



Tornado Strikes: July 12, 2006

**Tremendous changes wrought in minutes:
What will the future bring?**

Like many days this summer, July 12 was hot and humid and the forecast called for the possibility of thunderstorms late in the day. Nature campers had all departed and the staff and counselors were busy cleaning up from activities and preparing for the next day. The skies were getting darker and the expected thunderstorms seemed to be forming. Then we received a phone call from a staff member watching television at home. She informed us that there was a tornado heading our way!

All of a sudden, the routine anticipation of a thunderstorm changed to extra urgency as staff quickly checked all rooms of the Kimberlin Center and made their way to the basement to secure areas in anticipation of a possible tornado.

In the minutes leading up to the passing of the storm, staff had noticed leaves being blown hundreds of feet in the air and the sky taking



Entire root systems were pulled from the ground by the tornado.

on the green tinge associated with severe weather.

Executive Director Tom Baptist, noted that the sky had become almost as dark as night and cars were driving with their headlights on.

We had strong winds and heavy rain for a short period and the power went out, but we noted little other disruption from the storm. We had certainly lost power in thunderstorms before, so this was not particularly surprising.


After the storm had passed, we relaxed and expressed relief that the storm had not struck us more severely.

Continued on page 10



Large trees were snapped mid-way up the trunks.

Hawk Watch Weekend

 **Saturday & Sunday
September 16 & 17
11 am - 5 pm • Rain or Shine**

Celebrate the spectacular hawk migration passing over Audubon's Quaker Ridge Hawk Watch site!

IN THIS ISSUE

- Director's Message 2
- Hawk Watch Weekend 3
- Bird and Butterfly Count Totals. 4
- Nature Program Calendar 6 & 7
- Dinner Dance 8



Audubon GREENWICH

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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elizabeth Champlin Geske	CHAIR
Barbara Basney	VICE CHAIR
H. Lee Browne	VICE CHAIR
Paul DeForest Hicks	VICE CHAIR
Lolly Prince	VICE CHAIR
Michael Nelson	TREASURER
Allison Bourke	Norman Merritt
Barry Boyd	Rani Newman Mathura
Camille Broderick	Jonathan Ochsner
Nanny Cannon	Ede Peterson
Jane Dunn	Matt Popp
Ann Flinn	Jill Raker
Eaddo Kiernan	Ellen Reid
Penny Low	

Honorary Board Members:

Jane-Kerin Moffat	William Ross
Gary Palmer	

AUDUBON GREENWICH STAFF

Jeff Cordulack	EDUCATION PROGRAM MANAGER
Ted Gilman	EDUCATION SPECIALIST
Lindsey White	EDUCATION SPECIALIST
James Flynn	EDUCATION SPECIALIST
Margaret Robbins	OFFICE/STORE MANAGER
Brian O'Toole	SALES ASSOCIATE
John Fairty	GROUNDS AND FACILITIES MANAGER
Macario Nicholas	CARETAKER

AUDUBON CONNECTICUT STAFF

Tom Baptist	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Carolyn Hughes	DEPUTY DIRECTOR
Patrick Comins	DIR. BIRD CONSERVATION
Sandy Breslin	DIR. GOVT AFFAIRS
John Hannan	DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT/ INTERIM CENTER DIRECTOR
Joyce Leiz	MAJOR GIFTS OFFICER
Jennifer Palacios	EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

AUDUBON GREENWICH

613 Riversville Road, Greenwich, CT 06831

Phone: 203.869.5272 Fax: 203.869.4437

E-mail: greenwich_center@audubon.org

Web: http://greenwich.center.audubon.org

Open: 7 days a week 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Admission: Members FREE;

Non-members: Adults \$3;

Children/Seniors \$1.50

Nature Icons © Audubon 2004

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE:

Migration Season Looking Locally, Thinking Globally

As I wrote this column many of us were shuttling children to and from camps, going on vacation, or just enjoying another beautiful summer. Birds, on the other hand, were already hard at work starting their southbound migratory cycle.

If you, like me, enjoy being out along the Sound's shoreline you too probably noticed our first migratory guest's arrival way back in mid-July. Spotted Sandpipers, small brown and white birds who's constantly bobbing tails alert you to their presence, appeared first. Next came the beautiful crimson, black and white Ruddy Turnstones.

Flocks of Semipalmated Sandpipers arrived next. These tiny visitors may have come from as far north as the Arctic Circle on their way to as far south as Chile or Brazil. Soon a plethora of other species join these early birds and our shoreline, parks, forests, and backyards become filled with a multitude of color and species diversity.

Our shoreline is a vital stopover and refueling point for these long distance travelers who may only weigh one ounce but need the energy to fly as much as 2,400 miles non-stop in a 72 hour period. That is why Audubon has categorized many of our shoreline open spaces as Important Bird Areas.

