



SMRA

SAW MILL RIVER AUDUBON™

Fall 2024



Birders on our June 29 walk at Rockefeller State Park Preserve discovered a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher nest and other birds. You can view photos on our eBird list here: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S184340218>



Big thanks to Zeiss for the donation of two pairs of Zeiss Terra ED42, 8x42. Great optics! A much valued gift to support our birding outreach programs. Thank you!



Our Birding Tea in June drew a big crowd and good publicity. See more pictures and an article link on page 5. Our thanks to SMRA Board Member Cary Andrews for hosting.

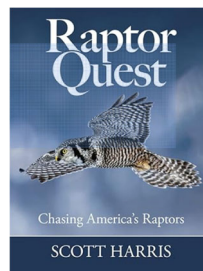
American Kestrel hovering at Croton Point, November. Photo: Karalyn Lamb



Fall Highlights

See more events on Page 3

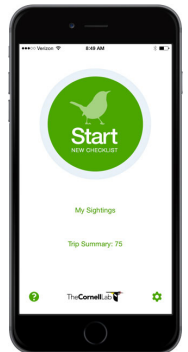
We are highlighting our September programs below, but page 3 has even more fall programs. Visit www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/register-programs for a complete listing. Our birding events are also on page 3 including special trips. Visit www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/register-trips for details.



Sunday, September 15, 5:00 pm | New York State Ornithological Association Annual Meeting via Zoom
Featuring a short Zoom program by Scott Harris, author/photographer of *Raptor Quest: Chasing America's Raptors* plus a challenging Zoom bird quiz run by the New York State Young Birders Club! Visit: www.nybirds.org/2024 for link.

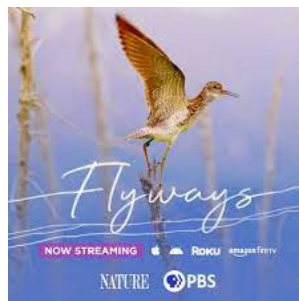
Wednesday, September 18, 7:00 pm via Zoom How to Avoid Receiving eBird Reviewer Emails

With the increasing popularity of both birding and eBirding along with the rise of applications like Merlin, local eBird reviewers Sean Camillieri and Kyle Bardwell will explain what makes a quality eBird checklist.



Tuesday, September 24, 6:00 pm via Zoom & In-Person Intro/Review to Birding with eBird and Merlin

This special workshop will be offered via Zoom and in-person at the Greenburgh Library. Learn how to use eBird and Merlin to enrich your birding adventures and contribute to citizen science. Stick around afterward to enjoy a screening of *Flyways*, a captivating documentary about bird migration. Register for workshop here: <https://greenburghlibrary.libcal.com/event/12755931>



**Tuesday, September 24, 7:00 pm
Film Screening: *Flyways* | Greenburgh Library**
How do shorebirds navigate thousands of miles along ancient migratory routes? Join us at the Greenburgh Library for a big screening of *Flyways*, a powerful film showcasing the incredible journeys of birds like Far Eastern Curlews and Red Knots, and the conservation efforts to protect them. Register for film screening:

<https://greenburghlibrary.libcal.com/event/12835611>

President's Message

The “About Us” page of our website: “We protect more than 300 acres of wildlife habitat in eight sanctuaries.”

So we were dismayed and appalled when the Town of New Castle notified us last July that the Town had issued violation notices to Pruyn Sanctuary neighbors Yosef Haroush and Rebecca Marshall of 7 Mayberry Close for bulldozing an estimated 560 trees on their 5.25 acre property...and on SMRA's 92-acre Pruyn Sanctuary. The damage is extensive and profound. Whole trees with root balls, bulldozed into 8 to 10-foot piles to make room for additional illegal landfill, engulfing additional mature trees. This is not the first time the property owners have violated town ordinances related to property management, and seeing their landscapers mowing in the Sanctuary last summer added insult to injury. We and the Town of New Castle have extensively documented the damages.

