



2007 - Another Big Year for Quaker Ridge Hawk Watch

by Brian Bielfelt, HawkWatch Intern



One hundred and forty-four ospreys were counted in one day, a single-day record.

In 2006, Quaker Ridge Hawk Watch ranked 9th among other hawk watches east of Ohio. This year, we ranked 6th, after an outstanding raptor migration season that featured nearly as many raptors as Hawk Mountain. Thank you to all the hawk watch volunteers who helped spot and record raptor activity from August 20 to November 20, 2007.

Eight raptor species broke annual and sometimes long-standing records this year, including: Bald Eagle (173), beating the previous record by 67 sightings; Peregrine Falcon (58);

Sharp-shinned Hawk (4876); Cooper's Hawk (657); and Merlin (124). Overall, it was a good year for the latter three of these species at most of the inland hawk watch sites. This may have been caused in part by the early and big winter finch movement out of Canada and more southerly winds this year.

The Red-shouldered Hawk (356) and Northern Goshawk (28) also had a record year. We sighted two Rough-legged Hawks, an uncommon migrant in the East, which tied the previous high. This was a good year for other species, such as the Golden Eagle, Black Vulture, and Northern Harrier, which each had their 3rd highest year in 37 years of hawk watching from this location. Other exciting single-day records occurred for the Peregrine Falcon (13), Osprey (144), Cooper's Hawk (65), and Rough-legged Hawk (2). Though Broad-wing numbers continued to be lower than normal, we still had one day of nearly 5,000.

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LIVE RAPTOR SHOW • BIRD WALKS • TRADITIONAL BIRD BREAKFAST IN THE RED BARN • AND MORE!

SATURDAY MAY 10

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY AND Annual Bird Breakfast

A day of programs and hikes to celebrate the migration with birding, breakfast, informative talks and more!

- 6:30-8:00 am: Morning Bird Walk
- 8:00-9:15 am: Annual Bird Breakfast*
- 9:30-10:30 am: 'NYC Bird Migration Research' with Dr. DeCandido
- 11:00 am-Noon: Bluebird Habitat Walk
- 3:00-4:00 pm: Live Raptor Show by 'Wind Over Wings'

* RSVP for breakfast. \$7 per person. Call to sign up at x221. • All other activities and events are free of charge.



The Mission of Audubon Greenwich is to motivate people to conserve, restore, and enjoy nature, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats, through education, land stewardship, science, and public policy advocacy.

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AUDUBON GREENWICH

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Open: 7 days a week 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Admission: Members: FREE
 Non-members: Adults \$3.00
 Children/Seniors: \$1.50

2008 ENVIRONMENTAL SYMPOSIUM

Sustaining Nature in the Suburban Landscape

Tuesday, March 11

Cole Auditorium, Greenwich Library
Reception & Exhibits: 6:30 pm • Presentation: 7:00-8:30 pm

Professor Douglas Tallamy and Dr. Barry Boyd will discuss the theme of "*Nature at Home in Your Garden: Suburban Landscapes to Help the Planet.*" Keynote speaker Professor Tallamy, Chairman of the Dept. of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology, U. of Delaware will discuss topics from his book:

- Why we need biodiversity
- Why we need to change landscaping paradigms to save biodiversity
- Why animal diversity depends on native plants
- What a sustainable suburban ecosystem might look like

Dr. Barry Boyd, a practicing Medical Oncologist for 16 years and Director of the Integrative Medicine Program at Greenwich Hospital-Yale Health Systems, will talk about the dangers pesticides pose to human health.

Environmental exhibits and information will be available at 6:30 pm and include the sponsors listed below plus The Native Plant Center, GRAB (Greenwich Recycling Advisory Board) with Green and Clean, Backyard Beekeepers and NOFA (Northeast Organic Farmers Association). Following the lecture, there will be Q&A with the speakers and additional time to view exhibits of local environmental groups.

Sponsored by: Westchester Fairfield Horticultural Society, Audubon Greenwich, Garden Education Center, Greenwich Conservation Commission, Greenwich Land Trust and Greenwich Tree Conservancy.