Sites like Greenwich Point are vital to the survival of many bird species. They may be used for a day or a whole season, but each site is part of a global interlocking quilt of habitats that birds use to nest, migrate, and winter in. And if we fail to protect any of the pieces we may break the chain and endanger the survival of an entire species.

Because we are directly in the path of the Atlantic Migratory Flyway, our area witnesses two of migration's most striking and visible displays. During the spring songbirds, stunningly beautiful in their mating plumage, arrive. Some will nest in Audubon's sanctuaries and other local open spaces, while others continue northward.

But perhaps the most exhilarating stage of the migration season is the annual fall raptor movement, which our Greenwich Center's Sanctuary is so famous for. The Center sits on one of the highest ridges in Greenwich and for centuries

raptors have used this aerial pathway to soar through as they head to wintering grounds as far south as South America.

For more than 40 years volunteers and staff have conducted a Hawk Watch here at the Greenwich Center. In any given year, we have counted more than 14,000 raptors flying over the Sanctuary. For this reason The Greenwich Center has been categorized as an Important Bird Area.

And just as important as counting the raptors is what we do with the data. This information is entered

into globally maintained databases that give scientists empirical data enabling them to report concretely on which raptor species are flourishing and which are facing population declines. Just as our site is part of a global chain of habitats, the data our team compiles is helping scientists develop and implement worldwide raptor conservation plans.



John Hannan

A day at the Hawk Watch Festival is an amazing insight into a centuries old natural phenomenon.

Continued on page 9

Saturday & Sunday September 16 & 17

11:00 am-5:00 pm
RAIN OR SHINE

Hawk Watch Weekendi



Div
to



Audubon GREENWICH



- Hawk Shows
- Nature Games
- Arts & Crafts
- Tornado Hikes
- Honey Harvest
- Owl Pellet Dissection
- Explore Indian Spring Pond
- The Great Migration and Bird Nest Games



- Audubon Greenwich members: \$7 adults, \$5 children/seniors
- General admission: \$10 adults, \$7 children/seniors

Help us scan the skies for the spectacular hawk migration which passes overhead each fall at Quaker Ridge Hawk Watch. If the winds are right we could have a spectacular flight!

613 Riversville Rd. at the corner of John St. • 203-869-5272 • www.audubonCT.org

2006 Butterfly Count Results

Annual Count Coordinator - Ted Gilman

Over 20 volunteers and naturalists counted butterflies in nearby meadows, orchards, and woodlands at Audubon's main sanctuary and the Nichols Preserve. This year's total was 20 different species. The species totals are listed below and include 7 Monarch butterflies. Also several larvae were found and we observed adults laying eggs on milkweed plants outside the Kimberlin Nature Education Center.

This was all very encouraging, as we have had few, if any, Monarchs on recent counts. The most unusual sightings for us were a Buckeye butterfly observed at the Nichols preserve, a Striped Hairstreak, and a Wild Indigo Duskywing observed laying eggs near the Ketay-Asnes barn.

As part of an ongoing citizen science program, Audubon Greenwich submits the butterfly count data to the North American Butterfly Association (NABA) to learn more about the diverse butterfly communities across the nation.

If you would like to join the butterfly counting fun next summer, contact Ted Gilman in the Education Department at Audubon Greenwich and indicate your level of interest and identification ability. No experience necessary.

2006 butterfly count sightings:

Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	5
Cabbage White	7
Orange Sulphur (only at Nichols)	8
Hickory Hairstreak	1
Striped Hairstreak	2
Eastern Tailed Blue	10
Spring Azure	1
Great Spangled Fritillary	8
Pearl Crescent	23
Eastern Comma (only at Nichols)	2
Mourning Cloak (only at Nichols)	2
Painted Lady	1
Common Buckeye (only at Nichols)	1
Common Wood Nymph	6
Monarch	7
Silver-spotted Skipper	9
Wild Indigo Duskywing	1
Least Skipper	5
Northern Broken Dash	14
Dun Skipper	6

Summer Bird Count 2006

By Brian O'Toole

Audubon Greenwich held its annual Summer Bird Count on the weekend of June 10th & 11th. Sixty-two observers in 40 separate parties were out counting all birds seen and heard in Greenwich, Stamford, Darien and parts of Westchester County. Our faithful birders tallied 147 species over the weekend and a total of 21,644 individual birds. Many of our volunteers were even out in the dead of night searching for owls. High winds plagued the count throughout the weekend making it difficult to hear nocturnal owls and songbirds during the day. Otherwise, the weather was overcast with scattered showers early on Saturday with gradual clearing on Sunday. Fortunately this did not put a damper on the weekend as many exciting and notable finds

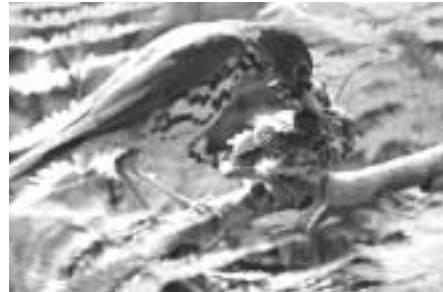


Photo: Annette Cumiffe

Nesting wood thrushes were a welcome sight on our summer count.

were tallied. The counters, along with compiler Tom Burke, gathered on the hawkwatch lawn at the Audubon Center on Sunday afternoon to go over the findings of the weekend. Some of the rare species seen on the count include first count records of Wilson's Warbler and Saw-Whet Owl in Westchester County. The

Saw-Whet Owl was a very exciting find since it constitutes the first nesting record in our count area. Five young fledged from a nest high in a tree cavity in Armonk. Other notable sightings are listed below.

