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## The Painted Bunting and the Media Storm

By Rob Bate

Our celebrity friend, the Prospect Park Painted Bunting, turned out to be a most cooperative bird and gave everyone satisfying looks in a most hospitable environment. PP-PABU stayed in the area of the Lefrak Center Green Roof for 5 weeks to the day: from around 10 am on Sunday, November 29, 2015 (when Keir Randall first spotted the soon-to-be-celebrity bird and got the word out to the local birding community) until late afternoon on Sunday January 3, 2016. Of course, anyone with access to any media at all had a convenient chance to see him as many times as they wished). PABU even stayed for two important calendar markers— December 19th for the 2015 Brooklyn Christmas Bird Census and the first days of January when every serious NYS “lister” had a chance to get the bird for their brand new 2016 list. Many, many thanks PABU (PaBoo), and we wish you well wherever your adventure has led you.

In the week prior to PABU’s appearance, I had been talking to several news reporters about a confrontation I had witnessed and photographed between two Red-tailed Hawks and a hobbyist’s drone over the Nethermead. I then contacted those reporters at DNAinfo (an online magazine) and the New York Post, as well as contacts at the New York Times, to alert them to our unusual and unusually colorful bird just as soon as it could be determined that PABU was sticking around. The Post got on the story right away and spoke with me, Keir, Sean Sime and Doug Gotchfeld about different aspects of PABU’s appearance in our park. The reporter, Sophia Rosenbaum, put together a great little story with the splashy headline “People are losing their s-t over this bird” the following day.

<http://nypost.com/2015/12/02/people-are-losing-their-s-t-over-this-bird/>

What followed can only be described as a media frenzy. Upon seeing the Post article with its provocative headline, FOX, CBS, WPIX and New12 Brooklyn all sent reporters and cameramen to

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### **The Brooklyn Bird Club**

**President:** Rob Bate

### **The Clapper Rail**

**Editorial:** Monica Berger, Bobbi Manian,  
Tracy Meade, Ann Murray  
**Production:** Janet Zinn

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cover the story. PABU was on TV on December 3<sup>rd</sup> along with the mass of onlookers who were beginning to gather on the Lefrak Green Roof.

<http://www.fox5ny.com/news/55597349-video>

Online magazines like the Verge, DNAinfo, the Park Slope Stoop and Brooklyn Magazine, as well as traditional print media like the Gothamist, the New York Times, New York Magazine and the Wall Street Journal contacted Tom Stephenson and/or me, and their stories got the word out about the presence of a rare and colorful songbird conveniently located in Prospect Park. Some stories were just cutesy news flashes but some reporters took time to do some research and contacted scientists like Paul Sweet at the AMNH and Susan Elbin of NYC Audubon about why this vagrant bird might be here in Prospect Park in the middle of winter. Audubon Magazine also ran an article featuring commentary by such birding luminaries as Ken Kaufman and Geoff LeBaron (who organizes the annual Christmas Bird Count for National Audubon.)

<http://goo.gl/JiRcUV> - New York Times

The first weekend of December, the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, brought huge crowds on the heels of the media coverage. The weather was fabulous, the transportation convenient and the facilities were accommodating. It was a great opportunity to visit Prospect Park and have a special treat, a sighting of our beautiful and famous vagrant songbird. At any one time you might count between 40 to 50 people crowding the pathways of the Lefrak Center Green Roof, craning for a peek at the Painted Bunting. Binoculars were shared with those who had none and all were generally helpful in making sure everyone had a chance to get a look at PABU.

Crowd management became something of an issue because of the temptation to step into the habitat to either get around the crowd or just to get a little bit of a closer look— always a temptation even with veteran birders. But with the helpful encouragement of the birding community and the quick fencing response of Janis Napoli and her Alliance Horticultural Crew (the people responsible for the care and maintenance of the green roof habitat), the crowds generally kept to the pathways and off the delicate native plantings and thus helped to preserve the very habitat that was the primary reason we even had such a visitor. Following this five week siege, the Horticultural Crew reports no

real damage to this delicate habitat from the huge crowds PABU drew to the area.



