

Winter 2019

*Brooklyn Bird Club's*

# CLAPPER RAIL





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Cover: Northern Saw-whet Owl in Brooklyn.  
Photograph by Mike Yuan.

# Editor's Note

Last May, on a beautiful and busy morning atop Prospect Park's Lookout Hill, I met Nikolaj Noel Christensen and his father. They'd traveled from Copenhagen for their first New World spring migration, a trip that Nikolaj, outfitted with a serious-looking camera, told me he'd been planning for a decade. Their enthusiasm was infectious. Over the next few days, they got to know a number of Brooklyn birders, who shared with them their sightings and their knowledge of the park.

Nikolaj kept in touch with a few Brooklyn birders, and after sending us some of his photos from that trip for an earlier issue, he's written about birding in Copenhagen for this one. I bring this up because it seems to me a wonderful example of the good nature of birders, and the camaraderie of the Brooklyn community. In turn, Nikolaj's offered to show visitors around Copenhagen. Connections like this open up the world.

Two years ago, at a Brooklyn Bird Club Open House, a small group decided to help revamp this publication. Looking through this issue, you can see the fruits of many people's ongoing labor—another outstanding collection of articles, poetry, photography, and artwork.

And it all starts with your outstanding contributions. Thanks everyone, and happy birding.

— Ryan Goldberg

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## 2018 Christmas Bird Count Recap

By Ryan Goldberg

“Christmas came early for me this year,” Peter Dorosh wrote me on the afternoon of the 119th annual Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 15. Dorosh, the Brooklyn Bird Club’s inside man in Prospect Park, had just scoped out the off-limits Quaker Cemetery. Given his job with Prospect Park Alliance’s natural resources crew, he’s the only Brooklyn birder with keys. His message to me came with a grainy photo of his solo discovery: a Great-Horned Owl high up in one of the cemetery’s tall old pines.

For the count total, it proved important: it was the only Great-Horned Owl seen on Brooklyn turf. That evening, at the compilation dinner at the Prospect Park boathouse, a full picture of the day’s findings came

into view: 11 teams of 102 birders (14 more than the previous year) tallied 121 species—one more than 2017. Overall, they reported 32,568 individual birds, well below 2017’s 56,886. The decrease came from waterfowl, which could be attributed in part to the day’s poor visibility—Sean Sime, out at Breezy Point, said they could only see yards ahead, not miles—and the fact that with another warm winter, declining populations may not need to come this far south.

Songbirds, on the other hand, seemed to rebound from 2017—at least on my small team at Green-Wood Cemetery. Nuthatches of both species were plentiful, as well as titmice and chickadees, while Pine Siskins and an Eastern Phoebe lingered. So too a Hermit Thrush, seen perched on the headstone





Great Horned Owl in Prospect Park. Photograph by Peter Dorosh.

of Bicknell. “It could read,” said Ed Crowne, our team leader. Raptors were around, too. On our walk out of the Fort Hamilton gatehouse, a Peregrine Falcon glided overhead, rounding out the morning’s falcon trio.

Out at the coast, because of the foggy pall, numbers were lower than normal. At Breezy Point, however, Sean Sime’s seven-person team added to their now-customary run of CBC riches. They led the way with six saves: a male Evening Grosbeak, Snowy Owl, Iceland Gull, Razorbill, three Common Redpolls and 37 Snow Buntings. (See this issue’s appendix for other highlights.)

Sime’s sea-watchers stumbled into the boathouse shortly before the compilation began. Or, as Dennis Hrehowsik introduced it, the “Birdwatchers’ Prom.” Rick Cech, the long-standing head compiler, announced that he will be officially handing the reins to Mike Yuan and Chris Laskowski. For his 27 years of volunteer service, the Brooklyn Bird Club presented Cech with a specially-commissioned watercolor of a Red-Shouldered Hawk by Paul Keim.

As always, there was the usual friendly competition. When the count reached the rarities, Shane Blodgett’s Jacob Riis Park team announced the only Red Knot.



