter. So please feel free to reach out to us about becoming a

member of the ELIAS Board of Directors, we promise that it will not take up all of your free time. Actually, the time you provide is up to you. The Board meets six times a year to discuss upcoming events, plan for the annual dinner, Earth Day, monthly bird walks, local environmental issues such as EPCAL and other issues as they come up.

In closing this section, I again want to acknowledge all members in good standing for their contributions to the success of this Chapter. Moreover, it is important to recognize that this is your Chapter and your participation, attendance at meeting and walks is greatly appreciated. We would encourage you to bring your friends along to meetings and walks to introduce them to our Chapter and to birding.



One last sad note, the Long Island Birding Community lost one of its very active birding members recently, Mr. Michael Sperling of the South Shore Audubon Chapter. Mike was the President of that Chapter, an active member of the New York Audubon Council and the keeper of Long Island Audubon Chapter records. Mike and his chapter were heavily involved in environmental concerns related to their area in addition to helping to develop broader support for larger statewide and national environmental concerns. Mike will be missed by all who knew him. 



**Sad but true -
the 2020 Long Island
Natural History Conference
has been canceled!**

April & Early May Events



Saturday, April 18, 2020

Earth Day Celebration

From Noon – 3:00 pm

Come and celebrate nature and our lovely planet at the Refuge!

The day will include guided birding walks by ELIAS, live animal presentations, crafts, environmental exhibitors, and self-guided kayaking and canoeing on Old Ice Pond.

This celebration is offered by Eastern Long Island Audubon Society, Westhampton Beach Earth Day, & Quogue Wildlife Refuge.

**It is the 50th anniversary of Earth Day Celebrations!
A great day for all ages!**

Check <http://quoguewildliferefuge.org> for more detailed schedule of events.

No reservations necessary. Rain or shine.

Monday Evening Meeting, May 4, 2020 at 7:15 pm

QWR Walk & A Movie

CANCELED!
SPRING should be on the way. Come enjoy a walk around Quogue Wildlife Refuge and we will see if we can find some of the birds that are either migrating through or who have come in to nest. Many species are possible this time of year, so you never know. Overall Quogue Wildlife Refuge has had 166 species that have been reported there, one-hundred-and-eleven in May. (numbers according to ebird).

After the walk we hope to come back to the Nature Center enjoy a movie and a snack. 🐦

**Meetings are held at Quogue Wildlife Refuge,
3 Old Country Road, Quogue, NY**

**Directions are on the website:
www.easternlongislandaudubonsociety.org**

Meetings are free and open to all.

Elizabeth Morton Wildlife Refuge

On March 14 ELIAS went Elizabeth Morton Wildlife Refuge. A few new comers joined us and we all delighted their reactions.
Photos by Bob Gunning.



Early Spring Walks

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2020, MEET AT 8:30 AM

NORTH FORK COUNTY PARK

Leader: Byron Young

This is a relatively new county park. It was purchased in 2011. It had been a private hunt club. There are plans to have a variety of facilities and there were some drainage issues that forced some destruction, but it still remains mostly wild. There are a few ponds on the property. We hope to find migrating and overwintering species.

The park is located at 5330 Sound Ave, Riverhead, NY 11901. It is east of Church Lane.



Cedar Waxwing, a beautiful spring bird.

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2020, MEET AT 8:30 AM

WERTHEIM NWP

Leader: Byron Young

CANCELED!

This 2,550 acre refuge on the south shore of Long Island is bisected by the Carmans River; a New York state designated scenic river and one of the largest on the island. Wertheim hosts a variety of habitats including oak-pine woodlands, grasslands and fresh, brackish and salt water wetlands. These habitats attract and support many types of wildlife including osprey, muskrat, fox, turtles, and frogs. The refuge also serves as a haven for waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors and songbirds. At the beginning of May we are hoping to see the beginning of the migrating warblers and the warblers, vireos and flycatchers that regularly nest at Wertheim.

The Refuge is located at 340 Smith Road in Shirley, NY 11967. It is just west of the William Floyd Parkway.