Free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.westfairhort.org

Make a Difference as a Teacher Naturalist

Spring Training: March 18-19 & 25-26

Times: 9:30 am to 12:30 pm

Audubon's volunteer naturalists lead educational programs outdoors and on the trails.

Beginners welcome. Training provided.

Call the Education Department to learn more today.



Audubon's volunteer Teacher Naturalists and Education staff at Croton Point Park in mid-January. Highlights included harriers, long-eared owls, and several wintering eagles along the river.

2007 Butterfly Count Report

Reported by Ted Gilman, Head Naturalist

Audubon Greenwich's butterfly count last summer was a very good one for both monarchs and eastern tiger swallowtails. In our regular survey of the gardens and fields in the southwestern corner of the Audubon Center property and the meadows at the nearby Nichols preserve, we observed eight monarch butterflies and 13 eastern tiger swallowtails. This was our best year for both of these species since the start of the count in 1999.



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail

The red admiral and the wild indigo duskywing butterflies also had a good year. In total, we observed 18 species of butterflies, as well as two unidentified "angelwing" butterflies, which were not observed well enough to identify to species (either 'comma' or 'question mark').

In contrast to the high numbers of monarch and swallowtails, we did not have any hairstreaks or coppers this year. We are interested to read other local and regional reports from the CT Butterfly Association and North American Butterfly Association to learn how other counts did for these species and what theories are presented to explain the numbers.

Butterflies counted on July 14, 2007:

Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	13
Cabbage White	4
Clouded Sulphur	5
Orange Sulphur	21
Eastern Tailed Blue	4
Great Spangled Fritillary	9
Pearl Crescent	31
Question Mark	1
American Lady	4
Red Admiral	17
Common Buckeye	1
Common Wood Nymph	10
Monarch	8
Silver-spotted Skipper	11
Wild Indigo Duskywing	9
Least Skipper	1
Northern Broken Dash	7
Dun Skipper	9



Monarch Caterpillar

To protect our diversity of butterfly species, people can protect a variety of natural habitats that are home to different native grasses, wildflowers, shrubs, and trees. This plant diversity provides many types of foods that caterpillars and adult butterflies need to sustain themselves. For example, milkweeds are essential to monarch caterpillars; the spicebush swallowtail prefers the spicebush plant and the anise swallowtails frequent fennel when it is time to raise their young.

Add some more butterfly-friendly plants this spring to enrich your yard's butterfly diversity for the summer season! For information about attractive plants that will support our local butterfly populations, contact the Audubon Greenwich Education Department or look online at www.audubonathome.org.

AUDUBON SUMMER DAY CAMP

One-week sessions from June 30 through August 8, 2008



Does your child love bugs, tadpoles, or birds?

Audubon's 295-acre sanctuary is an ideal location to explore nature through hikes, art, games, and much more! Children ages 5 to 15 will learn about the world around them through hands-on investigation and exploration.

Camp themes vary from week to week and include:

- Aquatic Adventures
- Audubon Ecology Adventures (Children entering grades 6-9 only)
- Backwoods Explorers
- Twilight Investigations
- Habitat Hoppin'

Camp Hours: 9:30 am to 3:30 pm

Price: \$300 for Audubon members; \$335 for non-members

Complete details and registration forms available at greenwich.audubon.org

Teens 14 and up can volunteer. Three week minimum commitment required. Please call the Education Program Manager at ext. 239 for information.

2008 SPRING PUBLIC PROGRAM CALENDAR

Saturday, March 1

Wilderness Road Walk at Fairchild Gardens 2:00-3:30 pm
Join us as we walk the full length of the Fairchild Gardens property in search of winter birds, animal tracks, and early signs of spring. Ages 7 & up. Call the store to sign up.

Friday, March 7

Audubon Night Hike 6:00-7:30 pm
Join Audubon staff on an evening adventure to listen and look for wildlife species that are most active at night. Ages 7 & up. Contact Ted at x230. Registration required.

