

Fall 2019

Brooklyn Bird Club's

CLAPPER RAIL



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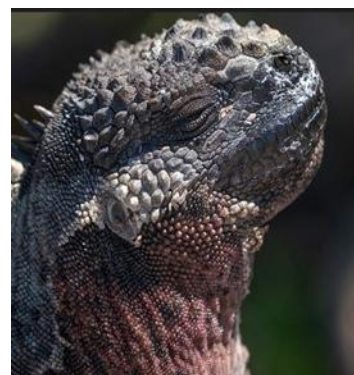


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Editor's Note

It's that time of year again—the feeders are going up in Prospect Park, the Christmas Bird Count is only a few weeks away, and winter is about to take hold (although not as strongly as it used to). I'd take a perfect spring day over any other season, but to me, and others I've spoken to over the years, there's something special about birding in the months ahead. It's quiet and contemplative, the landscapes are starker and empty, and birding with others on cold, winter days adds to the camaraderie of it all. The colors you see become all the more evocative—say a Northern Cardinal or Eastern Bluebird or Purple Finch framed against a snowy backdrop. It's a chance for discovery as well—which is one of my favorite aspects of birding—and that is a theme that comes out in several articles in this issue.

Speaking of camaraderie, remember to [sign up](#) for the Christmas Bird Count on December 14 and come to the compilation pot-luck dinner at the Boathouse that evening. It's one of the best days on the Brooklyn birding calendar. And as always, please write us with your story ideas, artwork, and photographs: newsletter@brooklynbirdclub.org.

Happy birding.

— Ryan Goldberg

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A Dump Of My Own

By Ryan Mandelbaum

Across Gerritsen Creek from Plumb Beach and a quarter mile down the Belt Parkway, an opening slopes down from the bike path, cutting a wide trail through the phragmites. During the hot summer months, the mosquitoes begin biting as soon as you step off the blacktop. A shopping cart inhabits another cutout off of the main clearing; its bright red handle and rust-free body implies that it might still have an owner. At the end, a storm drain beneath a pile of concrete blocks discharges through a grate into a fetid pond, littered with a tire, milk crates,

were shrieking, and I could make out a few peep-sized silhouettes standing in the pool. I figured that, since it was probably part of the Gateway National Recreation Area land, no one would yell at me for doing a little exploring. I looked up the name of the area online: “Willetts Hassock Island.”

Willetts Hassock was an island as late as the 1930s, bordered on the west by a waterway called the Plumb Beach Channel and on the east by Gerritsen Creek. But the Belt Parkway’s constructors dumped as much as 40 feet of landfill on top of it, destroying its sensitive

salt marshes. The fill also swallowed up potential archaeological sites; the Canarsie Indians may have used the shores of Gerritsen Creek as wampum production sites, according to a 1980 cultural resources survey conducted for a plan to build a sewage pump beneath the area.

Though still called an island by the United States Geological Survey maps, Willetts Hassock is now a hill on a peninsula with a highway running over it, and according to iNaturalist, home mainly to invasive plants.

But the wildlife on my first visit seemed to make do. Cedar Waxwings fluttered about a tree just off the bike path, while

Common Yellowthroats and Yellow Warblers sang from the thickets. When I arrived at the pool, something produced a familiar gurgle from the reeds, and a tiny, eyebrowed brown ball whizzed in front of me. Another one fluttered into the air behind me, singing a matching song. I’d only heard Marsh Wrens before, and never in Brooklyn—but now, I was watching a pair up close. I stood on an abandoned milk crate as one of them grasped onto a reed and sang.

I turned to observe the sandpipers, now with my binoculars in one hand so I could use the other to fend off the mosquito onslaught. I could tell that three of them were semipalmated, but one stood out: it was



Semipalmated Sandpiper. All photographs by Ryan Mandelbaum.

scrap metal, and a small, pink shoe.

On my first impression, the Willetts Hassock pool looked like utterly terrible wildlife habitat. But after a summer of visits, it became one of my favorite birding spots—my own patch.

