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## Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge: West Pond Restoration Update

By Rob Bate

**The West Pond will be restored!** Three years after Hurricane Sandy, the National Park Service is set to release a plan that calls for repairing the breach in the berm of the West Pond at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge that was caused by the super storm.

The official restoration plan came online on October 6<sup>th</sup>. The introduction page and links to a PDF of the document and the comments page can be found at: <http://goo.gl/H0m6l7>. The comment period closes November 6<sup>th</sup>. There will be an Open House on October 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6 PM at the JBWR Visitors Center, with a presentation by the NPS to explain the plan and also field questions about the plan. Later, on October 29<sup>th</sup>, the Jamaica Bay Task Force will host a meeting (location to be determined) on the plan and other Jamaica Bay issues. Jen Nersesian, Director of Gateway NRA, and other NPS officials will be on hand at both of these meetings.

The plan calls for two "Action Plans", a third "Preferred Alternative" and a forth "No Action" plan. If all goes as expected following the 30 day comment period, the NPS will issue its Record of Decision and bidding and work will commence. The West Pond may actually be ready to again host migrating waterfowl by Fall of 2016. The two "Action Plans" include one merely calling for a simple bridge over the existing breach, and the second calling for a more substantial habitat restoration project—including a reconfiguration of the pond footprint. The Preferred Alternative, the one expected to pass through this process, calls for the filling of the breach itself, the installation of a pipe and valve to regulate water levels in the pond, the augmentation of the berms around the pond to raise their height to help resist storm surges and a fresh water supply either from a ground water well or from the municipal water system to help establish truly fresh water habitat. A second later phase of the Preferred Alternative calls for restoration of marsh habitat to increase storm resilience and wildlife diversity, the installation

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### The Brooklyn Bird Club

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**Production:** Janet Zinn

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of visitor amenities – paths, boardwalks and viewing blinds - and upland habitat restoration at Terrapin Point.

Though the decision to repair the West Pond seemed like a no brainer to birders— and we think it should have been done immediately following the breach occurring during Hurricane Sandy—it was by no means a foregone conclusion that restoration would ever take place. The general policy of the National Park Service, born of its stewardship of our great western parks like Yosemite and Yellowstone, is not to interfere in any natural processes. The NPS prefers to let trees lay where they fall and rivers find their own course and they prefer to keep from managing habitat from a predetermined vision. They were therefore reluctant to support the West Pond restoration and there was a good deal of talk of letting the pond revert to salt water marsh. The pond was, according to this point of view, an artificial installation in a natural habitat, having been created during the Robert Moses era and susceptible to future storms such as Sandy. Additionally, as we face the inevitability of rising sea levels due to climate change, the possibility of repeated and greater storms is a very real possibility making the maintenance of the West Pond problematic for the National Park Service.

A further sticking point in the restoration of the West Pond was that Gateway National Recreation Area was undergoing a strategic reorganization which culminated in the release, vetting and final Record of Decision of the Gateway General Management Plan. The West Pond, being part of Gateway, would need to be managed in accordance with the overall plan, a process completed in April of 2014. And, as if those impediments weren't enough, the National Park Service was in the process of choosing a new Director for Gateway NRA, so there was no one in place to even make definitive statements regarding the future of the West Pond. Like Hurricane Sandy, Gateway NRA was in the middle of its own super storm, an administrative one.

Birders throughout the region began to mobilize as soon as it became apparent that restoration of the West Pond was not going to be a priority for the NPS and that there was a very real possibility that the pond might never be restored. In September of 2013, a coalition began to take shape. Area bird clubs, environmental organizations, and interested individuals formed the Birders Coalition for Gateway to respond to the Draft

General Management Plan for Gateway and to advocate for the restoration of the West Pond. We spent many hours meeting together, strategizing, and meeting with park officials—Joshua Laird, Northeast Regional Director for the NPS, Susanne McCarthy, Interim Director for Gateway and then Jen Nersesian, Director of Gateway NRA—to voice our concerns and ideas about the West Pond and Gateway NRA in general.

