

# The Meadowlark



The Newsletter of Genesee Valley Audubon Society, Vol. XXXI, No. 2  
November/December 2003

## From the President

June Summers

Only two years ago on a bright, sunny fall morning the First Sunday Hike at Seneca Park had two hikers. The Falcon Watch had barely enough volunteers to cover the morning and evening shifts. This year the First Sunday Hikes attracted dozens of people. It didn't matter if it was a cold January day or a gray, rainy June morning. People from our community hiked with Genesee Valley Audubon Members to learn more about birds and other wildlife in our area. The Falcon Watch in 2003 had over 30 official volunteers and many unofficial watchers, with almost complete coverage from dawn to dusk. Their time was spent not only watching the young falcon fledglings, but also answering questions of the curious passers by.

During the winter there were walks through Mendon Ponds Park to feed the wintering birds. In September, GVAS volunteers helped 4-H and scouting groups from the Genesee Valley Area assemble nest boxes for Bluebirds, American Kestrels and Wood Ducks at the William B. Hoyt II Visitor Center at the Mt Morris Dam.

Watching a young falcon take its first flight off Kodak tower, or hearing and seeing a Pileated Woodpecker on a winter hike at Mendon Ponds, or finding the woodpeckers' nest during a

Sunday walk at Cobbs Hill Park—all these events help us to educate our community on the birds and other wildlife with whom we share the earth. These events ultimately help the mission of GVAS, which is to promote conservation of the environment through education and to advocate for its protection, focusing on birds and other wildlife in Western New York.

We look towards the future, with a new nature center at the Mt. Morris Dam and the possibility of placing a satellite transmitter, cost \$7000, on a falcon fledgling from Kodak tower.

GVAS will continue to offer our regular activities and events, but even these cost money, \$50 each time we use the Brighton Town Hall. Over the last two years National Audubon Society has cut our dues share to \$1.25 per member from \$5.00. Funding is an issue and the need for donations has increased. As this year comes to an end we ask that you consider making a donation to the Genesee Valley Audubon Society. Whether it is a small donation of \$25 for a puppet for the nature center or a more significant donation towards the falcon transmitter, it will mean a great deal.

**Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to the Genesee Valley Audubon Society today.**

## Thank you to the following contributors to Birdathon:

Paychex  
Wegmans  
FRA Engineering, P.C.  
Marylynn Marino  
Joni VanDelinder  
Loretta Morrell  
Patricia Lynch  
Carolyn Ragan  
Suzanne Robinson  
Sid Gear  
Hans Strasser  
Everyone who purchased passes to Winged Migration  
Apologies to those we missed.

## Audubon Adventures

It is not too late to sponsor a classroom for Audubon Adventures or to purchase an individual kit for your own family. This is a newspaper for children that has four issues per year (32 copies of each issue per classroom). In addition, there is much resource material for the teacher.

The overall topic for 2003-2004 is People and Nature Sharing the Earth. The subtopics of the four issues are Grasslands; Nature in Your Neighborhood (Schoolyards, Backyards, Parks); Forests (coniferous); and Water, Wildlife and People.

The cost is \$41.50 for a classroom or \$24.50 for an individual kit. This is ideal for home schoolers. If you have questions, call Jean Barlow, (585) 392-5432.

GVAS is grateful to those who have sponsored classrooms this year. They are listed on the back page.

## NOVEMBER

7:30 pm Wed., Nov. 19, 2003  
Brighton Town Hall, Downstairs  
Meeting Room  
2300 Elmwood Ave., Brighton

### ORGAN PIPE CACTUS NATIONAL MONUMENT

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, one of the largest U. S. national monuments at over 330,000 acres, is located about 100 miles southwest of Tucson, Arizona and borders the state of Sonora, Mexico on the south as well as the Cabeza Prieta (U.S.) National Wildlife Refuge on the west. It is home to organ-pipe cacti and other unusual desert plant and animal life found nowhere else in the United States. Having been established as a national monument in 1937, it has remained an unspoiled desert for tourists and environmentalists to savor and enjoy.

Bruce and Nancy Secker are Chili residents who served as volunteers during the summer of 2002 at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. They have graciously offered to give a slide presentation about their experience in this unusual habitat. They will compare and contrast the Sonora Desert with other deserts of the United States and illustrate how the Organ Pipe area is truly differentiated from the Mojave Desert, the Great Salt Lake Desert, and other deserts of the great southwest.

The Seckers have given this talk at public libraries and to various groups in the Rochester area and it has always been well received. Please join us for an interesting presentation and an educational discussion on this truly unique eco-system.

## DECEMBER

No meeting in December.

*Happy Holidays.*

## JANUARY

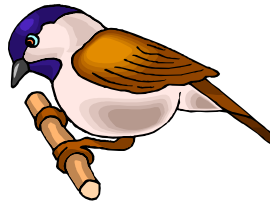
6:30 pm Wed., Jan. 28, 2004  
Carmen Clark Lodge, Brighton  
Town Park  
777 Westfall Road, Brighton

### MEMBERS AND FRIENDS NIGHT

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

### Mendon Ponds Park Field Trips

Walk a trail and feed the chickadees & nuthatches at Mendon Ponds Park. The entire family is welcome to participate in this outdoor adventure.



We will meet at 9 am in the Nature Center Parking lot on Pond Rd off of Clover St (the southernmost of the 3 park entrances off Clover) Bring sunflower seeds and dress for the weather (wear boots, warm clothes, etc. Joni Van Delinder will lead the hike, which will last about 2 hours.