I first visited the pool on a muggy, cloudy day in mid-June. After spending a half-hour watching a pair of Clapper Rails and their six black cotton ball babies at Plumb Beach, I decided to walk up the hill, climb over the fence onto the Belt Parkway bike path, and make the three-mile hike to Floyd Bennett Field. I’d never noticed the clearing while driving along the Belt, but this time, it seemed to beckon me in. Killdeer



slightly larger, with a bill just slightly too long and a little droopy. I snapped some pictures and texted them to friends, who suggested the bird might be a White-Rumped Sandpiper—a lifer. Photo processing later confirmed the suggestion, revealing the signature red patch beneath the bird's bill. I certainly hadn't expected to fill out an eBird rare bird comment after visiting this forgotten dump.

I continued visiting the spot whenever I visited Plumb Beach, and offered tips so others could visit the Marsh Wrens. The pair collected nesting material, continued singing, and maybe raised a wrenlet—I saw three marsh wrens during a visit in August. The Common Yellowthroats, Yellow Warblers, and Killdeer stuck around, too. I've yet to see anything rarer than that White-rumped Sandpiper, but the spot granted me private, up-close access to Snowy Egrets and Black-crowned Night Herons without having to bear Plumb Beach's rampant off-leash dogs and public nudity. Occasionally a tern would venture into the pool from the nearby beach looking for some life in the still water, and the local Ospreys would fly low overhead. During fall migration, if I sat still long enough, Semipalmated, Least, and Spotted Sandpipers would walk within feet

Snowy Egret (above) and Least Sandpipers (below).



of my concrete perch.

I've now seen at least 40 species of birds pass through the patch. A surprising number of butterflies visited the clearing, too, including buckeyes, monarchs, tiger swallowtails, painted ladies, cloudless sulphurs, eastern tailed-blues, and anglewings.

I know it's not really "my spot." I've seen other birders on the beach across the pool who walked up from the marina or Dead Horse Bay, and now others have submitted eBird lists for the new "Willetts Hassock, pool and marsh" hotspot I'd suggested. And I don't know whether I'll be able to bird it again next year; aggressive grasses have already started to fill the clearing, and I don't know if whoever cleared it in the first place plans to do so again.

I'm just glad that this past summer, even in this heavily-birded borough, I stumbled upon an under-birded patch. Sure, it was nearly impossible to get to, poor habitat, and full of smelly trash. But it had good birds. 🐦



Eastern Tailed-Blue (above) and Marsh Wren (below).



