

The Meadowlark

The Newsletter of Genesee Valley Audubon Society, Vol. XXXII, No. 2
November/December 2004



From the President

June Summers

Migratory birds need our help.

Currently awaiting a vote by the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate are two identical bills, H.R.4114 and S.2547, that reaffirm the original intent of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)—a law that has been in place for nearly a century—and reauthorize and expand the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA). The MBTA is designed to protect native migratory and non-migratory birds from acts by humans that endanger individual birds and bird populations. The NMBCA is focused on protecting habitat of migratory songbirds.

In May the House Resource Committee voted to continue the NMBCA program for another 3 years increasing funding levels to \$5 million in FY06, \$10 million in FY07, \$15 million in FY08. The Act also creates a 5-year program aimed specifically at restoring habitat for neotropical migratory birds. In June the Environment and Public Works committee of the U.S. Senate passed the same measure. We need to urge our Congressmen and women and our Senators to pass H.R.4114 and S.2547 this year.

There is language in each of these bills clarifies the original intent of the Migratory Bird

Treat Act to protect native migratory bird species not invasive species. A recent court decision, *Hill v. Norton*, turned conventional wisdom on its ear by extending the MBTA protection to the invasive, non-native Mute Swan. The Mute Swan is causing significant ecological damage to ecosystems up and down the East Coast of the United States as well as Braddock Bay and other embayments on Lake Ontario. Mute Swans displace and adversely affect native birds such as the Black Duck and Blue-Winged Teal, which nest here in the Rochester area.

The problem is not limited to the Mute Swan but to other invasive species including European Starlings and English House sparrows. European Starlings often take over the nest cavities of native woodpeckers as they prepare to nest. English House Sparrows decimate North American Blue Bird and Purple Martin nest by building nests over Blue Bird nests with babies or eggs in them. These sparrows are so aggressive that will try to drag Purple Martin babies out of their nest and/or kill them by pecking them on the back of the skull.

It is difficult for GVAS to support the reduction of any bird population, it also is painful to watch the decline of native birds that depend on a healthy ecosystem. H.R.4114 clarifies

that the MBTA applies only to the native birds, providing state fish and wildlife agents with management flexibility to control nonnative birds that are causing serious ecological damage.

We need your help to ensure that both the House and Senate take action on these bills to pass and signed into law this year! Write your Congressperson and Senators ask them to support H. R.4114 and S.2547 and urge the quick passage of them this year. The quickest and easiest way to do this is access the National Audubon Society web site, www.capitolconnect.com/audubon, go to Hot Issues, Final Action Needed in House and Senate for Migratory and Native Birds, click on Learn More, then Take Action Now. This site will automatically send letters to you.

Hafoc's Big Adventure

Hafoc, the young Kodak Peregrine Falcon with a satellite transmitter, ventured to Elmira NY on October 6 but has been hanging around the Rochester area ever since.

Check out his adventures on <http://www.migrationresearch.org/research/peregrine/results37123.html>.



NOVEMBER

7:30 pm Wed., Nov. 10, 2004
Brighton Town Hall, Downstairs
Meeting Room
2300 Elmwood Ave., Brighton

Birding in Bhutan

If you enjoy learning about exotic places, November's meeting is one you won't want to miss. Don and Donna Traver have traveled to many parts of the world in search of unusual sites, native birds, and other interesting flora and fauna. They have made many presentations on their travels to various audiences including one on New Zealand and Antarctica to the Genesee Valley Audubon Society a couple years ago. Another of their trips took them to Bhutan; a small, mountainous country in south-central Asia nestled between the People's Republic of China and the eastern portion of India. Although roughly only the size of the combined areas of Vermont and New Hampshire, Bhutan's climate varies from extremely hot in the low foothill regions to moderate in the mid-Himalaya regions to permanent snow and glaciers in the mountainous regions, which rise from 14,000 to 24,000 feet above sea level.

Don and Donna will present a slide show illustrating the diversity of Bhutan's ecology. Their travels included a search for the ibisbill, which nests on stony islands in the swift rivers that flow through this mountainous region. Their presentation will also include slides of part of eastern India, which borders on Bhutan, specifically the state of Assam. The combination of sightseeing and education renders this nature travelogue an event for which a front row seat would be well worth reserving.

DECEMBER

No meeting in December.

Happy Holidays.

JANUARY

6:30 pm Wed., Jan. 26, 2005
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 main dish. If your last name begins with M through Z, please bring a vegetable, beverage, or dessert.

Please note that this meeting starts at **6:30 pm** instead of the usual time of 7:30 pm.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Publicity Chairperson

GVAS needs a publicity chairperson. This person will send out publicity announcements twice a month for hikes and programs. This can be done by fax or email.

Volunteers at Genesee Valley Nature Center in Mt. Morris

- GVAS needs volunteers to open and run the gift shop at the Mt. Morris Dam visitor center on weekends.
- We also need volunteers to lead Cub Scout Packs and Girl Scout Troops through badge programs on forestry, wildlife, and other nature topics on weekends.

To volunteer for any of these positions call June Summers, (585) 865-6047.

2004 First Sunday Hikes at Durand-Eastman Park

November 7 3:00 p.m.

December 5 3:00 p.m.

We meet at the golf course parking lot off of King's Highway. Wear hiking boots, please.

