



The Sandpiper

Great South Bay Audubon Society

A Chapter of National Audubon Society

Pelagic Birding: It's Worth the Trip!

By Andrea M. DiGregorio and John Gluth

So you've gotten up at the break of dawn, and, bleary-eyed, made your way to Central Park in May to see Blackburnian Warblers, Bay-breasted Warblers, and – hope and against hope – that rare Kirtland's Warbler that was reported on the ABA Rare Bird Alert. And, you've braved the bitter winds with the GSBAS at Montauk Point to glimpse Common Eiders, White-winged Scoters, Black Scoters, Harlequin Ducks, and, if luck is with you, a King Eider. But, no matter how patient, persevering, or intrepid you might be, some seafaring birds will always escape your Life List. Unless, that is, you take the plunge and embark on a pelagic birding trip.

Pelagic birds, loosely defined, are those found in the open sea, away from continental land masses. They rarely venture close to land, except to breed, and then, they often prefer rocky, cliff-lined coasts and offshore islands, such as ones found off Maine. These seafaring birds characteristically have long, thin wings that allow them to soar effortlessly for long periods – sometimes weeks – without rest. Epitomizing the classic pelagic bird is the Wandering Albatross, which can have a wingspan of up to eleven feet and fly 10,000 miles in a single journey. Another adaptation for some of these avian mariners, such as fulmars, are special glands that help them extract excess salt from their bodies. They allow these “tubenose” seabirds to ingest seawater from the ocean and their prey without accumulating toxic levels of salt in their bloodstreams. Other notable pelagic birds include petrels, shearwaters, frigatebirds, and tropicbirds. For many birders, other species of birds heavily dependent on the sea, including puffins, murres, boobies, and auks, are also considered pelagic.

But what, one may ask, might I expect from a pelagic birding trip? The GSBAS's own John Gluth – who has been going on pelagic trips since 1997 – has the answers. Locally, John has sailed from various ports in New York (Montauk, Freeport, and Sheepshead Bay) and New Jersey (Point Pleasant). Those trips have plied the waters of NY, NJ, and Massachusetts.

Our local waters offer many beautiful, interesting, and rare birds. For example, in winter trips, John has seen Atlantic Puffin, Common and Thick-billed Murres, Razorbills, Dovekies (9,000 on one exceptional trip!), Northern Fulmar, Red-necked Phalarope, Black-legged Kittiwake, Glaucous, Iceland and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, as well as the more expected gulls, and Northern Gannet. John's most notable winter-trip bird was an adult Western Gull, the only documented occurrence of that west coast species in New York. Another memorable bird for John, a non-pelagic species, was a Common Redpoll that landed on the boat after having been blown offshore by strong winds.

On longer summer trips out to the Gulf Stream, John *continued on page 6*



The Trindade Petrel breeds on Trindade and Martin Vaz islands off the coast of Espírito Santo, Brazil. This petrel is mostly pelagic and comes to nesting grounds on warm islands only to breed.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS and MONTHLY PROGRAMS

All GSBAS Activities are FREE and open to the public. Join us and bring a friend. General Membership Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month, except May, (which is our Annual Dinner), July & August. Pre-program refreshments begin at 7:00. Program begins at 7:30 pm.

Thursday, January 17
(rescheduled from November)

What it Takes to Compete in the Long Island Birding Challenge

Tim Dunn and a team of birders, Pteam Ptarmiggeddon, compete annually in the Seatuck Birding Challenge, winning first place three times. Sponsored by Great South Bay Audubon for the last several years, the team has had many interesting and humorous moments over the course of their competitions. Tim will talk about the highlights and lowlights involved in their annual effort to see all of the birds from Brooklyn to the Hamptons in one twelve-hour period.



Thursday, February 21

Lou Siegel Animal Life in the Estuary

An interesting discussion and slide show about animal life and the ecology of our local waters. Lou Siegel has taught Biology and Marine Biology on the High School and College level. He is the former Science Coordinator at the South Shore Estuary Reserve. A 50 year resident of the South Shore of Long Island, Lou enjoys sailing, fishing, swimming and diving in our local waters. He is also a founding member and the current Nassau County Director of the New York State Marine Education Association.