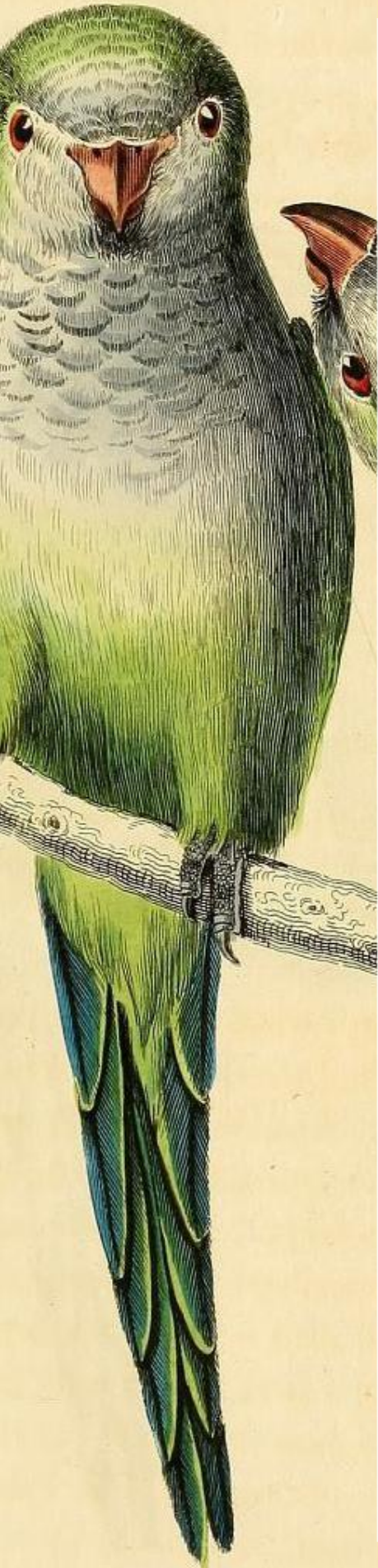
Photo Gallery: August Davidson-Onsgard





Northern Shoveler in Prospect Park (above) and Chipping Sparrow in Fort Greene Park (below).
Previous Page: Eastern Phoebe in Fort Greene Park. Next Page: Magnolia Warbler in Fort Greene Park.





Deleuze & Guattari: *Making love is not just become as one, or even two, but become as a hundred thousand.*

Raise your eyes along the spires of Green-Wood Cemetery or stand on the ball fields of Brooklyn College in Hopperesque light. Quaker Parrots will appear to you like the visions of St. Francis, lift the snatches of sound woven to make their voices and call to you from their nests, a nation of cheer trumpets and conch shells, a frenzied population of twitching, toes. They seduce us not simply with their tropical verve. Listen into the feathered shrubbery of their heat: they're chattering lines from Emma Lazarus; they're trading fours on "Salt Peanuts"; they're mourning their cousin, the Carolina Parrot, reduced to a flourish on ladies' headgear. Who flushed them from their ancestral skies of Argentina? What love sustained the awareness of their bodies—whether as chattel or deportees—such distance, and who speaks for this Diaspora heedless of empire's mundane cartography? If we ask why Brooklyn, we hear only our own reply: If not here, where? then tease a final query from our minds like thread from a lawn chair, parroting Hillel: And if not now, when?

Credit: Gregory Pardlo, "Deleuze & Guattari" from Digest. Copyright © 2014 by Gregory Pardlo. Reprinted with the permission of The Permissions Company, LLC on behalf of Four Way Books, www.fourwaybooks.com

The Point Reyes Moment

By Dan Smith

My wife, Ginny, reluctantly admits she's an SOB, spouse of birder. She has embraced my new passion, joining me on walks, accommodating another shelf of books and understanding my absence when she wakes up. She's always loved learning about the natural world, walking in the woods and marveling at the moss and wildlife. She appreciates that we can now put a name to any bird we might encounter.

What she holds most dear are her friendships. They are deep and faithful, having seen illnesses, marriages, births and deaths. Her friends know Ginny will be there for them for fun, comfort or sage advice. In August, we visited her friend Molly at her new place in the town of Point Reyes Station in northern California.

Molly grew up on a 480-acre ranch in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in Northern Colorado. We've shared hiking, camping and river trips with her over the years. I know she loves the outdoors but I didn't know how she felt about birding. Ginny participates enough for me to think I've converted her but I'm never sure of anyone else. I sent a message to Molly: "I'm now a birder. I have binoculars and I'm not afraid to use them."

"Bring it!" she wrote back.

Point Reyes Station is in Point Reyes National Seashore, a 71,000-acre expanse of grasslands, pine forests, marshes and coastline in Marin County, north of San Francisco. It has been a protected wilderness area since 1962. The diversity of avian life—in part because of its magnetic pull for wayward migrants—makes the area one of the top birding spots in the United States.

Molly worked for the Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT) and is mindful of our responsibilities to the land and the environment. MALT was established in 1980 by a group of environmentalists, farmers, and ranchers who wanted to protect the community from developers. The land owners sold their development rights to MALT

and kept ownership of the land. MALT then helps them with conservation planning and land management issues. The protected farmland is adjacent to the National Seashore.