Saturday, March 8

E4C: Spring Wildlife Breakfast 9:00-10:30 am
A family-friendly event to celebrate the arrival of spring. \$25 per family. RSVP required. Sign up with Jeff at x239. *Sponsored by the Executives for Conservation committee.*

Saturday, March 8

Trip: Hudson River Eagle Trip 2:00-6:00 pm
RSVP required. *Sponsored by the Quaker Ridge Bird Club.*

2008 ENVIRONMENTAL SYMPOSIUM:

Sustaining Backyard Ecology

Tuesday, March 11 6:30- 8:30 pm
Cole Auditorium, Greenwich Library

"Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens" by Douglas Tallamy, Ph.D., Entomologist – *Renowned expert on insect-plant interactions and ecology.*
Introductory remarks by Barry Boyd, M.D. Oncologist – *local authority on the dangers of pesticides to human health.*
Free Admission. Visit www.westfairhort.org for more information.

Saturday, March 15

Wild Bird Nestbox Workshop 1:30-3:00 pm
Come learn how to attract bluebirds, wrens, swallows, and even owls with nest boxes. Part of the program will include the option to purchase & construct a bluebird nestbox. Ages 7 & up. Class no charge. \$12 to build a bluebird nest box. Please RSVP with the store.

Saturday, March 15

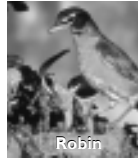
Woodcock Courtship Watch 7:00-8:00 pm
Witness one of the rites of spring as we watch and listen to the crepuscular calls and aerial performance of the woodcock – woodland relatives of sandpipers. Ages 7 & up. Call the store to sign up.

Saturday, March 22

Bird Class: Beginning Birding 9:30 am-12:00 pm
An introduction to basic ornithology and bird study skills. A walk in the field and audio-visual materials will be included in the program. *For adults and interested youth. Free workshop. Registration required.*

2008 Spring Bird Walks
Wednesdays at the Fairchild Garden
North Porchuck Road

Saturdays at the Main Center
613 Riversville Road
Meet in the parking areas of each site at 7:00 am.



Robin

Saturday, March 30

Guest Speaker: African Wild Dogs 2:00-4:00 pm
Learn about these interesting and iconic canines from Allison Nichols, a photographer exhibiting from March 1-30th. RSVPs appreciated.

Saturday, April 5

Bird Walk: Audubon Greenwich 7:00-8:45 am
Bird Class: Early Spring Migrations 9:30 am-12:00 pm
Learn about bird migration, recent studies and become familiar with migrants moving through our area in early spring. *For adults and interested youth. Registration required. Members \$12; Non-members \$15.*

Saturday, April 5

Mead Lake Wildlife Hike 2:00-3:45 pm
Join us as we circle Mead Lake at the time of spring thaw to seek out any early emerging turtles, frogs, snakes, insects, and returning wetland and water birds. Ages 5 & up. Call the store to sign up.

Saturday, April 5

Trip: White Memorial Park/Bantam Lake 7:00 am-2:00 pm
RSVP required. *Sponsored by the Quaker Ridge Bird Club.*

Wednesday, April 9

Bird Walk: Fairchild Garden 7:00-8:30 am

Thursday, April 10
Organic Lawns & Organic Schools
9:00 am & 1:00 pm

R.S.V.P. to Christy Pennoyer: 203-869-5272 x225.
Sponsored by the Audubon At Home committee
Tell your friends and school officials.

Friday, April 11

Moonlight Walk 7:00-8:30 pm
Come experience the moonlit woodlands, fields, and wetlands as we seek out sights, sounds, and evidence of local wildlife. Wear 'quiet' clothing. You can bring a flashlight for safety, but we will try to use moonlight for most of our lighting. Ages 8 & up. Call the store to sign up.