Sadly, we continue to see a decline in grassland species and birds that favor second growth woods and shrubby habitats. Ring-Necked Pheasant, White-Eyed Vireo, Veery, Brown Thrasher, Black & White Warbler, Ovenbird and Eastern Towhee showed all time low numbers. Over-development and habitat loss has certainly taken a toll on these birds. The continual increase in the deer population is also a significant problem especially in our count area.

The high density of deer is causing excessive damage to woodland undergrowth where many species of birds nest.

All is not gloomy though as we did set new high counts on a number of species. Our local Osprey population continues to benefit from the nesting poles that have been erected for them in Long Island Sound. Thirty-nine were recorded which represents an all-time high. Other notable highs were established for Bald Eagle, Monk Parakeet, Semi-Palmated Sandpiper, Saw-Whet Owl, Cliff Swallow, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, Pine Warbler, Common Grackle, Brown-Headed Cowbird and Baltimore Oriole. If you would like to learn more about the Greenwich-Stamford Summer Bird Count, please contact Brian O'Toole at 203-869-5272.

Notable 2006 Sightings

- Wilson's Warbler
- Saw-Whet Owl
- Gadwall
- Ruddy Duck
- American Wigeon
- 2 Buffleheads
- Hooded and Red-Breasted Mergansers
- 2 Bald Eagles
- Little Blue Heron
- 2 Peregrine Falcons
- Willet
- White-Rumped Sandpiper
- 3 Short-Billed Dowitchers
- 2 Forster's Terns
- Least Flycatcher
- 16 Purple Martins
- Kentucky Warbler
- White-Throated Sparrow

Pileated Woodpeckers nest in Fairchild Garden

Being year-round residents, pileated woodpeckers can be seen on Audubon sanctuaries all year long. During one of our regular Wednesday morning bird walks in the Audubon Fairchild Garden this spring, we followed the loud calls of a pileated woodpecker and found a pileated woodpecker vigorously excavating an oblong cavity about 20-30 feet up in a large dead ash snag near the junction of Fairchild Road and Fern trail.

Over the next weeks, observers witnessed several incubation duty exchanges between the male and female, indicating that the parents were hard at work on producing a new brood of young. Finally, in late May, several quiet, watchful birders were treated to the spectacle of two lively young woodpeckers being fed by each parent in turn.

At one point one of the parents swooped onto the upper portion of the snag that contained the nest cavity. The observers then noticed that there was a gray squirrel balanced on the very top of the snag. It appeared that the woodpecker wanted that squirrel to leave right away. The woodpecker gave one strong, loud whack against the side of the dead tree.

The squirrel seemed to get the message and quickly leaped off the snag onto nearby tree branches and

beat a hasty retreat away from the snag. The woodpecker then flew over and took a close look at the couple sitting very quietly to observe the nest cavity. Once it had taken a long, close look at the couple it returned to its work of feeding the hungry youngsters. After many feeding trips to and from the nest cavity, the two young fledged in early June.

Visit the Quaker Ridge Birding Bulletin Board just outside Audubon's Bookstore to see wonderful photographs of the attentive woodpecker parents as they were feeding their offspring. Many other local sightings are also posted there.



Annette Cunniffe captured this impressive series of photos showing an adult pileated woodpecker bringing food to its young.

Weekly Events by Email

Once a week, the education department sends email announcements about upcoming nature programs and special events. To sign up automatically, simply send a blank email to: audubongreenwichnews-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

AUDUBON GREENWICH NATURE PROGRAM CALENDAR

F A L L 2 0 0 6

S E P T E M B E R

Friday, September 8

Bats Around Us 7:00-8:00 pm

Bats are important to the ecosystem we live in. That is why Audubon Greenwich has a bat box in the orchard. Come to a program indoors and a walk to observe the bats' twilight behavior. Ted Gilman will share some secrets about these little understood mammals and talk about local bat species, their amazing flight method, favorite foods, habits, and habitats. Sign up at 203-869-5272 x230. Ages 5 and up.