Many of the Marin County dairy farms and ranches have stayed in the same family for generations. To survive they needed a different farming model. Instead of producing greater quantity they focused on quality. Their product is 100% source-verified, grass-fed beef and lamb. They can't compete on price but they deliver a product that's healthier, better tasting, and provides more humane treatment of the animals. They work with nature, not harnessing it. Much of the MALT protected ranch and farmland contain important marsh and riparian environments. As more farms work with MALT it creates wildlife corridors. The result is a preservation of their livelihoods, agricultural heritage, and wildlife habitat.

I hoped I could bring out the birder in Molly. The key would be binoculars. She has a pair from her dad that is lightweight and easy to pack but not so helpful in showing detail. I wanted to get her inexpensive 8x32s as a way of thanking her for putting us up and making sure we all had something decent to bird with. Ginny nixed that idea, citing Molly's attachment to her current pair.

After arriving Friday afternoon, Molly took us out



Red-shouldered Hawk on Drake's Beach Road.

Cover: View from Bear Valley trail. All photographs by Dan Smith.

to Point Reyes Beach South and Drake's Beach. She was excited to show us her territory and I was eager to check out the birds. The road to South Beach went through rolling grassland lined with fences to contain the cattle. Several Red-shouldered Hawks were perched on the electrical poles and Tule Elk, reintroduced to the seashore more than a century after their local extirpation, were a common

sight. We spotted finches and sparrows as we drove to the beach. Molly's interest grew as she noticed the difference between a soaring vulture and a hawk. The highlight was a Great Horned Owl at the Drake's

*Giacomini Wetlands.*

Beach parking lot.

Saturday the girls went to morning yoga class at Toby's Feed Barn and I had a chance to explore the Giacomini Restoration Project adjacent to Point Reyes Station. The National Park Service bought the land from the Giacomini family in 2000 and completed restoration work eight years later. Levies, drainage ditches and agricultural infrastructure were removed and within two years the number of waterfowl species grew by two-thirds. I walked through blackberry bushes heavy with fruit and dill weed in full bloom. The birds I was trying to identify as Lesser or American Goldfinches seemed to eye me suspiciously. A Pacific-slope Flycatcher made a brief appearance right at eye level.

We spent the afternoon hiking the Bear Valley trail, through a Douglas fir forest toward the inland visitor center. I was hoping to see California Quail and Acorn Woodpeckers. Ginny and Molly said quail were common which I felt totally ruined any chance I had of seeing one. I heard their contact calls in the brush along the trail but they were laying low in the afternoon heat. Finally one did make an appearance, in an unlikely spot—a dead branch atop a small tree.

Kinglets, White-breasted Nuthatch and Chestnut-backed Chickadee were the most common species we spotted. The trail ended at the Bear Valley Visitor Center, which has a permanent population of easy-to-find Acorn Woodpeckers.

The local paper, *Point Reyes Light*, had a listing for a bird walk the following morning, led by a park ranger from Limantour Beach. I suggested that this might be fun but wasn't sure whether Ginny and Molly would be up for it after a night of music at the Western Saloon. To my delight they were.

The morning was foggy and visibility low—not ideal conditions for birding. We found the ranger, Shannon Burke, in the parking lot. The path to the beach was narrow, forcing us to walk single file. I made an effort to stay close to the guide while Molly and Ginny hung back. The first bird we saw was a gull and I asked Shannon if it was a Western. Her response was terse: "I'm not doing gull identifications." I asked her if she was keeping an eBird list. "No," she replied.

While assembled in the parking lot, she had asked everybody to introduce themselves, where they came from and what birds they hoped to see. We were the only New Yorkers. I suspected Shannon thought I had

the potential to be pushy and wanted me to pull back.

We stopped at a little clearing and gathered around Shannon. I pointed out a Whimbrel on the mudflats and she seemed happy to set up her scope and point it out to the group. A couple Long-billed Curlews came along—it was low tide and this was becoming a productive spot. She explained the different ways whimbrels and curlews feed and how their beaks are slightly hinged to allow them to grasp worms in the mud. I made sure I was the last one to look through her scope.

