



The Kingfisher

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www.northforkaudubon.org

WILD ORCHIDS OF NEWFOUNDLAND



Sunday, February 12

2 PM

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

Diana Van Buren set off for a week-long Dragonfly workshop at the Eagle Hill Institute in Steuben, Maine in July of 2015. Two weeks later she found herself on a ferry heading to Newfoundland in search of wild orchids and other botanical wonders. Join us for Diana's virtual tour of the west coast of Newfoundland, where it's hard NOT to see wild orchids in bloom in July.

Diana recently completed a one year internship with the Long Island Native Plant Initiative (LINPI), and is a past President and Program Chair of the North Fork Audubon Society. She recently moved back to Manhattan where she donates some of her time to helping with maintenance of the Heather Garden in Fort Tryon Park in Washington Heights.

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Sunday, March 12

2 PM

Location TBA

Audubon's Birds and Climate Change Report, published in September 2014, confirmed that climate change is the single greatest threat to North American birds. Seven years in the making, the report warns that 314 North American bird species could lose more than half of their current ranges by 2080 due to rising temperatures. For those of us who care deeply about birds--from the Wood Thrush in eastern forests to the Burrowing Owl in western grassland--this is a warning call that demands urgent action. The situation is indeed dire—more than half of bird species on the continent are at risk—but there are reasons for hope. By identifying which birds are most sensitive to climate change and where those changes are most likely to occur, this research provides a roadmap for future conservation and advocacy efforts.

We will learn about more about the report, as well as Audubon's Climate Initiative, the organizational response to this threat, which taps into its members' commitment to birds to build population resilience and demand solutions to slow the pace of warming. The audience will learn what steps they can take to address the climate change threat in their backyards, in their communities, in the Important Bird Areas (IBAs) near their homes, and in seeking support from the state and federal government.



Lynsy Smithson-Stanley is the Deputy Director of Climate & Strategic Initiatives for National Audubon Society.

President's Message

A lovely evening was had by all at our Annual Holiday Party in December. NFAS was proud to honor former board member, Anne Surchin, for the major contribution she made as professional architect toward the refurbishment of the Red House and design of an accessible ramp. Anne donated many hours of professional services executing plans so that



Left to right: Rory O'Connor, Julie Amper, Anne Surchin, Christine Kelly and C. J. Obregon

much-needed work to the Red House could then be carried out by Suffolk County. We expect this work to be completed sometime during 2017. Recognition of dedicated volunteers Rory O'Connor, Veronica Kaliski, Julie Amper and Christine Kelly was also a highlight of the celebration. A very special thank you to C.J. Obregon for allowing us to enrich our website with his wonderful wildlife photography was also part of the evening's program.

Planning progresses for the installation of a demonstration rain garden incorporating native plants at the Red House. Eagle Scout Jacob Kollen of Southold will be adding some extra seating at Inlet Pond County Park to enhance the viewing of wildlife. Our education committee has been formulating plans for youth programs during the summer. We will keep you updated on all of these efforts over the next few months.

We hope to see you soon at a walk or monthly program!

Tuesdays with Tom

February 21

Drive By Birding

The title says it all. We will drive to North Fork birding "hot spots" and try to see what birds decided to call our neck of the woods their summer home.

Meet at the Mattituck Plaza at 8 AM.

March 21

Spring Is Here

and so are the early migrants! Let's look for those early birds and also for winter ducks that are still around at the Arshamomaque Pond Preserve otherwise known as Mill Creek in Southold. Did you know that clay for brick-making was mined from this area until 1939?

Meet at the Red House at 8 AM.

Please register for these trips by calling Tom at 631 275-3202 or email at tdamiani3@optimum.net. Dress warmly and bring binoculars.

2017 Great Backyard Bird Count

The 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 communities. We encourage you to visit <http://gbbc.birdcount.org> to sign up for the Great Backyard Bird Count scheduled for February 17-20, 2017. It's easy to set up your own checklist for the count.

NFAS will also be offering training on Saturday, February 18th for those of you who would like to learn "hands-on" how to participate in this globally important research project. Join us at the Red House **starting at 1 pm until 4 pm**. In 2016, Great Backyard Bird Count participants in more than 130 countries counted 5,689 species of birds on more than 162,000 checklists!

Programs held at Red House or Inlet Pond Suffolk County Park are co-sponsored by County Executive Steve Bellone and Suffolk County Parks.



