



THE KINGFISHER

A Publication of the North Fork Audubon Society, Inc. Mattituck, NY

www.northforkaudubon.org

Volume XXX V Number 2

Spring 2016

Our Deer Over-Population Problems - Consequences for the Environment, Biodiversity and Public Health

*Date: Friday, April 8
7:30 p.m.*

*Location: Peconic Lane Community Center
1170 Peconic Lane, Peconic*

In recent years, the deer population on eastern Long Island has exploded because of current land use practices and the near absence of natural predators. This has resulted in severe damage to our natural environment and a serious loss of diversity. The unnatural abundance of deer has also fueled a tremendous expansion in tick populations and the frequency of tick-borne diseases in humans. This talk will focus upon the nature of these problems and viable solutions.

John Rasweiler is a retired research professor of obstetrics and gynecology. He taught at Columbia University Medical School, Cornell University and SUNY Downstate. He has extensive experience in studying issues of mammal reproduction in wildlife. He is also a member of the Southold Town Deer Management Task Force, the Suffolk County Tick Control Advisory Committee, Town of Southold Tick Working Group and the North Fork Deer Management Alliance.

Exploring Long Island's Underwater World with Chris Paparo

*Date: Friday, June 10
7:30 p.m.*

*Location: Peconic Lane Community Center
1170 Peconic Lane, Peconic*

Through his underwater pictures and videos of local fish, crustaceans, mollusks, and other assorted invertebrates, attendees will follow Chris on an underwater journey of Long Island learning about each organism.

As a wildlife photographer, writer and lecturer, Paparo has been exploring the wilds of Long Island for over 30 years. He holds a BS in Marine Science from LIU/Southampton and currently manages the new Marine Sciences Center at the Southampton Campus of Stony Brook University. Follow @fishguyphotos on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter or visit www.fishguyphotos.com.

International Migratory Bird Day Celebration

Birding the Ramble and the Genius of Audubon and Olmstead

*Date: Friday, May 13
7:30 p.m.*

*Location: Red House, Inlet Pond Park
Greenport*

Our program on Friday night will cover three topics that will be explored in our field trip the next day. Pat Hanly will lead the program which will be an introduction to Spring bird watching in the Ramble in Central Park, identifying neotropical migrant passerine species by sight and sound. The second and third part of this program will serve as an introduction to the life and art of John James Audubon and the remarkable design of Central Park by natural landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted.

Bird Watching Field Trip to Central Park

Date: Saturday, May 14

We will take a bus to NYC for a spring birding trip to Central Park with Pat Hanly. This will be followed by a walk to the NY Historical Society on Central Park West to view some of Audubon's original water colors. A fee will be charged for bus transportation and admission to the Historical Society. There will be time to eat at the restaurant of your choice before returning.

Patrick Hanly is a local birder and nature enthusiast. He is an Audubon Citizen Science Project advocate and is in his third year serving as the compiler of the Annual Orient Christmas Bird Count, one of the longest continually running counts in the country. Pat is a former hawk counter at the Fire Island Hawk Watch and has recently participated in the Common/Roseate Tern nest census on Great Gull Island. Pat is a computer technologist by profession and is assisting NFAS with its website and other technical issues.

*For more information or to register for this event,
contact Pat Hanly at pat@mattpres.com or
631-312-0824.*

Why It's Important to Support Local Audubon Chapters

Many of you who receive our newsletter do so because you became a National Audubon Society member. Your support for our parent organization is critical, as the organization plays a key role in conservation and promoting policy initiatives which protect birds and educate the public about the threats to our avian friends. But it is also important to support Audubon on the local chapter level.

North Fork Audubon Society (NFAS) works collaboratively with both National Audubon Society and Audubon New York on issues affecting the East End, such as the preservation of Plum Island. But we also address local issues that do not garner national or statewide attention. The recent campaign to ban harmful single use plastic bags in Southold Town is just one example.