We have many of our fellow birders to thank for the coalition effort to date, and nearly everyone helped in some way by writing letters, making calls and/or attending various meetings. But a few coalition members deserve a special thanks. Glenn Phillips, then Executive Director of NYC Audubon, mobilized himself and the NYCA staff to make a detailed and substantive response to the voluminous Draft General Management Plan for Gateway, a response that was endorsed by the Birders Coalition for Gateway. This action alone insured that there was a large group of motivated and knowledgeable people demanding that birds and habitat be at the forefront of any development in Gateway NRA. Andrew Baksh and Doug Futuyuma, both of the BCforG, designed a serious overall plan detailing what an ideal restoration could and should look like for the West Pond, one that includes fresh and saltwater marsh, protected fresh water and a range of public accessibility platforms for wildlife viewing.

Andrew created a petition at change.org calling for the restoration of the West Pond which garnered over 7,500 signatures. Harry Maas, President of NYC Audubon, hosted many of the BCforG meetings at NYCA headquarters and he, along with Susan Elbin, Director of Science and Conservation at NYCA, spent many hours keeping in touch with NPS administrators and arranging meetings for the BCforG. Senator Charles Schumer lent his endorsement and influence to the restoration process in no small part through our efforts and, more specifically, through communication with Kathryn Heintz, the new Executive Director of NYCA.

Jen Nersesian, Director of Gateway NRA, deserves a round of applause as well. Jen listened and understood the issues as we described the lack of fresh water habitat in the Jamaica Bay watershed and the vital need it serves for resident and migrating waterfowl and the many other endangered species dependent on the fresh water for their survival.

Stay tuned for further developments and please take the time to write a response to the plan. Follow the

Brooklyn Bird Club on Facebook for notices about times and dates for meetings and deadlines. We look forward to Goldeneyes and many other waterfowl roosting on a restored West Pond.

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## Jamaica Bay Annual Shorebird Festival—August 29, 2015

By Kathy Toomey

The air was steamy hot as Bambi and I walked up to the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Nature Center. It was early morning on the day of the annual Shorebird Festival. Attending this event was part of our effort this summer to become better at identifying shorebirds.

A small crowd was beginning to assemble. Most of the attendees were wearing serious boots and hats and carrying heavy scopes. Others wore shoes and shorts; one tall young woman had on a pair of Birkenstocks. I thought about my own questionable decision to wear a pair of old sneakers, rather than boots, for the mud. In the crowd, I spied some familiar faces, many of whom emerged from a hired bus that came from Manhattan. I recognized others from Brooklyn, Queens and elsewhere.



After coffee, doughnuts and a brief welcome, we were instructed to choose to join a hike to the West Pond or to the north or south ends of the East Pond. We opted to go to the north end of the East Pond.

As we emerged from the reeds and walked out onto the rich dark mud, the huge, bright expanse of the East Pond opened up before us. We joined a line of about thirty birders and set up our scopes, flies buzzing around us. Close by, we immediately saw two Stilt

Sandpipers in shallow water and some Semipalmated Sandpipers working the mud. Lloyd Spitalnik and Kevin Karlson were helping the less experienced among us to locate and identify various shorebirds. A black tern—new for me—flew by and then landed with another in the distance.

Two hours later, we returned to the nature center for presentations. Before going in, I scraped a thick layer of smelly mud off my sneakers. Once inside, Don Riepe spoke about Jamaica Bay issues. Dr. Susan Elbin and Debra Kriensky talked about NYC Audubon shorebird research. Lloyd Spitalnik did a shorebird identification workshop. Sign up sheets were passed around asking for volunteers to plant Spartina grass in the marsh and a loop holding tiny plastic rings for bird banding was also passed around for our examination.

After lunch, we took a second shorter hike, this time to the south end of the East Pond. Andrew Baksh helped us with IDs and was on a quest to relocate a Baird's Sandpiper he had seen earlier. No luck with that, but he did find several Western Sandpipers at my request.

