

Bronx River Sound Shore Audubon Society Newsletter

Chapter of the National Audubon Society serving the communities of Bronxville, Eastchester, Edgemont, Hartsdale, Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, Pelham, Scarsdale and Tuckahoe

Along the Bluebird Trail

By Sandy Morrissey

The BRSS Eastern Bluebird Project continues to add nesting boxes. This year 166 boxes drew seven nesting pairs, fledging 28 baby bluebirds.

Golf courses proved up to par, with new boxes at Saxon Woods Golf Course getting two pairs of nesting bluebirds with one pair having a second brood. At Sunningdale Golf Club, our persistent removal of the house sparrows' nesting material proved rewarding when a nesting pair succeeded with two broods, fledging nine bluebirds. Scarsdale Golf Club attracted one nesting pair, but predation occurred despite predator guards. It was uplifting to hear Saxon Woods Starter, Mickey Mitchell say, "I'm 71 years old and this year I saw my first bluebird ever."



Despite the wire hole guard and plastic guard, this bluebird's eggs were destroyed by an unknown predator

Eastern bluebirds also nested at Harts Brook Park and Preserve, Osborn Retirement Community and SUNY Purchase College. No bluebirds returned to Burke Rehabilitation Hospital, the scene of three nesting pairs last year. Only tree swallows occupied the many boxes on the property. In addition, no bluebirds took advantage of the

20 new nest boxes placed on the open meadows of New York Presbyterian Hospital in White Plains. Only two tree swallow pairs used these boxes.

We are looking at research that shows a high density of birdhouses creates a tree swallow problem. There also seems to be an emerging pattern of success attracting bluebirds to new locations, then failure in the following years because tree swallows take over most of the boxes.

For a second year, Freddy Aguera, a student of White Plains High School, researched why bluebirds prefer Peterson triangular-style birdhouses to the traditional rectangular-style. He placed miniature therm-

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Programs

The Birds of Central Park Lecture, Oct. 19
A slide presentation by Deborah Allen, noted nature photographer and author, will be held at the Bronxville Library, Tuesday, October 19, 8 pm,

reception 7:30 pm
For further information on the "The Birds of Central Park" program contact:
BRSS Program Chair:
Mike Bryson 337-0333 or
Gisela Vaughan, 762-6134
BRSS sponsored programs

and field trips are free and open to the public.
For information and a complete schedule of BRSS free programs and field trips, visit us on the web at:
www.brssaudubon.org

Volume No. 61

Fall Issue

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Bird Seed Sale Order Form

Special point of interest:

The BRSS Seed Sale is our single largest fund-raising source. If you will be buying seed this fall, please order using the enclosed form and mail to Doug Bloom by Thursday, Oct. 13th.

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SOUND SHORE AUDUBON
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Programs

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Sheldrake, November 2, Bird Migration Lecture

Come to Sheldrake Environmental Center, 685 Weaver Street in Larchmont to hear Andrew Farnsworth on Wednesday, November 2nd at 7:30 p.m. He will talk about bird migration, as well as his participation in recent searches for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Andrew is a

tour leader for the Victor Emmanuel Nature Tours in both North and South America and has participated in several interesting and high-profile projects associated with the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. His main research is in bird migration, specifically the function and evolutionary history of flight calls and flight calling

behavior in migrating birds. This is an exciting opportunity to hear about some research in the bird world.



Volunteers Needed

The Sheldrake Team needs volunteers to monitor the Sheldrake River water quality . No prior experience necessary

As part of the Westchester County Citizen's Volunteer Monitoring Program (WCCVMP) the Sheldrake team consists of six volunteers working to collect the physical, chemical and biological data from the Sheldrake River at Columbus Park, in Mamaroneck. The team needs at least four more

volunteers. The monitoring is done once a week for about one hour. With about ten monitoring volunteers, not everyone will be required to come every week.

Interested?, please contact:

Susan E. Darling, Environmental Planner, Department

of Planning, Westchester County. Tel: 914-995-6535. Email:

sad8@westchestergov.com
or

Sam Suharto, Vice President, BRSS Audubon Society. Tel: 914-834-0861.

Email: ssuharto@aol.com

Want to Learn to be an Environmental Educator?

Do you have an interest in the natural world? Would you like to learn more about it and share your enthusiasm with children? Sheldrake Environmental Center is offering a new twelve-session course for those wanting to become volunteer environmental educators. Covering ecology and teaching techniques, it will be

taught by Mary Davis, Director of Environmental Programs at Sheldrake, and guest instructors. Participants will engage in hands-on activities and outdoor explorations. Classes start October 20th and will meet Thursday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30am. Trainees will be invited to observe

veteran naturalists in the field. Graduates will lead pre-trips in the local elementary schools and field trips at the Larchmont Reservoir, the Sheldrake River Trail and Dog Beach. Classes are free with a modest fee for materials. For more information call **Mary Davis** at 834-4326.

Otter Creek Ospreys-2005 Update

By Roz Wood

It was eleven years before the osprey platform, installed in 1991, in the Nature Conservancy's Otter Creek Preserve in Mamaroneck could claim its first nesting pair. One chick was fledged in 2002, two in 2003 and two more in 2004.