May brings the warblers, some of the prettiest birds around. ELIAS is planning walks to Manorville Hills County Park, Hunters Garden, Quogue Wildlife Refuge, North Fork County Park and on June 6 a joint walk with SoFo in Bridgehampton.

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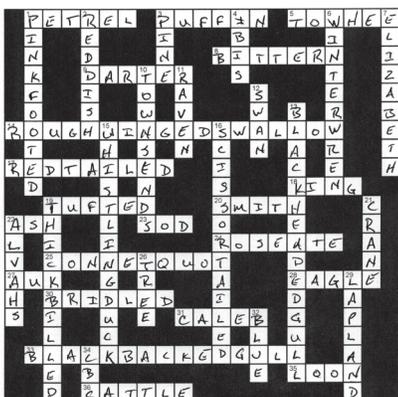
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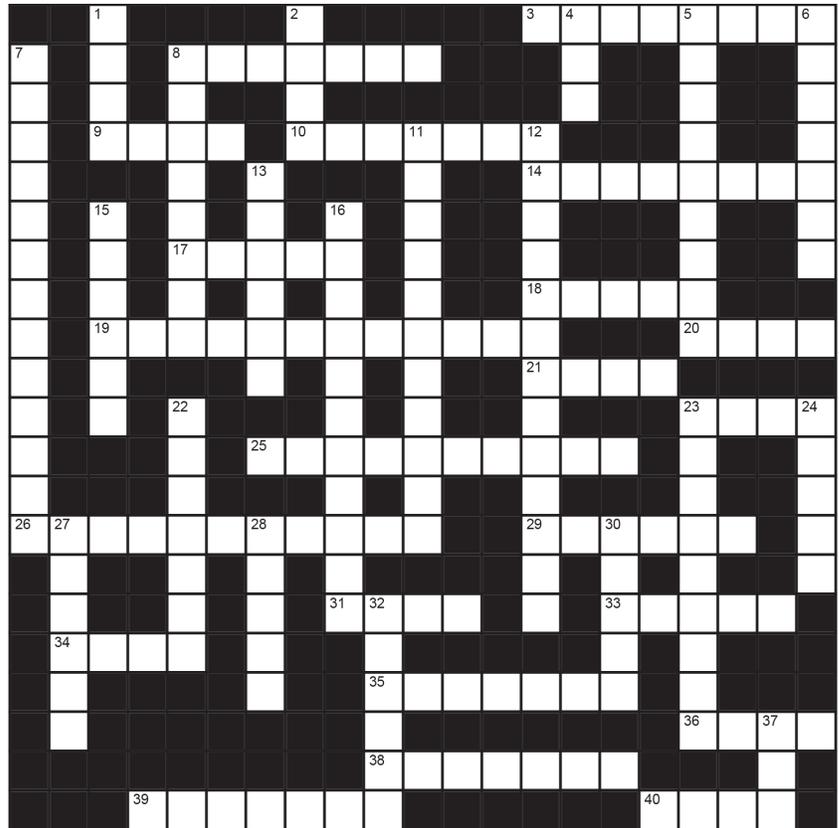
Our mission is to be an inspiration to those who feel a sense of kinship with Long Island by encouraging an appreciation for the natural world and a commitment to the environment.

Winter Birding

Answers to January/February puzzle by Tom Moran



Happy Spring Tom Moran



Across

- 3 American _____
- 8 Brown-headed _____
- 9 Streamlined water birds, that unlike gulls, don't swim, singular
- 10 Keep your eye on the _____
- 14 _____ State Park, check the puddles in Parking Lot 7 in fall and winter – omit the second c, opps!
- 17 _____ Fork Preserve
- 18 aka Grumman Grassland
- 19 Common _____, witchity, witchity
- 20 _____ Sparrow, see one, if you can, just because
- 21 Marsh _____
- 23 _____ Warbler, or tree common in the _____ Barrens
- 25 _____ Inlet, female 40 Across seen close to shore on east side this winter
- 26 _____ Hawk, sometimes seen at 18 across
- 29 _____ Duck
- 31 Mourning _____
- 33 _____ Grebe, rare for LI
- 34 _____ Pigeon
- 35 _____ Gull, brief appearance this winter at 25 Across
- 36 25 Across County Park _____ location of 40 Across this winter
- 38 _____ Longspur, from Arctic tundra, rare, bland plumage on LI, named for the largest and furthest north part of...Finland