*Painted Bunting, ©Janet Zinn*

PABU's first week was a festival for serious birders as the news of his appearance had gone out on Twitter and the listserves immediately. They came from all over New York State and beyond, giving everyone a chance to meet up with far flung friends and put faces to names we might only know from the listserves. During the week, as confidence had grown that PABU would stick around, many upstate birders organized impromptu birding trips and came by the carload during the first weekend. There were many birders, even veterans, who had never seen a Painted Bunting in NYS let alone a bright male one. Lifelong birder Sy Schiff, at 88 years old, scored his 400<sup>th</sup> NYS life bird with the PP-PABU followed shortly thereafter by fellow veteran Long Island birder Lefty Cooper who also got his #400 with our bird.

Besides the many individuals seeking a first look at PABU, a devoted following developed with a number of individuals making daily visits to see the bird and they got to know something of the bird's habits and routines. Over the course of his residency, thousands of people visited PABU and many of these visitors came away with a true wildlife experience and, hopefully, a new understanding of the importance of protecting native habitat areas.

The media attention developed enormous good will for the Brooklyn Bird Club and the larger birding community and has helped introduced our sport/obsession/avocation to a wider public. Many civilians, drawn to the newsworthy magic of this colorful bird, experienced the beauty and fragility of the wild world that exists even here in this most urban of environments. To understand the impact PABU could have on people, you had only to lend a pair of binoculars to a potential birder and hear them gasp as they finally caught sight of PABU skulking in the weeds. It was such "unicorn" moments that started many of us on the path of birding.

Another beneficiary from the media attention has been the Prospect Park Alliance. The green roof on the Lefrak Center has been noted as an incredibly successful creation of native habitat that is in no small part responsible for PABU's presence. Christian Zimmerman, Chief Landscape Architect for the Alliance, even got a few chances to talk to the media about the very considered design and creation of the Lefrak Center Green Roof. The Alliance is seen more now, post PABU, as a steward and protector of natural habitat and this aspect of our great urban park is now more in the forefront of the public's mind as well as those of potential donors. The NYC Department of Parks and Recreation got in the act as well, and broadcast a live twitter video feed called "Periscope" from the Lefrak Green Roof featuring the presence of the Prospect Park Painted Bunting.

Thanks go out to all who helped out by sharing your time with the bird-tourists and helping encourage people to be mindful of the delicate landscape. Our Painted Bunting has moved on but has left many beautiful and lasting impressions and he has perhaps altered many people's understanding of natural habitat and the natural world.

(As a side note— the last two winters have seen an overwintering male Painted Bunting in Stamford CT.

The PABU did not show there this year. Perhaps their bird was our bird this year?)

<http://www.fox5ny.com/news/55597349-video>

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## Brooklyn Christmas Bird Census Results (Count Circle "NYBR") December 19, 2015

Over 100 participants on 15 teams covering 11 territories joined this year's Brooklyn Christmas Bird Census. Teams surveyed Brooklyn's many and varied parks, preserves, and coastal habitats during a brutally windy day and recorded 117 bird species in the Kings County count circle ("NYBR"), including 93 regular, 14 irregular and 10 rare species. 2015 recorded 6 fewer species than last year. A total of 42,314 birds were seen overall. For the first time, Prospect Park had the most species recorded at 56. However, most teams reported 10-20 fewer species than in previous years. Winds gusting up to 30mph made for challenging viewing conditions along all the shore areas and kept passerines hunkered down in most locations.

The worst misses in 2015 included Snow Goose, Eastern Meadowlark, American Pipit and Winter Wren. Other noticeably absent birds were Canvasback, Ring-necked Pheasant, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Surf Scoter, and Red-necked Grebe, all of which were recorded in at least 5 of the past 10 years.

On a happier note, Prospect Park's celebrity Painted Bunting as well as its Black-headed Gull were both cooperative on the day of the count.

Other notable rarities this year included Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Sora, Blue-headed Vireo, Common Raven, Nashville Warbler, Yellow Warbler and Purple Finch.

We wish to thank Maria Carrasco, Vice President for Public Programs, and her staff, especially facilities managers Kenny Lyons and Jose Betancourt, who helped our dinner committee, and thanks to the Prospect Park Alliance for providing our count venue, the park's Audubon Center. Additional thanks go to: Rick Cech, our head compiler; Paul Keim, who assisted with the calling out of species; Bobbi Manian, for her

organization of the count teams; Heidi Steiner-Nanz, the dinner coordinator and her volunteers for the well organized set-up and preparations; and most importantly, to our many citizen scientist birders who went out into the field and counted!