Our mission, connecting people with nature, is achieved through monthly programs, hikes and workshops. In addition, we are stewards of the Red House and the grounds on Inlet Pond County Park, a sanctuary for many bird species.

Although we get a small stipend from your first donation to National Audubon, it is not enough to sustain the work of NFAS, much of which is accomplished through the efforts of volunteers. We need your financial support to continue our wide range of programming.

If you are not a member, please consider joining NFAS today. Your tax-deductible donation can be sent to NFAS, PO Box 973, Mattituck NY 11952. Thank you!

We're Going Digital!

In an effort to conserve resources - both money and trees - our newsletter, *The Kingfisher*, is going digital. Starting with the Fall 2016 issue, you will receive our newsletter via email. If you don't have an email account or if you would like to continue to receive the hard copy of *The Kingfisher*, you must opt out of receiving the digital copy by calling us at 631-477-6456 or emailing us at info@northforkaudubon.org. Thank you for your cooperation.

Tuesdays With Tom

April 19 - Pearson's Place

We will visit Nancy Pearson's glorious "bird sanctuary" where she will show us around and tell us about the nesting bluebirds, barn swallows, and tree swallows that visit her every year. Her land is along Richmond Creek so we will be sure to see Osprey, Kingfishers and Egrets.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Red House at Inlet Pond County Park, North Road, Greenport and we'll carpool from there.. To register for this trip, call Tom at 631-275-3202 or email tdamiani3@optimum.net.

May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 - It's Maygration!

May is by far the busiest month for birds and birders alike. Our feathered friends are busy moving into our area and beyond and we birders are busy observing them. The North Fork is ripe with birding hotspots and we will hit most of them this month.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Red House at Inlet Pond County Park, North Road, Greenport and we'll carpool from there. To register for this walk, call Tom at 631-275-3202 or email tdamiani3@optimum.net.

June 21 - Up a Narrow River!

Narrow River Road is one of the most bucolic places on the North Fork. Rarities like Willow Flycatcher, Sharp-tailed Sparrows and Clapper Rail can all be seen there. Join Tom to explore this beautiful stretch of roadway.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Red House at Inlet Pond County Park, North Road, Greenport and we'll carpool from there. To register for this walk, call Tom at 631-275-3202 or email tdamiani3@optimum.net.

NORTH FORK AUDUBON SOCIETY CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

ONE YEAR INDIVIDUAL \$25
ONE YEAR FAMILY \$30
ONE YEAR BUSINESS/CORP. \$35

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

Make check payable to NFAS and return to
NFAS, PO Box 973, Mattituck NY 11952.

Remembering Maureen

By Tom Damiani

With the untimely passing of Maureen Cullinane, the North Fork Audubon Society has lost a very good friend. Maureen was involved with NFAS for many years serving as president, children's program coordinator, and, frankly, anything that needed doing, she was always right there.

She generously provided "her guys" from her landscaping business to overhaul the grounds at the Red House on a yearly basis.

She was a no-nonsense person who believed in getting the job done. A very independent woman, she used her confidence and strength to lead NFAS through trying times and had a way of looking at challenging issues as opportunities to stretch and change rather than throwing up her hands in frustration. If we needed to work through a difficult situation, we turned to Maureen for guidance and leadership.

Maureen will never be forgotten by NFAS. I'm sure she'll also be remembered by all the people she met and worked with. She devoted so much of herself to simply doing a good job for her beloved North Fork, and all the folks here who call it home.

Remembering Linda

By Rick Kedenburg

Linda E. Vardy was my soul-mate, my partner-in-life, my best friend, my everything.

Linda, a former secretary of NFAS, was a life-long dedicated birder. Those in the chapter may remember her great ornithological knowledge and love of birds, acquired throughout her life (including summers in Potomac, MD and college graduate research on the DNA of White-throated Sparrows.).

Linda was my light to the world of beauty and nature. Her love for the Earth, its plants and animals, especially birds, was extraordinary. Her write-ups of chapter field trips made you feel as if you were there.