Saturday, September 9

BIRD WALK: Audubon Greenwich 7:00-9:00 am

Local bird enthusiasts head to the Old Pasture Trail and return by the Lake Trail in search of migrating songbirds. Everyone welcome. RSVP not required. Meet on Hawk Watch lawn, next to the Audubon Greenwich parking lot.

Sunday, September 10

E4C: Audubon Sanctuary Hike 9:00-10:30 am

This annual sanctuary hike starts with a light breakfast and at 9:30 am, hiking groups will hit the trails to Mead Lake and explore for signs of coyote, otter, songbirds or other surprises. The walk will last up to 1.5 hours. Bring walking shoes and get ready for fun in the woods. RSVP required. Call 203-869-5272 x239 to sign up.

HawkWatch Festival Weekend

September 16 & 17

11:00 am - 5:00 pm

This family-oriented celebration highlights Audubon's Quaker Ridge and the spectacular hawk migration passing overhead. With live 'bird of prey' shows, nature-themed games and crafts, face painting, pond studies, honey harvesting and much more. All ages are welcome. Displays, food, kids events, hikes and guest speakers will run throughout the day. Live bird shows begin at 1:00 & 3:00 pm. General admission: Non-members: \$7 children/\$10 adults. Members \$5 children/\$7 adults. For more information or Audubon family membership (\$35), call 203-869-5272 x239.



vulture

Saturday, September 23

BIRD WALK: Audubon Greenwich 7:00-9:00 am

Local bird enthusiasts head off to the Hillside and Lake Trails in search of migrating songbirds. Everyone welcome. RSVP not required. Meet on Hawk Watch lawn, next to the Audubon Greenwich parking lot.

Saturday, September 23

FIELD TRIP: Hook Mountain

9:00 am-1:00 pm

Audubon's Quaker Ridge Bird Club is pleased to host a trip to Hook Mountain, on the west side of the Hudson River. This site provides spectacular views of migrating hawks and involves a moderate half-mile hike uphill. The view is worth the climb. Meet at the Audubon Center to carpool or call for directions. Bring binoculars, bag lunch, water and sun protection. Group size limited. Ages 8 and up. Adult must accompany children. Registration required. Contact Ted at 203-869-5272 ext. 230.

Saturday, September 30

Autumn Songbird Migration Walk 9:30-11:00 am

Join us to seek out some of the flood of songbirds that are migrating south through our area by day and night. We will discuss the migration process and also seek out some of the plant and animal foods that provide the migration fuel for these birds. Ages 8 and up. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair from us.

O C T O B E R

Saturday, October 7

BIRD WALK: Fairchild Garden 7:00 - 9:00am

Join birders who will search for birds in the varied wetland habitats and nearby woodlands. Everyone welcome. RSVP not required. Meet at the Fairchild Wildflower Garden on North Porchuck Road (parking area on right, 1/4 mile down from Riversville Road).

Saturday, October 7

Marvelous Mushrooms 2:00-3:30 pm

The world of fungi is filled with a wonderful variety of colors, shapes and relationships with plants and animals. Join us as we seek out local mushrooms and explore their role in our forest ecosystem.



Saturday, October 7

Autumn Harvest Moon Walk 6:30-8:00 pm

The special light of the harvest moon provides a setting for seeking out wildlife adventures. We'll watch the moon and turn our ears skyward for migrating birds, and walk to pond, forest, and lake to seek out other wildlife. Ages 8 and up. Contact Ted at 203-869-5272 x230 to sign up. RSVP requested.

September-November HawkWatch On Quaker Ridge

Daily hawk counting from 9:00 am-5:00 pm

Each day, Audubon's hawk watchers observe and tally the awe-inspiring migration of hawks, eagles, falcons, and vultures passing over the Audubon Center. No experience necessary. Bring binoculars, if available, and join the group of birders assembled on the lawn at 613 Riversville Road. For updated HawkWatch count results, go to www.hawkcount.org and search on our region or see other sites from around the country.

You may also contact Audubon's education department for more information at 203-869-5272.

Saturday, October 14

BIRD WALK:

Audubon Greenwich

7:00-9:00 am

Local bird enthusiasts will hike down to Mead Lake on various trails.

Everyone welcome.

RSVP not required. Meet on the HawkWatch lawn, next to Audubon Greenwich parking lot.



red-tailed hawk

Sunday, October 15

Hike to The Leather Man's Cave 2:00-4:00 pm

While hardly a cave in many respects, this crude shelter was one of the many homes visited by one of New England's most reclusive historical figures, the Leather Man. Join Audubon naturalists for a 1 mile walk to Beech Hill, where guests will learn about this historical vagabond who periodically visited Audubon lands during his travels through lower New York State and Connecticut. Bring sturdy walking shoes, a water bottle and camera for the autumn foliage. Sign up with James Flynn at 203-869-5272 x224. Ages 8 and up.