- 39 Boat-tailed or Common _____
- 40 _____ Eider

Down

- 1 Yellow-breasted _____, seen in January at Mill Pond, Bellmore
- 2 Glossy or, if lucky, White-faced _____
- 4 Short-eared _____, was at 18 Across, sadly, not lately
- 5 Red or White-winged _____
- 6 American _____
- 7 American _____, shorebird with a flamboyant red bill
- 8 Northern _____
- 11 _____ Kinglet
- 12 _____ Sparrow, Oh, Canada, Canada, Canada
- 13 Elizabeth _____ NWR, go feed a bird from your hand at ELIAS field trip, March 14
- 15 _____ Park, Babylon, or a good design for socks
- 16 _____ Crossbill, irruption on eastern LI south shore in 2012
- 22 Upper or Lower _____ Lake, Trumpeter Swans were seen there until 2013
- 23 _____ Falcon, fastest member of the animal kingdom
- 24 Great or Snowy _____
- 27 aka fish eagle, sea hawk, river hawk or fish hawk
- 28 Bald or Golden
- 30 _____ Sparrow, falling ping pong song
- 32 Bird that makes a hanging nest
- 37 _____ Harbor

NYSOA Meeting, Kingston, NY

Bob Adamo

Bob Adamo is the ELIAS representative to the New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA). He had been attending their meetings for many years and reports back to the chapter on the events.

The 72nd Annual Meeting of the New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA) was held in Kingston, N.Y. on September 13-15, 2019. It was hosted by the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development, with field trips being led by the John Burroughs Natural History Society. To my delight, Jim Clinton Jr.* was one of the members doing the leading!

On Friday afternoon there were two field trips offered - the first to Ashokan Reservoir, the second was a walk around historical Kingston (NYS's first Capital) highlighted by the Ulster County Courthouse, a location where many of our state and country's important events were fostered. I opted for the reservoir, and while the weather was fine, the birding was light. The most excitement on this trip, for many of us, was the Red Spotted Eft (a small salamander) which was spied first in the grass just before it started to cross the road...by the youngest birder in the group - what eyes!

There were also two events in the evening, a Hudson River Cruise, and a buffet dinner which featured a Bird Trivia Quiz. I chose the first option and stuck close to one of guides (J.C.Jr., of course). I thoroughly enjoyed the sights and the history attached to them, in addition to a touch of birding thrown in. While Bald Eagles are always a thrill to see, I especially appreciated seeing and hearing about a particular vessel that had passed us. At first it looked like an ordinary harbor cruise boat, until you noticed its roof supporting a tier of solar collectors. This experimental solar-powered ship is the only one at present operating in the eastern part of the country, while its twin is likewise being tested near, or on, the west coast.

Keeping with the "two-theme" agenda, there were two early morning (6:30 - 9:30

**Jim Clinton, Jr. and his father were long-time members of ELIAS.*

am) delegate field trips - designed so that delegates could make it back on time for the 10 am start of the Business Meeting. This meeting is really the overriding reason for the entire Annual Meeting. The by-laws require at least one meeting per year to address the statewide business conducted by NYSOA

The two choices for the delegates were the Scenic Hudson High Banks Preserve trip, or the Hudson Valley Farm Hub trip. The former offered 3 miles of trails that allow you to reach bluffs that provide superb vistas of the Hudson River, as well as wetlands, meadows, hardwood forests and the Esopus Lake shoreline. The latter trip was through an old former sweet corn farm, which is being transformed into a comprehensive applied research program, tailored to the Hudson Valley, featuring resilient and climate-smart farming practices. Its goal is to become "The Hub" for supporting the partnership between regional educators and farmers. As it strives to attain its future plans, it has created a very productive habitat for both birds and pollinators!