SMRA initiated a civil suit for damages related to the mitigation of damage and restitution of the property the neighbors have despoiled. At this writing, the Town of New Castle's own court action is underway (The Town of New Castle v. Rebecca C. Marshall & Yosef Haroush) with ours to follow later. Keep track of this travail in local media, as we devote time and resources to countering bad behaviors.

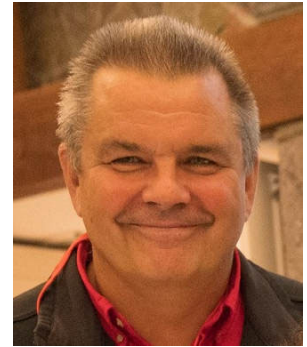
On a lighter note, I recently had the pleasure of chatting with Jane and Walt Daniels, co-authors of *Walkable Westchester* (NYNJ Trail Conference), a guidebook to many of Westchester's 225 parks, now in its third edition. A pair of old soles (cringeworthy pun here), their story of how they started the book in the 2000s, the criteria for which parks to include or exclude, and the use of proxies — which included SMRA board members — to help update the trail coverage was an interesting conversation. Pick up a copy and find yourself a new adventure.

A final suggestion. I had the pleasure of sitting in on SMRA's informal trip planning Zoom a few weeks ago, and there is (almost) nowhere on the planet this group is unwilling to go or hasn't been. From day trips to week long international sojourns, keep your eyes peeled for upcoming announcements and don't be slow signing up; these

small group trips are well planned, expertly guided and affordable.

For the birds,

Erik Andersen, President, Saw Mill River Audubon



Erik Andersen, SMRA President

Saw Mill River Audubon

275 Millwood Road Chappaqua, New York 10514
914.666.6503 | office@sawmillriveraudubon.org
Visit us online: www.sawmillriveraudubon.org

President: Erik Andersen
Vice President: Suzanne Kavic
Treasurer: Lynn Salmon Secretary: William Kellner
Editor: Jennifer Stern Circulation: Jean Sparacin
Executive Director: Anne Swaim
Office Manager: Barbara Daniel
Sanctuary Maintenance: Danny Ferguson
Educators: Cathy Hildenbrand, Pete Salmansohn
Education Partner: The Rewilding School

ON THE WING, Saw Mill River Audubon's newsletter, is published four (4) times a year (Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer) for \$7.50 a year by Saw Mill River Audubon, 275 Millwood Road, Chappaqua, NY 10514. Periodical Postage #013281 at Chappaqua, NY 10514. ISSN: 1545-5254 at Chappaqua, NY and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Address changes sent to Saw Mill River Audubon, 275 Millwood Road, Chappaqua, NY 10514

If you are reading this on paper, you can view a full-colored version with clickable links online at <https://www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/news>

Audubon Nature Book Club

Tuesday, Sep 17 7:00 pm

Register for Zoom link & reminders at www.sawmillriveraudubon.org

Audubon Nature Bird Club Continues

The book club will meet online Tuesday, September 17, at 7:00 pm and discuss *John James Audubon: The Making of an American*. To register for Zoom link and reminders visit www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/book-club. Our nature book club is coordinated by SMRA Board Member and author Kathleen Williamson.

Fall 2024 Schedule

Bird Walks & Field Trips

8:00 am start for most fall walks*

* except for any special field trips noted below in boldface

Register at www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/register-trips

SEPTEMBER

Mon, Sep 2, 8:00 am, Muscoot Farm
 Sat, Sep 7, 8:00 am, Croton Point Park
 Mon, Sep 9, 8:00 am, Croton Point Park
 Fri, Sep 13, **10:00 am**, Geocaching at Pruyne Sanctuary
 Sat, Sep 14, **7:00 am**, Black Dirt Birding
 Thu, Sep 19, **7:00 am**, Hook Mountain
 Fri, Sep 20, 8:00 am Marshlands Conservancy
 Sat, Sep 21, 8:00 am, Rockefeller SP Preserve
 Sun, Sep 22, 8:00 am Lyndhurst
 Mon, Sep 23, 8:00 am, Rockefeller SP Preserve