Saturday, October 21

BIRD WALK: Audubon Greenwich 7:00-9:00 am

The Quaker Ridge Bird Club will lead bird enthusiasts on a 2-mile hike down the Hillside Trail, to Beech Hill, Maple Swamp Loop, and Hemlock Trails before returning by the Lake Trail. Everyone welcome. RSVP not required. Meet on Hawk Watch lawn, next to the Audubon Greenwich parking lot.

Friday, October 27

E4C: The Enchanted Orchard & Animal Show

6:00-8:00 pm

Prepare the family and join the fun in Audubon's Historic Barn and orchard. This special E4C evening will include a live animal show, visits to Audubon's Enchanted Orchard, and lots of treats for children. Warm refreshments, sweets and a cozy fireplace await the guests. Costumes welcome. All ages. \$25 per family. Parent supervision and RSVP required. Call 203-869-5272 x239 to sign up. Rain date: October 28.

Saturday, October 28

Audubon's Tornado Alley 2:00-4:00 pm

The July 12 Tornado left quite a trail through our property. Come see the evidence of the power of that tornado and learn about the possible changes to the flora and fauna that may come about in the future as nature responds to the post-tornado landscape. 2 hour hike down the Byram River. RSVP requested. Call 203-869-5272 x239 to sign up.

N O V E M B E R

Saturday, November 4

Autumn Hike to Old Pasture Trail and Mead Lake 2:00-4:00 pm

Get out and hike the property to catch the last bits of color and search out red-tailed hawks, bluebirds, and signs of coyote and other wildlife.

Saturday, November 11

Citizen Science for All 2:00-3:30 pm

Want to take part in nation-wide scientific surveys and projects? Come learn how to participate in studies of winter birds, breeding birds, butterflies, and other creatures through programs conducted by Audubon, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, North American Butterfly Association, etc. We will highlight upcoming winter bird study projects of Project FeederWatch, Christmas Bird Count and Great Backyard Bird Count.

Sunday, November 12

RECYCLING 101: Paper-making for all 2:00-3:00 pm

Do you ever wonder what happens to paper after you put it in your recycling bin? Come and learn how the recycled papermaking process works, then make your own paper out of newspaper, office and construction paper that has been recycled by Audubon. Feel free to bring in small amounts of recycled paper from your home. Ages five and up are welcome. To sign up or to learn how to recycle paper at home, contact Lindsey at: 203-869-5272 x235.

Saturday, November 18

FIELD TRIP: Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

9:00 am-1:00 pm

Join the Quaker Ridge Bird Club and other birders as they head out to bird one of NY's premier bird watching sites in our region. We should see a good variety of waterfowl, as well as raptors and over-wintering land birds. Meet at the Audubon Center to carpool. Bring binoculars and spotting scope if you have them. Wear warm clothes in layers; the area is cold and windy. Pre-registration is required. Sign up with Ted or Brian at 203-869-5272.

Sunday, November 19

The Sights and Sounds of Migration:

A Presentation by Andrew Farnsworth 4:00-5:00 pm

How to Identify Flight Calls and Interpret Radar Imagery. This workshop will focus on two exciting ways to study and experience migration from a brand new perspective: listening to flight calls of migrants and interpreting radar imagery of bird migration. Guests will listen to a variety of pre-recorded flight calls focusing on how to listen to these ephemeral notes and methods to distinguish them.

Programs are suitable for all ages unless otherwise indicated. Please register for all programs by calling 203-869-5272 to reserve your spot. Programs start at the Kimberlin Nature Center at Audubon Greenwich, 613 Riversville Rd. Program fees are \$3.00 for adult members, \$5.00 for adult non-members, \$1.50 for member children and seniors, \$3.00 for non-member children and seniors. Programs are no charge to Teacher Naturalists as part of their ongoing training.

Audubon Greenwich • 613 Riversville Road • Greenwich, CT 06831 • 203-869-5272 • greenwich.center.audubon.org

Dinner Dance Set for November 11th

Please join us on November 11th for an exceptional event when we return to the Belle Haven Club to show our support for Audubon Greenwich and to present Dan Lufkin with the prestigious Connecticut Environmental Leadership Award at the second annual Dancing with Nature Fall Dinner.

This Dinner will benefit our community in two very special ways: funds raised will enable the Audubon Greenwich Center to expand its education and conservation programs for young and old alike, and they will ensure our shared backyard, the Long Island Sound, is preserved and protected for generations to come.

More than 30,000 visitors use our Center as a living classroom, research facility, and hub of appreciation for nature. Thousands of children come on school field trips along with hundreds of summer and winter campers, volunteers conduct scientific research that becomes local and global conservation work, while others simply enjoy the natural serenity of our sanctuaries.

One of the topics we focus on is watershed protection, because without it we cannot preserve national treasures like our Long Island Sound. All of us use the Sound in one way or another; whether to fish, boat, swim or simply to gaze out over the majestic beauty of this body of water.