Each year sticks and flotsam added to the nest grew it to more than four-feet high by 2004. Soon after

the young fledged in early August, 2004, the pole collapsed under the weight of the huge nest.

In 2005, a pair, one of whom had nested at the site the previous year, arrived March 21 and began building a new nest on the replacement platform. They were observed mating many times in mid April, and by April 26th one was sitting on eggs. The male brought

fish to the sitting female, and by June 17, the chicks were big enough to be seen. The first fledged August 3 and the second a few days later. They have remained in the area fishing Long Island Sound, returning to the nest to eat and rest. Soon they will be migrating south.

Roz Wood is a BRSS board member and a long time bird watcher.



Osprey in flight

New Members

We extend a warm welcome to all.

Bronxville - Patricia Hagendorn, Larry Lena, Chase O'Neill.

Eastchester - Sean Hayes, Kenneth Heins, Margaret Vordsmarty.

Hartsdale - Stella Benkel, Charles Berthiaume, Susan Brubaker, Merle Bushkin, Catherine Gilmartin, P. Hand, Susan Plath, Edmund

Yuhas.

Larchmont - Ruth Gyure, Sebastian Polizzi, Jennifer Reidy.

Mamaroneck - Douglas Bessone, Susan Fruslick, Elizabeth Jacobson, Bruce Leonard, Neil Powell, Helene Schaeenman, Lerg Studwel, Nadia Valla, Elizabeth Wolff.

Mount Vernon - Diana Costa, Odessa Terry, William Wertheim.

New Rochelle - Karen Balik, Murray Beaver, Eulalie Fernando, Leroy Grayson, Joan Harrigan, Dorothy Lewis, Greg Prelich, Julia Robinson.

Pelham - Ruth Barrow, Connie Chin, Katie Kleiner.

We hope you will join in the BRSS field trips and programs

Along the Bluebird Trail *(continued from Page 1)*

meters inside nest boxes to measure the temperature difference in the two houses. He will report his findings in an upcoming BRSS Newsletter.

Thanks to all the birdhouse monitors who recorded nesting activity and prevented house sparrows from multiplying by using our houses.

Golf courses prove to be highly successful habitat for bluebirds. We plan to add to that inventory. If you play golf regularly at a private or public golf course and are interested in birdies – both on and off your scorecard – we could use your help monitoring birdhouses. If your course doesn't already

have birdhouses, we can supply them.

To volunteer or for more info, please contact Sandy Morrissey, 914-949-2531 or sandym@cloud9.net.

Sandy Morrissey is a BRSS board member, avid birder, butterfly and gardener.



White Plains High School student Freddy Aguera did research on two styles of bird houses.

Bronx River Sound Shore Audubon Society

(formerly Scarsdale Audubon Society)
P. O. Box 1108
Scarsdale, NY 10583

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Permit No. 513
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Field Trips 2005-2006



In the coming months, BRSS will offer a number of birding trips in our area and the region that are free for all members. Below is a list of upcoming trips. If you're interested in participating, please contact either Andrew Block at 337-1229 or Doug Bloom at 834-5203 (evening) or 713-0630 (day) for further information. It's important to please call in advance so that trip leaders can ensure adequate transportation and for overnight trips to reserve accommodations.

September 18, 2005- Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. Scarsdale Village Hall to drive to Jamaica Bay for shore birds and water fowl.

September 24, 2005- Introduction to Hawks at Lenoir Preserve, Yonkers

Meet at Lenoir at 9:00 a.m. for slide show followed by Hawk watch. This is a cosponsored trip with Hudson River Audubon and also Central Westchester Audubon. Call Mike Bochnik for details at 237-9331.

October 9, 2005- Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge, N.J.

Meet at 6:30 a.m. Scarsdale Village Hall for migrant waterfowl and shore birds.

November 20, 2005- Hawk Watch

Meet at 8:30 a.m. Scarsdale Village Hall. This trip will be to either Hook Mountain, Butler Sanctuary in Bedford or Greenwich Audubon Center.

December 26, 2005- Christmas Bird Count (ALL DAY)

Contact Doug Bloom if interested.

January 8, 2006- Montauk Point Area

Meet at Scarsdale Village Hall at 6:30 a.m. Alcids and other wintering birds that come in closer. Also seals.

January 29, 2006- Pelham Bay Cosponsored with Central Westchester Audubon

Meeting time and place to be announced. The focus will be on owls.

February 11, 2005- Croton Point Park

Meet at Wild Bird Center, 400 Central Park Ave., Scarsdale at 8 a.m. to go looking for eagles. Call Doug Bloom at 834-5203 evenings or 713-0630 days.

February 17-19, 2006- Cape Ann

Call for meeting time and place. Looking for wintering waterfowl and other winter birds.

March 5, 2006- South Jersey

Early migrants on the way back, eagles, owls, maybe Sand hill cranes.

May 7, 2006- Central Park, NYC

Meet at corner of 79th and Central Park West at 7:30 a.m. focus is on migrating warblers.

Details for field trips on May 21, June 2-4 and June 24 will follow in the next issue, and are available now at www.brssaudubon.org.