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Birders May Be Crazy

By Rob Bate

I grant that traveling 50 miles offshore in the middle of winter, bucking wet and freezing conditions as well as the ocean swells that can show up without notice on the open ocean, just to see birds, may not seem entirely sensible. Still, I highly recommend it.

The favorite prizes of a mid-winter “pelagic” bird trip are the Alcids: Dovekies, Common Murres, Thick-billed Murres and Razorbills. These birds are the Northern Hemisphere’s equivalent of the Southern Hemisphere’s penguins—black and white birds more adapted to flying underwater than above it. Alcids and penguins exhibit the process of co-evolution where separate avian lineages produce birds that are strikingly similar in form and function when they move into similar environmental niches—in this case offshore, cold water, underwater ocean habitat.



Dovkie © Rob Bate

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The Brooklyn Bird Club

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The Clapper Rail

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For those who love the magnificent Northern Gannet, which we generally only see from a distance from our local barrier beaches, a pelagic trip is a must. These great creatures can often be seen plunge-diving in the wake of the boat where the crew maintains a “chum slick” attracting many gulls as well as Gannets. You get to see these magnificent birds up close and personal and look right into their blue eyes.



Northern Gannet © Rob Bate

Gulls hover constantly above the ship’s stern waiting for choice chum morsels and providing great looks for all.



Adult Herring Gull (winter plumage) © Rob Bate

On our last trip on January 11th I spent a good deal of time studying the many Herring Gulls over the chum slick; we had many examples of all 4 major variants of this species from juvenile to the fully mature 4-year-old birds. Besides my new-found appreciation for these birds, we were treated to a few Black-legged

Kittiwakes, Iceland Gulls and Lesser Black-backed Gulls following the chum slick as well.

Paul Guris of “See Life Paulagics” (multi-punned company name) will now be running his New York pelagic trips out of Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn, so we BBC folks could conceivably take the subway to the boat. Paul has two itineraries—one starts at 6 am and goes around 25 miles off shore in January and February looking for the temperatures the Alcids and their sources of food prefer. The other is an overnight trip that leaves in the evening (you sleep on the boat) and arrives at the continental shelf at daybreak looking for Shearwaters, Petrels and Storm-petrels as well as any rarities that may show up. Overnight trips are generally in the fall and spring.

There are a number of seasickness prevention strategies from just eating saltines and peppermints to wearing a Scopolamine patch (available by prescription and a sure-fire seasickness preventer.) Paul has all the info you need about preparation along with his schedules at his website. <http://paulagics.com>

Do a pelagic trip at least once—you won’t regret it!

Floyd Bennett Field Continues to Amaze

By Bobbi Manian

Floyd Bennett Field has always been a local gem enjoyed by Brooklyn birders. Diverse habitat allows for waterfowl, shorebirds, passerines, raptors and owls. The Snowy Owl irruption at the end of 2013 saw a sharp increase in the number of local birders who made the trek down to the southern end of Flatbush Ave. Anyone traveling by mass transit, who chased the Snowy Owl on the day of its first sighting, knows the heart-breaking pain of the B41/Q35 transfer!

2014 continued to amaze...

In mid-November, a visiting birder from Manhattan spotted a Kingbird that turned out to be an extremely rare Cassin’s Kingbird. Extensive searches in the days following this find turned up nothing until the following Saturday when local birder Klemens Gasser (recently returned to birding after a 6-month hiatus and unaware of the Cassin’s manhunt) spotted a possible Western Kingbird and tweeted it out. Several

local birders immediately connected the dots and requested he get photos quickly, while racing over themselves. Luckily, several birders capable of making the positive ID were already in other parts of Floyd and the ID was quickly confirmed. Birders raced to the now famous Community Gardens. The bird continued for over 6 weeks and birders from all over the country drove or flew to NYC to see this mega rare visitor. The bird was last seen on Jan 5th, after which a sharp drop in temperature occurred. With any luck, our visitor sensed the changes coming and headed home!



Cassin's Kingbird © Klemens Gasser

Upping the wow factor on November 30th, regular FBF birder Heydi Lopes turned up a LeConte's Sparrow in the brush behind the ball fields at the end of Archery Road. Word spread quickly and for the next 36 hours over 35 metro area birders were treated to great views of this usually skulky bird. By Tuesday, December 2nd, the bird was gone, but it left a lasting impression on those who were able to get to FBF.