Unfortunately, today the Sound's ecological health is at a critical crossroads, and that is why Audubon has made restoring the Sound one of its top national priorities. Despite the best efforts of many, our Sound's waters are still degraded by pollution. Hypoxia robs the Sound of precious oxygen and continues to render a significant portion of its western area lifeless each summer. But, if we act now, we can reverse this trend and restore the Sound.

Audubon has put together the team that can restore the Sound and Dan W. Lufkin is not only a leader, but also a founder of this team, and this is why Audubon is pleased to present him with its Connecticut Environmental Leadership Award for his long service, dedication and commitment to the

protection of Long Island Sound.

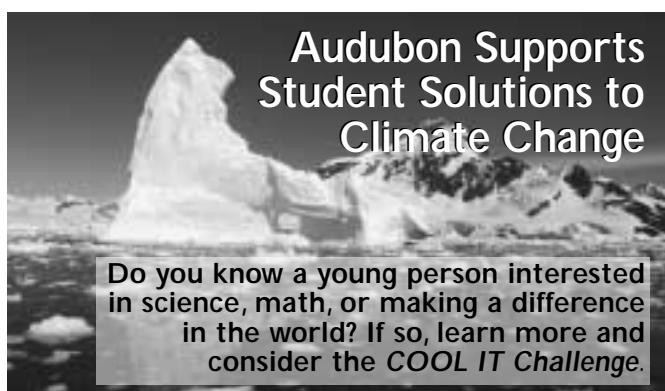
Many of us know Dan Lufkin for his business leadership. Dan's record led the *Wall Street Journal* to list him among the most significant 100 Men in the World: People Who Influenced Our Daily Business.

But Dan's true passion is for the environment. In 1970, he was a member of the organizing group of the first Earth Day. In 1971, he became Connecticut's first Commissioner of the

Department of Environmental Protection. Under his watch, Connecticut was one of the first states in the nation to establish inland wetland regulations and the first to create a private enterprise, the Resource Recovery Authority.

For more than forty years, Dan has been deeply involved in the protection and restoration of Connecticut's environment and Long Island Sound. On November 11th I hope you will join us in recognizing that vision and leadership. Your support will immensely benefit our Center while helping to restore the Long Island Sound for generations to come.

For more information on the November 11th Dinner Dance please call John Hannan, Director of Development, at 203-869-5272 ext 234 or e-mail him at jhannan@audubon.org.



This fall, the Audubon Greenwich Education Department will help Connecticut students put the freeze on global warming as a sponsor for *Cool It: The Climate Change Challenge*, a statewide competition open to all Connecticut middle and high school students. Participating students will learn about climate science and the causes of climate change and then make a team to create local solutions to this global problem. Students who create the best solutions can win awards of up to \$10,000. Details are available at www.coolitchallenge.org. If you know a team of one or more young persons and an adult supervisor, have them contact Audubon Greenwich's Education Department at 203-869-5272 x239 to sign-up for this special science contest before December 15, 2006.

Director's Message continued from page 2

Some of us were awakened to the magnitude of migration through the film *Winged Migration*; others of us are old hands at watching the skies. No matter how long you have known about migration, I am sure you agree that it is a phenomenon that everyone should be aware of. For the passage of birds and butterflies from as far south as the tip of Argentina to as far north as the Arctic circle demonstrates how we are one interconnected eco-system.

To celebrate this centuries-old process, I invite you to come to our Hawk Watch Weekend on September 16th and 17th. We time the festival to occur in the peak of the Broad Wing Hawk movement. Broad Wing Hawks migrate in large numbers on their way to Central and South America so it is possible to see hundreds if not thousands of these hawks soaring together right above the Sanctuary in mid-September. During this period you are also apt to see Sharp-Shinned and Cooper's Hawks, Osprey and Bald Eagles, along with Harriers and Kestrels. A day at the festival is an amazing insight into a centuries-old natural phenomenon that goes largely unnoticed by so many.

But the Weekend Festival is not just about hawk watching, there are educational programs for young and old alike. From games, arts and crafts,

to lectures on global conservation, everyone in the family will find something of interest, something new to learn, and something to participate in. In this newsletter you will read about some of the activities we will be offering, but keep checking with us as new speakers and programs are being added daily.

Of course, Hawk Watch Weekend is just one event at the Center. As you read this newsletter you will see a lot has happened since our last issue and more is coming. Be sure to read the results of our annual summer Bird & Butterfly Counts. Find out how the tornado affected the Sanctuary and surrounding area. Be sure to check the calendar of upcoming events.

And once you have finished reading come on up and visit us at the Center. The Hilfiger Family Children's Learning Wing has been refurbished and is open once again. New exhibits and programs are coming into the Center everyday. The art gallery and Nature Store are filled with beautiful and informative items. And of course our miles of trails and Hawk Watch await you.

So dust off your binoculars and bring the whole family. We're always here; ready to share the wonderful secrets of nature, and you are always welcome.