The love Linda and I share transcends death. Some day soon I will join her on a woodland trail in the spring with all of the earth's precious jewels of the forest - our favorite warblers - rejoicing.

Linda Vardy Kedenburg, with Appreciation

By Diana Van Buren

I have known Linda Vardy Kedenburg for the fifteen years I've been involved with the North Fork Audubon Society. And with Linda, there was always Rick, never one without the other. They did everything together, including a lot of educational bird walks for NFAS.

Rick and Linda were an extraordinary team. They monitored Plovers and Terns, helped erect enclosures, worked with Tom Damiani counting waterfowl in the winter and were sector leaders for the CBC. They led terrific bird walks, where between them, they identified every bird, using both sight and sound, adding extemporaneous riffs on bird biology and interesting ornithological facts along the way.

Linda's egalitarian attitude toward the natural world meant that she appreciated both the spectacular and the mundane. This was most evident in the field trip reports she wrote for the NFAS newsletter, which are full of the drama of everyday bird life. Linda didn't seem nearly as interested in chasing rare species or vagrants as much as she loved observing the beauty and behavior of the birds she and Rick came to know and find each season of the year. Linda's Field Trip Report from November 2014 is reprinted with this newsletter.

No pussy-footing around for Linda; I will always remember her as being disarmingly direct. This held true when it came to her illness as well. Last year, soon after she was diagnosed with cancer, she didn't shy away from the truth and kept us informed about what was happening.

Her attitude towards her treatments, her interest in the science behind them and her hopes for conquering this illness were all impressively positive and upbeat. In fact, her mood over the past few months was inspirational, because whenever we saw her, she was reassuringly cheerful.

Knowing she survived a previous life-threatening illness, we shared her optimistic view. It didn't seem possible that she wouldn't beat this, too. We had no idea we were going to lose such a good friend, so soon.

President's Message

The North Fork Audubon Society has experienced some changes recently. We mourn the loss of two very dear members who found a home and a mission at NFAS. Both Maureen Cullinane and Linda Vardy Kedenburg understood the ever-increasing need for "connecting people with nature" and dedicated innumerable hours to this mission, sharing their passion for understanding, appreciating and conserving our natural world.

We will be honoring the contributions of these wonderful women to the North Fork Audubon Society at events later this year and will share that information with you once details are finalized.

In the meantime, NFAS has created two dedicated funds for donations in honor of Linda Vardy Kedenburg and Maureen Cullinane.

Linda devoted much of her time and effort to the protection and restoration of natural habitat. The **Linda Vardy Kedenburg Memorial Fund** will ensure donations given in Linda's memory will go directly toward these efforts.

NFAS will dedicate donations made in Maureen Cullinane's name to the **No Child Left Inside Children's Education Fund**, which will enable the continuation of the work Maureen committed so much of her time to as a member.

Thank you to all who have made memorial contributions so far and know that your donation will go directly to these special programs.

The NFAS Board of Directors is pleased to welcome two new members to our board. Nancy Conradi Pearson and Patrick Hanly bring much experience in the birding world as well as a diversity of talents and interests to complement our existing board.

As always, we would love to expand our volunteer base. If you are interested in lending a hand, we have many tasks ahead of us in 2016. Please write to us at info@northforkaudubon.org and we'll find a job that suits you!

Sibbie O'Kane

Suffolk County Legislature Considering Plastic Bag Ban in Suffolk County

On March 1, 2016, legislation was introduced to adopt a law banning "carry-out" or what are more commonly known as "single use" plastic bags in Suffolk County. The legislation is co-sponsored by the North Fork's representative in the legislature, Al Krupski.

If enacted, the law would prohibit "the distribution of plastic carry-out bags used in retail sales." In addition, retailers would be required to charge ten cents for paper bags or "reusable" plastic bags. "Reusable" bags were included as chargeable items because in some places where bans were enacted, the industry simply changed the width of the bags to circumvent the law. The law would be implemented one year after its adoption.