While the delegates met, other attendees could choose among 10 additional field trips scheduled for the weekend. I was only able to attend one, Sunday's trip to the Shawangunk Grasslands N.W.R. which was on the way home. Most years there are field trips available in every direction for the members to take advantage of as they headed home - hence, my choice of the Grasslands...more on this later in the article. However, I would be remiss if I didn't provide the gist of at least one of the other field trips. The John Burroughs Nature Sanctuary consists of 200 acres and is where the naturalist John Burroughs built his rustic cabin retreat "Slabsides" in 1895. It has 4.5 miles of trails and a 2-acre pond. You can experience the same forest, wildflowers and birds that Burroughs did over 100 years ago. This trip also included a timely passage from one of his writings, by his great granddaughter, Joan.

Back to the delegates meeting. After the roll call and acceptance of the 2018 Annual Meeting minutes were completed, the President's Report was given by Mike

DeSha, who was finishing up his last term. He applauded the co-hosts of the 71st Annual Meeting, the Rochester Birding Association and the Burroughs Audubon Nature Club, for their outstanding commitment to the meetings success - including, drawing the huge number of 187 registrants! Part of that total was probably due to their selection of Greg Miller as banquet speaker. Greg is known for being one of the three birders who were depicted in the book *The Big Year*, which led to a movie of the same name. Some of the other topics Mike touched on were as follows:

a) The Conservation Committee, chaired by Andy Mason* and assisted by Brian Dugan and Joan Collins, encouraged NYSOA to endorse a letter from the American Bird Conservancy addressed to the Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Customs and Border Security. The letter opposes the building of a border wall. The Conservation Committee has continued to support two of our local environmental issues, the Plum Island and EPCAL initiatives. Another current concern is addressing the effect of large-solar farms on bird life.

b) *The Kingbird*, under the editorship of Shai Mitra, continues to grow and excel. Pat Lindsay will now be Editor for the Regional Reports, in addition to her current duties as Production Manager. In her spare time (*Ho Ho Ho*) Pat will also take on the compilation of the Spring Arrival Date Tables.

c) *The N.Y. Breeding Bird Atlas III* is officially underway. This 5 year study is being sponsored by NYSOA, Cornell Lab, N.Y. Audubon and ESF (Environmental Science and Forestry), operating under the DEC, and receiving Federal Grant money for the project. NYSOA's Kathy Schneider will continue as co-chair of the Atlas Steering Committee, with NYSOA's Bob Spahn, Joan Collins and Greg Lawrence all continuing to serve on this committee.

**Author's note: After serving 10 years as NYSOA's Treasurer, Andy has prepared his last financial report. He is one of the "old good guys" (like Bill Reeves before him) and NYSOA is very happy he will continue on as Conservation Committee chair!*

d) Carena Pooth has made NYSOA's County and State Listing exercise a lot of fun! This yearly endeavour allows the membership to "lay it all out there" in a most amiable fashion. For the 2nd year in a row (2017 & 2018) 129 reports were submitted. Although they reign as all-time high NYS lister and NYS high year total lister respectively, Paul Buckley and Anthony Collerton did not send in reports for 2018. Among those who did, Gail Benson again led with 443 life sightings, and 330 year sightings. She also has moved closer to Paul's life list total of 446. Pelagic Zone birders submitted a total of 26 reports, which was down 2 from 2017's total. This category's top record holder, Dave Klauber, does not submit anymore, now that he has moved to Panama. While 20 birders reported sightings from all 62 counties, up from 18 in 2017, Bill Purcell continues to be the only one with at least 100 species in all of them! Bill Cook and Jane Graves were the only reporters of more than 50 species in all counties. The top participants in the race for the highest total of County List Ticks from all 62 counties are Bill Purcell (8,960), Rich Guthrie (7,359) and Jane Graves (7,109). Three members of the YBC who submitted lists (Richard Buckert, August Davidson and Adam Troyer) were all under 18 years of age, as of 12/31/18. 3 former YBC members (Adam Vinson, Brendan Fogarty and Greg Lawrence) started listing many years ago, and are still at it, with the latter two finding time to currently serve as NYSOA's YBM's! Shai Mitra and Pat Lindsay were gratified upon listing birds in all 62 counties, as well as breaking 100 species in all the State's Regions. Taylor Sturm set a new Suffolk County Big Year Record of 304 species in 2018.