We made our way behind a berm that paralleled the shore line until the trail turned toward the beach. There wasn't much activity as we walked along the sand. A bird walk leader's greatest fear—no birds. Shannon seemed relieved to come across a small group of Heermann's Gulls at the water's edge. It gave her a chance to tell us how Heermann's Gulls follow Brown Pelicans on their reverse migration, going north in the winter. I spotted a loon in the surf that I called a Red-throated. She set up the scope and corrected me. It was a Pacific Loon.

We came across a fenced-off Snowy Plover nesting site and spotted several of the little balls of puff. In a sheltered spot nearby we stopped for lunch. I sat next to Shannon and told her what a terrific walk it was so far. Molly joined us and had several questions of her own. She seemed to be gaining an appreciation of the local shorebirds. Shannon had a remarkable depth of knowledge of all the fauna at Point Reyes. She could speak about the Tiger beetles that skittered across the sand or the whale vertebra we found. She also led walks focused on dragonflies, spiders, and gulls.

"Gulls?" I asked, surprised.

"Yes, I decided to learn about gulls and spent four months learning how to identify them." I guess she saved the gull ID for another walk.

The Snowy Plover is an endangered species mainly because of habitat destruction. In an attempt to stabilize the dunes at Point Reyes, the Army Corp of Engineers once planted European beachgrass. Over the years, this stopped the natural dune processes and destroyed the swales behind the dunes where the plovers nested. The area we came across is part of a restoration project where the invasive grass has been replaced with native stock. The plovers nested there almost immediately with many successful fledglings. Simple things like posts were removed because they create a perch for plover predators.

Because the Snowy Plover site was closed it



Plover nesting area (above) and whale vertebrae (below) at Limantour Beach.



prevented us from doing a loop and we headed back the way we came in. Shannon set up her scope overlooking the salt marsh. While she was finding more birds for the group I was able to step back and see the whole ecosystem at work. On the left, the mudflats were disappearing under the incoming tide but there were still some curlews using their long beaks to dig out burrowing crustaceans. In front of us, wading dowitchers were probing for insect larvae and worms. On the right, in the now flooded creek, Red-necked Phalaropes were swimming and capturing brine flies in the marsh grass escaping the rising water. Barn and Cliff Swallows foraged just above the grasses in the cool air. Overhead, Turkey Vultures and Ospreys rode the thermals coming off the surrounding hills. This is the way it was before the Europeans arrived and manipulated the land for their ranches and farms. We made our way back to the parking lot having seen 24 bird species.

We drove back to Point Reyes Station for dinner. Most of the food consumed in Point Reyes is raised in the area. Restaurant menus include local purveyors, either the dairy, farm, ranch or vineyard. The night before in the Western Saloon, we spied a T-shirt reading "Pasture to Plate."

Since learning about the heavy and unregulated use of antibiotics in the American livestock industry,

I've avoided pork. I eat red meat only occasionally.

"I'd love a BLT," I said, "but I'm off pork."

"I know the ranches and farms around here from MALT," Molly said. "I'm alright with eating meat 'cause I'm supporting them by using their product."

I thought back to the previous evening at the beach, watching the cows head back to the barn and saw a community at a biological fulcrum. I ordered the BLT. It was delicious.

We didn't make it to all the recommended birding hot spots, like the Fish Docs, Abbott's Lagoon, Five Brooks or Palomarin. Perhaps we'll return in April for the annual Point Reyes Birding and Nature Festival. When I'm out with my bins I strive to be completely in the moment. Sometimes the moment is letting the spring migration sweep over you while surrounded by a flock of Yellow-rumped Warblers in Prospect Park. This trip the moment was sitting in a restaurant with Ginny and Molly knowing my part of the ecosystem, being so alive nothing gets past you.

I was right about Molly; she was a hidden birder, just not my idea of a birder. Her father's binoculars showed her everything she needed to see. Like the community around her, she used what's been passed down to make the world whole. 🐦

Thule clk beside Drake's Beach Road.