OCTOBER

Fri, Oct 4, 8:00 am, Rockefeller SP Preserve
 Mon, Oct 7, 8:00 am, Muscoot Farm
 Fri, Oct 11, **9:00 am**, Stateline Hawk Watch
 Sat, Oct 12, 8:00 am, Croton Point Park
 Thu, Oct 17, 8:00 am, Croton Point Park
 Sat, Oct 19, 8:00 am, Marshlands Conservancy
 Sun, Oct 20, 8:00 am, Lyndhurst
 Thu, Oct 24, **7:00 am**, Hook Mountain
 Sat, Oct 26, 8:00 am, Rockefeller SP Preserve
 Mon, Oct 28, 8:00 am, Rockefeller SP Preserve

Overnight Field Trip

Mon Oct 14–Tue Oct 15, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary

NOVEMBER

Mon, Nov 4, 8:00 am, Muscoot Farm
 Thu, Nov 7, **7:00 am**, Hook Mountain
 Sat, Nov 9, 8:00 am, Croton Point Park
 Mon, Nov 11, 8:00 am, Edith Read Sanctuary
 Sun, Nov 17, 8:00 am, Lyndhurst
 Mon, Nov 25, 8:00 am, Rockefeller SP Preserve
 Fri, Nov 29, 8:00 am, Croton Point Park
 Sat, Nov 30, 8:00 am, Rockefeller SP Preserve

DECEMBER

See also Christmas Bird Counts listed to the right

Mon, Dec 2, 8:00 am, Muscoot Farm
 Sat, Dec 7, 8:00 am, Croton Point Park
 Mon, Dec 9, 8:00 am, Croton Point Park
 Fri, Dec 20, 8:00 am Edith Read Sanctuary
 Mon, Dec 23, 8:00 am, Rockefeller SP Preserve
 Mon, Dec 30, 8:00 am, Rockefeller SP Preserve

If you visit our sanctuaries, send us a Trail Walker report: www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/walker

More Upcoming Programs

Details at www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/register-programs

Tue, Sep 17 & Thu, Oct 17, 7:00 pm

Raptors for Rookies Zoom Workshops

Online workshops hosted by local public libraries and open to the public. Our birding workshops are here: <https://www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/birding-101>

Sunday, October 6, 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm

Live Birds of Prey Program | Ossining Library

Our presenter will be Laura Jaworski, D.V.M, a falconer and veterinarian who will show us her hawks and owls.

Wednesday, November 13, 7:00 pm via Zoom

Grassland Habitats for Birds and Pollinators

Learn more about grasslands for bird and pollinator habitat and best practices. Speaker Laura Suomi-Lecker is Manager of Maine's Ag Allies Grassland Bird Program.

Thursday, December 19, 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Chappaqua Library Theatre

Our Best Photos and Holiday Desserts

Our annual holiday gathering offers large screen viewing of the best bird, other wildlife and habitat photos shown by our members and friends. Visit our website to submit your photos for consideration. Bring desserts to share or just come enjoy desserts and photos prepared by others!

Even More Fall Events

Second Saturday Walks, Brinton Brook Sanctuary

9/14, 10/12, 11/9, 12/14. Meet at 9:00 am in the main lot. Walk typically lasts two hours. Rain or shine but always check our website calendar before traveling. For adults and youth 8 and up. No registration required.

2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 7:00 pm, Bird Chat on Zoom

Note 2nd Tue only in Sep & Dec

Tuesdays, Sep 10, Oct 8&22, Nov 12&26, Dec 10

See upcoming topics/speakers & register for Zoom link:

www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/chat

2024 Christmas Bird Counts

More about this Citizen Science program is here:

<https://www.audubon.org/community-science/christmas-bird-count/>

Saturday, December 14: Peekskill Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, December 15: Greenwich–Stamford CBC

Sunday, December 22: Bronx–Westchester CBC

Saturday, December 28: Putnam Christmas Bird Count

Contact SMRA office to get connected with above counts. Email office@sawmillriveraudubon.org or call 914-666-6503.

