

THE KINGFISHER

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

Volume XXX IV Number 2

Spring 2015

Climate Matters: How a Changing Climate May Impact the Birds We Love

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

*Location: Peconic Landing (Auditorium)
Greenport*

Recent research by Audubon's science team indicates that North American birds may suffer significant losses due to climate change. Over half of North American species (314 out of 588) studied are considered to be threatened or endangered by climate change, as they may face a loss of over 50% of their current ranges. Tom Auer, Conservation Data Manager of the National Audubon Society, will explain how Audubon's science team made their findings and what we can all do to help birds through an uncertain future.

Spring Warblers

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

*Location: Peconic Lane Community Center
Peconic*

The month of May is the optimal time to find Warblers migrating through our area. Traveling from South and Central America, Mexico and the West Indies, a few of these neo-tropical migrant songbirds stay here to breed while many are only stopping on their way to boreal breeding grounds further north. Our Eastern Warblers are strikingly colorful, active and exciting to find in backyards or nearby wooded trails. This unique multi-media learning program uses photos and bird call recordings to focus on how to find and identify migrating Wood Warblers.

Presenter Pat Hanly is a North Fork birder, hawk-watcher and nature enthusiast. He is the new compiler of the Orient Audubon Christmas Count, one of the oldest continuing Audubon counts in the country.

Creating a Rain Garden Workshop

*Date: Friday, June 12
7:30 p.m.*

*Location: Peconic Lane Community Center
Peconic*

Do you want a garden that's easy to install, looks good year-round, requires little maintenance and helps prevent water pollution? Rain gardens are shallow depressions designed to soak up water and support trees, shrubs, and flowers that tolerate both wet and dry conditions. A rain garden is not a pond and won't breed mosquitoes. By absorbing rain falling on your land, a rain garden can help reduce storm-water runoff that pollutes beaches, creeks and estuaries.

This workshop covers the basics of designing and installing a rain garden with an emphasis on using native plants.

Robin Simmen is Community Horticulture Specialist for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County. Previously, she was Director of GreenBridge at Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

Become a Bee Rancher!

Has the yield of your garden declined in the last few years? There could be a reduction of pollinators in your area. Back in March, Laura Klahre, beekeeper and owner of Blossom Meadow, gave a great presentation on the role of managed and wild pollinators in pollinating our backyard gardens, orchards and farms. You can ensure good fruit and vegetable yields and have a fun by "bee ranching" mason bees and leaf-cutter bees. The bees and bee-ranching kits are available at the Blossom Meadow store located at 31855 Main Road, Cutchogue (east of the King Kullen shopping center). Mason Bee season starts in April so now is the time to reserve the cocoons and get your nesting blocks in order.

Bluebird Nest Box Walk at Mashomack Preserve with Bill Zitek

Date: Saturday, June 13
10:00 a.m.

Location: Mashomack Preserve
Shelter Island

We will meet at the Visitors Center at Mashomack Preserve and will walk out to the Red Trail to North and South Fields where Dr. Zitek will explain the Nest Box Project - natural history, banding, cameras and results. We will open nest boxes and should be able to see Eastern Bluebird and Tree Swallow eggs and nestlings. If needed, Dr. Zitek will transport in his truck people who have difficulty walking to the meadows.

William E. Zitek, DVM is a (mostly) retired veterinarian. A volunteer at Mashomack Preserve since 2001, he revitalized the nest box trail and has been growing it ever since. He is a trustee of Mashomack Preserve and serves as their Science and Wildlife Committee Chairman.

From Our Tech Department.....

We have moved our website to a new hosting site and started updating the information to present our programs in a timely manner. We will be improving the look and feel of the site soon as well, so be sure to check back every once in a while to see what's new at NFAS.

We have also just purchased a professional software application for not-for-profits at an incredible discount. This will work to integrate our current membership and volunteer database. Please let us know if we need to update your contact information.

NorthForkAudubon.org will soon be the "go to" site for all of your questions about birds, habitat and lots more, with information about our community and links to dozens of other sites which you will find helpful!