Promoting Pollinators in Greenport

NFAS Receives Funding for Interpretive Signage

In December 2016, Audubon New York released their list of Collaborative Funding Grant recipients for 2017. We are very pleased to announce that the NFAS will receive \$1000 for an educational panel to be installed at Larry Tuthill Park in Greenport (adjacent to the Railroad Dock), where we planted a native plant demonstration garden last spring.

The sign will identify some of the plants and insects that are commonly seen foraging on the North Fork, and provide information about the multiple benefits of using native plants in home and public gardens. This particular site is ideal for an educational sign, because many people pass by as they walk to and from the ferry, bus or into downtown Greenport. Before the sign is manufactured, design for the sign will be submitted to the Mayor and Board of Trustees for the Village of Greenport for their approval.

A QR code on the sign will provide a link to Audubon's updated "Plants for Birds" website (www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds) with even more in-depth information about specific plants and practices that benefit birds, insects and ultimately, humans, who depend on bird and insect pollinators to produce many of our fruits and vegetables.

The goal of the plantings and the sign is to help residents and visitors to the North Fork appreciate the purpose and value of pollinators like native bumblebees, wasps, butterflies and moths, and the native plants upon which many of them depend in order to continue their life cycles.

Many people know, now, that Monarch butterflies depend on plants in the Asclepias family (Milkweed) as sites to lay their eggs, because that's what the larvae eat as they grow to the next stage of their development towards adulthood. The Monarch butterfly is the "poster child" for the insect-host plant relationship. There are a multitude of other Lepidoptera that depend on the availability of native plants for their eggs, such as:

Evening primrose (*Oenothera biennial*) and Primrose moth

Blue vervain (*Verbena hastata*) and Common buckeye

Joe Pye weed (*Eupatoriadelphus purpureus*) and Ruby tiger moth, Red groundling moth and others.

If you're interested in learning more about how to attract butterflies to your garden with appropriate host plants, you might consider buying a copy of Gardening for Butterflies, recently published by the Xerces Society (www.xerces.org). Of course, there is also an amazing amount of information on the internet. Just type "Butterfly host plants for Northeastern U.S." into your search engine.

Many thanks Greenport Mayor George Hubbard, Village Trustee Doug Roberts and Village Administrator Paul Pallas for their support of this project.

As I tended the garden last spring and summer, passersby showed a great deal of interest in the project, and asked great questions. We hope this sign will answer many of them. If you have suggestions for what should be included in the sign, please feel free to contact me at dianavb@mac.com.

Diana Van Buren

NFAS Need You!

As always, we appreciate your financial support helping us provide programs and other educational resources to fulfill our mission of "connecting people with nature" on the North Fork.

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.

Orient Christmas Bird Count

2016-2017 is the 117th annual Audubon Christmas Bird (CBC). Individual count areas are a 30 mile radius of a particular area that is approved by the count committee of the National Audubon Society. The Orient CBC, one of the longest running counts in the state, covers Plum Island and Orient west to Southold, Shelter Island and parts of the south fork on Jessup's Neck and Sag Harbor. A new sector with birders riding the Cross Sound Ferry has been added in the last 3 years in an effort to report numbers in the count area that might be missed by the beach counters.

The 2016-2017 Orient CBC took place on December 31, 2016. Weather was cold and clear with no snow but a stiff wind occurring in certain areas near the water. About 1/2 of the sector leaders have reported their numbers and early returns report similar numbers of overall birds to the last two years. The total species list may be larger this year with an exciting find of a Northern Waterthrush in the Jessup's Neck sector of the South Fork! A rare bird report is being submitted to National Audubon for this find.

Bald Eagle numbers continue to rise, following a trend we have seen for the last few years. Other good news include high numbers of Snow Bunting and Bobwhite Quail as well as a better numbers of Virginia Rail, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Brown Creeper.

Early numbers show the continued decline of sea ducks (Long-Tailed Duck, Red-Breasted Merganser, Common Goldeneye, etc). I will be using this year to finish a 3-year analysis of the sea duck numbers to understand the pattern and determine if it is a localized problem or an overall problem with these species. Some terrific count week birds were reported including Harlequin Duck, King Eider, Peregrine Falcon and Merlin Falcon.

A final report for this year's CBC will be included in the newsletter at a later time.



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