Buy Bird Seed from Audubon!

And support our local conservation & education work

First Staffed Seed Pickup: Sunday, September 8
10:00 am to 1:00 pm at Prun Sanctuary

New Seed Available Starting Friday, August 30
For self-loading M/W/F 10:00 am to 3:00 pm



www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/seed

Order Deadline of September 5

Our 2024–2025 bird seed sale kicks off on Sunday, September 8 at Prun Sanctuary when our volunteers will be on hand to load your car from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Please order by Thursday, September 5 for the above pickup date to have your seed ready to load.

Visit www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/seed to see our seed types and prices and order online. You may pay online with MasterCard or Visa, or via Paypal which also accepts Amex, or pay us via Zelle. You may also pay by cash or check when you pick up your seed.

Or you may prefer to do self-loading any office day, Monday, Wednesday, or Friday, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at Prun Sanctuary. Our 2024–2025 seed order will be available starting Friday, August 30, and through the winter. Contact us in advance to ensure access: 914-666-6503 or office@sawmillriveraudubon.org.

We were pleased to see that wholesale prices for several seed types have actually dropped this year including the prices of black oil sunflower and sunflower chips.

The long-range winter forecast also suggests a snowier and colder winter so there may be more activity at our bird feeders than past winters.

If you are new to bird feeding and/or if you want to learn more about types of bird feeders and bird food to offer, and what feeder birds to expect in our area, be sure to visit Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Project FeederWatch, www.feederwatch.org.

You might also consider adding your bird feeder observations to FeederWatch to help track bird populations.

Third Sunday Seed Sales

We will also offer staffed seed pickups on third Sundays from October through April, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. Want to be part of our seed sale team? We have good conversations and birding and nature time during our seed sale pickup days at Prun. Use our volunteer form online to join us: www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/volunteer

Come Geocaching With Us!

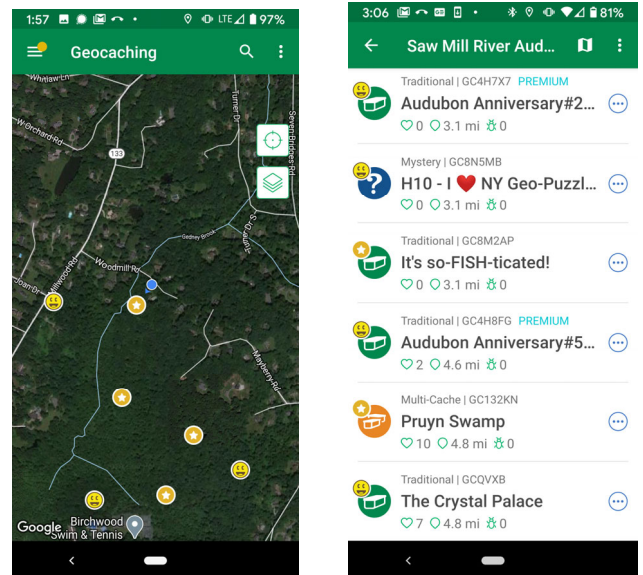
Geocaching is a high-tech outdoor scavenger hunting game or hobby where people using GPS enabled devices hunt for containers (geocaches) in the woods. In other words, what nerds do when they go outside. Cache containers range in size from tiny micros to extra large and may be cleverly camouflaged to blend into their surroundings. They usually include a log book and may contain trinkets to trade from previous cachers.

Geocaching began with 75 caches in 2000—growing to over 3 million around the world today. There are over 30,000 in NY state hidden by more than 5,000 cachers and approximately 1,500 caches in Westchester County including more than 30 caches in SMRA sanctuaries.

In the coming months, SMRA Treasurer Lynn Salmon will be leading a series of geocaching walks in our sanctuaries, starting with one in Prun on September 13. See details below. No experience or equipment is necessary.

You can visit www.geocaching.com and create an account (free) to learn more.