Volunteer Spotlight: Doug Kalunas He's For the Birds!

By Tom Damiani

Have you ever taken a walk at Inlet Pond County Park and noticed the feeders behind the Red House and the multitude of birds they attract? Well, you can thank East Marion resident and longtime NFAS member Doug Kalunas for that.

Doug has had the "job" of filling the feeders here for many years. He stops by every few days to check and replenish the avian attractors with black oil sunflower seed and suet. His volunteer work doesn't stop with NFAS. He volunteers for the Nature Conservancy at Mashomack Preserve where he aids Bill Zitek and the preserve's nesting Bluebirds. Doug helps with monitoring, maintenance, and record keeping of Mashomack's 50 plus boxes. So you can see, Doug is for the birds and the birds are better off because of him!



Emergency Contacts for Injured Wildlife

NFAS quite often receives calls with questions regarding injured wildlife. Rest assured that there are resources out there for rehabilitation of an injured animal. These are the numbers we share when you call:

The **North Fork Animal Hospital** in Southold can be contacted 24/7 at **631-765-2400**.

The **Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center** in Hampton Bays has a corps of volunteers all over the North Fork to assist with wildlife rescue. Their number is **631-728-9453**.

For marine mammals and sea turtles contact the **Riverhead Foundation for Marine Preservation** at **631-369-9840**.

President's Message

Are you the recipient of piles of unwanted catalogs and other assorted junk mailings? You can stop those pesky companies in their tracks by logging on to www.catalogchoice.org. This not-for-profit company offers a free service to opt out of catalogs, coupons, credit card offers, phone books, circulars and more. Using this service, you can take control and protect your privacy by removing your name from marketers' databases. And the added benefit is how good you'll feel about reducing the environmental damage caused by all of that junk mail.

Speaking of environmental damage, NFAS continues to advocate for alternatives to the single-use plastic bags that denigrate our beloved landscapes and pollute both land and sea. We are offering a complimentary ChicoBag to all new members who join at the \$25 individual level. They are durable (holding up to 25 pounds), washable and come a range of fun colors. Or, you can purchase your reusable ChicoBag from us for \$7. Contact info@northforkaudubon.org if interested. If you have not already done so, please visit our website and sign the petition favoring a ban on single-use plastic bags.

Speaking of websites, ours is new and improved and looking wonderful these days. Visit northforkaudubon.org for more information.

In our Volunteer Spotlight we feature a volunteer most worthy of recognition. Doug Kalunas goes about his tasks silently and faithfully. He's the reason we are able to watch all sorts of birds from the comfort of the Red House or from the yard outdoors. Many thanks to you, Doug! We certainly appreciate all that you do.

Speaking of volunteers, North Fork Audubon would cease to exist if not for the people who give graciously of their time and talents. We hope that you will consider supporting NFAS as a volunteer. Assisting as a greeter at the Red House could be a commitment of just a few hours a month. Helping with a mailing is a fun way to get to know other members. If you need some time communing with nature, the trails at Inlet Pond County Park always require TLC. You can contact us at info@northforkaudubon.org and we'll make sure the fit is just right. NFAS needs you!

Happy Spring!

Debbie O'Kane

Tuesdays With Tom

April 21 - Fashionably Early!

May is the month for watching migrating birds but some birds don't wait. April can be a good month to see early arrivals like Yellow Warblers, Baltimore Orioles and Eastern Phoebes. We'll check out Wildwood State Park since its a little farther west. Early migrators may show up there before we see them on the East End.

We will meet in the Tanger parking lot in front of Office Max at 8:00 a.m. Be sure to bring binoculars and expect to be back to Tanger by 11:00 a.m.

May 5, 12, 19, 26 - It's Maygration!

May is THE month for birding, hands down. As the migration unfolds, Tom will pick different areas to go to each week in hopes of maximizing the species seen for the month.

