



THE KINGFISHER

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

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Winter 2016

Winter Waterbirds of the North Fork - Program and Field Trip

Dates: *Program*
Friday, January 8
7:30 p.m.
Field Trip
Saturday, January 9
8:00 a.m.

Location: *Red House at Inlet Pond County Park*
65275 Route 48, Greenport

As residents of the North Fork, we are privileged to witness the fabulous flights, migration and overwintering of many species of ducks and waterbirds that are not present here in the summer months. From ducks to loons to grebes, our North Fork waters teem with them from November to March, and that is the time to search out our lakes, ponds, inlets, and bays as well as the Sound for these active, colorful and fascinating visitors. Local birder Pat Hanly will cover the many wintering waterbirds of the North Fork, describing the best spots to find them as well as how to identify and differentiate puddle (dabbling), diving and sea ducks from loons and grebes.

This program and field trip will be especially welcoming to beginning birders.

Love Is For The Birds

Date: *Saturday, February 13*
10:00 a.m.

Location: *Orient Beach State Park*

Winter bird walk with Tom Damiani.
Beginners welcome and binoculars available
Join us for lunch and a movie afterwards.

Delicious Hot Soup Lunch and Film Screening - *The Messenger*

"Imagine a World Without Birdsong"

Date: *Saturday, February 13*
12:00 noon-3:00 p.m.

Location: *Poquatuck Hall*
Village Lane, Orient

Listen carefully. Birds are telling us something about our future, but their message is fading away quickly. Sue Rynard's documentary, *The Messenger*, unveils the complex effect of disappearing forests on migrating birds. While building windmills and skyscrapers has been great for life in the 21st century, we are inadvertently interfering with these birds' ancient rite of passage. The changes in tree-lined landscapes are causing the decline of many songbird species, especially the Cerulean Warbler, Purple Martin and Olive-Sided Flycatcher.

Rynard uses a unique combination of animation and breathtaking cinematography in her film to show that these birds' journeys are not only beautiful, but also important to the ecosystems that humans inhabit. "You can't just take birds out of the picture and expect the rest of it to keep working," Rynard says in the movie. That's something we can wholeheartedly agree on.

\$20 per person donation. Tickets available online at nfas.org

For more information on The Messenger, visit www.songbirdsos.com

Film Screening - *Racing Extinction*

Date: *Sunday, March 6*
2:00 p.m.

Location: *Floyd Memorial Library*
Greenport

From famed photographer Louis Psihoyos, director of *The Cove*, comes a behind-the-scenes film about how the illegal wildlife trade combined with the impacts of global climate change can bring the planet to its knees.

Racing Extinction explores the possibility of a sixth mass extinction on Earth, one that could be prevented if we band together and beat out time.

And the Wild Bees Exclaimed, “We are the Superheros!”

By Laura Klahre

Blossom Meadow Farm

There are close to 450 different bee species in New York State, so why does everyone focus on honeybees? Wild bees including bumble bees, mining bees, leafcutter bees, and carpenter bees are 2-3 times better at pollinating than honeybees - wild bees are the superheros! Wild bees ensure that our backyard gardens and farms are pollinated, working often while the honeybees are still in their hive. Honeybees supplement the work of wild bees, not the other way around.

I recently gave a TEDx talk about these native wild winged wonders and how they match up to the attention-grabbing non-native honeybee. Interestingly, over 75% of wild bees are solitary (live by themselves) and nest in the ground or in holes found in trees. Consequently, they don't have a “protect the hive mentality” that gives bees a bad rap and a high fear factor. Not only are they docile, but many wow with a glitzy flair, including the beautiful metallic green of a sweat bee and the fantastic metallic blue of a mason bee. Other bees like the leafcutter impress with a calling card - they are known as nature's hole punchers because they cut circles out of leaves and use them to swaddle their bee babies.

As emphasized in the video, keeping a honeybee hive is not the answer to ensuring that your backyard garden is pollinated and will not “help save the world.” If you want to ensure bountiful crops and help the natural world, give a helping hand to the wild bees. In fact, high densities of honeybees may outstrip an area of nectar and pollen before the wild bees can fully take advantage. Keep honeybees if you want honey. Yes, I continue to keep honeybees (it is how I got my start over 15 years ago and I do love honey) but I also raise mason bees and experimenting with raising leafcutter and bumble bees. Mason bee houses and cocoons are available for sale at our Blossom Meadow store in Cutchogue so that other bee ranchers can also get started.

No matter the shape, size or life history, bees are just fascinating. Thank you to TEDx for giving them the spotlight they so richly deserve.

Tuesdays With Tom

January 19 - Winter Waterfowl Count

Every year in January the New York State Ornithological Society conducts a waterfowl count across New York State. We are lucky to live in an area that is rich with ducks, geese, and other waterfowl. This count will take us from Orient Point to Greenport, with stops at all bodies of water along the way.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Red House at Inlet Pond County Park, North Road, Greenport. Expect to be out until around noon. To register for this trip, call Tom at 631-275-3202 or email tdamiani3@optimum.net.

February 16 - Road Trip!

Well, Road *Birding*, anyway. You don't have to go far to see birds on the North Fork. There are many hot spots along roads that we will motor to, get out, see what's around, and then it's off to the next place. We will carpool so we don't unnecessarily contribute to climate change.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Red House at Inlet Pond County Park, North Road, Greenport. We will be out for about two hours. To register for this walk, call Tom at 631-275-3202 or email tdamiani3@optimum.net.

March 15 - Beware The Ides of March!