AUDUBON'S ART EXHIBITS

• "From Here to Vermont"

by former Greenwich resident, Mike Mayone.

September 1-October 31

- **Artist's Reception: Sat., Sept. 9, 2-5 pm.**
Open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

The Audubon Greenwich Nature Arts Gallery will feature "From Here to Vermont" by former Greenwich resident, Mike Mayone. Mr. Mayone's original paintings and prints capture the essence of the northeast in beautiful detail and realism. His artwork is inspired by, and immortalizes, the magnificence of this region from Greenwich to his home in Vermont.

• **Botanical Paintings in Mixed Media and Watercolor**

by local artist Rhoda Holzer

November 1-December 31

For further information, contact Margaret Robbins, 869-5272 ext. 223.



Red-Tail by Mike Mayone

Long-tailed weasel. Photo: J. Cordulack



Just before closing on a July afternoon, Ted Gilman witnessed a Long-tailed weasel stealthfully leaping through the Susanna Chase Wildflower Meadow. It was thought to be in pursuit of young turkey poults that often feed among the many grasses and flowers.

Only when we ventured farther from the Center, did we realize how strong the storm was and how close it had come to the Kimberlin Nature Center.

Just 150 yards north of the center building, a distinct corridor of destruction traced the path of the tornado across the Audubon property from Riversville Road on the west to John Street on the east.

Along this corridor, there were many broken and uprooted trees, broken telephone poles and downed power lines, blocked trails and a large tree lying on top of one of the staff residence buildings.



Top: Falling trees caught others, causing them to bend and splinter.

Bottom: Vernal pool below Audubon's orchard. Inhabitants must now adjust to additional sunlight.

Trees twisted off mid-way up the trunk showed the sheer power of the tornado. The force of the winds uncovered weak points in trees where carpenter ant colonies had chewed out much of the inner core of the tree trunk. It also split trees at points where the main trunk had divided into two main branches creating a potential weak point where the branches separated.

The changes, brought about in these few seconds of powerful, spinning winds, may have many repercussions for the plant and animal life of the Audubon Center sanctuary.

Trees which had previously shaded the vernal pool by the orchard had been blown down or broken off leaving the pool much more exposed to the sun. This more exposed situation may make it impossible for the pool to retain water long enough to sustain growth of wood frog tadpoles or spotted salamander larvae in future years.

The new gaps in the tree canopy will allow more sunlight to enter the forest and may allow more sun-loving plants to grow in areas which had only forest plant species previous to the storm. As these plants change, the insects and other animal life attracted to them may change as well. Some small animals which thrive in the shade and dampness of the forest may retreat from these newly-created woodland openings.

Deer have been observed in the areas of the downed trees, perhaps taking advantage of the fresh foliage brought to the ground by the tornado.

Certain birds such as great crested flycatchers are attracted to openings in the forest. These new gaps in the forest may be attractive to them.

Squirrels often have regular pathways of branches which they use to navigate through the treetops. With many treetops removed, our local squirrels will have to develop new routes.

Trees which were homes for scarlet tanagers, flycatchers and vireos, when they stood tall, will now become horizontal homes for beetles, sowbugs, salamanders and other denizens of the forest floor as they are slowly recycled into the earth.



A large tree fell onto an Audubon staff residence. No one was injured.

Natural brush piles created by the fallen tree tops may attract the attention of birds such as wrens and sparrows which love dense tangled vegetation as places to find both food and cover.

Old friends are gone; the white oak above the root cellar in the orchard, which hosted many a migrating warbler, acorn-seeking blue jay, foraging white-breasted nuthatch and singing male scarlet tanager, no longer stands. Now that part of the sky is empty, awaiting the growth of a future tree.



The tornado took only a few moments to reduce large trees to ragged stumps.

In the coming months and years, we will trace the changes that take place as the natural inhabitants of our fields, forests, and vernal ponds adjust to the changed environment that took only seconds to occur in this storm.

Join us for walks this fall to survey the tornado corridor, appreciate the power of this storm, and search for the changes taking place in its wake.

Audubon Greenwich

Nature Store News

Fall is here and it's time to get your birdfeeders out for our feathered friends. After nesting season is finished, birds will begin to set up feeding flocks and stake out territories where they know a steady supply of food will be present throughout the fall and winter. By getting your feeders out before the cold sets in you are improving your chances of attracting and keeping more birds at your feeder. Be sure to clean and sanitize any feeders or birdbaths that have been stored for the summer with a mild bleach and hot water solution. Let the feeder thoroughly dry before putting the seed in. Our store carries a handy birdfeeder brush that can reach deep down into the feeder to remove the shell debris that may have built up over time. Make sure you check your seed supply so that you are ready for the fall season. Now is a good time to stock up on sunflower and nyjer seed, mixed seed blends and suet so that the birds will be well fed with a variety of foods. We carry a wide range of seeds to suit many kinds of birds including cardinals, chickadees, titmice, finches and nuthatches. Rather than keeping the seed you buy in its original bag try one of our heavy duty, airtight seed vaults that keeps the seed fresh and protects it from pests, critters and excessive moisture. It can also be used to store your pet's food.