And last, for the complete spreadsheet of the regions and species recorded in each region, go to the below links. Note the regions' legend used to designate the areas below the links.

Regional NYBR Count circle complete data is available here:

- 1. Historic Results by Rarity By Year  
<http://tinyurl.com/he4nlmw>
- 2. High/lowlights  
<http://tinyurl.com/hu642uc>
- 3. Species Total Counts by Territory  
<http://tinyurl.com/qbfvfn>
- 4. 2015 Count Annual Report (includes Territories and Species Details)  
<http://tinyurl.com/pnr25sn>
- 5. 2015 Worst Misses  
<http://tinyurl.com/ofzdaq4y>

NS = North Shore

PP = Prospect Park

GW=Greenwood Cemetery

OH= Owls Head

MP= Marine Park

FB=Floyd Bennett

BB= Bergen Beach

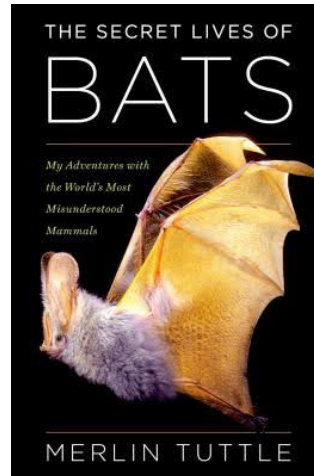
SC =Spring Creek

JB =Jamaica Bay

RP =Riis Park

BP=Breezy Point

For more about the Christmas Counts objectives and history, look up <http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count>.



**Do the Reading #1:  
*The Secret Lives of Bats: My Adventures with the World's Most Misunderstood Mammals* by Merlin Tuttle**

*Reviewed by Janet Schumacher*

While idling in heavy traffic in Accra early one evening, we noticed this amazing spectacle of thousands of huge fruit bats darkening the sky. This was an unexpected highlight of my birding trip to Ghana. The bats were streaming out of the city to find fruiting trees. Bats have learned to seek refuge in urban areas where they are protected from hunters, according to Merlin Tuttle, the founder of Bat Conservation International. One estimate is that a million of these bats live in Accra.

In *The Secret Lives of Bats*, Tuttle notes that being hunted for food is just one of the many threats bats face. Reviled as vampires, disease carriers and fruit crop destroyers, bats also face extinction from habitat loss and threat to caves from limestone quarrying and other mining operations. Tuttle emphasizes that human ignorance and fear of bats is the greatest threat, and he offers many examples of the beneficial role bats play in eating insects (one bat could eat up to 1,000 mosquitos in one night!), pollination, and seed dispersal. Guano from large colonies may also be harvested for fertilizer.

As a child Tuttle was very interested in nature, and his fascination with bats began as a teenager when he discovered a large population of hibernating bats in a cave near Knoxville. With parental support, he began a risky exploration of that cave. Tuttle has traveled the world exploring other caves, photographing bats, documenting their behavior and educating and engaging people into protecting their local bat colonies.

Another surprise for me while on a birding trip, this time in Panama, was watching bats fishing over a pond. Tuttle discovered that some fishing bats also hunt frogs. He wondered if the bats could hear the low tones of the frog vocalizations and how they could differentiate the edible frogs from the various poisonous frogs that live in Panama. He documented that these particular bats, unlike most bats, could hear the lower range and could differentiate the mating calls of the poisonous from the benign frogs.

In the presence of predacious bats, researchers have discovered that the frogs alter their mating calls in a manner that makes them less attractive to females but also makes it harder for a bat to hone in on one. Frogs do not want to stand out by vocalizing alone and rarely call on an overcast night when they cannot see approaching bats. Tuttle observed that when these bats appeared, the frogs were usually able to immediately shut down their chorus. The opposite of birds mobbing a predator, the frogs were so in tune with their cohort that when one stopped calling, they recognized the danger.