LeConte's Sparrow © Bobbi Manian

Also this fall a regular, but frustratingly elusive, Lapland Longspur was seen by a lucky few, mixed in with Horned Larks on the Cricket Field nearby Aviator Sports.

While there has not been another mass irruption of Snowy Owls this year, a handful of birders have seen a lone Snowy along the runways this winter again.

As more amazing birds are found, hopefully more birders will get out there, and continue the trend. See the Trips section for upcoming April trip to FBF.

Brooklyn's New Bush Terminal Pier Park

by Peter Dorosh

<http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/bush-terminal-park>

A new waterfront park in Brooklyn is likely the first public access to the extensive industrial Bush Terminal coastline in over a century. Opening this past mid-November, Bush Terminal Pier Park, at 43rd Street and 1st Avenue in Sunset Park, is fast becoming a birder's dream. Already recording a few rare bird species in its very young history, the park offers panoramic views of the lower New York harbor and provides coastal safe haven and a calm harbor for a diverse number of winter species, with waterfowl the primary beneficiaries. The new park's future as a year round birding spot looks promising as this park grows new habitats.

Eager to see this new park, in early December of 2014 Mary Eyster and I went exploring. Right off the bat, Mary found a rare drake Eurasian Wigeon by the dilapidated piers near the park entrance. (This Eurasian Wigeon stayed for several more weeks and was successfully recorded on the Kings County Christmas Bird Count on December 20th.) What followed that day was easily ten species of ducks, including a sizable raft of uncommon Lesser Scaup mingling among abundant Bufflehead ducks. We also recorded American Wigeon, Greater Scaup, Gadwall, Red-breasted Merganser, American Black Duck, Hooded Merganser, Northern Shoveler and Ruddy Duck. Aside from ducks, we also observed Killdeer, American Kestrels, Great Cormorants, Cooper's Hawk and Merlin as well as the usual common species. A variety of other species have been reported by birders visiting the new waterfront park, such as Peregrine

Falcon, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-throated Loon and some rare gulls.

This park appears to be a winter gull species gathering site, and two outstanding gulls appeared in December—the rare Lesser Black-backed Gull and even rarer Glaucous Gull were seen. With the perfectly designed rock jetty impoundments that vary water levels based on the tides, and with the nearby exposed piers and old man-made water structures, gulls will feast on this site, particularly during low tides. It is exciting to know that anything rare can appear and will do so in the foreseeable future.

Park planning began close to a decade ago by the city, initiated mainly by former Mayor Michael Bloomberg's PlaNYC environmental program (<http://www.nyc.gov/html/planyc/html/home/home.shtml>) that emphasized a park accessible within ten minutes walking distance of every NYC resident. Acknowledging the dearth of parks in the Sunset Park section of Brooklyn, the idea of a waterfront park that would include athletic fields, a nature center and green living space for local neighborhood residents, Bush Terminal Pier Park was born.

Bush Terminal Pier Park © Peter Dorosh



When one walks through the 43rd Street chain link entrance at 1st Avenue, the visitor sees industrial and abandoned buildings all around the new park, including feral cats at the street entrance. In a unique arrangement, the park's access runs through private property of the manufacturing entities, a sort of an easement or negotiated byway to the new park. The park opens and closes based on the manufacturing corporations' operations, opening daily at 8 am and closing at 4 pm. The park includes pedestrian and multipath bike lanes, which are well marked, protected by several bollards, and pass by the Irving Bush building headquarters with the founder's prominent statue. To the left of the headquarters is the hard to miss park entrance.

After entering the park's steel-gated entrance, one is greeted by a walkway with a modern railing that stands between the visitor and a large cove. One then comes upon a long concrete rock-encased pier, built for the purpose of enclosing the rock boulder impoundments, which offers generous public viewing of the surrounding area. There's a grassy marsh in one corner—a potential site for rails perhaps—and beyond this safe harbor feature is the prominent hillside with its sparse tree grove. On the south side of this hill or mound that borders the sports fields, an adjoining second concrete path runs along the south cove, where rafts of ducks find more safe haven from windy, turbulent waves. It's a great setup: a park that is deeply satisfying and has a very promising future.

My part in the park planning effort was important if minor. My friend Bart Chezar, an environmental activist behind the Osprey nesting platform project featured in a past Clapper rail newsletter, asked for my advice regarding the nest location at this park. Looking to keep the nest away from people, I suggested the nest platform be placed out in the water and at a safe distance from the concrete pier terminus at the north cove. It is our hope that an osprey will find this site enticing, given the growing population of ospreys throughout the city.

