

The Meadowlark

The Newsletter of Genesee Valley Audubon Society, Vol. XXX, No. 3
January/February 2003



Genesee Valley Audubon Society Accomplishments for 2001 - 2002 June Summers, President

Conservation Committee and Volunteers

Conservation of Open Space in Greece—In June of 2001 the Master Plan for the Town of Greece was revised and public comment was accepted. It became obvious at that time that the Master Plan had no open space plan. The Master Plan was approved without changes. Throughout the summer and fall GVAS worked with Barbara Carder-Pierce to draw attention to the need for open space preservation in the Town of Greece. Greece, N.Y. is the home of Braddock Bay Wildlife Management Area (BBWMA), an Important Bird Area. Since last fall the Town has put together an internal open space committee and has started negotiations with several private land owners around BBWMA through the Trust for Public Lands and the Genesee Land Trust. The Greece internal open space committee and the Environmental Board are surveying and prioritizing undeveloped land in the town. We continue to have a good relationship with the Town, writing support letters for grants and advising the open space committee on important lands to preserve.

Round Pond—Is one of four unique ponds adjacent to the Lake Ontario shore in the area of the Braddock Bay Wildlife Management Area. It came to the attention of the GVAS Conservation Committee that Round Pond, while adjacent to BBWMA, is

not included in BBWMA or the Important Bird Area. The BBWMA Advisory Committee has tried for 10 years to have Round Pond removed from the administration of the New York State Office of General Services to The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). By writing one letter to the Commissioner of the NYSDEC we had more movement on this issue than has occurred in years. We were asked to not pursue this until testing by an Army Corp of Engineers contractor is finished for heavy metals and solvents contamination of the pond next to the old Air Force Plant 51. Another issue we are trying to keep track of.

Two Year Moratorium on Logging at Hemlock Lake IBA—GVAS Conservation Committee suggested to the City of Rochester that a two year moratorium be placed on a proposed logging area adjacent to Hemlock Lake. This moratorium will allow the area to be surveyed for Cerulean Warblers and other forest birds as well as old growth forest.

Seneca Army Depot — We have supported Seneca White Deer, Inc. in their efforts to save the Seneca Army Depot from development. Their purpose is simply to save this large expanse of undeveloped land for wildlife. This project must be economically feasible; ecotourism will be a necessary device to make this possible and white deer will be

an attraction.

Greece Canal Park—Monroe County proposed turning 90 acres of field and forest in this county park into a 22-field commercial soccer complex. We opposed it on the grounds that it would adversely affect the ecosystems in the rest of the park where Veery and Pileated Woodpecker nest.

This was put to rest for now because Monroe County realized it didn't have the funds for the project.

Falcon Watch — This is the third year that GVAS has organized a fledgling falcon watch for the Peregrine Falcons that nest on top of Kodak Tower, in downtown Rochester. We train and schedule volunteers to keep track of the fledglings. Designed originally to conserve and protect the fledglings this has become a great public awareness tool, education tool and membership recruitment tool.

Bluebird Box Trails, Purple Martin Houses and Butterfly Garden
GVAS has four bluebird box trails and a butterfly garden in Monroe County parks, cared for by volunteers. Our Purple Martin houses are on the Lake Ontario State Parkway and fledged over 40 babies in 2001.

Education

New York Wild Web Site—GVAS is a member of the New York Wild

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JANUARY

6:30 pm Wed., Jan. 22, 2003
Carmen Clark Lodge, Brighton
Town Park

777 Westfall Road, Brighton

MEMBERS AND FRIENDS NIGHT

Please bring a dish to pass and slides, pictures, a carving, or a special item to share. Everyone is welcome. If your last name begins with A through L, please bring a main dish. If your last name begins with M through Z, please bring a vegetable, beverage, or dessert.

FEBRUARY

7:30 pm Wed., Feb. 26, 2003
Brighton Town Hall, Downstairs
Meeting Room

2300 Elmwood Avenue, Brighton

INSECTS

Bugs, Beetles, Butterflies, Moths...the list could go on to enumerate the 800,000 species of insects that we know of today. Crickets, grasshoppers, wasps, bees...life on earth would change dramatically if it weren't for insects pollinating our plants and serving themselves up to other species on the food chain. Cockroaches, ants, termites, fleas... the reproductive power of insects could allow them to take over the world if they were not kept in check by our feathered friends and other insect-devouring species. Cicadas, aphids, weevils, fireflies...the strange, unusual, and even bizarre phylum of insects is varied, fascinating, and often overwhelming.