Mission Statement

The primary mission of the Great South Bay Audubon Society is to advocate for the conservation of habitats for native birds and other native wildlife on Long Island.

The Sandpiper

Editor: Vera Capogna
vlvcap@yahoo.com

Mailing Chair: Ken Thompson
Thank you to everyone who helps mail each issue.

Editorial Address:

Sandpiper
GSBAS, PO Box 267
Sayville, NY 11782

The Sandpiper

is published bi-monthly.

Website: GSBAS.org
email: info@GSBAS.org
Webmaster: Eric Larson

Submission deadline for next issue is **February 8**
Please send submissions to
vlvcap@yahoo.com



The Larry Merryman Memorial Library

is located at Brookside,
59 Brook St. in Sayville.
It can be accessed Wednesday
and Sunday
from 1 to 3pm.

*Listen to the Voice
of Nature,
For it Holds Treasures for You*
-- Native American Proverb

President's Message by Jody Banaszak

Hello my little birding friends! Mother Nature has not been kind. I hope none of you ventured out to November's meeting. If you are ever in doubt as to whether or not a meeting is cancelled or not, you can always call me: 631-278-4059. I heard of horrendous driving stories the next day. Maybe it was a preview of what to expect this winter!

I went to a climate conference at St. Joseph's in Brentwood last month. There were several speakers on climate change and what's important to help. TREES! Cutting down trees and keeping trees were the biggest. So many people cut down trees. Why? Well my neighbor, who just reconstructed this huge house next to me, asked me about the trees that border our property. He would cut them down and plant Leland cypress. I asked him why and his answer was, "I hate raking leaves!" Well he has two sons and apparently a lot of money, looking at the size of his house, so I think he could well afford a landscaper to rake. Of course I said no. Not only do trees give shade, homes for birds and other wildlife, but they take in CO2 and give off oxygen. The oxygen we all need to breathe! We need the trees to help with climate change. I used to climb trees in my backyard when I was younger, and we made tree forts. I would climb up a tree and look in a bird's nest, only to have the blue jay dive bomb me! And then, of course, if my mom saw me she would yell at me to come down. The conference also spoke about logging upstate. And they did experiments. They would cut down an area and fence it so when new growth came up, the deer wouldn't eat it. Or they would plant new trees. Just think of a life without trees. Ugly!

We had a lovely volunteer brunch on December 1st. About 30 people attended. The food and drink were great and a good time was had by all. Ken Thompson showed a photo of an Evening Grosbeak he took at Heckscher Park. I reminisced with Bob and Edith Wilson about the first time we saw that bird, many years ago, at our homes and then never saw it again! Many of us talked about all the different birds and ducks, including a wood duck, that were spotted at Brookside this year. I would like to thank all of you who volunteer. Without you we wouldn't have such a great, Great South Bay Audubon Society!!!! Keep up the good work.

Perfection by Harry Anderson

"Advice from a Tree" (Anonymous)

Stand proud and tall.
Sink your roots into the Earth.
Be content with your Natural Beauty.
Go out on a limb.
Drink plenty of water.
Remember your roots.
Enjoy the view.

We have an oak in the backyard that is probably 70 years old and 45 feet tall. Over the years, it has shot off a horizontal branch that is now 30 feet from its trunk, reaching out to about a foot from the deck. I have watched that limb over time and it has long since stopped growing. The tree knows its natural limitations and will not extend the limb any more than it already has. The wisdom of trees . . .

Trees, animals, plants are about as close to perfection as anything will ever get. Their only purpose is to be what they are and nothing else. Their ambition is bound by their nature. Bears don't fly, and aren't we fortunate for that bit of nature's bounty.