Saturday, April 12

Bird Walk: Audubon Greenwich 7:00-8:45 am
Bird Class: All about Woodpeckers 9:30 am-12:00 pm
Learn about the unique adaptations and life history of woodpeckers and get an update on current efforts to relocate/rediscover the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. The program will include a walk outside to search for woodpecker courtship, territory, and breeding behaviors. *For adults and interested youth. Registration required. Members \$12; Non-members \$15.*

T4C: Vernal Pond Survey Hike 1:30-3:30 pm
Hike to the Old Pasture Trail to examine vernal pools and look for evidence of breeding wood frogs and spotted salamanders. Ages 12 & up. Sign up with Jeff at x239. *A Teens for Conservation event.*

Eastern Bluebirds 3:30-5:00 pm

A special presentation by John Rogers, co-founder of the NYS Bluebird Society. This informative talk will discuss the bluebird's life history and recent research/management techniques. No charge. RSVP required. Not to be missed. *Sponsored by the Quaker Ridge Bird Club.*



Eastern Bluebird

Wednesday, April 16

Bird Walk: Fairchild Garden 7:00-8:30 am

Saturday, April 19

Bird Walk: Audubon Greenwich 7:00-8:45 am
Bird Class: Wood Warblers & Neotropical Migrants 9:30 am-12:00 pm
Introductory talk and field walk to learn characteristics, adaptations, and behaviors of the colorful warblers and other migrants. *For adults and interested youth. Registration required. Members \$12; Non-members \$15.*

Saturday, April 19

Wildflower Walk 2:00-3:30 pm
Walk with us to seek out our early spring wildflowers and learn about their life histories, ecological niches and insect pollination partners. Ages 8 & up. Call the store to sign up.



Trout Lily

Wednesday, April 23

Bird Walk: Fairchild Garden 7:00-8:30 am

Saturday, April 26

Bird Walk: Audubon Greenwich 7:00-8:45 am

Saturday, April 26

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JOHN JAMES AUDUBON
E4C: Live Raptors Breakfast 9:00-10:30 am
\$25 per family. RSVP required. Sign up with Jeff at x239. *Sponsored by the Executives for Conservation committee.*



John James Audubon
Born April 26, 1785

Basics of Landscape Drawing 1:00-3:00 pm

This class with Frank Guida, a local artist and birder, will demonstrate basic landscape drawing techniques and provide an opportunity to practice the skill. Pre-registration required. \$15 per person. Limit 15. Call the store to sign up.

'Audubon At Home' Hike 3:00-4:30 pm
Guided tour of habitats and landscaping that is wildlife friendly. Demonstration gardens and organic lawn included.

Wednesday, April 30

Bird Walk: Fairchild Garden 7:00-8:30 am

Saturday, May 3

Bird Walk: Audubon Greenwich 7:00-8:45 am
Bird Class: Learn to Bird by Ear 9:30 am-12:00 pm
The how and why behind birds vocalization and an introduction to useful bird call recordings. *For adults and interested youth. Registration required. Members \$12; Non-members \$15.*

Wednesday, May 7

Bird Walk: Fairchild Garden 7:00-8:30 am

Saturday, May 10
Annual Bird Breakfast & International Migratory Bird Day

• 6:30 Bird Walk • 8:00 Bird Breakfast
• 9:30 Guest Speaker • 11:00 Habitat Walk • 3:00 Live Raptors
Call to sign up for breakfast at x221.

Wednesday, May 14

Bird Walk: Fairchild Garden 7:00-8:30 am

Saturday, May 17

Bird Walk: Audubon Greenwich 7:00-8:45 am

Bird Class: Birds in their Habitats 9:30 am-12:00 pm
An in-depth discussion of how particular birds are linked with particular habitats, how each species uses its habitat and how this ties in with Audubon's 'Important Bird Areas' and 'Audubon at Home' programs. *For adults and interested youth. Registration required. Members \$12; Non-members \$15.*

Wednesday, May 21

Bird Walk: Fairchild Garden 7:00-8:30 am

Programs are suitable for all ages unless otherwise indicated. Please register by calling 203-869-5272. Programs start at the Kimberlin Nature Center at Audubon Greenwich, 613 Riversville Rd. Website: greenwich.center.audubon.org.
Program fees: \$3/adult members; \$5/adult non-members; \$1.50/member children and seniors; \$3/non-member children and seniors; no charge to Teacher Naturalists as part of their ongoing training.