2005 First Sunday Hikes

GVAS will host our First Sunday Hikes at Braddock Bay Wildlife Management Area next year. We will explore this beautiful area near Lake Ontario, which sometimes has extreme weather conditions. Always dress or bring clothes for the windy cool environment along Lake Ontario. We will meet in the lodge parking lot at Braddock Bay Park on East Manitou Road off the Lake Ontario State Parkway. If you have a question, call June at (585) 865-6047.

January 2 3:00 p.m.

February 6 3:00 p.m.

March 6 3:00 p.m.

April 3 3:00 p.m.

May 1 8:00 a.m.

June 5 8:00 a.m.

July 3 8:00 a.m.

August 7 8:00 a.m.

September 4 3:00 p.m.

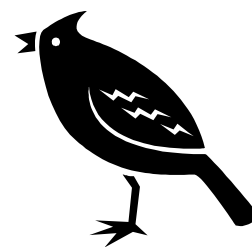
October 2 3:00 p.m.

November 6 3:00 p.m.

December 4 3:00 p.m.

Thank you!

to Barbara Guttman and Steven A. Zwart for donations in memory of Art Cala.



Nature Walks

Genesee Valley Nature Center at the Mount Morris Dam

Genesee Valley Nature Center is sponsoring two more nature walks in 2004:

Saturday, November 20

Sunday, December 11

On both days the hikes will go from 12:30 pm till 2:00 pm

Dress in layers. Binoculars will enhance your enjoyment. Free and Open to the Public. The November walk will meet at the Mount Morris Dam and Recreation Center Visitor Center lobby. The December walk will meet at the Green House (Genesee Valley Nature Center) to the left of the Visitor Center.

From 390N take exit #7. Turn

left onto 408S. In the village turn left onto 36, but be prepared to take your next right back onto 408S. Take 408S for 1.9 miles. Turn right onto Visitor Center Road and drive to the large parking lot at the end. The visitor center is directly across from the parking lot.

Short-eared Owl Outing

Mark your Calendars for Saturday, January 8th at 3:00 pm. We are having an outing to see the Short-eared Owls of Livingston County.

We will be carpooling from the Genesee Valley Nature Center, 6109 Visitor Center Road, off 408S. Reservations required.

Please contact Loretta Morrell at (585) 338-3683 to reserve your spot and get directions. Dress in layers and bring binoculars.

Chickadee Walks

Joni Van Delinder will be leading winter hikes (no more than 2 hours) in Mendon Ponds Park. Come out, walk a trail and feed the chickadees & nuthatches while enjoying nature. 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.) Seed will be provided with a donation.

Saturday, November 20, 2004

Saturday, December 18, 2004

There will be more in 2005, too!

Fund-Raising Appeal to Help GVAS Continue Our Programs

Dear Genesee Valley Audubon Members,

Another year draws to a close and it is time to reflect on the progress we made in this past year. It has been a big year for Genesee Valley Audubon Society. We opened our first nature center this year. In addition to regularly scheduled nature walks, we had a wonderful Earth Day celebration at the Nature Center at Mt Morris Dam at Letchworth Park. Numerous children from various scout and 4-H groups helped put up nest boxes, planted gardens and painted fence posts. We successfully raised enough money to place a transmitter on a young falcon and many of us are watching as he travels around western New York and possibly further. GVAS also continued with many of the ongoing programs. Genesee Valley Audubon continues to be part of International Migratory Bird Day

with this past year being a bigger event than the previous year. This year the first Sunday hikes occurred in an Important Bird Area, Durand-Eastman Park. Plus we held winter hikes to feed the birds at Mendon Ponds Park.

Going forward into this next year, Genesee Valley Audubon looks to maintain our current level of projects and programs. GVAS also would like to expand its programs at the Nature Center. We want to offer programs that allow Boy and Girl Scouts to earn some of their badges. We strongly feel that this would help in our mission to promote conservation. To further our investment in the nature center it is essential that we have some necessary items. Our needs include sturdy chairs and tables, along with magnifying glasses, microscopes, balance beams, telescopes, plus a television with a VCR/

DVD player.

These are aggressive plans and we need your help. please consider a donation to Genesee Valley Audubon Society. Presently, GVAS receives approximately \$2.00 per member from the national society. This money does not even cover the cost of printing and mailing our newsletter five times per year. All of our projects are funded through the generous donations of participants and members; your generosity is always appreciated. As we look forward to next year, we ask that you consider making a tax-deductible donation to Genesee Valley Audubon Society. Please send donations to GVAS, 208 Rhea Crescent, Rochester NY 14615.

June Summers, President

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, Ravi Sampath, and Nancy Strong; *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*,

Items Needed—Please Recycle

Genesee Valley Nature Center is looking for items to use for craft projects. If you have any of the following, please consider donating. Items can be dropped off at any of the GVAS Meetings held on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Contact Loretta Morrell at (585) 338-3683 for more information.

Items needed:

Plastic Baby Wipe Boxes
Shoe Boxes
Toilet Paper Tubes
Paper Towel Tubes
Cardboard or Styrofoam Trays
Gift Wrap Tubes
Egg Cartons
Old Nature Magazines



Keep up-to-date with our web site, www.ggw.org/gvas.

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

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