We will meet at the Red House at Inlet Pond County Park at 8:00a.m. unless otherwise notified. Expect to be out for two hours unless we travel to a location outside of the North Fork. To register for this walk, call Tom at 631-275-3202 or email tdamiani3@optimum.net. This is especially important for May as we may be meeting at different locations.

June 16 - A Little Bird Told Me!

Ever wonder what birds are "saying" or why they are saying it? Join Tom on a trip into wood and field where he will focus on bird songs and calls. Of course, we will be looking as well.

Meet at the Red House at Inlet Pond County Park at 8:00 a.m. Please register by calling Tom Damiani at 631-275-3202 or email tdamiani3@optimum.net.

NFAS Officers and Directors
2015

Debbie O'Kane, President
Gwynn Schroeder, Vice President
Anne Surchin, Secretary
Bernadette Deerkoski, Treasurer
Peggy Lauber, Program Chair
Diana Van Buren, Director
Mark Haubner, Director
Tom Damiani, Director
Ed Ward, Director

**Special Native Plant Sales
Mark Your Calendars!**

Saturday, May 9 and May 16

8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Red House
Inlet Pond County Park, Greenport

Pollinator Project Plant Sale at the Red House
We will feature a variety of pollinator-friendly and native plants in different sizes from Glover Perennials in Cutchogue. This is a rare opportunity to browse through an assortment of native plants from Jim Glover, a wholesale-only grower of high quality herbaceous perennials, grasses and woody plants.

**Friday and Saturday, June 5 and 6,
June 12 and 13**

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. or by appointment

The Long Island Native Plant Initiative Sale is an annual event. Here you can purchase native grasses, herbaceous flowering plants and a limited variety of shrubs, all grown from locally collected seed. Plants available at sales benefit L.I.N.P.I.'s mission. 4" pots, 6 packs and flats. Check website for plant list.

L.I.N.P.I.

**The Greenhouses at Suffolk County Community
College - Eastern Campus**

121 Speonk Riverhead Road, Riverhead NY 11901
www.LINPI.org

*Celebrate International Migratory
Bird day with NFAS!*

Date: Saturday, May 9

*Location: Red House at Inlet Pond
County Park*

This event will feature guided bird walks, a native plant sale, a pot luck picnic and music by the Second Hands. Bring a dish to share and a chair.

Check our website for times and more details.

Native Plant Sale and Annual Yard Sale

Date: Saturday, May 16

*Location: Red House at Inlet Pond
County Park
8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.*

\$25 Vendor Fee

**Contact info@northforkaudubon.org if
you would like to participate.**

JOIN THE NORTH FORK AUDUBON SOCIETY

Chapter Membership Application

One Year Individual	\$20
One Year Family:	\$25
One Year Business/Corporate	\$35

Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-Mail:

Return this application and check to:
North Fork Audubon Society, PO Box 973,
Mattituck NY 11952 or join online at
www.northforkaudubon.org.

Check here if this is a renewal.

This article first appeared in the January/February 2015
Edition of Eastern Long Island Audubon Society's THE OSPREY

Remembering an Exceptional Mentor

By Larry Penny

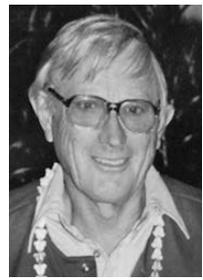
I would not be here today if it weren't for my mentor Paul Stoutenburgh. In the middle 1950s when I was a teen growing up next to the potato fields in the Oregon part of Mattituck, my mother turned my attention to a small notice in the Mattituck Watchman-Long Island Traveler. It said that a man named Paul would be showing slides of birds at a local church. After a very snowy winter of feeding birds—rather than shooting them with my Daisy BB gun—with old pieces of bread in my backyard and watching them feed with the naked eye from my second story window I was eager to learn more about them and so went to the slide show.