There is a purported vital principle in all nature called "entelechy." It's from the Greek entelecheia, meaning "end perfection." While not a scientifically posited force, its existence and persistence are difficult to deny. The flower in the cracked wall or the dandelion coming up through a crack in the tarmac are proof enough. Things do what they have to do to be what they are supposed to be. Good lesson that.

Oak trees have memory, assessing conditions to determine how many acorns to produce. In the fall trees don't have to be schooled to determine when to drop leaves -or grow new ones- as the season tells them to. Brown bears know as winter approaches when to give it up for another year and hibernate.

All of this may not be perfection, but as an old expression puts it, "Almost is good enough."

Great South Bay Audubon Society

General Membership Meetings and Programs

All General Membership Meetings are held the third Thursday of the month (except for May, July and August). Join us at 7:00 pm for pre-program refreshments and casual conversation. Our bird experts will be on hand to field your questions, discuss equipment and share their favorite birding spots.

LOCATION FOR MEETINGS: Seatuck Environmental Association located at the Scully Estate, 550 South Bay Avenue, Islip NY 11751. **Directions:** Sunrise Highway (Rte. 27) to Exit 45 (Rte. 111/Islip/Smithtown), Follow signs to Rte. 111 South toward Islip. Rte. 111 ends at Main St. (Rte. 27A). Turn right onto Main St. (Rte. 27A). Turn left at first traffic light onto South Bay Ave. The entrance to the Environmental Center is almost exactly one mile south of Main St. on the right.

Louise Titus Memorial Tuesday Walks

Tuesday Mar 19, 9:30 am, Sunken Meadow SP Meet in the main parking lot in front of the main pavilion near the traffic circle.

Tuesday Mar 26, 9:30 am, Heckscher SP Meet in Field 5 west end

Weekend Nature Walks

Saturday January 5, 9:00 am, Montauk Leaders: John Gluth (631-827-0120), Ken Thompson (631-612-8028) Meet at Lighthouse parking lot. Latecomers can still join in the vicinity of the restaurant overlook. Directions: Route 27 to 27A to end.

Saturday January 12, Connetquot River SPP, 8:00 am, Breakfast & Birding Leaders: Bob & Edith Wilson, Ken Thompson, Helga Merryman, Jack Carlson Continental breakfast hosted by Friends of Connetquot. Reservations required .

Call Connetquot River State Park Preserve at 581-1072 to register. Registration fee \$4, plus \$8 parking fee per car - unless you have Empire pass.

Saturday February 2, 8:30 am, Jones Beach West End

Leaders: Mike Cooper (516-523-2369), Bob Grover (516-318-8536) Meet in the parking lot near the Coast Guard Station at West End.

Sunday March 3, 8:30 am, Bob Laskowski Memorial Duck Walk Leader: Bob Grover (516-318-8536) Meet at Brookwood Hall, Islip Town Park in East Islip on Irish Lane between Montauk Hwy and Union Blvd.

Saturday April 20, 8:30 am, Connetquot River SPP

Leaders: Bob Grover (516-318-8536) Ken Thompson (631-612-8028, John Gluth (631-827-0120) Meet in parking field.

Entrance is on the westbound side of Sunrise Highway (Rte. 27) west of Pond Road. If coming from west to east, Take exit 47A and go to the next overpass, Oakdale Bohemia Rd. to cross over bridge, then head westbound and stay in right lane to entrance.

Saturday April 27, 8:00 am, Valley Stream SP & Jones Beach West End Leaders: John Gluth (631-827-0120), Bob Grover (516-318-8536) Southern State Parkway to exit 15S, North Corona Ave. North Corona Ave to Hendrickson Ave (.07 mi) turn right at Hendrickson Ave. Hendrickson Ave. to Fletcher Ave (.3 mi) turn right on Fletcher Ave. Fletcher Ave North to Valley Stream State Park entrance on right (.2 mi). Park at far end of lot.



Breakfast and Birding at Connetquot SPP is always a fun time.