When it was time to go back for the final presentation, Bambi and I lingered after the crowd had gone. It was peaceful, and there were so many birds for us to study. I had been familiar with the West Pond at Jamaica Bay, but I had always been intimidated about going to the East Pond, maybe because of the heat and the mud, and the difficulty of identifying shorebirds. Now I realized how beautiful it is there and how many interesting birds can be there to see.

Finally, we made our way back to the center, cleaned our shoes/boots, and caught the second half of Kevin Karlson's talk about *Birding by Impression*, his newest book. He stressed the importance of using shape to ID birds and to not just use color and pattern (as I am prone to do).

At the end, we left, somewhat sweaty, with the distinct aroma of marsh mud arising from my sneakers. We hadn't seen many rarities, but I had the chance to practice identifying common shorebirds. I had that satisfied feeling I get after a full day of birding, getting good looks at some new and interesting birds, and having shared that time with other, enthusiastic birders. And, I had learned the lesson to be sure to wear waterproof footwear the next time I am heading to a marsh.

# Sparks!

Josh Malbin

My first real job out of college was as an intern and then a fact-checker at *Audubon Magazine*. At the time I knew nothing about birding and didn't especially care; I went to work there because I did care about conservation and the environment. I was ignorant enough that when we ran a story about "bluebills" (a.k.a. scaup), I assumed that the duck with the blue bill in the picture the art department had placed must be the one the author was talking about, and thereby invited a spate of angry letters. It was a Ruddy Duck. After that, I had to check all photos with Kenn Kaufman.

We were allowed to take home the review copies of books the magazine was sent, and right as I was finishing my time there the first edition of the Sibley Guide was being released. I took the review copy. I moved back in with my parents in suburban Maryland while I went to graduate school, and when I walked the dog I carried a pair of compact binoculars I'd been given as a kid, along with that Sibley.

I think I've probably learned slower than most people who get involved in this hobby. I've been birding for 15 years and it's only in the last few that I've begun to feel like I've collected more than a beginner's level of knowledge. For a long time I didn't like waking up before noonish, and I was a freelancer so I could get away with it. That limited things. It also helped a lot when I finally learned songs and calls, which I got around to doing maybe three years ago. Now I trust my ears more than my eyes. Still, every time I start to feel like I know a little bit, I make some embarrassing misidentification in public or on Twitter.

It's also only in the last few years that I've come to know birders a little more, maybe because I'm finally waking up early now. We're a weird people who are always fighting with someone or other, if you believe our press. But Brooklyn birders are also the people who have made me feel a part of a community, which otherwise can be hard in New York.



# Road Scholar

By Eni and Vinny Falci

If your resources for birding trips are far from unlimited you might want to check out a birding trip with Road Scholar, a not-for-profit tour company specializing in "Adventures in Lifelong Learning." Vin and I have taken three birding trips with them: Cave Creek Canyon, Portal, Arizona; Chincoteague & Assateague Islands, Virginia; and Puerto Rico. None have disappointed.

The bird guides all work for local subcontractors and know the birds and area resources intimately. The most recent and best trip we did with them was to Puerto Rico at the beginning of December, 2014. Our guide, Cindy Hackney, is a veteran of Rico Rican birding and knows her bird calls and habitats. She was determined to get everyone on a bird even if they were new to birding. Not only was she herself a talented professional, but she literally brought in her network of local birders, who joined us on most of our outings, either as volunteers or paid assistants. On an average day, we had three experienced guides among less than 15 birders.

When we went looking for the Puerto Rican Nightjar, she enlisted Mike Morel and his son to help us get on the bird. He had been studying the bird in the Guanica Dry Forest and photographing it daily at its nest site. It was after nesting season, but the bird was still in the area. His son went tramping through the underbrush looking for signs of the bird. We got the bird on the other side of the stand he explored. It was sitting on an eye level branch just off the path. Usually the birds are on the ground but due to heavy rains in the evenings, including the night before, the bird was sleeping higher up. We all had great looks at the bird and even with my little camera, I got a great photo. If you Wikipedia Puerto Rican Nightjar the photos are Mike Morel's. Every time we went to a venue—whether it was Cabo Rojo on the coast or Maricao up in the mountains—we either had a friend volunteering like Mike and his family or a local paid guide.