It was the beginning of a long and prosperous tutelage under Paul Stoutenburgh's watchful eye. At the time Paul was married to Barbara Silleck who contributed equally to my development as a budding naturalist. Paul took me under his wing and I spent many a great day with him watching birds, photographing them and learning about the local ecosystems: salt marshes, coastal ponds, woodlands, old fields and such. Long Island Sound, Mattituck Inlet, the Peconic Bays and their cricks and inlets, from Orient Point to west of Riverhead and the South Fork that was his primary bailiwick.

How Paul got started photographing nature is a mystery to me. I know that he took up photography at a young age and took his Leica to World War II with him on a naval vessel in the Pacific. Near New Guinea his ship was torpedoed and went down, Paul managed to save himself and, luckily, his camera.

When he returned to the States his camera was by his side and stayed by his side for until he got another, then another, as film cameras and their lenses became more and more sophisticated. One of my first treks with Paul was to Quogue where he had found a Killdeer nest in a field in mid-March. From that moment on, I played a valuable role in his photographic pursuits. He would build a makeshift blind close to a nest, come back a few days later with me, and set up to shoot the nester.

There were no telephoto lenses readily available in those days so the blind had to be but a few feet from the nest.



The killdeer spooked, we both entered the blind and sat for a short spell, confident that the Mrs. Killdeer knew that someone was near her nest. The next step was a brilliantly staged by Paul. I would leave the blind in an obvious fashion and walk away about 200 yards with the hope that she was watching me leave. I sat down and watched from afar. In about 15 minutes she came back and started brooding her eggs but I couldn't tell from my faraway vantage point. In an hour or so, Paul stood up outside the blind. "Did you get some good shots", I asked, "Yes, indeed" he replied.

From then on I played a very valuable role. Things got tricky when he found a Yellow-crowned Night Heron breeding in a pine tree in Aquebogue. He constructed a tree blind and we pulled the same dog-and-pony trick, we both went up the tree, I got down and hid a distance away, Paul was able to get some magnificent close-ups of the heron.

Paul was also a Christmas bird counter. I went on my first one, the Central Suffolk Count, in December of 1952. There were only a handful of us, but they were all tried and true birders. They were the big four of East End birders at the time. None of them were academic scientists but they were prodigious observers, data recorders and writers. Gil Raynor was a meteorologist at Brookhaven National Laboratory, he used an old fashioned telescope but was as adept at following the flight of birds in the air with he as spotting them roosting or on the ground. He published scientific papers about bird migration in *The Auk* and other ornithological journals. Dennis Puleston, author and public relations person at the Brookhaven Lab who had sailed across the Pacific Ocean in a smallish boat and later wrote a very fine *Natural History of Long Island*.

The Long Island duck farmer, Roy Wilcox, he worked the South Bays part of the count, he was also a writer, and compiled the natural history of Southampton Town among other works. He was also a bird-bander and the Long Island authority on the Piping Plover and its nesting habits. Art Cooley graduated from Cornell University and taught biol-

continues next page

ogy and other subjects at Bellport High School. He led many, many highschoolers into natural history and the environment in the way that Paul did with me. At that time, along with Paul, and following in the footsteps of the great Roy Latham, an Orient potato farmer, who was self taught in all phases of natural history, they made up the “Big Five” of Suffolk County’s active natural historians.

Paul and I would also go duck hunting together. Set out decoys, sit in a blind on Nassau point and watch the winter waterfowl skim the waters of Peconic Bay. Many naturalists, conservationists and environmentalists started out as hunters. Just think for a moment of John James Audubon and Theodore Roosevelt, they both travelled the Americas, often on foot, and shot their specimens in order to collect them for museums and illustrations.

Early on, long before there was email and digital cameras, Paul said that print was fated to be replaced by pictures, namely, photographs, and in a way he was right. Ironically, perhaps, Paul was as good in print as behind the camera. But he had the help of his able assistant and wife and co-writer, Barbara, who knew how to spell and type with both hands. He (and Barbara) began writing a weekly column “Focus on Nature” in the Riverhead News-Review in 1951. It became a mainstay in the Suffolk Times published by Troy Gustavson. He wrote more than 2,500 nature columns replete with photographs, covering flora and fauna, fish and fowl, herbs and trees, land and water. His last was printed in 2011. For a short time his column was carried in the Southampton Press, as well.