I hope to continue to support the park by adding native plantings to the sparse habitat of the park. Additional native plantings will attract a greater diversity of land-based

songbirds and as well insect life for well-rounded wildlife diversity throughout the year. With native shrubs, oaks, grasses and wildflowers filling in the still open areas, one can hope for a very promising future for this exciting new park—not only for birders but also for the general public and young people. Schools and urban youth could benefit immensely from park visits, helping to develop a richer nature-oriented society and enjoyment of a well-deserved green space in Sunset Park of Brooklyn.

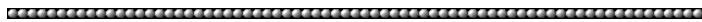
With its surprising birding record in less than its two months of its inauguration, Bush Terminal Pier Park has a very bright future. Birders can only wonder what they have been missing all this time when the coastline was restricted to the public for the past century.

Bird species history

<http://ebird.org/ebird/hotspot/L3151880>

Public access and notes: take the R train to the 45th Street stop. Walk approximately 5 blocks south to 1st Avenue to the 43rd Street entrance. Park opens at 8 am, closes 4 pm daily. Check the NYC parks website link above. If by car, park anywhere along 1st avenue, check parking regulations, particularly during the busier weekdays. There are restrooms at this park.

For more information, email us at info@brooklynbirdclub.org. Also nearby is the Army Terminal Pier 4 at 59th street, to the right before the Army Terminal Gate; pier 4 also offers excellent waterfowl and gull species viewing.



Sparks!

Bobbi Manian

In the fall of 2011, I was recently ‘retired’ from the 9-5 world, and looking to spend more time outdoors. I liked photography and nature and had started spending more time at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and Prospect Park. I googled “free activity prospect park” and “Introduction to Birdwatching” popped up. That sounded good. I had a pair of ancient 7x binoculars and I thought, “why not?”.

So that Saturday, I headed to the noon meet-up at the Audubon Center. Prior to this, I only knew the park for summertime concerts and powerwalking on the main ring road. From the moment Michele Dreger led the group out from Audubon I felt like I had entered an enchanted world full of mysterious-sounding names

and places. We walked along the Lullwater, past the Rustic-Arbor, into the Midwood, along dirt paths and chip trails. Michele and crew magically conjured up woodpeckers (there’s more than one kind!?!), titmice and chickadees. Vinny pointed out the resident Raccoon sleeping in his hollowed out tree trunk. Eni knew all the trees and plants and what birds fed where. After the first hour, I remember thinking, “don’t get separated from the group, you might never find your way out.” This was a group dynamic to getting everyone on the bird. I got in synch with the lingo: “three o’clock,” “in the deciduous tree,” and “flying left.” Anytime a person spotted a bird Michele always congratulated them.

What really sealed the deal for me was the following weekend. As I approached the Audubon Center, I saw a cute black and blue bird on Breeze Hill and managed to get a few fuzzy pictures w/ my point-and-shoot camera. When I showed them to Michele as the group was assembling, she could have said “oh yes, that’s a Black-throated Blue warbler, we’ll be seeing many of them today on our walk.” But instead she said, “that’s a GREAT bird! Come on everyone, we’re going to start on Breeze Hill, this girl saw a Black-throated Blue a few minutes ago, let’s go get it!!!”

Of course that was just the beginning. People told me about the Brooklyn Bird Club and their Fall Migration walks. My first Tom Stephenson walk was the day he found a super-rare Fall Prothonotary Warbler. This was a whole new level of birding! Tom sent a text to someone named Peter, and within minutes, grown men in business suits (!!) were hurrying down to Pink Beach on the Peninsula to get a look. The smiles on everyone’s faces are something I will never forget. For me it was just a yellow blob, but I realized there was so much more to it. Tom insisted I look at the bird through his Zeiss Victor FL 10x42 bins and Vinny decided to tease me “don’t drop them, they are worth more than all the rest of ours put together.” So of course my hands started shaking and I pretended to see the bird and quickly returned them!