Lynn Salmon, SMRA Board Member



Geocaching at Prun Sanctuary

The above images from the geocaching app show geocaches hidden at Prun Sanctuary. **Come on a geocaching hike Friday, September 13, starting 10:00 at the Woodmill Road trail entrance** with SMRA Board Member Lynn Salmon to find them! Visit: www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/geocaching-hike

Youth Scholarships Available

Having young birders at SMRA walks and other events is always such a delight: we admire the knowledge they've acquired at a young age and the perceptiveness and wonder they share with us.

For birders ages 13 to 17, SMRA is pleased to be able to offer scholarships for birding camps and other educational activities such as research trips. We can do so as a result of the generosity of family and friends of Larry Light, who established the Larry Light Memorial Scholarship Fund for Youth in 1981. Over the past 70 years, we have assisted more than 170 youth and adults with scholarships. The scholarships are not awarded based on financial need but on the level of interest shown by the student in the environment through coursework and/or extracurricular or volunteer activities. We especially focus on applicants who will apply their experience in ongoing environmental education and outreach in local communities, school, or work.

Past funded programs have included:

- National Audubon camps (<https://www.audubon.org/audubon-camps>),
- American Birding Association youth birding camps (<https://www.aba.org/camps/>),
- high school science research trips,
- New York Department of Environmental Conservation wildlife camps (<https://dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/summer-camps>), and



ABA Camp Avocet youth birding camp. Photo: American Birding Association

- Westchester County ecology day camps (<https://parks.westchestergov.com/children-camps/nature-camps>).

The maximum amount of our youth scholarship award varies based on funds available but has typically covered all or most program costs. Applicants select their program themselves and then apply for a SMRA scholarship.

We now have a rolling deadline for applications. As soon as you know the event you want to attend, visit our website and use our online application to apply: www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/scholarship.

June Birding Tea Photos



Cary's food spread. Photo by Michael Balter



On June 15, SMRA Board Member and Village of Croton Bird Commissioner Cary Andrews hosted 57 people at her home in Croton for an Audubon Birding Tea. The event introduced many new people to the work of Saw Mill River Audubon and to ideas about native plant gardening with short talks by Cary Andrews and SMRA Garden Coordinator Mark Magel who is pictured to the left with SMRA's previous Garden Coordinator Donna Lassiter (left) and Nina Romanoff, Mark's wife (right).



Saw Mill River Audubon literature table. Photo by Michael Balter for the Croton Chronicle. The Chronicle article about the Tea is online here: <https://substack.com/home/post/p-145680241>

275 Millwood Road
Chappaqua, New York 10514
Return Service Requested

PERIODICAL POSTAGE
PAID
at Chappaqua, NY
and additional offices



Barred Owl from below.
Photo: Ruogu Li

Connecting People and Nature Since 1953

Explore Nature with Saw Mill River Audubon this Fall!

We have more than 50 events scheduled between September and December to connect you with local habitats, birds and other wildlife. Small-group bird walks. Online and in-person programs. Sanctuary walks.

We connect people with nature!



Red-breasted Nuthatches are visitors from the north that pass through our backyards and parks in fall and spring as they migrate. A few may even spend the winter with us. A good way to spot them is at a bird feeder that has suet or black oil sunflower seeds.

See page 4 for more about our bird seed sale and bird feeding. See the special insert to learn about our 2024–2025 bird seed sale that supports our local conservation and education work.

Photo: Mitchell Goldfarb

Connecting with Nature: Your gift helps us connect people and nature. **Zelle us: smrapay@gmail.com**

I wish to donate. Enclosed is:

- \$1000 \$500 \$250
 \$100 \$50 \$35 \$_____

My employer will match my gift

I'd like to join Saw Mill River Audubon

Basic Chapter Membership

- Enclosed is \$35
 Please list my gift anonymously

Name(s)

Address

City / State / Zip

Email Address

Please make check payable to Saw Mill River Audubon and mail or deliver to our office address listed above

OR join/renew/donate online

www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/join
www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/renew
www.sawmillriveraudubon.org/donate