e) NYSOA's membership, as reported by Joan Collins and Pat Aitken, stood at 609 Individual Members, of which, there were 572 Annual Members and 37 Life Members. We also have an additional 39 Club and Organization Members.

f) There were 3 members appointed recently to the New York State Avian Records Committee - Doug Gochfeld, Derek Rogers and Jay McGowan. NYSARC is responsible for vetting all the bird reports submitted as possible additions to the official record of N.Y. State's bird species.

g) The election of NYSOA's Officers, Directors and Committees was next on the agenda:

Officers (one year term)

President	Shirley Shaw
Vice President	Greg Lawrence
Recording Secretary	John Kent
Treasurer	Mary Jane Dugan

Directors (term ending in 2021)

Patricia Aitken
Brian Dugan
Brendan Fogarty
Lucretia Grosshans

Directors (term ending in 2020)

Joe Brin
Douglas Futuyma
Richard Guthrie
Robert Spahn
Gerald Thurm

Auditing Committee (one year term)

Stephan Chang, *Chair*
Tom Burke
Peter Capainolo

Nominating Committee (one year term)

Robert Adamo, *Chair*
Michael DeSha
Lucretia Grosshans

h) This year's Annual Business Meeting was brought to a close with the announcement that the 2020 Annual Meeting will be held on October 2-4 in Syracuse, and be hosted by the Onondaga Audubon Society.

The Papers & workshop took place after lunch - a description of 2 of them follows. Dr. Kara Belinsky, assisted by a number of her students at SUNY New Paltz, described their research in avian communication, behavior, and urban ecology of the song birds found on their campus.

Julie Hart, Project Coordinator for the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas III Project, spoke of the hopes and aspirations of this 5 year survey, which runs from 2020 to 2025. Designed to confirm the number of breeding birds in NYS, it also can bring a high return of self-satisfaction to the individual Atlas participant! Many MBAS / ELIAS members took part in the first two Atlas campaigns (1980-1985 and 2000-2005). Hopefully, a similar number of our current contingent will volunteer for the third edition.

At the banquet, during dinner, awards were given out to a number of members. Three President's Awards are given to members who have contributed to the ongoing success of NYSOA. They were Joan Collins, Kathy Schneider and Robert Spahn. The 2019 Emanuel Levine Award was presented to Waheed Bajwa for the best article published in the 2018 *Kingbird*. The Lillian C. Stoner Award, was given to three high school students: August Davidson-Onsgard, Adam Vinson and Ryan Zucker, providing them with financial aid to attend the NYSOA meeting.

The Keynote Speaker at Saturday's evening banquet was Dr. Nathan Pieplow, whose presentation was entitled *The Language of Birds*. He is the author of *The Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds of Eastern North America* and is currently teaching at the University of Colorado. His fascination with birds started during his childhood in South Dakota and continues into the present. He has been intensively studying bird sounds since 2003. His talk, with accompanying recordings, was most entertaining and informative... who would have thought that the species making the most number of different calls in the world (over 2,100) was the Brown Thrasher!

On Sunday, I elected to take the field trip to the Shawangunk Grasslands, where we saw Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk and American Kestrel, in addition to a few warblers. However, the real highlight of the day awaited us at a swamp outside of New Paltz. One of field trips on Saturday had reported an amazing 12 Red-headed Woodpeckers at that location. Along with three birders from the Elmira area, we decided to leave the Grasslands early and try for these colorful creatures...and we weren't disappointed! Although we didn't see all 12, we did encounter six, three adults and three immatures, and at close range. These sightings were enhanced by the bright sunshine. We also had seven raptors at this magical place, Bald Eagle, Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Northern Harrier, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk and American Kestrel. With these birds as fresh memories, the ride home seemed much shorter than Friday's trip up to Kingston - see you next year in Syracuse! 🐦

THE OSPREY

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2020 Chapter Renewal/Membership

Membership is \$20 a year, you will receive 6 issues of *The Osprey* and you will be supporting our education and conservation activities.

This is a Renewal New Membership

I would like to make a donation of _____ in addition to my membership

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