This is Tuesdays with Tom, not Brutus, so nothing to worry about! Where we go for this walk will depend on ice coverage. If the ice is gone from ponds and inlets, we will visit a preserve with those features. If not, we will improvise.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Red House at Inlet Pond County Park, North Road, Greenport. We will be out for about two hours. 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: _____

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

President's Message

As we welcome the new year a major focus for North Fork Audubon will be "Getting Back to Basics." In 2016 one of our goals is to inspire young people, less experienced birders and anyone who wants to enjoy the natural world to experience the joys of a walk in the woods, a hike in the park or a bird count in your own backyard. We encourage everyone to join us on our walks. We offer at least one a month and our guides make these some of the most enriching experiences on the North Fork.

The Christmas Bird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count and other citizen science programs are essential for providing data to scientists in order to determine changing migratory bird patterns, the effects of climate change on birds, how bird diseases are affecting bird populations and what kinds of differences in bird diversity are apparent in cities versus suburban, rural and natural areas. We encourage you to visit gbbc.birdcount.org to sign up for the Great Backyard Bird Count scheduled for February 12-15, 2016. In 2015, Great Backyard Bird Count participants in more than 100 countries counted 5,090 species of birds on more than 147,000 checklists!

As always, we appreciate your financial support helping us provide programs and other educational resources to fulfill our mission of "connecting people with nature." As an all-volunteer organization, we truly appreciate "donations" of time as well. Please contact us at info@northforkaudubon.org if you are interested in helping with projects such as youth programs, trail maintenance, native gardening at the Red House, newsletter production, etc. NFAS needs you!

All the best in 2016,

Sibbie O'Kane

Fish Chowder and the Orient Christmas Bird Count

By MaryLaura Lamont

Barbara and Paul Stoutenburgh had coordinated and compiled the Orient Christmas Bird Count for 27 years, from 1967-1993. That is a very long time and they were dedicated to it but they were looking to hand off the Count to someone else. By 1994 I had taken over the reins as the compiler. One of the nicest things about doing the Count with the Stoutenburghs was always the great dinner and comradery after the Count, when we all got together at their house by about 5:00 p.m. or so to go over the numbers of birds each party had seen that day in their respective assigned sections

Upon entering their house the first one to greet you was Hickory, their beautiful Golden Retriever. Then the aromas of the homemade North Fork fish chowder wafted through your nostrils and it was spiced with the scents of hot awaiting Russian tea. There was nothing quite like it after being out for 9-10 hours or more on the cold, windy days, sometimes snow or ice filled as well. When Barbara greeted you with a cup of hot Russian tea (which was like hot mulled cider) well, it just didn't get much better than that. As birders straggled in all were greeted the same way. A real highlight was hearing about the rarities seen while settled in a cozy chair by the roaring fire, with Hickory begging for your food. Maybe he got a piece of bread, but that was it.

Still in my possession is the thank you letter from Paul when I took over the count. He stated, "Barbara was the real brains behind the Count and she has worked out all the kinks." I told the two of them I wouldn't consider taking over the Count unless Barbara shared with me her fish chowder recipe. She quickly gave me the original recipe on the original paper. They were happy to let it go, count and all, and get on with a well-deserved retirement. I believe to this day one of the reasons why people partook of the Orient Count was the thought and act of eating, sipping, enjoying her down to earth, lip smacking good fish chowder. Of course, then there were all the great birds to be seen and the warm comradery of birders sharing their highlights and birdy stories of the day.

So, like they did for many years, I would have fish chowder ready and waiting for weary birders and a rip-roaring fire (my husband made that). We would all listen to the day's highlights as I recorded them and my black Labs all begged for food like Hickory did. I compiled the Count for 20 years and now it is time to share Barbara's fish Chowder recipe.

Fish Chowder Recipe for 30 People

30 pieces of bacon fried out. Add 20-30 shallots into the bacon fat, saute, then throw out the bacon fat. Add 2 and a half to 5 sticks of butter to 10 onions, chopped and cook that. Cut 20 medium potatoes and cube. Cook until tender in water.

Open and heat 14 small cans of mushroom soup diluted with milk, add 10 cups diced cooked fish (they did Black Fish; I did Flounder). Add water to thin. Add 10 pinches pepper, dill seed, thyme. She added carrots and celery. I cook the fish first with just enough water to cover with spices, carrots and celery. The fish will flake in the water after slowly cooking. Add sauteed onions and shallots, cooked potatoes, bacon, etc. into the fish broth. Add the mushroom soup and milk at the end. You will have to adjust to taste but it was and is delicious and a very appropriate dish at the end of a long hard and cold birding day. Your house may smell fishy for a day or two (or more) but it always reminds me of good cheer, great birds, funny stories, sometimes awful weather, and wonderful cherished memories of years gone by with dozens of great nature loving people - on Christmas Counts Past!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Winter 2016

Friday, January 8, 7:30 p.m. - Winter waterbird program, Red House

Saturday, January 9, 8:00 a.m. - Bird walk, meet at Red House

Tuesday, January 19, 8:00 a.m. - Waterfowl Count bird walk, meet at Red House

Saturday, February 13, 10:00 a.m. - Bird walk, meet at Orient Beach State Park

Saturday, February 13, 12:00 noon - Lunch and film, Poquatuck Hall, Orient

Tuesday, February 16, 8:00 a.m. - Bird walk, meet at Red House

Sunday, March 6, 2:00 p.m. - Film, Floyd Memorial Library, Greenport

Tuesday, March 15, 8:00 a.m. - Bird walk, meet at Red House

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



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POB 973 Mattituck NY 11952

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