STAY UP-TO-DATE WITH AUDUBON PROGRAMS! Sign up for weekly program reminders: AudubonGreenwichNews-subscribe@yahoo.com

Christmas Bird Count December 15, 2007

by Brian O'Toole & Gary Palmer

The 108th Annual Christmas Bird Count was an exciting one. For the first time, we rescheduled the count due to a dire winter forecast for our scheduled count date on Sunday, Dec. 16th. For safety reasons, we decided to move the count up one day to Saturday. Fortunately, we made a good decision, as Sunday weather proved to be treacherous. Most of our faithful observers altered their plans at the last minute to participate a day early, and we were able to have a very rewarding count.

The weather on Saturday was crisp, mostly sunny with light winds and was a great day for a count. Thanks to a great effort by all, we counted a grand total of 28,267 individual birds in our 15-mile wide count circle (Greenwich, Stamford, Darien, and parts of Westchester County). We set a new record of 123 species, topping the 120 species in 1984, and well above our average over the last 20-25 years.

We also added two long overdue species to our all time list with a Red Knot in Riverside and an Iceland Gull seen by our boat party. We were fortunate to count during a year in which Northern Finches had headed south and we were able to add such species as Common Redpoll, Red Crossbill, and Pine Siskin, which we do not always record during the count. Participants also sighted Common Ravens and Black Vultures, which continue to increase in numbers in our count area.

New high counts were set for Common Merganser (1790), Northern Gannet (8), Cooper's Hawk (25), and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (23). Several other species were at near high record numbers. Other good finds were King Eider, Great Egret, Yellow-breasted Chat, Lapland Longspur, and Red Crossbill.

Thank you to all the observers for making this one of our most successful counts in recent years and especially to our volunteers for providing the delicious food at the compilation meeting after the long count day. For detailed results from any of the count years, visit: www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/ and search for the Greenwich-Stamford count circle.

This year's count will be held on Sunday, December 14th, 2008.

Sign up and join the fun!



QUAKER RIDGE BIRD CLUB

Saturday, March 8

Hudson River Eagle Trip 2:00-6:00 pm

Waterfowl and eagles congregate along the Hudson River each winter and form large roosts. This tour will visit Croton Point, George's Island, Black Rock Park, and the Croton Dam. Join the carpool at 2 pm or get directions to meet there.

Saturday, April 5

White Memorial Park and Bantam Lake 7:00 am-2:00 pm

Visit a special corner of Connecticut that is known to attract birds from Canada's boreal forests in search for remaining passerines and waterfowl that have not started their trek back north to breed.

Sign up for trips with Brian O'Toole at x221. RSVP required.

Sponsored by the Quaker Ridge Bird Club.

Quaker Ridge Hawk Watch

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The 2007 season also had much better success with aging and sexing of several of the raptors species. That improvement will make a significant contribution to biologists trying to understand raptor movement around Long Island Sound. During the festival on September 15 & 16, the count made use of a small scaffolding to create a "hawk watch tower." This height helped us spot several distant kettles and raptors that were below tree-line for observers on the ground.

Many other good things happened at Quaker Ridge this year. Thanks to the generosity and hard work of hawk watch volunteers Steve Beal and Mike Warner, we extensively refurbished the hawk watch kiosk and tally board. The site also had many new visitors drop by because of postings to the new Connecticut bird list. It was a great season for both raptors and watchers alike, and we look forward to welcoming back both new and returning hawk watchers in 2008.

If you would like to count this Fall, volunteers are welcome. Visit Audubon Greenwich to put your spotting skills to work and get in on the 2008 hawk migration action.

For detailed count results from Quaker Ridge or other sites across the country, visit: www.hawkcount.org.



Twenty-eight Northern Goshawks were recorded, making 2007 a record year for this raptor.

Great News for Long Island Sound!

by Sandy Breslin, Director of Government Affairs, Audubon Connecticut

Just in time for the New Year, Congress and the President approved almost \$5 million in funding for two of Audubon's priority Long Island Sound programs. The move marks a first for the Long Island Sound Stewardship Act, which was passed in 2006, but never funded due to the budget impasse that occurred at the close of the 109th Congress. The Stewardship Act authorizes up to \$25 million each year to protect important ecological and recreational treasures around the Sound – including 26 coastal Important Bird Areas already identified in Connecticut – and to improve access to this nationally significant estuary.