He was the first nature columnist on Long Island. Back from the Army and Japan in 1961, Paul let me write one of his columns and I guess I was smitten. Nowadays three East End newspapers, the East Hampton Star, Southampton Press and East Hampton Press run a weekly column nature column. In 2013 Dave Taft began a biweekly nature column in the New York Times Metropolitan section. But, above all, he was an ardent environmentalist, working to preserve wetlands at a time when Suffolk County and the U.S. Corps of Engineers were dredging waterways helter-skelter and putting the dredged materials on wetland vegetation. He started the North Fork Environmental Council, which preceded the Group For The South Fork which ultimately morphed into Group For The East End. Long before the Long Island Nature Conservancy had paid staff, Paul was one of the TNC’s most strenuous volunteers saving land here and there relying on

the good will of people who donated it.

He was also a director for the Peconic Land Trust, helping to preserve farmland. He, as a member of the Big Five, helped bring Suffolk County into the environmental limelight by starting and working with organizations such as Defenders of Wildlife in order to get DDT—the mosquito control agent of choice and the farmer’s right-hand in battling the Colorado potato beetle—banned in Suffolk County. While a shop teacher at Greenport High School, he started a summer nature workshop program for Southold youth involving seining creeks and coves and other nature studies.

After the DDT era, Paul and other began putting up artificial nesting poles for the Osprey population which had been reduced to less than 20 breeding pairs on Long Island. He, Gil Raynor, Dennis Puleston and I overnights on Gardiners Island in the 1970s to study the breeding bird fauna at a time. While I was at Southampton College we visited Robins Island more than once and Paul led the fight to protect it. Most of it is now managed by the Nature Conservancy. He studied mammals and marine organisms with me on Mashomack to formulate the Mashomack Preserve Master Plan.

Paul was the compiler of the Orient Christmas Bird Count for about 30 years. For a long time, Paul served as a Southold Town Trustee where he made deep environmental inroads. He also was a town councilman for a term or two. Paul traveled widely with his wife and family, e.g., to the Gaspé Peninsula to study the breeding of Gannets and other marine birds. In June of 2013, the Southold Town Board named the Hashamomuck Pond Nature Preserve in his honor.

On July 15 of this year after a long bout with Parkinson’s Disease, Paul passed away. His body in keeping with a long-held commitment was given to Stony Brook University.

He is survived by his wife of long-standing, Barbara, who carries on his work and his love of nature and the environment.

Plants With a Purpose - Planting for Pollinators

Spend less money on sunflower seed next winter. Instead, invest it in planting native shrubs this spring.

We all know that it was a tough winter. Temperatures in the single digits and snowfall measured in feet, not inches, are not the norm here on the North Fork.

Knowing that the dense and persistent snow cover had made foraging for seeds and insects in the wild much more difficult for birds, I felt obligated to keep my feeders full of sunflower and niger seed. Cheaper seed mixes with mostly millet don't cut it. The high-calorie fats found in sunflower seeds is what birds need. But what would happen if we didn't have feeders in our yards?

The fact is that without humans, birds and other wildlife would thrive. If humans were not here, wildlife habitat - food, shelter, water and safe places to reproduce - would be intact and wild things would live as they have for hundreds of thousands of years.

What wildlife needs from humans right now is a commitment from homeowners in suburban areas to re-vegetate their yards with native plants. These are the plants that North Fork birds, mammals and insects co-evolved with. They have a special relationship to each other and "speak the same language." In almost all cases, the larvae of butterflies native to our area cannot use non-native plants as their food source. Birds depend on insect larvae as a primary food source, particularly for their young. Everything is connected.

If you are just starting your journey towards a bird and butterfly-friendly yard, trees and shrubs are the place to start. They can be the visual framework around which you build your wildlife garden over the years.