Art Class with Jody

Our next class will be Saturday, January 19th from 2-4 pm at Brookside County Park

The November paint class was a lot of fun. There was a new person who was quite entertaining! The subject for this class was a Wood Duck. As always, I gave step by step instruction because there are usually some people who have never painted with acrylics before. Everyone's painting was different and came out great, as you can see by the photo. No Bob Ross here!!!

If you are interested in the January 19 class, please sign up a week before the class starts. You can call or email me at: crabnose88@yahoo.com. -Jody Banaszak



CHAPTER NEWS

Finances – Ugh!

by Annette Brownell

One of the things that we rarely mention in our newsletter articles is finances. Not for any reason except that our hearts and minds are normally on things like birds and trees and our planet when we are corresponding with you through *The Sandpiper*.

We also tend not to harp on asking for money. We have only a few ongoing fund raisers, such as the Cash for Causes program through Stop and Shop gift cards. We only ask for donations once a year through our appeal letter which we recently mailed out.

It always amazes me in a pleasant way how people respond to the appeal so quickly. And we thank you. The appeal donations are pretty much our operating income. As you know, our Board of Directors is entirely volunteer and we

have a host of volunteers that help keep things going in a positive motion, from trip leaders and Brookside Volunteers, to the person that makes the coffee for the general meetings.

The appeal monies are used for things such as our insurance. We are required to carry \$2 million in liability insurance. Our insurances costs are about \$3500 a year. Some of our speakers donate their services, but most of our speakers are paid a stipend. We have the expenses of a webmaster to maintain our website, Verizon for internet access for the camera system at Brookside and a separate alarm system for the building. One of our bigger expenses is postage. Just these larger expenses cost about \$9,000.

I mention all this so that everyone can understand the part they play in keeping Great South Bay Audubon Society going. It really wouldn't work without the gen-

erosity of our members. Appeal donations are tax deductible. If you have thought about sending a donation but haven't done so, we encourage you to do so. We appreciate the notes too! Personal comments and stories are very encouraging.

Stop and Shop Fundraiser

Our Cash for Causes fundraiser continues as a very simple way to support our chapter. Just purchase a \$25 or \$50 Stop and Shop gift card at face value. Give as a gift or use at checkout. This is a "risk free, have to eat anyway" fundraiser. Mail a check



made payable to GSBAS to Annette Brownell, 1411 Saxon Ave., Bay Shore NY 11706, along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope and the cards will be mailed to you. Or they can be purchased at our general membership meetings.

Be On the Lookout!

Several Species of Uncommon Finches Just Might Show up at Your Feeders this Winter

by Steve Amato

Every few years, there is an irruption of finch species from the north which usually do not overwinter on Long Island. Some examples are Evening Grosbeaks, Pine Siskins, Red & White-winged Crossbills, Common Redpolls and Purple Finches. These



Evening Grosbeak photographed by Ken Thompson at Heckscher Park this December.

seed eaters are most affected during periods when seed production on their native conifers and deciduous trees is low. This is usually the result of a number of seasons of harsh weather up north, causing the forests to conserve on seed production and shift that energy toward protection against the

heavy weather conditions. So far this season, low seed production has been the case for cone and birch seed crops in eastern Canada, northern New York State, and New England. This has forced these seed eaters to migrate out of their normal overwinter range and seek food further south.

seed eaters are most affected during periods when seed production on their native conifers and deciduous trees is low. This is usually the result of a number of seasons of harsh weather up north, causing the forests to conserve on seed production and shift that energy toward protection against the



Red Crossbills and Common Redpolls have been seen this far south during irruption years.

the ground in the backyard, all of them below the bird feeder. Much of the northern half of Long Island was invaded that year.

The grosbeaks' main food source are seeds from the Ash Leaf Maple, Box Elder, Tulip Poplar, etc., and during breeding season, they will feed on fruits, grubs, and other insect larvae that can be found on the ground. At birdfeeders, however, sunflower seed seem to be their favorite. Although platform feeders are their preference, when it comes to sunflower seeds, they will take them from perching feeders.