Photo Gallery: Marc Brawer





Northern Mockingbird (above) and Black-crowned Night Heron (below) in Prospect Park.
Previous Page: Short-billed Dowitcher at Plumb Beach.





Owls & Codes of Ethics

Holed Up. Pen and ink on paper by Martha Walker.

Ed. note: This was first [published](#) on eBird.

eBird now has [a formal system to protect highly imperiled Sensitive Species](#), and that policy and species list can be reviewed. However, this list only applies to clear cases where public information about a given species may place that species at risk. There are other cases where specific observations may be best to not report publicly on eBird, and these could apply

to any individual either because of private property or restricted site access concerns or because the bird may be harmed in some way.

How to report sensitive species to eBird

eBird has numerous output tools that display information about birds. Our goal is to promote the

exchange of information and our tools are designed to help people share data. With that in mind, one must consider whether it is appropriate to report specifics about birds that could be considered sensitive. eBirders must take it upon themselves to understand the situation locally and to use their best judgment, as the status of a species may change from place to place. For example, Long-eared Owls are particularly vulnerable to human disturbance in their day roosts across the Northeast, but in the West they can occupy more remote areas away from potential problems.

Here are a few ways to help protect sensitive species when reporting to eBird:

- Wait until the season is over and the sensitive species (e.g., owls) have left before reporting the birds to eBird. You can always go back and ‘edit’ your checklists later to include sensitive species after the birds have departed.
- Do not provide explicit coordinates or directions to sensitive species. When using the mapping tool to plot your location, use the “general area” instead of the exact grove of trees where the birds are. For instance, you may say that birds were seen at a state park, instead of listing the exact location within a state park.
- Delay reporting observations for a week to keep these reports off the “eBird Alerts.” These Alerts are mostly for rare birds, but please note that “Needs Alerts” also go out to individuals who have yet to see a species in a certain area. By delaying your reports for 8 days or more, your report may appear in eBird but not be “pushed” to birders via the Alerts.
- Finally, you can also hide observations in eBird after you have submitted a checklist. Go to manage my observations, click on the checklist you want to hide and scroll to the bottom. There is a link to hide the checklist. Please note that this keeps the species off the output (e.g., maps, bar charts etc.) but does not hide the fact that you went birding altogether (i.e., the date and location may show up on the Recent Checklists feed, but no one will be able to see the species you saw). Once the species is safe again, we always recommend “unhiding” your checklist.

Be a conscientious birder

It’s up to each and every individual birder to ensure that they behave themselves in the field. [The American Birding Association](#) published a [Birding Code of Ethics](#) that should be followed by all birders (see

below). eBird fully supports these recommendations and we are pleased that the great majority of birders follow this code. We encourage all birders to review these guidelines, and realize that they are established to help protect the birds we all love to watch! Moreover, take it upon yourself to understand the conservation concerns in your area, and be aware that your actions could impact birds negatively. Use bird conservation resources like local [Audubon](#) chapters and the [American Bird Conservancy](#) to learn more about the issues in your area. Be smart, be aware, and always keep the bird’s best interests in mind.

Owls

As birders, we all love to see owls—they are beautiful, fascinating, and generally hard to come by. An encounter with an owl can be among the most memorable of birding experiences. In many places, however, roosting owls are vulnerable to disturbance, particularly in areas where owls are scarce and people are abundant! When owls are flushed from their secretive roosting spots they are frequently “mobbed” by crows and jays, creating lots of commotion in the process, and drawing attention to species that rely on their cryptic plumage to help hide them from potential predators. If mobbing occurs frequently, the owls may abandon the roosting site. In the worst-case scenario, a larger predator like a Red-tailed Hawk or Great Horned Owl may be alerted to the presence of the smaller owls, and prey upon them. We use owls as an example of what might be considered a “sensitive species,” but these can change locally and regionally.

(Acknowledgments: Some of the content for this news item was graciously provided by Sharyn Magee of [Washington Crossing Audubon Society](#). Thanks Sharyn!)