Julio Salgado was our local guide the entire time we birded out of La Paguera, and he pre-scouted all the habitats on our itinerary. He is a young Puerto Rican environmentalist building up his own birding tour company, [juliosalgado@puertoricobirdingtrips.com](mailto:juliosalgado@puertoricobirdingtrips.com). Julio is an enthusiast ecologist advocating for the

habitats and birds of his island. He is involved in projects like restoring the Puerto Rican Parrot population.

There are 17 endemic species in Puerto Rico including the Puerto Rican Tody, Puerto Rican Emerald Hummingbird and the Puerto Rican Nightjar. The goal of the trip was to get as many endemics and the best of the rest including the red-eyed Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo.



Puerto Rican Tody © Janet Zinn

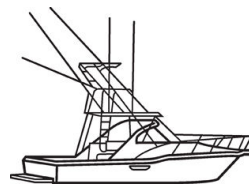
There are a lot of similarities between the birds in Puerto Rico and Cuba. They are one of three islands on about the same latitude with both the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean. The advantage to birding Puerto Rico over Cuba is the quality of the roads, ease of access, compact size of the island and quality of the accommodations and food.

Puerto Rico is so much more than just San Juan. The bulk of the trip was based out of La Paguera on the Caribbean side, just west of Ponce. La Paguera is an old fishing village used now mostly as a marina and is inside a coral reef with numerous Mangrove Islands in the protected bay. From this location we took day trips to Cabo Rojo, Maricao and Guanica. The endemic Yellow Shouldered Blackbird was regularly just down the road from our hotel. On a pre-dinner short walk clapper rails were observed performing their mating behavior in the wetland a few streets over from the hotel.

Road Scholar birding trips have a variety of accommodations, food and transportation. Virginia's trip took place out of a research station and we stayed in a college dormitory with shared baths. For the

Arizona trip we stayed in a funky "rustic" cowboy motel. Puerto Rico had the most upscale and scenic lodging: a hotel on the water in La Paguera. The transportation was the best in Puerto Rico as well. The bus had floor to ceiling windows so as you drove through the mountains you had panoramic views and the roads were well paved. The dusty dirt roads in Arizona were a problem for Vin. They advise you about boots and hats for the desert and the sun but they forget how the dryness and dust kill your sinuses. We highly recommend a nose gel if you are going to Arizona. Bring it with you because once you are in Portal, the nearest services are 50 miles away on dirt roads. The worst food we had was in Portal, Arizona. Great birds in the canyons of the Chiracahuas including the Elegant Trogon but the food was boring, redundant and dry. Portal's night skies and resident elf owl made up for the dining.

We got countless life birds on each of the trips from the Elegant Trogon to Magnificent Hummingbirds in Arizona to the adorable Puerto Rican Tody in Puerto Rico. These trips have not broken the bank and allowed us to explore new birding venues with the aid of local guides and in the company of like-minded birders.



### Pelagic Birding

By Bobbi Manian

Brooklynites wanting to see pelagic birds in NYS waters used to have to travel out to Freeport, Long Island for day and overnight trips. This changed last year when SeaLife Paulagics, operated by Paul Guris, established a relationship with a local charter fishing boat, Brooklyn VI, sailing out of Sheepshead Bay. Three trips have occurred so far, a day trip last April and two overnights this year, one in May and one in August. These trips head out to the deep waters off the continental shelf, looking for areas where warm and cold waters come together; these areas are often known for high fish concentrations.

Pelagic birds are birds that live all or most of their lives at sea and are rarely seen from shore. Unlike the colorful passerines we pursue throughout Prospect Park, pelagic birds are mostly shades of black and white. They include Albatrosses, Petrels, Storm-Petrels and Jaegers.