This is an enormous victory for North Fork Audubon Society and the other groups from across Long Island who have been working to get plastic bag bans adopted in their municipalities. The arguments in favor of eliminating these bags from use are numerous. Single use plastic bags are harmful to wildlife, the environment, and human health since plastic doesn't biodegrade, it photodegrades, breaking down into smaller and smaller pieces which make it into the food chain, particularly into sea food. They are also a visual blight, often stuck in trees, washed up on beaches or littering roadways. Although the industry claims they are recyclable, the majority are not and those that are, aren't really recycle, rather, downcycled - made into products of lesser quality and utility. Finally, they are made from petroleum, the extraction of which contributes to climate change.

The opposition, including plastic industry lobbyists, will be out in full force to try and defeat the bill. We need your help to make sure that doesn't happen.

The legislation will have been addressed at the March 14 Environment, Planning and Agricultural (EPA) Committee - after the printing of this newsletter but prior to its mailing. Depending on the actions of members, it will be moved out of committee to be considered by the full legislature or tabled in committee.

There is still time for you to express your support as we anticipate the issue will not be settled at the March 22 General Meeting of the Suffolk County Legislature. Please write to the legislators expressing your support; send comments to the Clerk of the Legislature and ask him to forward your comments to all the Legislators.

Email comments to Jason.Richberg@suffolkcourtyny.gov or send written comments to:

**Jason A. Richberg, Clerk of the Legislature
Suffolk County Legislature
William H. Rogers Building
725 Veterans Memorial Highway
Smithtown NY 11787**

We will keep you updated via email on the status of the legislation. Thank you for your help!

Olivia's Birds - An Invitation from The Old Town Art and Crafts Guild

Oliver Bouler was 11 years old at the time of the devastating Gulf oil spill. The young artist and aspiring ornithologist found a way that she could help. Working with National Audubon, Olivia raised \$200,000 for Gulf recovery by selling her original drawings of birds and wildlife. She inspired us all with her determination to make a difference.

Join us at The Old Town Art and Crafts Guild (28265 Main Road, Cutchogue) on April 16 to meet Olivia, now 16, and still a champion for birds and the environment. Hear about ways we can all become better stewards of the earth. Participate in a drawing workshop given by this talented young artist. A selection of Olivia's paintings will be on exhibit and for sale and her book, *Olivia's Birds: Saving the Gulf*, will be available for purchase.

Olivia's presentation (1:00 p.m.- 3:00 p.m.) will be followed by a reception with refreshments (3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.). In addition, to Olivia's exhibit, local children's art related to nature and bird photographs from noteworthy North Fork photographers will be on exhibit (04/16, 04/17 and 04/23, 04/24). Parking in lot adjacent to the building.

NFAS TRIP TO DUNE ROAD

Tuesday November 18, 2014

By Linda Kedenburg

Tuesday with Tom turned into Tuesday with Rick and Linda and whoever was brave enough to turn out after an all-day rain and forecast 40 knot winds. Waiting at Mattituck, we debated the wisdom of perhaps staying local, but two steps away from the car convinced us that it was no balmier on the North Fork. When Jim Romansky and Christine and Peter expressed an interest in taking our chances with Dune Road, we hopped in the cars and hoped for the best.

After Monday's storm, we expected Dune Road to be half buried in sand as we have seen it in past years. Thankfully it was not, although there were lake-sized puddles in the roadway. However, yesterday's rain did us the favor of plastering down most of the loose sand so that we were not blasted with it upon stepping out of the cars. A howling wind greeted us at Shinnecock Canal. Two Black Scoters surfed the canal. A treacherous walk out on the wind-scoured jetty did not reveal any Purple Sandpipers, even on the "lee" side. However, the swaying scope did pick up several gannets out over the storm-tossed waves. They were flapping more than normal to maintain their heading against the gale, but those long, pointed wings and beak convinced us that we were indeed seeing gannets. Two surfers arrived, checked out the maelstrom and jumped back in their truck with a sympathetic smile in our direction. Only crazy birders could be out today!