ABA Code of Birding Ethics

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

- 1(a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.
- 1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming. Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily

birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area; keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1(c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1(d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.

2(a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.

2(b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

2(c) Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

3(a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.

3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

4(a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other

Snowy Take Off. Pen and ink with watercolor on paper by Martha Walker.



legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.

4(b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations. Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

4(c) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.

4(d) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and does not interfere with others using the same area.

4(e) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.

4(f) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g. no tape recorders allowed).

4(g) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations. 🐦



BBC Gallery



Top to bottom: Painted Bunting in Jamaica Bay and Great Black-backed Gull chasing a Brown Pelican over Coney Island Creek Park. Photographs by Charles Tang.
Yellow Warbler in Prospect Park. Photograph by Ann Feldman.
Left: *Mourning Warbler*. Pencil on paper by John Dean.



Prospect Park Happenings

By Stanley Greenberg

After a summer break, the Community Committee (ComCom) met in September to hear reports from Sue Donohue on general park issues and from Christian Zimmerman on capital projects.

As you may remember, the Parks Department budget was increased substantially this year, including money for a new class of rangers. We were told that four to six rangers will likely be stationed in the park, with two spending most of their time there. Nothing final yet, but looks promising.

We were told that there would be a pilot program to change the traffic signals to flashing yellow on the West Drive at Ninth Street.

Many capital projects are underway, and others are about to start:

Two Titmice. Ink on paper by Toni Simon.

Flatbush Avenue perimeter reconstruction is moving along, completion of the second phase soon.

New park entrances on Flatbush are already under construction; the smaller of the two will be done this fall, the larger one some time next year.

The Music Grove Pavilion work will begin this fall.

The Endale Arch, the oldest in the park, is being restored to its original design, including alternating walnut and pine interior.

I asked about all the furniture strewn about at the south end of the lake. Some of this can be taken away, but if a homeless person is using it there is a very involved procedure for removal. The Alliance works with other city agencies and dedicates a lot of resources to this issue. It's always a good idea to call 3-1-1 with complaints if you're so inclined.

No ComCom meetings were held in October. The next meeting was scheduled for November 20. 🐦

Help Advocate to Make New York Safer for Birds

By Molly Adams

Since joining NYC Audubon as their Advocacy and Outreach Manager in late February, the bulk of my efforts have been focused on campaigns for bird-safe glass legislation at the state and city level.

After extensive lobbying efforts from Audubon New York assisted by NYC Audubon, the Bird Friendly Buildings Council Act (A4055B/S25B) passed in the New York Senate and Assembly in mid-June. This bill, first introduced in 2011, would have created a council that would provide recommended guidelines for implementing bird-safe building design across the state. Despite its support and small cost, Gov. Andrew

Cuomo vetoed the bill on November 20.

New York City Audubon will work together with Audubon New York to make sure that next year's budget includes funding to reduce bird collisions so that this bill, or another more effective one, will pass in Albany. In the meantime, New York City has the chance to champion bird-friendly action by passing a bill that would result in more immediate change here.

In March, Council Member Rafael L. Espinal, Jr. and Council Speaker Corey Johnson introduced Int. 1482-2019, a bill that will require new buildings to use bird-safe design. After hundreds of postcards, letters, and meetings with city council members and staff, there are now 20 co-sponsors as of mid-November. A public hearing was held in September, where dozens testified in person for the bill, providing overwhelming support for this step forward.

We anticipate that the City Council will vote on this bill by the end of the year, and when it is called to the floor, it needs to win a majority of yes votes to pass. If your Council member doesn't already sponsor this bill, [please contact them to make sure it passes!](#) 🐦



Raven. Mixed media on paper by Sam Dean Lynn.

Birds in Art



Have you seen birds in art that you love? Send us your favorites at newsletter@brooklynbirdclub.org and we'll include them in the next issue.