Pine Siskins prefer small seeds such as thistle. Red & White-winged Crossbill extract seeds from within the conifer cones and will eat black-oil sunflower seed in feeders and on the ground. Common Redpolls will eat various small seeds, many which the redpolls knock off of the flowers, and in backyard feeders-they do prefer thistle. Purple Finches enjoy black-oil sunflower seed.

You should keep your binoculars handy this winter and let us know if you spot anything unusual!

CHAPTER NEWS

Fall Nature Walks Recap

About 30 people attended our fall **Breakfast and Birding on Sept. 15**. The folks were enthusiastic and the birds were cooperative. At the start of our walk we were greeted by the local Great Blue Heron. We then went to see the Red-headed Woodpeckers and did manage to see an immature, showing that breeding was successful again this year. Then our next target was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird in the butterfly garden and again we were successful. Everyone got good looks. We had twenty four species of birds. **-Ken Thompson**

On **Saturday Sept 22**, accompanied by beautiful weather, we visited the Robert Moses Hawk Watch. We had northwest to north winds all morning after a cold front. These are excellent conditions for hawk watching at the platform. We walked the boardwalk to the light-house and back to the Hawk Watch platform. We had just a smattering of the usual suspects in the way of land birds. The sit at the platform made up for it. Thanks to the good winds there was a steady stream of raptors coming through. As usual, Merlins made up the bulk of the migrating raptors. During our time at the platform I counted 18 Merlins, 3 Peregrines, 4 American Kestrel, 2 Northern Harriers and 4 Osprey. All in all a very good morning. **-Ken Thompson**

On **Saturday, Oct. 20** a small group met at **Caumsett State Park** and were rewarded with 46 species of birds, including Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Rusty Blackbird, Lincoln's and White-crowned Sparrows, and Purple Finches. Our first chapter trip to the **Suffolk County Farm on Saturday November 10** was filled with many raptor sightings including Peregrine, Merlin, Kestrel, Cooper's Hawk and Red-tailed Hawk, as we tried to squeeze a few more migrating birds out of the season. Our trip leader, John Gluth, was skillful enough to capture a great shot of a Peregrine Falcon as it flew directly over our heads. (see photo) **-Vera Capogna**

What a beautiful fall morning for a walk through **Morton Wildlife Refuge (November 18)**. Mild temperatures and no wind with bright sunshine helped us have a very enjoyable walk. The usual

cast of characters greeted us by mooching sunflower seeds from our hands. At the beach we saw our first of the season Long-tailed Ducks, calling on the bay. On the way back from the bay we heard a bird singing that we had trouble identifying by sound. A little further up the path we saw a beautiful Fox Sparrow that was responsible for the lovely song. Then a pair of bluebirds dropped in to add to our morning.

-Ken Thompson



This Peregrine Falcon flew right over our heads at Suffolk County Farm.

says that he is looking forward to helping GSBAS in all of its projects. We think Jack will be a great addition to our Board and have been enjoying his presence at the Board meetings already.

Hospitality Person Needed

Our Hospitality Volunteer, Audrey Collins has resigned from the position and we are now in need of someone to take her place. We thank Audrey for the many times she arrived early at our meet-

ings to set up the snacks and get the coffee going. If you enjoy our meetings and would like to be a part of our team by helping out please contact us at info@gsbas.org or call (631) 563-7716.

Art Show

We will be having our Great South Bay Audubon Art show on February 9th. Any member can enter with a painting, photograph, sculpture or any other form of art. Your piece of art will be displayed for one day at Brookside County Park building from 12 to 4pm. Please bring your art from 10 to 11pm. Call or email Jody by February 1st at 631-278-4059, or email crabnose88@yahoo.com. Hope to see your stuff!!!! **-Jody Banaszak**



Board members donned reindeer antlers at the volunteer party to show how "deer" GSBAS volunteers are. Left to Right: Jack Carlson, Steve D'Amato, Vera Capogna, Annette Brownell, Jody Banaszak and Arlene Rawls.