To help enlighten us on this subject, Mr. Bob Iveson, who has collected and studied insects ever since he was a child, will provide a presentation guaranteed to make everyone appreciate these small six-legged creatures that make up 80% of the animal species that have been identified by scientists. He will show portions of his private collection that includes pre-historic mountings and

he'll describe various species and their function in the web of life.

Mr. Iveson has made a lifetime hobby learning about insects. He has been employed by Ward Scientific and is also an instructor on insects in the ADEPT program for the Monroe County Board of Cooperative Educational Services.

MARCH

7:30 pm Wed., Mar. 26, 2003
Brighton Town Hall, Downstairs
Meeting Room

2300 Elmwood Avenue, Brighton

PENGUIN RESCUE!

As we look forward to the beginning of spring, thoughts of penguins, which successfully thrive in a habitat of ice, snow, and frigid waters, are probably the last thing on our minds. However, various species of penguins do live in places other than the Antarctic region...places such as New Zealand, Australia, the Galapagos Islands, and South Africa. Penguins in the South Africa area were threatened by a large oil spill a couple years ago and volunteers from around the globe rushed to their rescue in efforts to help preserve the species.

Mr. Chris Ruedin, who works at the Seneca Park Zoo, was one of the people who volunteered to go to South Africa to help with the rescue efforts. This heart-touching story is one that will warm each and every one of us regardless of the outside temperature that evening.

NOTE: The February and March programs are reversed from what was originally announced in the 2002 September/October Meadowlark. One of our speakers had a conflict.

First Sunday Hikes

Highland and Cobb's Hill are the parks that we have decided to explore for 2003. The hikes are slow-paced but moderately strenuous due to hills and will last about 2 hours. Wear boots and dress for the weather. For the Highland hikes, we will meet at the Conservatory by the reservoir. For the Cobb's Hill hikes, we will meet in the parking lot near the intersection of Culver Road and Norris Drive. Questions? Call June Summers at (585) 865-6047 weekdays 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Jan. 6	3 p.m.	Highland
Feb. 3	3 p.m.	Cobb's Hill
Mar. 3	3 p.m.	Highland

Mealworms

What are they and which birds eat them? Mealworms are the larvae of the *Tenebrio molitor* beetle, common name, the darkling beetle. They stay in the larvae stage for about ten weeks before becoming beetles. Mealworms offer birds protein, fat and calcium.

Some local birds that eat mealworms are: Eastern Bluebirds, American Robins, Blue Jays, Cardinals, Chickadees, Hairy Woodpeckers, Finches, Juncos, Kinglets and Mockingbirds. Offering mealworms during summer can give baby birds a good start on life. Offering mealworms in the winter and spring will help them make it through the winter or a sudden cold snap in the spring.

Mealworms are sold a live or roasted. Live mealworms can crawl out of feeder trays; try a straight sided tuna can or empty plastic margarine container placed on a platform or tacked to the side of your feeder.

You can buy mealworms from birdseed catalogs, birdseed specialty stores, pet stores, and bait shops. Once you get them they will keep for weeks if you put them in the refrigerator in a well-ventilated, well-labeled container. Place a slice of apple in the container for moisture. Mockingbirds will eat about a dozen a day. Smaller birds will eat fewer. Give them a try.

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partnership. The purpose of the partnership is to maintain a website that will open the eyes of the World to wildlife of New York State through video clips, information on each animal and live video feed when possible. www.newyorkwild.org

Audubon Adventures Classrooms—GVAS sponsored 72 Audubon Adventures classrooms for the 2001/2002 school year.

Birding 101 and Shore Bird Identification

This was our first year to offer a bird identification class and a shore bird identification class. The bird identification class had thirty people enrolled, only half were members.

Falcon Watch—The falcon watch was used as a stepping stone to do programs in several area schools that kept track of the eyases' growth over the Kodak website.

Great Backyard Bird Count—Education programs on bird identification were given at three libraries and an interactive exhibit was staffed at a local museum to increase public awareness and involvement.

International Migratory Bird Day—GVAS provided exhibits and jointly hosted an open house at the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory banding station.

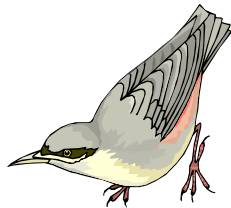
Field Trip

**Saturday, January 11,
Mendon Ponds Park.**

Come feed the chickadees and the nuthatches on the Birdsong Trail.