There are many online resources that can help you to plan and design a backyard that is hospitable for birds and butterflies. One of my favorites is on the **AllAboutBirds.org** website created by the **Cornell Lab of Ornithology**.

Below is a very short list of reliable, easy-to-find native shrubs that you should consider planting this year. The first three marked with an asterisk * have persistent berries that are good food sources for birds and other animals during tough winters. The rest have berries that are usually eaten by the birds before winter begins.

Winterberry, *Ilex verticillata** (need male and female to produce berries)

Northern Bayberry, *Myrica pensylvanica** (same as above)

Creeping Juniper, *Juniperus horizontalis**

Possumhaw **Birurnum**, *viburnum nudum*

American Beautyberry, *Callicarpa americana*

Serviceberry/Shadbush, *Amelanchier alnifolia*

Arrowwood **Viburnum**, *viburnum dentatum*

American Cranberrybush, *viburnum opulus* var. *americanum* (makes a very good deciduous hedge, gets quite big)

These local nurseries have sold native plants in past seasons and can often find and order what they don't have in stock.

Patronizing these small, local nurseries is an investment in our North Fork community.

Ornamental Plantings

4100 Route 48, Southold NY 11971
631-765-2614

Trimble's

20985 Main Road, Cutchogue NY 11971
631-734-6494

Peconic River Herb Farm

2749 River Road, Calverton NY 11933
631-369-0058

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions

Diana Van Buren

dianvb@mac.com

917-623-5373

Pollinator Project at Peconic Landing Update

Plans are moving forward to create beautiful new pollinator habitat at Peconic Landing.

A meeting between NFAS representatives Debbie O'Kane and Diana Van Buren, Peconic Landing Environmental Services Coordinator Scott Ellis and Peconic Landing residents Alice Ayers and Louise Barry took place on Tuesday, March 9. Also present were PL residents Martha Ulman and Colleen Stevenson, Allan Connell of the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) and Southold Boy Scout Zachary Ellis.

Zach showed a presentation about his plan to create pollinator habitat at Peconic Landing as part of an Eagle Scout Service Project. We will be working with Zach and his team of scouts to start work on the site.

Step One: Proper site preparation for a meadow-style planting is crucial. Non-native plants will be removed from the site to start.

Even after existing non-native plants are removed, unwanted invasive species are often the first to populate a disturbed area, as previously dormant seeds are brought to the surface and exposed to sunlight. Since we intend to avoid using herbicides (which can impact butterflies and other pollinators) we plan to use alternate, mechanical methods to discourage and remove any invasive species that reappear. Smothering seedlings with landscape cloth is one method, and, of course, hand-pulling.

Planting strong, well-established grasses and perennials will also help with getting the area off to a good start.

We'll keep you posted. Check our Facebook page for updates. As one wise meadow-maker put it, "You can either have a quick failure or a slow success." We're opting for the latter.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Spring 2015

Friday, April 10 7:30 p.m. - Climate Change program, Peconic Landing, Greenport

Tuesday, April 21, 8:00 a.m. - Bird walk, meet at Tanger parking lot

Friday, May 8, 7:30 p.m. - Spring Warbler program, Peconic Lane Community Center, Peconic

Tuesdays, May 5, 12, 19, 26, 8:00 a.m. - bird walks, various locations

Saturday May 9 - Guided bird walks (8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.), potluck picnic and outdoor concert, Red House, Inlet Pond County Park

Saturday, May 16, 8:00 a.m. - Native plant sale and annual yard sale, Red House, Inlet Pond County Park

Friday and Saturday, June 5 & 6 & June 12 & 13, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Native Plant Sale, LINPI, Calverton

Friday, June 12, 7:30 p.m. - Rain Garden program, Peconic Lane Community Center, Peconic

Saturday, June 13 10:00 a.m. - Bluebird walk, Mashomack Preserve, Shelter Island

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



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North Fork Audubon Society, Inc
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