Birding along the Sound. Marshlands Conservancy in Rye, NY

Audubon played a lead role in passage and funding of this and the Long Island Sound Restoration Act, which authorizes up to \$40 million per year for municipal nitrogen reduction and water quality projects in the Sound. The entire

Connecticut delegation, led by Congressman Chris Shays, co-chair of the bi-partisan Long Island Sound Caucus, and Senators Lieberman and Dodd strongly supported the funding.

Long Island Sound is a national treasure and Audubon is delighted that the federal government is willing to partner with the state and municipalities in restoring and protecting this vital resource.

Organic Lawns & Organic Schools

Need help getting your school or lawn free of synthetics?

THURSDAY, APRIL 10

- **Organic Lawns for Homeowners – 9:00-11:00 am**
Learn how you can have a beautiful lawn without the chemicals, synthetic pesticides, and fertilizers that are damaging to human health, wildlife, and the environment.
- **School Practices Go Organic – 1:00-4:00 pm**
New Connecticut legislation, “An Act Banning Pesticide Use on School Grounds,” prohibits schools serving students through 8th grade from using synthetic pesticides on lawns and grounds. Join Audubon for an informative program and Q & A session. Designed especially for school staff.

Presented by: CHIP OSBORNE *Co-Chair of the Living Lawn, Instructor for Grassroots Healthy Lawn Program & NOFA Organic Land programs, and President of Osborne Organics*

R.S.V.P. to Christy Pennoyer: 203-869-5272 x225

Sponsored by the Audubon At Home committee



While we do not use synthetic chemicals on any of Audubon's grass, the lawns directly in front of the building have undergone organic treatments over the last year. They exemplify the beauty and lushness that can be achieved without the use of harmful chemicals.

First Sunday Bird Walks at Greenwich Point

• **Sunday, March 2** • **Sunday, April 6** • **Sunday, May 4**

Meet at the second concession stand at 9:00 am. Park permit required. *Sponsored by Wild Wings.*

SPRING 2008

Natural History Notes

By Ted Gilman, Education Specialist

Bufflehead, hooded mergansers, and ring-necked ducks appearing on inland waters as winter's ice retreats; pairs of red-tailed hawks perching closer and closer to each other as they approach mating for another year's nestfull of hungry young; mourning cloak and tortoiseshell butterflies sunning themselves along woodland trails in early spring, resting between sips of leaking maple tree sap; nature unfolding her amazing full palette of subtle shades of green in the opening buds and leaves; the drumming of a pileated woodpecker, on a resonant dead oak tree, echoing a quarter mile or more advertising its claim on the Audubon woodlands; the smell of the rich damp earth with April's warmth and spring rains; male black-nosed dace, small energetic minnows, show off their bright rust-orange flanks to attract mates in small pools and riffles of the Byram River near Discovery Trail bridge; delicate pale blue crosses of bluets or "Quaker Ladies" turn their blossoms to the spring sunshine; the uncharacteristic silence of the crows during April's nest-building season as they quietly ferry stick after stick to



some well-hidden branch in a tall pine; the joy of discovering lots of new "small talk" calls from tufted titmice in the spring breeding/courtship season; multi-toned trills of American toads, calling from shallow waters at the margins of Indian Spring Pond, adding a delicate background music to warm April days and evenings; mayflies escaping from their nymphal skins and underwater lifestyle to take flight for their brief period as adults to find a mate and provide for future generations of trout food and sources of fascination for curious school children; the short call notes floating down from nighttime skies giving hints of the flood of neotropical migrant birds returning to their northern breeding grounds from their winter homes in southern lands in the US and Latin America; painted turtles, basking with hind legs fully extended, soak up the warmth of springtime sun; the flash of the first early season firefly foretelling the dazzling display of multiple lightflash patterns by which these magical night-flying beetles usher in another season of warm summer evenings.

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2008 Environmental Symposium

Tuesday, March 11

Organic Lawn & School Yard Workshops

April 10

Annual Bird Breakfast & Workshops

Saturday, May 10