Bring the kids. We will meet at 9:00 a.m. in the Nature Center parking lot on Pond Rd. off of Clover St. (The southernmost of the three park entrances off Clover.) Bring sunflower seeds, wear boots and warm clothes. June

Summers, 865-6047, will lead the hike. It will be approximately 2 hours long.



Great Backyard Bird Count

President's Day Weekend, Feb 14 - 17, 2003

PARTICIPATING IS EASY!

We need every bird enthusiast in North America to count for the birds!

All you need is basic knowledge of bird identification and access to the Internet at home, a friend's house, local library, school, or anywhere you can get access to the web.

Why count backyard birds?

(From www.birdsource.org)—Scientists and bird enthusiasts can learn a lot by knowing where the birds are. Now that winter has gripped much of the continent, what are our birds doing? Bird populations are dynamic, they are constantly in flux. We want to take a snapshot of North American bird populations and **YOU** can help us. *Everyone's contribution is important.* It doesn't matter whether you identify, count, and report the 5 species coming to your backyard feeder or the 75 species you see during a day's outing to a wildlife refuge. Your data can help us answer many questions:

- How will this winter's snow and cold temperatures influence bird populations?
- Where are the WINTER finches and other irruptive species?
- Will late winter movements of many SONGBIRD and waterfowl species be as far north as they were last year?

The data that you collect will be combined with Christmas Bird Count and Project FeederWatch data to give an immense picture of our winter birds. Each year that these data are collected makes them more important and meaningful. So as we see patterns, discover new questions and insights, we'll update you. And we'll ask for your help again.

How can you participate?

Go to www.birdsource.org and read about the Great Backyard Bird Count. You will find information on how to count, how to submit your observations, and the results from previous years. There is information on how to tell similar species apart. For educators, there are suggestions on how to make this a classroom project.

You can count birds for one day of the four-day period (Feb. 14-17) or all four days. For each day, you would submit a new checklist. You can count birds in your own backyard or in a nearby park. This is a terrific family project to teach children about science.

Submit your observations on your home computer, at work, from your friend's computer, with a computer at your public library, or at a school.

Last year 47,000 people across North America participated. Won't you be part of the 2003 count?

Genesee Valley Audubon Society, Inc., Board of Directors

Officers: *President*, June Summers; *Vice President*, vacant; *Secretary*, Joni VanDelinder; *Treasurer*, William Gruenbaum.

Committee Chairpersons: *Field Trips*, vacant; *Fundraising*, vacant; *Publications*, Joanne Mitchell; *Programs*, George Zakielarz; *Publicity*, Loretta Morrell; *Conservation*, June Summers; *Membership*, Doug Smith; *Education*, vacant; *Hospitality*, vacant; *Director-at-Large*, Carolyn Emerson; *Webmaster*, Sid Gear; *Staff Biologist*, Brett Ewald.

The Meadowlark is published the 1st of September, November, January, March, and April. Articles for the Meadowlark should be submitted four weeks prior to the date of publication. Send articles to Joanne Mitchell, 169 Black Walnut Dr., Rochester, NY 14615, or at GJMitch@localnet.com.

Meadowlark staff: *Editor & Layout*, Joanne Mitchell; *Business Editor*, vacant; *Printing*, Community News; *Distribution*, vacant.

Volunteer Opportunity

Help us monitor bluebird houses. We have two Monroe County parks where GVAS monitors Blue Bird Houses. There is one trail at Northampton Park and two trails at Black Creek Park. Our beautiful state bird is just starting to make a strong comeback in this part of the country, but they are still dependent on human intervention to keep out house sparrows and mice that take over their nest boxes. This commitment involves one day in February when the mice are evicted and the nest boxes are cleaned for the beginning of the Blue Bird breeding season. Then from the end of March through the beginning of August the Blue Bird Houses are monitored weekly and house sparrows are removed. The Northampton Park route is along a road, so it is not necessary to walk the entire route. Commitment is approximately two hours weekly. Even if you can only work some weeks and not others, your assistance would be appreciated.

For Black Creek Park, contact Carolyn Emerson at (585) 889-1887

For Northampton Park, contact Pat Rauber at (585) 589-0071

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P.O. Box 886, Adams Basin, NY 14410-0886

GVAS: A chapter of the National Audubon Society

The mission of GVAS is to promote conservation of the environment and advocacy for its protection, focusing on birds and other wildlife in western New York.

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