#### Dates:

Saturday, November 15, 2003  
Saturday, December 27, 2003

## First Sunday Hikes 2003

We will continue the First Sunday Hike Series at Cobb's Hill and Highland Park.

Nov. 2 3 p.m. Highland  
Dec. 7 3 p.m. Cobb's Hill

## First Sunday Hikes 2004

GVAS will continue our First Sunday Hike Series for the fourth year. We will be hiking in Durand-Eastman Park in 2004. We will be meeting at the Golf Course Club House parking lot on King's Highway, which runs through the park. King's Highway may be accessed from Lakeshore Blvd.

The purpose of these hikes is to familiarize our members and friends with the beauty of our area parks as Audubon Important Bird Areas. Most of all we have fun discovering what nature has to offer. Children are welcome.

### DATES AND TIMES, 2004

January 4 3:00 p.m.  
February 1 3:00 p.m.  
March 7 3:00 p.m.  
April 4 3:00 p.m.  
May 2 8:00 a.m.  
June 6 8:00 a.m.  
July 4 8:00 a.m.  
August 1 8:00 a.m.  
September 5 3:00 p.m.  
October 3 3:00 p.m.  
November 7 3:00 p.m.  
December 5 3:00 p.m.

Call June (865-6047) if you have questions.



## Nature Center Update

As it stands right now the lease and the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) are scheduled to be signed no later than the beginning of November.

This means that we could be looking at moving into our beautiful new space in Letchworth Park next to the William B. Hoyt II Visitor Center at the Mt. Morris Dam by the beginning of spring.

We will be looking for many volunteers who will be willing to donate some of their time and skills. Especially needed are people to lead nature walks or folks willing to offer programs to scout groups or classrooms.

We also need equipment and materials to turn this building into the center we visualize. See our Wish List below.

For more information feel free to contact Loretta Morrell at (585) 338-3683 (lorettamorrell@earthlink.org) or June Summers at (585)865-6047 (summers@frontiernet.net)



## Genesee Valley Audubon Center Fall 2003 Programs

All Programs meet at the William B. Hoyt II Visitor Center at the Mt Morris Dam

**From the North:** Take 390 to Exit 7 Mt. Morris and Letchworth Park. Turn left onto 408S. In town 408S will turn left followed by a very quick right. Follow 408S for 1.9 miles. Turn right at the William B Hoyt II, Mt Morris Dam Entrance. Drive up to the visitor parking lot (1.7 miles) to meet walk leader.

**From the South:** Take 390N to Exit 6 Sonyea. Take Route 36 North for seven miles. Turn Left onto Route 408S and travel for 1.9 miles. Turn right at the William B. Hoyt II, Mt Morris Dam Entrance. Drive up to the visitor parking lot (1.7 miles) to meet walk leader.

For further information regarding events contact Loretta Morrell at (585) 338-3683.

For further directions contact the William B. Hoyt II Visitor Center at (585) 658-4790.

### November 8 – Great Backyard Bird Count 2004 - 9:30 am- 10:30 am

June Summers, President of Genesee Valley Audubon Society. February 13 - 16<sup>th</sup> are the dates for next year's Great Backyard Bird Count. This is a joint venture between Natural Audubon Society and Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Each year before the Bird Count, GVAS appears at several venues throughout Monroe County rounding up citizen scientists to help us in this venture. We have chosen to do it at Mt Morris before Christmas to give folks suggestions for possible Christmas presents. Again, backyard winter habitat will be our focus.

### November 22 – Nature Walk - 9:30 am-10:45 am

Only the winter resident birds are left in the woods now. We will try to find as many of these birds as possible as well as look for evidence of the past season of bird activity such as nest cavities and nests.

**December - no programs**

## Genesee Valley Audubon Center Wish List

Picture Window

Front Door no less than 36" wide

Wood for ramp, and puppet theatre

Cement for ramp

Large Refrigerator for basement or garage

Bar size Refrigerator for Retail Space

Bookcases for Resource Library and retail space

Displays for nature center and retail space

Cash Register

Safe

Computer Desk (receptionist/upstairs office)

Computer with Word Processing Capabilities (Laptop a dream come true)

Genesee Valley Audubon Society would like to thank Sid Gear, Hans Strasser, Lisa McKeown, Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Morrell, and Rose and Vincent Maxwell for their generous donations for the new Audubon Center currently being developed next to the William B. Hoyt II Visitor Center at the Mt. Morris Dam.

**Board of Directors****Genesee Valley Audubon Society, Inc.****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; *Directors-at-Large*, Carolyn Emerson, Marylynn Marino, Lisa McKeown, and Ravi Sampath; *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.**2003-2004 SPONSORS - AUDUBON ADVENTURES  
(as of October 9, 2003)****Genesee Ornithological Society** 1 Classroom kit  
Sponsor for Lynn Gatto, School 28.**Robert Cordy** 1 Classroom kit  
Sponsor for Kathy Gallmon, School 7**Rochester Birding Association Inc.** 4 Classroom kits  
Sponsor for  
Librarian & Ivy Clark, School 28  
Patricia Cook, School 36  
Annie O'Reilly, Holy Childhood School**Alan and Suzanne Robinson** 1 Classroom and 1 Individual Kit  
Sponsor for Mrs. Marie McCoy, St. John's School, Greece**Braddock Bay Raptor Research** 1 Individual Kit

We thank you all for your generosity in helping children learn about nature!

Keep up-to-date with our web site, [www.ggw.org/gvas](http://www.ggw.org/gvas).***The Meadowlark***

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 through education and to advocate for its protection, focusing on birds and other wildlife in western New York.

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