Backyard Gardening Corner

by Annette Brownell

You are probably wondering what can be said at this time of year about garden. Winter is a very special time for the garden. It is when the perennial plants rest and get ready for their upcoming blooming season. As much as we don't particularly appreciate a really cold winter, the earth looks forward to that deep dormant period.

There are some things you can do to maintain a bird-friendly atmosphere during the deep days of winter. The most important thing is providing water. If you have a bird bath, make water available all winter with a bird bath heater. I purchased mine at Wild Birds Unlimited.

Another thing to keep in mind is to leave the spent flower seeds of plants such as Black Eyed Susan, thistle, cone-flower and other plant species for the birds to harvest when food is scarce. Leaving the dried leaves around all winter takes a little getting used to if you are at Type A person like I am. I used to plan to have all my leaves picked up before the first snow. I didn't want to see any messy leaves when I shoveled or as the snow melted in spring. Although I still pick up most of them (mainly to be considerate so they don't blow on my neighbors' clean yards), I don't rake my flower beds or around my bushes. I leave a layer of material for the birds to have fun with

and use as protection. It also gives the plant roots a little insulation. I bag my leaves but don't put them out for collection. I keep them bagged near my compost pile. In the summer when I mow, I use the dry leaves (which are generally wet and bug-filled by then) to layer with my grass clippings. Great composting!

This is also a good time to just look around at your bushes and trees to see if there is any last-minute tidying up of branches that may break under the weight of a wet snow. Keep an outdoor broom handy so you can shake the snow off the evergreens to minimize damage.

By the next issue of *The Sandpiper*, we will be planning our gardens!

Pelagic Birding *continued from page 1*

was privileged to see other amazing birds of the oceanic realm such as Black-capped Petrel, White-faced, Leach's, Band-rumped and Wilson's Storm Petrels, South Polar Skua, Pomarine and Long-tailed Jaegers, five species of shearwater (Cory's, Sooty, Great, Manx and Audubon's), and Bridled Tern. And on the most recent trip on which John sailed (this past August out of Brooklyn), he and forty other birders were elated to see a Trindade Petrel, a species that only breeds on an archipelago off the coast of Brazil, from which it draws its name.

Although the main objective of many pelagic trips is to observe seabirds, other trips focus on cetaceans (whales and dolphins), with birds as a secondary goal. To that end, John has also seen much non-avian wildlife on offshore trips over the years. Cetaceans such as fin, minke and hump-backed whales; bottle-nosed, common, white-sided, striped and Risso's dolphins; leather-backed sea turtles; blue shark, billfish (marlin or sailfish), ocean sunfish (mola mola) and flying fish, and Portuguese Man o' War.

So, you might wonder, pelagic birding might be for me, but how do I find a vessel to take me to sea, and what can I expect on the voyage? Well, John Gluth has the answers for these questions, too. John has been on a few trips independently organized by birders, but the majority have been trips run by tour companies specializing in birding adventures, such as See Life Paulagics (paulagics.com), or whale watch trips run by The Coastal Research and Education Society of Long Island (cresli.org). These trips have ranged in length from six- to twelve-hour day trips, to twenty-two-hour overnight trips, and even one fifty-one-hour trip with two nights at sea. The overnight trips (always scheduled during the summer) have sailed over 100 miles offshore in their respective quests, most out to the various canyons at the edge of the continental shelf, one leaving



John Gluth, GSBAS nature walk leader, keeping a sharp eye out for the next ocean-wandering bird, aboard the Brooklyn VI sailing out of Sheepshead Bay to the continental shelf.

New York waters to reach canyons in Massachusetts waters.