I shortly found out who the mysterious Peter was. As I started spending more time in the park on my own, I got to know him as well as the other weekday regulars. Peter’s passion for birding and encouragement of new birders is legendary. I remember him stopping his work truck to ask me what I was looking at. In my mind it was a mysterious warbler with a strong eye-ringing. He took a look and kindly informed me it was a

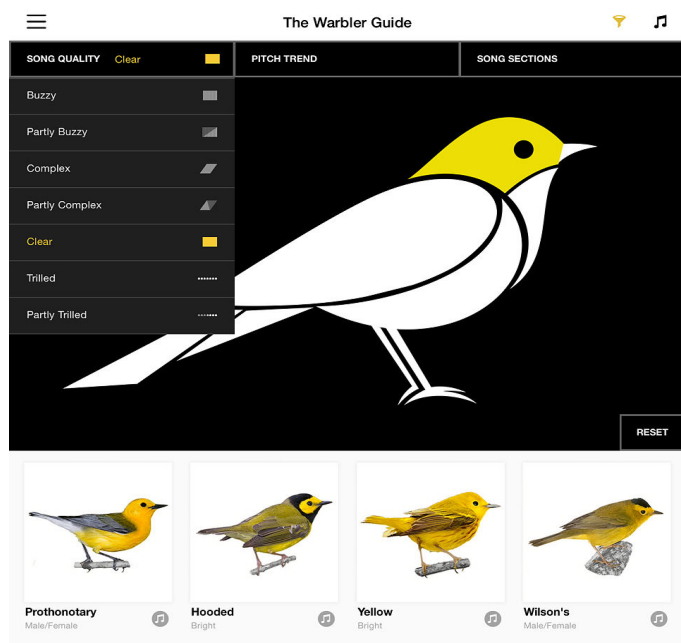
Ruby-crowned kinglet, but “make sure to do an e-Bird list and send it to me.” I still remember the thrill the first time Peter posted one of my photos on his blog. It was a point-and-shoot capture of a female Hooded Warbler and Peter called it “terrific.”

After that first Fall I was hooked. Winter birding introduced waterfowl and opened up new locations such as JBWR, FBF and Marine Park. By the time Spring Migration rolled around my head almost exploded when I realized the warblers also sang!

Warbler Guide App

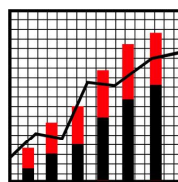
<http://tinyurl.com/warblerapp>

The Brooklyn Bird Club congratulates Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle on the release of the Warbler Guide App for iPhone and iPad. The app includes the content we are already familiar with from the book plus great new interactive features. The App allows you to view and rotate 3-D images of the birds, so you can match the view you are seeing in the field. Comparison Species is also interactive now. You can scroll through easily confused species, changing view angles with a tap. You can also compare species in 3-D mode, rotating both birds simultaneously. A filter ID feature allows you to fill in as much information about the bird as you can, the color of various body parts, wing-bars, song quality, and a filtered list of candidates is quickly whittled down.



You can see video examples of 3-D modeling, Interactive Comparisons, and Filtering at The Warbler Guide's website:

<http://www.thewarblerguide.com/app>



December 20, 2014, Brooklyn Christmas Bird Census Results (Count Circle “NYBR”)

By Bobbi Manian

Over 100 participants on 15 teams (covering 11 territories) participated in this year's Brooklyn Christmas Bird Census. Teams surveyed Brooklyn's many and varied parks, preserves, and coastal habitats under an overcast but dry day. All told, 124 bird species were recorded in the Kings County count circle “NYBR” including 99 regular, 19 irregular and 6 rare species. A total of 42,314 birds were seen overall, and for the first time ever Spring Creek beat Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge for the most species recorded at 63. Spring Creek was followed closely by Floyd Bennett Field at 60, Marine Park at 59, and JBWR at 58.

The 2014 worst misses included Canvasback, Bonaparte's Gull, Snow Bunting and Common Grackle, all of which have been seen every year for the past 10 years. Other noticeably absent birds were Wood Duck, Rusty Blackbird, Ring-necked Duck, Great Egret, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Ruddy Turnstone, Yellow-breasted Chat and Razorbill, all of which have been seen in at least 5 of the past 10 years.

Of particular note, Brooklyn's celebrity Cassin's Kingbird, who had been gracing Floyd Bennett Field's Community Gardens since mid-November, was a NO SHOW on Count Day. It was seen on the days before and after the Christmas Count and so it did count for Count Week.

Notable irregulars this year were Eurasian Wigeon, Common Eider, Common Merganser, Red-shouldered Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Clapper Rail, Wilson's Snipe, Barn Owl, Great Horned Owl, Snowy Owl, Short-eared Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Fish Crow, Tree Swallow, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Common Yellowthroat, Seaside Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, and Pine Siskin.

Rarities this year comprised 2 Eastern Phoebes, 2 Purple Finches and a Clay-colored Sparrow in Prospect

Park, a Common Raven at Green-wood Cemetery, a Vesper Sparrow at Breezy Point and 2 Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows at Marine Park.

We wish to thank our host venue, Prospect Park Alliance's Audubon Center and its director Maria Carrasco, and her staff, especially Facilities Manager Kenny Lyons and Tanya Dupree, who assisted and helped our dinner committee. Thanks go to Rick Cech, our head compiler, and Paul Keim, who assisted with the calling out of species; to Mary Eyster for her excellent organization of the count teams; to Heidi Steiner-Nanz, the dinner coordinator and her volunteers for the well organized setup and preparations; and most importantly, to our many citizen scientist birders who went out into the fields and counted!

And last, for the complete spreadsheet of the regions and species seen in each region, go to the below links for the spreadsheet totals and breakdowns or to the Prospect Park Sightings blog link on the BBC website. Note, below the links, the legend used to designate the regions.

Regional NYBR Count circle complete data is available here:

1. Historic Results by Rarity By Year

<http://tinyurl.com/nerl638>

2. 2014 Highlights by Territory

<http://tinyurl.com/opb3v9v>

3. Species Total Counts by Territory By Year since 1981

<http://tinyurl.com/p4j6caq>

4. 2014 Count Annual Report (includes Territories and Species Details)

<http://tinyurl.com/px9o6sa>

5. 2014 Worst Misses

<http://tinyurl.com/okoyl93>

NS = North Shore

PP = Prospect Park

GW=Greenwood Cemetery

OH= Owls Head

MP= Marine Park

FB=Floyd Bennett

BB= Bergen Beach

SC =Spring Creek

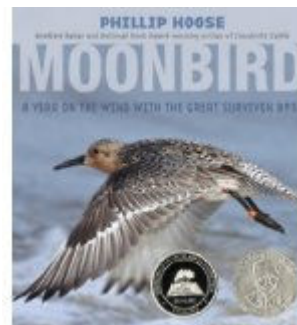
JB =Jamaica Bay

RP =Riis Park

BP=Breezy Point

For more about the Christmas Count's objectives and history, visit

<http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count>



Do the Reading: *Moonbird* by Phillip Hoose

Reviewed by Tracy Meade

The wonderful and important *Moonbird, A Year on the Wind with the Great Survivor B95*, introduces the

reader to the book's protagonist with sentences that immediately reveal Hoose's admiration for the bird: "Meet B95, one of the world's premier athletes. Weighing a mere four ounces, he's flown more than 325,000 miles in his life--the distance to the moon and nearly halfway back" (3).

It occurs to me that Hoose's deep respect for Moonbird the bird manifests itself in the labor of love that became *Moonbird* the book. I should note right away that *Moonbird* is written for young adults, and by all means buy a copy for your kids, nieces, nephews or friends' kids. Just don't let the target audience keep you from reading the book yourself: it is a nonfiction thriller, if such a genre even exists!

Moonbird movingly documents the precarity of an entire subspecies of shorebird, the *rufa* Red Knot. The now famous migratory feats-of-strength of the *rufa* subspecies are personalized by B95, the oldest known *rufa* Red Knot. B95, named for the band attached to his upper left leg in 1995, has managed to excite and unite a global and multi-generational community committed

to seeing this subspecies recover from an 80 percent decline in its population in just the past 20 years. *Moonbird* introduces us to members of this community—all interesting and passionate people—in short profiles at the end of nearly every chapter of the book.

But the main focus of the book is the *rufa* Red Knot and what is known about this subspecies—from a scientific standpoint but also from the point of view of those who are flat-out astonished by the sheer force-of-nature of this small, beautiful shorebird. Hoose translates the fame of B95 into a call to action on behalf of the survival of his entire subspecies. Of course, there's very interesting science along the way that uncovers the bird's 18,000 mile migratory route, his diet and the seemingly impossible transformations of his body for the purposes of migration, feeding and reproduction.

Moonbird, published in 2012, is good reading and important reading, especially since the announcement in December 2014 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to formally list the red knot as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Enjoy the book and if you would like to learn more about what you can do to help the *rufa* Red Knot, visit <http://moonbirdfund.org/>.

****A copy of *Moonbird* will be available to a BBC member at the January 29th club event!****



Identifying Those Winter Loons: A Shortcut Identification Website

By Peter Dorosh

There is no reason to go “loony” whenever you seek out the coastal “divers “ we know here in North America as Loons. Oftentimes loons are difficult to identify because rough ocean waters keep these birds bobbing up and down, making it difficult to see them long enough for an ID, or the bird is diving frequently, or it is in a molt transition, other than the definitive breeding plumage we are used to seeing. Winter loon identification is thereby a real challenge.

This link (<http://www.bafrenz.com/birds/Loons.htm>) brings you to a very good website that cuts to the chase

using SIMPLE clues for what to look for on loon species **primarily based on head position and bill shape/size** followed by secondary clues like head shape and plumage contrasts. The website was the brainchild of Bert Frenz in Texas where winter loons reside. Mr. Frenz uses a “tree” or pyramid structure based on the loon species having particular field marks, then proceeds to the next step of the visual cues one sees on a distant loon. His concept is an excellent, very helpful tool with accompanying photographs arranged in a quiz for testing.

The below is based on a shortcut version the “tree” which you can see on his website.

When you see a loon, ask yourself:

- 1) Is the head tilted **slightly upward or level**?
 - A) If the **head is tilted upward**, it's a Red-throated **OR** Yellow-billed loon species (the latter is very rare on the east coast)
 - If the **bill is gray and thin**, it's a Red-throated Loon
 - If the **bill is yellow and thick**, it's a Yellow-billed Loon
 - B) If the **head is level** (or horizontal), it's a Common OR Pacific/Arctic Loon species
 - If the **bill is THICK and dark**, it's a Common Loon
 - If the **bill is THIN and dark**, it's an *Arctic /Pacific Loon*
- 2) Other field marks to back up the head position/bill size are head shape and dark with white plumage margins demarcation:
 - For **Yellow-billed Loon** [rare], look for white mark behind eye; longer bill than Common; brown back compared to Common's black, peaked crown.
 - For **Common Loon**, look for white neck notch; white throat and face surrounding the eyes; steep forehead, bump on forehead (peaked at the front of crown).
 - For **Pacific/Arctic Loon - smooth rounded head** indicates this species; the head is usually brownish with sharp contrast between the head and white throat and fore

neck; also, look for a prominent thin “brown necklace” extending around white throat.

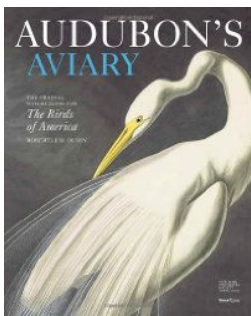
Note: for furthering separating Arctic from Pacific, go to <http://tinyurl.com/32q48g4>

- **For Red-throated Loon** - also smooth rounded head but the white face surrounds the eyes; sharper plumage delineations versus Common Loon; **back is spotted** compared to Common or Pacific/Arctic Loons with paler head than its back as well as paler to other winter loons.

Other Loon species references:

<http://tinyurl.com/2cgvr43>

<http://tinyurl.com/2ctech9>



Audubon's Aviary: The Final Flight (Part III of The Complete Flock)

March 6 - May 10, 2015

By Ann Murray

The New-York Historical Society will present the third and final exhibition in a three-part series featuring the watercolors of John James Audubon. The exhibition will run from Friday, March 6, through Sunday, May 10.

Part III of the series, *Audubon's Aviary: The Final Flight*, will showcase masterpieces from the New-York Historical Society collection of John James Audubon's preparatory watercolors for the print edition of *The Birds of America* (1827–38).

The series set out to present all 474 watercolors in the collection along with media installations to help viewers gain a deeper understanding of the works.

Unique in this final series of watercolors is the inclusion of western species such as the American Dipper. Audubon never traveled to the Western United States and therefore relied on observations from others and a large number of bird skins, specimens and nests he had purchased to create his watercolors.

Through this three-part series, the New-York Historical Society has explored Audubon's watercolors in the order in which they were engraved, allowing visitors the unique opportunity to view them sequentially and in their entirety. Audubon organized *The Birds of America* not by traditional taxonomic order, but according to his aesthetic and practical judgments. He believed this manner of presentation was closer to that of nature.

The New-York Historical Society is located at the corner of 77th Street and Central Park West, across from the American Museum of Natural History.

Submissions wanted!

The Clapper Rail is always in need of interesting content. As a volunteer organization, we encourage editorial contributions from our members. If you would like to submit a birding-related article, or other contributions such as trip reports, local events, members in the news, or images, please contact us at newsletter@brooklynbirdclub.org

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>

Thursday, January 29th: Bird Life in Brazil

Presenter: Paulo Boute

Location: Prospect Park Audubon Center at the Boathouse

Parking is available at the new Breeze Hill lot, enter at Lincoln Rd and Ocean Ave.

Come take a virtual tour of the Pantanal and Brazilian birds at this presentation with Brazilian guide Paulo Boute. Paulo is one of the pioneering birders and ornithologists in Brazil, with almost 30 years of experience guiding birders and photographers.

He was one of the first and now is the most experienced guide working in this unique habitat, with more than a thousand trips to the Pantanal. His Brazilian life list is 1260 birds.

Paulo has inspired others to follow in his tracks and is very proud in having dedicated his life to preserving the birds in Brazil and educating others on their beauty. When he is not guiding--either in the Pantanal, Amazon/Atlantic Forest or in the Brazilian Northeast--he is teaching birdwatching and presenting lectures both abroad and in-country.

Check out his website at <http://www.boute-expeditions.com/>

Tuesday, March 10th: Iceland: Land of Fire, Ice and BIRDS!

Presenter: Sandra Paci

Location: Brooklyn Public Library Central Branch at Grand Army Plaza

The lure of Iceland for birders lies not in the number of species to be seen, but in the quality of those species and the opportunity to encounter them in spectacularly beautiful and unspoiled landscapes, sometimes in overwhelming numbers. Seabirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, and gulls are all well represented. Some are special Icelandic races and subspecies found nowhere else. Many birds in this sparsely populated land show a remarkable lack of fear of humans, allowing for close viewing and photography. Join Sandra Paci as she discusses her 2013 journey to this intriguing island nation.

Sandra Paci was born in Baltimore, Maryland and lives in New York City, where she works for a gallery in the Chelsea art district and is an active member of the Brooklyn Bird Club and the Linnaean Society of New York. Since first catching the travel bug in the early 1980s, she has ventured to over twenty countries outside the U.S., mostly in Europe and Latin America. Sandra became an avid birder in 2003 and has enjoyed long-distance birding trips to Alaska, Mexico, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Iceland and Morocco.

Winter/Spring 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.
- **NEW** 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.**
- **NEW** 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://prospectsightings.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. (10 a.m. in January and February; check <http://www.prospectpark.org/calendar> to confirm times.)



Tuesday and Thursday Seasonal Prospect Park Walks

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.)

TUESDAYS: April 7th, April 14th, April 21st, April 28th, May 5th, May 12th, May 19th, May 26th

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

THURSDAYS: April 9th, April 16th, April 23rd, April 30th, May 7th, May 14th, May 21st, May 28th

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

NEW! SATURDAYS: April 4th, April 11th, April 18th, April 25th, May 2nd, May 16th

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

(**Note:** due to possible scheduling conflicts, leader substitutions may be made for some dates.)

Saturday, January 31st, New Jersey Winter Tour

Leader: Rick Wright

Car fee: \$35.00

Registrar: Sandy Paci, email

sandypac56@gmail.com or cell # 347-834-5881

Registration period: Jan 20th - Jan 29th

February 14th-15th, Overnight Weekend: Montauk Point and East End, Long Island

Leader: Rob Bate

Focus: Winter birds of various habitats, waterfowl and winter flocks

Car fee: \$100.00

Registrar: Bobbi Manian email

Roberta.manian@yahoo.com

Registration period: Jan 2nd - Feb 5th

Sunday, February 22nd, Sunset Park Neighborhood Birding Tour

Leader: Peter Dorosh (347-622-3559 text only)

Focus: winter passerines, ducks, waterfowl, gulls

Itinerary: This long winter walk will pass through the cemetery, then Sunset Park after the cemetery exit at 4th Ave, before heading northwest to the coast to the new Bush Terminal Pier Park. An option if continuing will be the former Army terminal Pier 4 eight blocks west along 1st Avenue. At least 3.5 miles walking.

Nearest train afterwards will be the R line at either 45th or 53th or 59th St stops.

Meet: No registration necessary. Meet 8 am at the Greenwood Cemetery's east entrance, Prospect Park West Avenue and 20th Street. Nearest subway: F train to 15th St/Prospect Park, walk 3 blocks west on Prospect Park West Avenue to GWC meeting site.

Saturday, February 28th, Fort Tilden Winter Birds

Leader: Dennis Hrehowsik

Focus: Coastal birds, dune species and waterfowl, gulls, raptors

Car fee: \$12.00

Registrar: Bobbi Manian, email

Roberta.manian@yahoo.com

Registration Period: Feb 17th - Feb 26th


Sunday, March 8th, Prospect Park


Leader: Rafael Campos

Focus: winter passerines migrants, early Spring migrants, waterfowl, raptors


Meet: 7:30 AM at Grand Army Plaza Park entrance "Stranahan Statue"

Note: Daylight Savings Time begins

 **Saturday, March 14th, Massapequa Preserve Greenbelt Trail by LIRR**
Leader: Peter Dorosh (347-622-3559 text only)
Focus: a long casual flat hike on the preserve's Greenbelt trail
Train fee: To be determined at Brooklyn's Atlantic Ave Long Island Railroad station
Registrar: Peter Dorosh, Prosbird@aol.com (preferred) or 347-622-3559 text
Note: the registrar will communicate the train time of departure and instructions to participants. Meet downstairs at the ticket windows.
Registration Period: March 3rd - March 12th
Source: <http://tinyurl.com/MassGBT>


 **Sunday, March 22nd, Greenwood Cemetery**
Leader: Ed Crowne
Focus: early spring migrants, exiting and straggling winter birds
Meet: 8:30 am at the Greenwood Cemetery east entrance, Prospect Park West Avenue and 20th Street. Nearest subway: F train to 15th St/Prospect Park, walk 3 blocks west on Prospect Park West

 **Saturday, March 28th Carnarsie Park and the Southeast Brooklyn coast**
Leader: Bobbi Manian
Focus: early spring migrants, sparrows, coastal species, waterbirds, gulls, returning raptors
Car fee: \$12.00
Registrar: Mike Yuan, email mjyuan@gmail.com
Registration Period: March 17th - March 26th


 **Saturday, April 4th Prospect Park Spring Series**
Leader: Dennis Hrehowsik
Note: this is a new Saturday series walk till middle May (EXCEPT May 9th Birdathon). See the dates at the beginning of the trips page, above.
Meet: 7:15 am "The Pergola" entrance, Ocean Ave and Parkside Ave corner. Nearest train "Q" line to Parkside Ave, across the street or "Prospect Park" stop on the "Q" line as well- requires a 5 block walk south on Ocean Avenue from Lincoln Road exit. ("B" Express train does not run on weekends.)

 **Sunday, April 12th, Staten Island Spring**
Leader: Mike Yuan

Focus: first Spring neotropical songbird migrants, late ducks, sparrows, upland grass species
Car fee: \$25.00
Registrar: Dennis Hrehowsik, email deepseagangster@gmail.com
Registration Period: March 31st - April 9th

 **Saturday, April 18th, Floyd Bennett & Marine Park**
Leader: Heydi Lopes
Focus: first Spring neotropical songbird migrants, sparrows, raptors, upland grass species, early shorebirds
Car fee: \$10.00
Registrar: Bobbi Manian, email Roberta.manian@yahoo.com
Registration Period: April 7th - April 16th

 **Saturday, April 25th, Celebrating 40 years birding: A Return to High Tor State Park**
Leader: Peter Dorosh
Car fee: \$25.00
Registrar: Peter Dorosh Prosbird@aol.com (preferred) or 347-622-3559 text
Registration Period: April 14th - April 23rd
Note: Peter Dorosh celebrates 40 years of birding in a symbolic and commemorative walk, to honor his first Brooklyn Bird Club trip at this locale led back then by Ron and Jean Bourque. Trip requires some upward gradual hiking from the trailhead. More details on the terrain at the time of registration. Other easier nearby locations will be visited-likely Stony Point Park or Mount Ivy County Park as options. High Tor State Park near Nyack is the club's first trip since the leader's debut as participant over 35 years ago.
<http://www.nynjtc.org/park/high-tor-state-park>
<http://tinyurl.com/HTSPApr25>

 **Sunday, May 3rd, Ridgewood Reservoir and Forest Park, Brooklyn-Queens's Border**
Leader: Steve Nanz
Focus: peak of spring migrants
Car fee: \$10.00
Registrar: Heidi Steiner-Nanz, email heidi.steiner@verizon.net or call before 8 pm 718- 369-2116
Registration Period: April 21st - April 30th