The boat's crew drips an oily 'chum' slick off the back of the boat; the chum attracts these birds, which have a highly developed sense of smell. When a good bird is spotted bigger pieces of chum are thrown out by the crew to try and entice the bird closer.

Recent trips have turned up rarities to the delight of all participants both veteran and new, including South-Polar Skua and Black-capped Petrel. You don't need to be an expert to go on a pelagic trip. In fact, the only way to start to build up a working knowledge of these species is to go out on the trips. You don't have to worry, Paul has a group of leaders on board to help spot and make sure all participants get to see the birds and tell you what to look for on a particular bird that makes it unique. Brooklynites Doug Gochfield, Shane Blodgett and Sean Sime are among the leaders so you are in good hands! Even an 'uneventful' trip is an enchanting experience for new participants (and likely the old-salts as well). Waking up (if you slept at all) in the pre-dawn light to the sight of Wilson's Storm-petrels dancing on the water as they feed in chum slick is a sight you will never forget.

To learn more about what to expect and how to prepare, visit <http://paulagics.com/>, then get ready to hit the high seas.

and provided the City with important knowledge about how trees contribute to the urban environment.

Training is easy. The Parks Department requires a brief online training and orientation, after which volunteers can sign up for an in-person training event where they will begin to map trees in a designated area. Once the training event is completed, volunteers can sign up for one of the many mapping events across Brooklyn and the other boroughs. Volunteers can even work on their own schedules and reserve blocks that they can map independently.

Many Brooklyn community groups are involved in the effort including the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy, the Gowanus Canal Conservancy, the Sunset Park Block Association and the Prospect Park Alliance.

More information is available at <http://www.nycgovparks.org/trees/treescount>.

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**116th Christmas Bird Count - Save the Date!**  
**Saturday, December 19th**

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a great annual winter event that champions citizen science. The CBC started in 1909 as a protest against the "holiday side hunts" for the largest kill by hunters. Ornithologist Frank K. Chapman organized the CBC with twenty-seven of his friends and volunteers to count birds and in doing so, the event garnered much media attention. Twenty-five Christmas Bird Counts were held that day, tallying 90 species.

Since then, the CBC has become a widely loved birding event that recruits over tens of thousands of birders of all skill levels. Birders count birds in all sorts of weather, and their results provide a critical collection of sightings for the benefit of science.

Sign up to join a team, spend a day birding with fellow club members, then come hear the tally results at the pot-luck dinner that evening.

**Teams Organizer:** Bobbi Manian [roberta.manian@gmail.com](mailto:roberta.manian@gmail.com)  
**Dinner/Count Coordinator:** Heidi Nanz [heidi.steiner@verizon.net](mailto:heidi.steiner@verizon.net) or call before 8 pm 718-369-2116



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**TreesCount! 2015**  
*By Ann Murray*

The NYC Parks Department is making an effort to map and catalogue every street tree on every block in New York City. Armed with measuring wheels, tape measures and tablets loaded with special software, teams of volunteers go out to every neighborhood throughout the boroughs in an attempt to get an accurate picture of the number, type and health of the many street trees in the City.

The effort is a part of MillionTreesNYC, an initiative that has already planted more than 900,000 trees in the five boroughs of New York, including 200,000 street trees. Trees Count volunteers are needed to monitor the condition of all of the street trees and to help determine where care is needed. Counting the street trees can also alert the Parks Department to areas where dead trees can be removed and new trees put in their place. Past tree counts have resulted in the creation of a block pruning tree maintenance program

## FALL/Winter 2015 Schedule

### Information and Registration

No registration is required for Prospect Park or Green-Wood Cemetery trips. For all other trips, advance registration is required; exact location and time of meeting will be provided at time of registration. Car pool fees are required for some trips and should be paid directly to your driver.

In noting the need to make trip registrations more manageable and fair, the BBC council has imposed these guidelines:

- With the exception of Prospect Park and Green-wood Cemetery trips, a TWO-WEEK registration period will precede all trips.
- Club members will be given first-priority for all trips except Prospect and Green-wood Cemetery. Nonmembers and guests are welcome on BBC trips but only if there is available space at the end of the registration period. Drivers, whether members or not, will normally have priority over non-drivers. Full weekend (overnight) trips are reserved for members only.
- Children 14 years of age or younger are welcome on trips but must be accompanied by an adult guardian.
- Some trips have limited enrollment, at the discretion of the trip leader. So register early! In addition, most car trips require lunch, water, appropriate clothes for seasonal weather, and all the essentials you require for day trips.
- Please call registrars as early as possible within the registration period, and before 9 p.m. **Please be sure to leave your phone number(s) so that we may contact you in the event of a schedule change.**
- Status changes of a trip due to inclement weather will be posted on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BrooklynBirdClub> and also on Peter Dorosh's blog: <http://prospect sightings.blogspot.com/> Please check before leaving for the trip if the weather looks questionable.

We hope these guidelines will facilitate the registration process in the fairest possible way.

The registrar and information source for each trip is listed at the end of the trip description.

**Prospect Park Bird 2-hour Sunday Walks:** In addition to the trips listed below, the first Sunday of every month the Brooklyn Bird Club participates in the Prospect Park Audubon Center's "First Sunday" two-hour walks. All walks leave from the Prospect Park Audubon Center at the Boathouse at 8 a.m. and are led by Michele Dreger and/or Eni and Vinnie Falci (10 a.m. in January and February; check <http://www.prospectpark.org/calendar> to confirm times.)



**Just a few Fall 2015 Prospect Park Walks left!**

No registration is required for these weekly walks in Prospect Park during migration season. (**Note:** due to possible scheduling conflicts, leader substitutions may be made for some dates.)

**TUESDAY: Oct 20th**

Leader: Rob Bate or Bobbi Manian. Meet at Bartel Pritchard Square park entrance at **7:30** a.m.

**THURSDAY: Oct 15th**

Leader: Tom Stephenson. Meet at the Stranahan Statue, Grand Army Plaza, at **7:15** a.m.

**SATURDAY: Oct 17th**

Leader: Dennis Hrehowsik. Meet at Ocean/Parkside Avenues "The Pergola" at **7:15** a.m.


**Registration Period:** October 24th - October 29th

 **Sunday, October 18th , Marine Park Sparrows**

**Leader:** Sean Zimmer  
**Focus:** Fall migrants peak of sparrows. Raptors, late season warblers, marsh and water birds.  
**Car fee:** \$10.00 (or public transportation)  
**Registrar:** Kathy Toomey email kathleentoomey@gmail.com  
**Registration Period:** Oct 6th - Oct 15th

 **Sunday, November 8th: Fresh Kills Park and Staten Island Locales**

**Leader:** Seth Wollney  
**Focus:** sparrows, raptors, early winter species  
**Car Fee:** \$22.00  
**Registrar:** Peter Dorosh, Prosbird@aol.com or text only cell 347-622-3559  
**Registration Period:** October 31st - November 5th  
**Note:** Fresh Kills Park section partly opened to the public this past summer. Site profile <http://freshkillspark.org/>

 **October 23rd - 25th Weekends: Autumn in New Jersey's northern Highlands (Members only, limit 12)**

**Leader:** Peter Dorosh  
**Focus:** Fall migrants various locations, including two hawk watches; primarily hawks and sparrows, open space species.  
**Car fee:** \$120 .00  
**Registrar:** Peter Dorosh Prosbird@aol.com (preferred) or 347-622-3559 text  
**Registration Period:** June 1st - Oct 11th

 **Saturday, November 14th: "BQ Wildcard"**

**Leaders:** Bobbi Manian and Dennis Hrehowsik  
**Focus:** the latest Rare Bird Alert reports and listserve postings for quality birds in Brooklyn & /or Queens  
**Car Fee:** \$12.00  
**Registrar:** Dennis Hrehowsik deepseagangster@gmail.com  
**Registration Period:** November 7th - November 12th

 **Saturday, October 31st: Floyd Bennett Field Preserve**

**Leaders:** Tom Stephenson and Heydi Lopes  
**Focus:** sparrows, raptors, early winter species  
**Car Fee:** \$10.00  
**Registrar:** Bobbi Manian roberta.manian@gmail.com

 **Saturday, November 21st: Hiking the Long Island Greenbelt: Heckscher State Park and Bayard Arboretum**

**Leader:** Peter Dorosh  
**Focus:** waterfowl, winter species, raptors, rarity potential



**Registrar:** Peter Dorosh Prosbird@aol.com or text only cell # 347-622-3559

**Registration Period:** November 14th - November 19th

**Note:** This is a Long Island Railroad trip. The registrar will inform participants of the train departure time from the Atlantic Ave terminal. There is extensive walking, likely 5 plus miles. Wear comfortable shoes or light hikers; bring lunch and water. Site profile <http://www.ligreenbelt.org/>

 **Sunday, December 6th: Prospect Park**

**Leader:** Dennis Hrehowsik

**Focus:** winter migrants, waterfowl, ducks, and raptors

**No registration necessary.** Meet at 8:00 am at the "Pergola ," Ocean and Parkside Avenues park entrance <http://binged.it/1UiffD1> . Nearest train stop: "Q" local stop at Parkside Avenue; otherwise express "B" stops at Prospect Park, walk south along Ocean Avenue

 **Saturday, December 12th: Fort Tilden and Breezy Point Seabirds Walk**

**Leader:** Peter Dorosh

**Focus:** Hiking the Western Rockaway terminus for seabirds and dune species. 6 + miles - extensive walking.

**Registrar:** Peter Dorosh Prosbird@aol.com or cell # 347-622-3559 (text only)

**Registration Period:** December 5th - December 10th

**Meet:** 8 am at Flatbush Avenue's Target Store main entrance for the Q 35 bus terminus stop. This retail locale is accessed from the IRT train last stop "Flatbush Avenue/ Brooklyn College ". <http://web.mta.info/nyct/service/twoline.htm> . Walk south two blocks on Flatbush Avenue

 **Saturday, December 19th: 116th Christmas Bird Count**

<http://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count> The great annual winter event that champions citizen science, today the longest voluntary bird census on the North American continent. Started in 1909 as a protest against the "holiday side hunts" for the largest kill collection by hunters, ornithologist Frank K Chapman organized with twenty-seven of his friends and volunteers to count birds that garnered much media attention; twenty-five Christmas Bird Counts were held that day, tallying 90 species. Since then the Christmas Bird Census has become the best loved event

that encompasses over tens of thousands of birders of all skills counting birds in all sorts of weather in this critical data collection of sightings to the great benefit of science.

**Teams Organizer:** Bobbi Manian [roberta.manian@gmail.com](mailto:roberta.manian@gmail.com)

**Dinner/Count Coordinator:** Heidi Nanz [heidi.steiner@verizon.net](mailto:heidi.steiner@verizon.net) or call before 8 pm 718-369-2116

 **Saturday, January 2nd: Marathon Tour of Brooklyn's Southern Beaches**

**Leader:** Peter Dorosh

**Focus:** winter gulls, ducks, sea bird waterfowl, waterbirds; dune species.

**Registrar:** Peter Dorosh 347-622-3559 (text only) [prosbird@aol.com](mailto:prosbird@aol.com) (for more info)

**Meet:** 8:00 am at the Q train stop "Brighton Beach" off hours section benches by token booth <http://web.mta.info/nyct/service/qline.htm>

**Note:** The total hike will approach 9 miles, birding first Brighton Beach, Sheepshead Bay, little known Manhattan Beach, Plumb Beach, then in reverse back towards Coney Island, Norton Point and Coney Island Creek. This is an all day affair. We return to Stillwell Avenue train terminal. Dress warm or appropriate winter wear and proper footwear. We may stop in a diner or eatery on Emmons Ave.

 **Saturday, January 9th: Pelham Bay Park, Bronx**

**Leader:** Jack Rothman

**Focus:** Woods birding, winter species, raptors, coastal birding for ducks and other waterfowl a

**Car Fee:** \$20.00

**Registrar:** Janet Schumacher

[janets33@optonline.net](mailto:janets33@optonline.net) or 718-594-7480

**Registration Period:** January 2nd - January 7th

 **Sunday, January 17th: Prospect Park Winter Walk**

**Leader:** Ed Crowne

**Focus:** winter songbird species, ducks, raptors

**No registration necessary.** Meet at 8:30 am at park entrance Bartel Pritchard Square

<http://binged.it/1Uif5vl>. Nearest train is "F" line to Prospect Park stop

 **Saturday, January 23rd: Jones Beach, Long Island**

**Leader:** Mike Yuan

**Focus:** coastal species, waterbirds, sea ducks, raptors, dune passerines

**Car Fee:** \$22.00

**Registrar:** Mike Yuan mjyuan@gmail.com  
**Registration Period:** January 16th - January 21st

**Sunday, January 31st: Brooklyn's southwest coast**  
**Leader:** Dan Frazer cell # 347-355-1330, danielericfrazer@gmail.com (info)  
**Focus:** Coastal species, waterbirds, sea ducks, raptors  
**No registration necessary.** Meet: 8:30 am at TD Bank below the Bay Parkway train stop "D" line: <http://www.usbanklocations.com/td-bank-bensonhurst-branch.html>  
**Note:** the primary birding locations are Caesar's Bay locale and nearby BJ's retailer coast views, Calvert Vaux/Drier Offerman park area. A bus

runs towards Caesar's Bay from the train stop.

**Saturday February 13th: Bush Terminal Park**

**Leader:** Chris Laskowski cell #646-236-6167; celaskowski@yahoo.com  
**Focus:** a morning tour that may also include at leader's discretion and afterwards Greenwood Cemetery or otherwise another coastal location for waterbirds, gulls, and winter passerines. Site profile <http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/bush-terminal-park>  
**No registration necessary.** Meet: 9:00 am outside on the west corner above the R train stop "45th Street". (Brooklyn) <http://web.mta.info/nyct/service/rline.htm>

**BBC EVENING PROGRAMS**

**IMPORTANT!** Meeting locations are changing for 2015 due to construction at our usual venue, the Litchfield Villa. *Please note location for each individual meeting as they may change from month to month.*

Unless otherwise noted, all start at 7 p.m. For up-to- date information and directions go to: <http://www.brooklynbirdclub.org/meetings.htm>

**Tuesday, October 27th: Face to Face: The Mammals and Birds of Southern Africa**

**Presenter:** Tom Stephenson

**Location:** Brooklyn Public Library Central Branch at Grand Army Plaza

Southern Africa is home to a huge range of stunning and unique birds and mammals.

Tom Stephenson, author of The Warbler Guide book and app, will show pictures taken during his recent trip to Namibia and South Africa. Come see a range of birds including stunning Sunbirds, colorful rarities like Rockjumpers and Rockrunners, raptors, cranes, kingfishers, barbets, albatross, penguins, Spurfowl, Korhaan, Bustards, Bee-eaters, Mousebirds, Waxbills, Canaries, Scrub-robins, Robin-chats, Prinia, Camaroptera, Larks, Pipits, and, of course, warblers... (warning...they are mostly brown...!)

A full range of mammals will be also be on display, along with a scary, 2-minute-long recording Tom made of a lion's midnight sequence of territorial roars. There will also be photos of the some of the local pastoralists, panoramas of the oldest desert in the world, the Namib; and some of southern Africa's unique ecosystems, including the Fynbos, with the highest number of plant species on the planet.