This issue's submission is by Toni Simon, who writes:

The Garden of Earthly Delights triptych by Hieronymus Bosch is one of my favorite paintings and I believe one of the greatest paintings of all time. It was painted in the 1490s in The Netherlands and is now owned by the Prado museum of Spain. This detail is from the upper left-hand corner panel, Creation (The Garden of Eden). To me it represents the abundance of birds that once graced our planet. 🐦



Above: left panel of the triptych *The Garden of Earthly Delights*.
Left: painting detail from top left corner.
Oil painting by Hieronymus Bosch.

Upcoming BBC Programs

Please check the [BBC website](#) for updates.

The following programs begin at 7 P.M. and will be held at the Brooklyn Public Library, inside its Info Commons Classroom.

1.21.20

“The Galapagos: Home of Evolution,” presented by Bobbi Manian and Tom Stephenson

Six-hundred miles off the coast of mainland Ecuador sit a chain of volcanic islands that are home to a range of fascinating and unique animals. Because of its isolation, the Galapagos has served as a workshop in evolution. The slight variation of some of the birds from island to island triggered the imagination of Charles Darwin, which led him to develop his world-changing theory of evolution. For this talk, we'll discuss the historical significance of the islands and show lots of photos of the birds, reptiles and mammals that live there, including sharks, iguanas that swim, albatrosses, penguins, tree finches, cactus finches, ground finches and, of course, tortoises. Come and learn what it's like to visit this unique area.

Bobbi Manian is a retired engineer who took up birding as her second career eight years ago. Her main birding interest is county birding; she enjoys scouring all corners of Brooklyn, finding migrants, rarities and the occasional dead body. Bobbi is an active volunteer with the Brooklyn Bird Club. She leads the club's Tuesday migration walks in Prospect Park during spring and fall migration. She coordinates the BBC's birdathon in May. She is also the Brooklyn team organizer for the National Audubon's Christmas Bird Count, a bird census dating back 120 years. Bobbi recently tore herself away from Brooklyn to join Tom Stephenson on a Galapagos trip he was leading, enticed by the glamour of life on a yacht and the promise of Swallow-tailed and Lava Gulls.

Tom Stephenson's articles and photographs are in museums and many publications including *Birding*, *Birdwatcher's Digest*, *Handbook of the Birds of the World*, *Handbook of the Mammals of the World*, *Birds of Madagascar*, and *Guide to the Birds of SE Brazil*. He holds the U.S. record for a photo big day and is the co-author of *The Warbler Guide* book and app.



2.18.20



“How to Take Better Photos of Birds,” presented by Tom Stephenson

Birds make beautiful pictures. And photos can be useful in making tough IDs and also serve as memories of great experiences. But birds can be very difficult to photograph well.

This workshop covers everything you need to know to make great, sharp bird photos. We'll cover camera basics, how to set up for different conditions, advanced tips and tricks for the field; and also the importance of post-processing and how to make a good photo look professional.

Tom Stephenson's articles and photographs are in museums and many publications including Birding, Birdwatcher's Digest, Handbook of the Birds of the World, Handbook of the Mammals of the World, Birds of Madagascar, and Guide to the Birds of SE Brazil. He holds the U.S. record for a photo big day and is the co-author of The Warbler Guide book and app.

3.24.20

“The Ins and Outs of eBird,” presented by Sean Sime

Join Sean Sime, a Kings County eBird moderator, who will be telling us about how eBird works. More importantly, the direction of this meeting depends on you! Submit your eBird inquiries and questions here, or in writing at the January and February meetings. Your inquiries will be discussed and answered by Sean on this date.

Prospect Park
Nov 17, 2...

Likely species based on 5837 checklists in 20x20km area

INFREQUENT		
1	Cackling Goose	R
1	White-winged Dove	R
1	Parasitic Jaeger	R
1	American White Pelican	R
1	Eastern Screech-Owl	R
1	Ash-throated Flycatcher	R
1	Red Crossbill	R

UNREPORTED & NON-SPECIES TAXA		
1	Fulvous Whistling-Duck	R
1	Harlequin Duck	R
1	Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird	R
2	Sora	R