As we left for the Ponquogue Bridge Peter remarked that if every stop produced a bird or two, we might have a list by the end of the trip. Onesies and twosies became the watchword of the day. Maybe we'd reach a total of twenty. The only birds at the bridge were gulls (all three species) and Black Duck. We have all new respect for these tough birds. They were the only ones out on the Bay. The Oystercatchers were gone and although we tried to make some cormorants into loons, they were indeed only Double Crested Cormorants. A stop next to a flooded marsh caused two Great Egrets and a Great Blue Heron to rise up. Hope they leave for Florida soon!

Another stop along the road. Two white dots out on a mud flat. These turned out to be a lone Black-bellied Plover and a Dunlin. A small flock of 10-12 Dunlin industriously probed the mud in a small cove to the East. Further along, a flock of bobbing white dots turned into Hooded Mergansers clustered in a partially sheltered cove.

Try as we could, we did not find any Yellowlegs on roadside mud flats or Bonaparte Gulls, out on the Bay. Similarly, repeated stops at beach pavilions resulted in fruitless scans of the shore for Sanderlings. The sand was scoured bare. Hoping for Snowy Owls, we perused dunes and sand islands out in the Bay, but none were to be found. An airborne flock further west raised the hopes of Snow Buntings, but all we found were a foraging flock of starlings along the roadside. However, all was not lost. We did spot Brant, Red-breasted Mergansers and two Mute Swans out across the Bay and finally hit the "mother lode" at the Quogue Community Boardwalk.

Entering the preserve, a Northern Harrier tilted in the wind above the marsh. Crows were mobbing a supposed raptor in a thick copse of pines. However, searching the area with the scope did not help. We could only assume that it might have been a Cooper's Hawk well hidden in the thick branches. Better luck arrived in another grove of trees that cut the wind both for us and the birds. A Robin, perched at the top of a Winterberry bush, dove in and feasted on the bright red fruit. A chickadee scolded us from a pine and a Yellow-rumped Warbler confirmed that the species does depend on Bayberries in winter. It could not be budged as it scarfed them down with enthusiasm. Several flickers bounced along and settled down in the ground cover of Hudsonia and perched on surrounding trees. Finally a scan of a marsh pool added Green-winged teal and Bufflehead to our list. There is always a mystery bird on every trip. Ours was a rufous skulker who could have been a fluffed-up Carolina Wren or perhaps a Fox Sparrow. It was not elongated like a Thrasher, so we left with doubts and questions.

Although we searched the roadside for the White-winged Dove that had been spotted in the area over the weekend, it did not show itself. Mourning Dove were also not present, so we did not have to practice our studied field marks that might have helped us separate the two species. Well, we were ready should it have cooperated.

Reaching the bridge to Westhampton, we decided to call it a day. Although conditions were rough, we thank Jim, Christine and Peter for being such good sports about it all. There was camaraderie in suffering. Looking back on the trip, we had to admit that in some wacky way, we really did enjoy this wild day out in the field, as only birders can. Adding a Turkey Vulture on the way home, we even exceeded our prediction. The trip list totaled thirty species.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Spring 2016

Friday, April 8, 7:30 p.m. - Deer Over-Population program, Peconic Lane Community Center

Saturday, April 16, 1:00 p.m. - Olivia's Birds, Old Town Art & Crafts Guild, Cutchogue

Tuesday, April 19, 8:00 a.m. - Pearson property bird walk, meet at Red House

Tuesdays, May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, 8:00 a.m. - Bird walks, meet at Red House

Friday, May 13, 7:30 p.m. International Migratory Bird Day Celebration - Red House

Saturday, May 14, - Bus Trip to NYC, Central Park and NY Historical Society

Friday, June 10, 7:30 p.m. - Long Island Underwater program, Peconic Lane Community Center

Tuesday, June 21, 8:00 a.m. - Bird Walk, Narrow River Road, Orient

All programs held at Inlet Pond County Park are presented by North Fork Audubon and Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone