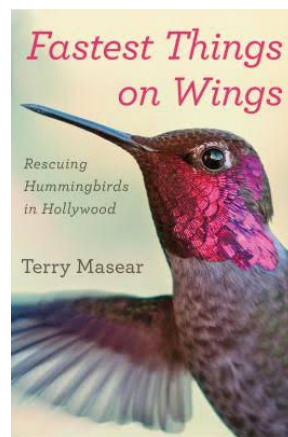
The above is just one fascinating example of Tuttle's presentation of the complex relationship that bats have with other animals and plants. Bats are also prey. Raptors are known to wait by bat roosts for the evening flight, although Tuttle observes that even Peregrine falcons have difficulty snatching an agile bat.

Bats are the primary pollinators of a number of endangered plants that bloom only at night, including cacti and trees. These plants often develop dish-shaped leaves or petals to enhance echolocation in the dark. And Tuttle notes that fruit eating bats often disperse the seeds over a wider area than birds as they do not perch in trees and travel far to their roosts.

The book is also filled with derring-do. Tuttle has had many harrowing incidents while caving, including almost dying from ammonia poisoning from bat guano. He flew in a balloon at night to confirm that high-flying bats consume huge numbers of migrating pests such as leafhoppers before they reach the crops. He has faced down poachers, moonshiners and politicians and made them allies in his quest to protect bats. The Bat Conservation headquarters are in Austin, Texas. Years earlier the large Brazilian free-tailed bat colony roosting under a bridge near the state capitol in Austin was under threat. Now the nightly flight of bats is a major tourist attraction and protected by Austin.

Tuttle easily tamed bats to hand feeding for his experiments and photography. Do the bats in his photos look as cuddly as he claims? I am not so sure. But I found his account of this diverse group of intelligent mammals absorbing.

On to birds. Unlike bats, hummingbirds are one of the most beloved winged critters. Increasing numbers of hummingbirds are nesting in Hollywood given the temperate climate that supports lush flowering plantings and the many feeders people put up to watch the dazzling flight and aggressive behavior of this beautiful bird.



**Do the Reading #2:  
Fastest Things on Wings: Rescuing Hummingbirds in Hollywood by Terry Masear**

Reviewed by Janet Schumacher

In the *Fastest Things on Wings: Rescuing Hummingbirds in Hollywood*, Terry Masear

presents an engaging account of several decades of rescuing hummingbirds. When it is not breeding season, she teaches English as a Second Language.

Masear and another facility take in around 400 hummingbirds each year during the nesting season and refer hundreds more to other facilities. Hazards abound: spring tree trimmers, collision with windows and vehicles, hurricanes, outdoor pets, poor choice of nest site (one female abandoned her nest built on a wind chime when it became windy), golf balls and in one instance nestlings stranded on a Rose Parade float. Aggressive male-to-male battles or males pursuing females can end in injury or death. An immature female was found in the salsa on a film shoot. A review of the film clip revealed her being viciously pursued by a male before her fall.

The goal of rehabbers is to keep the birds in the natural environment. They instruct callers on how to remove hummingbirds unable to find their way out of buildings, to rewire branches onto trees and to reinforce a damaged nest. They reassure people who fear the mother has abandoned the nest. Masear

estimates that she has fielded more than 20,000 phone calls from would be hummingbird rescuers; most callers are distraught but others demanding at all hours of day.

Masear warns not to get too close to a nest and especially do not use a flash for photos as it may frighten the mother away. The most important advice is to not attempt to rescue hummingbirds on your own. She's had to clear out the gullet of nestlings fed ants (they can't digest the exoskeleton) or brown sugar (the molasses sticks to the lining). Nestlings can survive for a day or so on sugar water but need a steady supply of fruit flies.

The California hummingbird rehabbers have a very high success rate of returning the birds to the wild. Cleaning cages and frequent feedings are a huge commitment and expense. Masear provides incubators for the newly hatched and takes pride as they move through a graduated series of flight cages and gain essential skills: how to perch, drink from nectar feeders and eventually to fly and spin. She notes individual differences and provides an insider view of these tiny winsome birds.

Tuttle and Masear's books are available at the Brooklyn Public Library.

Merganser, Greater Scaup and Hooded Merganser visitors. A small group of 3 to 6 Pied-billed Grebes have become regulars.

These waterfowl are not in the creek just as migratory stopovers; they stay all winter until April or May, depending on the particular species. The Brant (*Branta bernicula*), the last to leave, are gone at the end of May for their 2-thousand mile migration to the northern coast of Canada above the Arctic Circle. Until the mid-'70s, it was generally believed that the decline in the Brant population was due to the loss of eelgrass in the 1930s in many polluted bays. That might account for some of the decline but other factors can affect breeding success. Since Brant breed close to the shore along the shores of Foxe Basin, summer storms there can wipe out virtually all of their very vulnerable nests. Successive years of Brant nesting colony wipeouts can reduce their population.

As we have learned, thanks to citizen-science birders assisting Thomas Clough in his Master's Thesis (University of Massachusetts at Amherst 1976-78), Brant are far more adaptive and resilient than one might have guessed. Much to the chagrin of golfers, Brant – and Canada Geese – graze on many varieties of lawn grasses and clover on golf courses, median strips and airports. They will also eat *Spartina alterniflora* leaves.

A very nutritious part of the Brant's diet is Sea Lettuce (*Ulva lactuca*), a green sheet algae that grows down to 75 feet on the bottom of many bays, creeks and basins. Although it grows attached by holdfasts on solid substrates, it is easily torn loose by strong wave action. *Ulva* is very abundant throughout the summer months on mud flats at low tide but growth slows by October when Brant arrive. Since Brant are not able to dive for *Ulva*, we have often see them "tipping up" and gleaning what they are able to reach at low tide in shallow water. But the ever-resourceful Brant have discovered another way to get to the *Ulva* or have it brought to them – diving ducks.

I first observed what seemed to be some sort of social gathering of Brant forming dense clusters swirling around and around. Somewhat like the swirling rings of Northern Shovelers, but this was a denser cluster involving many more birds – perhaps 10 to 100. I could not determine what they were up to until I was able to get a closer look with a spotting scope. After all,



### **Brant, Buffleheads & Ulva in Gerritsen Creek**

*by Ron Borque*

The months of October and November herald the arrival of winter waterfowl in Gerritsen Creek, Marine Park, as they do throughout Long Island waters. As one

of many arms of Jamaica Bay, Gerritsen Creek is more of a tidal basin than a creek with an upland watershed. The watershed is there but the fresh water enters the creek via storm drains. Nonetheless, Gerritsen Creek supports a fair variety of waterfowl--both dabblers and diving ducks. Ruddy Ducks, Mallards, Black Ducks, American Wigeon, Buffleheads, Northern Shovelers, Atlantic Brant and Canada Geese. There are also occasional Green-winged Teal, Gadwall, Red-breasted

Brant generally do not form dense rafts like we see with Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*). It turned out to be a feeding frenzy.

When Greater Scaup dive to the bottom of Gerritsen Creek, they can be seen bringing up sheets of Ulva that they lay on the water's surface to facilitate ingesting these sheets. The Brant were quick to notice their favorite salad being consumed by the Scaup, seeing them tearing away at the Ulva and shredding it into many pieces to be inadvertently shared by many. The sight of the Ulva stimulated this swirling feeding frenzy and attracted more Brant to join the fray. This tight knot of swirling Brant did not dissipate until they had eaten all the Ulva they could find. They soon associated the presence of Greater Scaup with food and persistently surrounded the befuddled diving meal ticket, the Scaup. When the Scaup were nowhere to be found the swirling knots of Brant surrounded diving Buffleheads (*Bucephala albeola*).

Buffleheads are generally more common than Greater Scaup in Gerritsen Creek and they tend to be more dispersed throughout its length. And it is the Buffleheads that are most frequently seen amid the tight swirling masses of Brant. One can observe three or four of these Brant clusters at one time from the Marine Park Salt Marsh Nature Trail. Without exception, Buffleheads will be in the midst of the activity but often surfacing at the periphery of the Brant cluster. After more than fifteen hours of close observation with a 26X-62 mm spotting scope, I never saw Ulva in the bills of Buffleheads surfacing from their bottom-foraging dives. They are feeding on mollusks and crustaceans which they generally swallow under water.

Indeed, on occasion, the Ulva feeding frenzy begins before the Buffleheads break the surface. One can only surmise that, in the process of foraging, the Buffleheads dislodge the Ulva that comes to the surface with them and sometimes ahead of them. Because Ulva has a slightly negative buoyancy, it appears that some of the Ulva must be entrained in the turbulence that develops around the duck's bodies in their rapid ascent to the surface. It is all the more remarkable because the depth of the water where Buffleheads are diving is from 3 to 4.5 meters (about 10 to 15 feet). Little is known about Bufflehead foraging movements underwater except that they use only their feet for

propulsion; their wings are tucked tightly to their bodies.

The Brant in Gerritsen Creek have again shown their adaptability to a changing environment without eelgrass. This association of diving Buffleheads with Ulva brought to the surface is just another example of birds and multiple forms of wildlife associating food with the unrelated activities of another species – Cowbirds following herds of ungulates is another well-known example.

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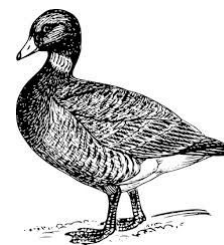
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Johnsgard, Paul; Waterfowl of North America, 1975 - Indiana University Press

Kortright, F.H.; The Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America: Wildlife Management Institute, 1967 - Telegraph Press

Ladin, Zachary, et al, Regional and Intraseasonal Variation in Diet of Wintering and Staging Atlantic Brant. Journal of Wildlife Management 78(7):1206-1215; 2014 DOI

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## Brooklyn Bird Club, Spring 2016 Evening Programs

BBC Programs start at 7:00 pm.

BBC Programs are held at the Brooklyn Public Library, Central Branch, 10 Grand Army Plaza (718-230-2191).

**Tuesday, February 16, 2016.** Celebrating Brooklyn.

Brooklyn Bird Club members Rob Bate, Marc Brawer, Cindy Cage, Paul Chung, Peter Colen and Klemens Gasser share photos and sightings from 2015.

**Tuesday, March 15, 2016.** The Rarest Bird in the World. The Search for the Nechisar Nightjar.

Vernon R.L. Head, chairman of BirdLife of South Africa, will present his quest to solve the mystery of an isolated wing of an unknown species of nightjar collected in Ethiopia in 2009. In his search for a possible new species, Head is not just on a mission for a spectacular tick, but he places his endeavor in the context of other rare and endangered species suffering from human impact on the environment.

**Tuesday, April 19, 2016.** Better Birding, Tips, Tools and Concepts for the Field.

George L. Armistead will present identification strategies from his new book, co-written with Brian Sullivan. Armistead is an expert birder, tour leader, and an events coordinator with the American Birding Association and Associate Professor of Ornithology at Drexel University. To whet your appetite, read Queen's birder Donna Shulman's review of this comprehensive text:

<http://10000birds.com/better-birding-a-book-review-a-new-years-goal.htm>.



## Winter-Early Spring 2016 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:

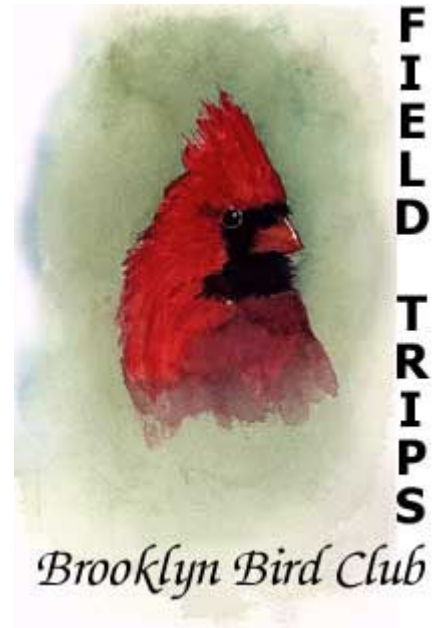
- With the exception of Prospect Park and Green-wood Cemetery trips, a TWO-WEEK registration period will precede all trips.
- Club members will be given first-priority for all trips except Prospect and Green-wood Cemetery. Nonmembers and guests are welcome on BBC trips but only if there is available 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.)

**For dates of weekly Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday Prospect Park walks in Spring 2016, please check our web site.**



**🦅 Sunday, January 24rd: 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>

**🦅 Saturday, February 27th, Winter Waterfowl Wildcard**

**Leader:** Peter Dorosh  
**Focus:** Waterfowl & geese  
**Car fee:** TBD  
**Registrar:** Peter Dorosh Prosbird@aol.com or text only cell 347-622-3559  
**Registration Period:** February 20<sup>th</sup> - February 25<sup>th</sup>  
**Note:** this trip depends on the current week's reports in the metropolitan NYC area with locations chosen at the behest of the leader. The

trip may venture outside city limits in pursuit of good waterfowl species. Do expect an all day birding adventure.

**🦅 Sunday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, Croton Point Park, Croton on Harmon, Upstate NY**

**Leader:** Paul Keim  
**Focus:** Sparrows, raptors, likely eagles, waterfowl/ducks, returning winter species  
**Registrar:** Paul Keim (718) 875-1151  
**Registration Period:** February 27<sup>th</sup> - March 3<sup>rd</sup>  
**Note:** This is a NY Metro North train trip leaving from Grand Central Station. Leader/Registrar will provide meeting and trip details during the registration period.

**🦅 Sunday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, Marine Park & Floyd Bennett Field**

**Leader:** Rafael Campos  
**Focus:** Waterfowl, raptors, returning late winter species, early sparrows, open field birds  
**Car fee:** \$10.00  
**Registrar:** Kathy Toomey, email [kathleentoomey@gmail.com](mailto:kathleentoomey@gmail.com)  
**Registration Period:** March 5<sup>th</sup> - March 10<sup>th</sup>

**🦅 Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, Prospect Park's First Day of Spring**

**Leader:** Ed Crowne  
**Focus:** Early spring migrants, transitional period species  
**Meet:** 8:00 am at Bartel-Pritchard Square park entrance  
**Note:** Nearest subway: F train Prospect Park /15th St station  
Equinox in New York City is on Sunday, March 20, 2016 at 12:31 AM EDT

**🦅 Saturday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, Greenwood Cemetery**

**Leader:** Matthew Wills  
**Focus:** Upland species, early spring migrants and songbirds, raptors  
**Meet:** 8:00 am inside the 25<sup>th</sup> St/5<sup>th</sup> Ave entrance, just past the guard station of the "Castle"  
Nearest train stop: "R" local stops at 25<sup>th</sup> street. Walk one block uphill.  
Site profile: <http://www.green-wood.com>

**🦋 Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge**

**Leader:** Steve Nanz  
**Focus:** Waterbirds and geese, early egrets and herons, early shorebirds & passerines  
**Registrar:** Heidi Nanz  
email heidi.steiner@verizon.net or call before 8 pm 718- 369-2116  
**Registration Period:** March 26<sup>th</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>

**🦋 Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, Brooklyn Wetlands and Marshes**

**Leader:** Heydi Lopes  
**Focus:** Species that visit and migrate through wetlands and marshes  
**Car fee:** \$12.00  
**Registrar:** Dennis Hrehowsik , email deepseagangster@gmail.com  
**Registration Period:** April 2<sup>nd</sup> – April 7<sup>th</sup>  
**Note:** This themed trip focuses on migrating birds of Brooklyn’s wetlands; locations & itinerary decided by the leader.

**🦋 Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, Tenafly Nature Center & Palisades Stateline Hawk Watch**

**Leader:** Peter Dorosh  
**Focus:** Woods birding, early songbirds and warblers, raptors; location debut  
**Car fee:** \$20.00  
**Registrar:** Peter Dorosh Prosbird@aol.com or text only cell 347-622-3559  
**Registration Period:** April 9<sup>th</sup> – April 14<sup>th</sup>  
**Site profile:**  
<http://www.tenaflynaturecenter.org>

**🦋 Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, Local Spring Sparrows**

**Leader:** Dennis Hrehowsik and Bobbi Manian  
**Focus:** Locations of Brooklyn and perhaps Queens frequented by the *Emberizidae* species  
**Car fee:** \$12.00  
**Registrar:** Bobbi Manian email roberta.manian@gmail.com  
**Registration Period:** April 16<sup>th</sup> – April 21<sup>st</sup>  
**Note:** Random locations and itinerary of this themed trip is decided by the leaders.

**Reminders!**

- Check out our Brooklyn Bird Club shop on CafePress for great gifts for your Brooklyn birding pals.  
<http://www.cafepress.com/brooklynbird>
- Have an interesting story related to birding? We are always looking for contributions for *The Clapper Rail*. Trip reports, book reviews, essays, ID tips—we’d love to hear what you have to say. Please send submissions to [newsletter@brooklynbirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@brooklynbirdclub.org)