If you'd like to see some of the aforementioned pelagic fauna, the main prerequisite is getting out on the water, advises John. But if you've never done a pelagic trip and aren't sure it's for you, start small with a whale-watching day trip like the CRESLI trips that sail twice a week from Montauk Point (Wednesday and Sunday, early July through Labor Day in 2018). John further advises that if you enjoy yourself and think you'd like to try moving up to longer trips and a greater variety of birds, then be prepared to get prepared! First, unless you have a generous friend with a boat (and knowledge of offshore waters), longer trips are not cheap, with Paulag-

ics trips running \$190-\$250 in 2018. Once you've committed monetarily, the next step is gearing up. Being comfortable while at sea is not easy, but can be maximized by making sure you wear/bring appropriate clothing (waterproof), sunscreen, and adequate food and water. Paulagics trips sail on a boat that has a full galley, but you can save money if you bring your own food. For overnight trips you'll need to bring a sleeping bag/bedroll (and a small tarp to keep spray off in case you end up sleeping outside on the upper deck). Finally, if you have known issues with seasickness, don't let that stop you. There are various easily obtained preventive measures. You may have to try more than one to find what works for you. There's another entire world of birds and birding out there once you leave terra firma. Pelagic trips are the only way to experience that world. So, leave your land-loving ways behind, and take the plunge to new, blue horizons!

BIRD FEEDER SURVEY

Compiled by Helga Merryman

FEEDER SURVEY November 2018



It's always a pleasure to see nuthatches at our feeders; last year we had White-breasted Nuthatches, but sightings of Red-breasted were few. This year the Red-breasted Nuthatches with their bold black and white face pattern and rusty breast are back, though it probably means that there was poor cone production on their breeding grounds, (their bad luck is our good luck). Every morning I watch the frosty faced White-breasted Nuthatches examining the lichen covered branches on the Horse Chestnut tree just outside my window looking for a tasty tidbit. Because of the nuthatch's long, strong toes and short tails they are able to climb up, down and sideways around branches and tree trunks looking for morsels hidden from woodpeckers and creepers, who can only go up trees headfirst foraging for food. Many times, nuthatches are part of winter-feeding flocks, which can include chickadees, kinglets, titmice and woodpeckers. The advantage of these mixed flocks is that there are more eyes to watch for predators and voices to sound an alarm. There are over 20 species of nuthatches worldwide, four species of which are native to North America and only two species that we see at our feeders on Long Island. It is thought that their name arose from their habit of wedging a large nut into the bark of a tree and then hammering away with their sharp bill until it opened; thus hatching the nut became "nuthatch". If you see them zipping back and forth from feeder to tree, too fast to have time to eat, they're probably caching seeds under the bark for future meals. A "Jar" is the name for a group of nuthatches. The White-breasted will take over an abandoned woodpecker's hole or other suitable space for a nest, whereas the Red-breasted will excavate a hole in dead or soft wood for their nest (another reason to allow dead trees to stand, if possible).

Welcome to all, new and past participants who have joined us for this new survey season. We had 8 participants for this survey period, Caruso, Fogarty, Merryman, Nasta, Kremer-Parrott, Paltridge, Sorenson and Wilson, the 7 areas covered were, Babylon, Deer Park, East Islip, East Patchogue, Islip, North Babylon and West Sayville.

How Does the Survey Work?

- 1) The counting period is 5 months from November to March. You may choose to participate for only one month, several months or the full period of five months.
- 2) During the first 15 days of each month, keep your feeders filled. Whenever you view your feeders, count the number of each individual bird species you observe. Report the highest number of each individual species seen at any one time, e.g., if you see ten Cardinals on the 1st, five on the 2nd, three on the 3rd - report the highest number observed, i.e., 10. These birds can actually be at your feeder or attracted to your yard by the feeding activity.
- 3) Make five (5) copies of the form printed below, use (1) form per month to record the highest number of individuals of any species that you see at one time.
- 4) No later than the 19th of each survey month, mail your completed form to Helga Merryman, 38 South Carll Ave., Babylon, N.Y., 11702. You can also email your sightings and photos to me at eider55owl@optonline.net. Please put FEEDER SURVEY in the subject line. I will compile the information and the results will be published in the following issue of *The Sandpiper*.