Autumn brings our annual hawk watch so you will want to be armed with a quality pair of binoculars in order to identify the different types of raptors that pass over our Quaker Ridge hawk watch site. For birding, 8x or 10x binoculars are ideal and we always carry a variety of brands from compact binoculars to top of the line Swarovski optics. In celebration of hawk watch season we will be offering ALL optics at 15% off retail price. Our informative store staff are available seven days a week to

advise you on what binoculars best suit your needs. Come on in and try a pair – or two or three! If you need to brush up on your hawk identification skills or are new to the hobby be sure to pick up a helpful book such as *Hawks From Every Angle* by Jerry Liguori or *A Photographic Guide To North American Raptors* by Wheeler and Clark.

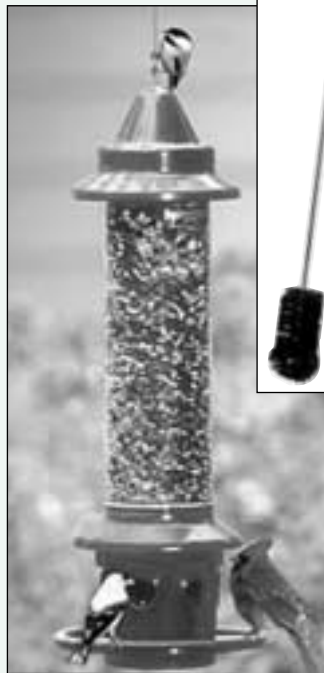
Not only are binoculars on sale but we are also having a back to school sale for the nature-loving child you may know. They can impress their friends with our animal and insect rulers, animal and bug eraser tops and assorted nature themed pencils.

While in the store be sure to check out our clearance shelves where you will find all sorts of bargain-priced goodies like embroidered pillows, writing paper, light switch covers and potpourri to name a few.

For lovers of fine nature-themed jewelry, take a peek in our display case where you will find stunning hand-crafted earrings, necklaces, and pendants from Connecticut artist Michael Michaud as well as hand-painted stud and dangling earrings by H.E. Eren.

A new line of our popular and unique Leaf Leather handbags and purses are now available and always look great during the fall season.

Enjoy the fall foliage on our property this autumn and don't forget to stop in the store for all your nature needs!



After nesting season, birds will stake out territories where they know a steady supply of food will be present throughout the colder months. The Nature Store has a large selection of feeders, including the popular "Squirrel Buster." We also carry a handy birdfeeder brush that can reach deep down into the feeder to remove shell debris which may have built up over time and can be unhealthy to your birds.

COUPON



**Audubon
GREENWICH**

Enjoy **20% OFF** Entire Purchase

Excludes Seed and Swarovski Optics (special pricing available). Coupon not valid on sale items.

THE NATURE STORE IS OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK FROM 9 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

FALL 2006

Natural History Notes

By *Ted Gilman, Education Specialist*

The riot of gold and violet color and the accompanying insect and spider activity to be found in autumn meadows of goldenrod and New England asters; raptors large and small, from golden eagle to kestrel, passing in review over Quaker Ridge, thrilling yet another season of hawk watchers witnessing this annual spectacle of flying skill and aerial drama; the multi-colored parade of fungi issuing forth from tree trunks, logs, and fallen leaves on the forest floor reminding us of Nature's endless cycles of reuse of life-giving nutrients; the sudden appearance of mixed flocks of white-throated, swamp, and field sparrows after a clear cold night, with winds from the north; Nature's abundant harvest of seeds and nuts awaiting careful investigation by birds, rodents, and the hikers of field and forest



trails; the first piping notes of an energetic winter wren in our local forest, announcing its arrival for another season of investigating the hidden insect and spider treasures to be found in tree stumps, fallen logs, and brush piles; the special golden glow in a grove of brilliant sugar maples, which not only reflects the October sunshine, but seems to flow from within the leaves themselves; the timeless feeling of wonder at the rise of the harvest moon over a landscape filled with the natural harvest and colors of the autumn season; the last, solitary sounds of a slow-tempoed katydid almost silenced by the growing cold of November; the first brisk snow flurry dusting flakes across roof, field, and jacket sleeve foretelling the snow-blanketed winter landscape to come.

♻️ PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER WITH VEGETABLE-BASED INKS. ♻️
PLEASE RECYCLE.


Audubon GREENWICH
613 Riversville Road
Greenwich, CT 06831

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
STAMFORD CT
PERMIT NO 102

Daily Hawk Watching
Until November 19

Dancing With Nature Dinner
Saturday, November 11

Christmas Bird Count
Sunday, December 17