Survey Data: period from _____ to _____ Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

Survey Data: period from November 1 through November 15 2018

Red-tailed Hawk 1	Blue Jay 44	Towhee 0	House Sparrow 72
Sharp-shinned Hawk 3	American Crow 14	Fox Sparrow 1	OTHER SPECIES
Cooper's hawk 3	Black-capped Chickadee 27	Song Sparrow 8	Rough-legged hawk 1
Rock pigeon 30	Tufted Titmouse 14	White-throated Sparrow 29	Eastern Phoebe 2
Mourning Dove 67	Red-breasted Nuthatch 4	Dark-eyed Junco 26	Golden-crowned Kinglet 2
Monk Parakeet 0	White-breasted Nuthatch 12	Northern Cardinal 23	Winter Wren 1
Red-bellied Woodpecker 9	Carolina Wren 18	Red-winged Blackbird 21	Yellow-rumped Warbler 1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 0	American Robin 3	Common Grackle 88	Purple Finch 3
Downy Woodpecker 13	Northern Mockingbird 7	Brown-headed Cowbird 7	Pine Siskin 1
Hairy Woodpecker 3	Brown Thrasher 1	House Finch 44	
Northern Flicker 3	European Starling 56	American Goldfinch 62	

Great South Bay Audubon Society

President: Jody Banaszak (631) 278-4059

Vice-president: (Position Pending)

Treasurer: Annette Brownell (631) 665-4405

Recording Secretary: Nicholas Laviola (631) 678-7866

Board of Directors

Vera Capogna (516) 639-5430

Jack Carlson (631) 988-6808

Steve D'Amato (631) 264-8413

Michael Maraviglia (631) 338-0549

Peggy Marsh (631) 667-3556

Arlene Rawls (516) 712-9514

Committee Chairs

Hospitality: Open

Conservation:

Michael Maraviglia (631) 338-0549

Membership: Position Pending

Publicity: Helga Merryman (631) 669-6473

Audubon Activist: Open

Newsletter: Vera Capogna (631) 563-4969

Nature Walks: Ken Thompson (631) 612-8028

Programs: Jody Banaszak (631) 278-4059

Librarian: Vera Capogna (631) 563-4969

Annual Dinner:

Annette Brownell (631) 665-4405

Mailing: Ken Thompson (631) 612-8028

Email Responder: Vera Capogna (631) 563-4969

Answering the GSBAS Direct Phone:

Helga Merryman

GSBAS Direct Phone Number (631) 563-7716

GSBAS website: GSBAS.org

GSBAS email address: info@gsbas.org

For wildlife in need of rescue please call

The STAR Foundation (631) 736-8207

Great South Bay Audubon Gear



For Sale at

www.zazzle.com/sandpiper267

Great South Bay Audubon Society Membership

Become a member of Great South Bay Audubon Society. Your contribution will support GSBAS conservation efforts, educational programs and our stewardship at Brookside County Park.

Please make checks payable to:

"Great South Bay Audubon Society" and mail to:

GSBAS, P.O. Box 267, Sayville, NY 11782

- New Membership \$20 New Membership Senior (62+) \$15
 Renewal \$20 Renewal Senior (62+) \$15

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Great Backyard Bird Count

If you can spare 15 minutes to do a little birdwatching on one or more days from February 15 through February 18th, you can have some fun while at the same time help science. All you have to do is tally the numbers and kinds of birds you see from any location, anywhere in the world.

The GBBC is a joint effort by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society; more than 160,000 people of all ages and walks of life worldwide join the four-day count each February.

Bird populations are constantly changing, and Bird Counts help scientists understand the distribution and movements of birds, as well as understand what is happening to bird populations.

For more information and/or to sign up, visit gbbc.birdcount.org.

Great South Bay Audubon Society
PO Box 267, Sayville, NY 11782
A Chapter of National Audubon



NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SAYVILLE, NY 11782
PERMIT NO. 108

Or Current Resident
Dated Material: Please Do Not Delay