Rusty Blackbird in Prospect Park. Photograph by August Davidson-Onsgard.



Seaside Sparrow in Marine Park. Photograph by Richard Payne.

Not to be outdone, Sime followed with their single Razorbill sighting.

“Was it in the afternoon?” Paul Keim asked.

“Right before sunset,” Sime replied. “It was photographed.”

“The photo,” Blodgett noted, “looks like a log.”

But there was more. The typically genial Steve Nanz announced a border dispute between the Bergen Beach and Spring Creek teams. The prize in question? A Black-Crowned Night Heron found by Fresh Creek, apparently the dividing line. Nanz thought it should be part of Bergen Beach, but the heron was found by the Spring Creek team. They wanted it—and for now, at least, they got it.





# 2018 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT BROOKLYN

**11**  
TEAMS

**102**  
PARTICIPANTS

**121**  
SPECIES

**32,568**  
TOTAL BIRDS COUNTED



# A Community Victory: Ridgewood Reservoir receives state wetland designation

By Steve Nanz

**A**fter more than a decade-long battle to preserve Ridgewood Reservoir, located on the Brooklyn and Queens border and decommissioned in 1989, a coalition of concerned citizens, environmental organizations and local politicians successfully lobbied the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to designate this important habitat a Class 1 freshwater wetland. Having lost over 90 percent of the city's original freshwater wetland, this is a huge win for both New Yorkers and the environment. Finally, it appears Ridgewood Reservoir is protected from the threat of future development. To download the findings, please visit NYC H2O's [website](#). Both the draft report and final decision are included. Both are fascinating.

As I wrote back in the [Fall 2014 issue](#) of the Clapper Rail, this fight went all the way to Albany. Having successfully convinced the politicians to halt a project which would have turned the west basin, the southern half of which is a wetland, into ballfields, we were informed that it would be bulldozed anyway as a part of an unnecessary and costly (over \$10 million)

decommissioning plan. We rallied local politicians and set out on an all-out petition campaign. The result was a letter from the DEC's then-commissioner, Joseph Martins, writing at the direction of Gov. Andrew Cuomo himself, that the project would be rethought and our application for wetland status would be finally processed. A new decommissioning plan was presented which would preserve all the wetlands and the process of wetland mapping commenced.

It took another four years of pressing DEC to do the work needed to gain wetland status, but they finally did it. Much credit goes to Ken Scarlatelli, the agency's Regional Natural Resources Supervisor, who oversaw the work. After rendering the draft decision last year, he held a public meeting to present the findings, an event that turned out to be an extremely educational experience for all who attended, and one which put our fears to rest.

While the list of those who helped make this campaign a success is long, members of the Brooklyn Bird Club can take particular pride in this victory. Without the breeding bird survey conducted by club

The central basin at Ridgewood Reservoir.  
All photographs by Steve Nanz.



members back in 2007 and the subsequent leadership of club members, it's hard to say whether the effort would have succeeded. For more information from this club member's perspective, check out the [Fall 2014 issue](#) of the Clapper Rail. In addition, there is also a very detailed history of the preservation effort available on the [website](#) of the Newtown Historical Society, which was one of the original supporters of the "Save Ridgewood Reservoir" campaign. Rob Jett,



One of two old pump houses at the reservoir.

another original supporter, has tirelessly maintained the [Save Ridgewood Reservoir](#) blog through the years.

This latest victory comes on the heels of being listed in the National Parks Service's National Register of Historic Places for New York State. Much credit goes to NYC H2O, a latecomer organization to the fight which then took a leadership role in defining the future of the reservoir. As a result, the Parks Department has been persuaded to support the desire of the surrounding communities to preserve the reservoir as a nature preserve. In doing so, Parks has also sought

Critical Environmental Area status. While nothing is bulletproof, with state wetland designation, national historic designation, and the Critical Environmental Area status, Ridgewood Reservoir is safe for the foreseeable future.

Late last year, Parks hosted a meeting of stakeholders to discuss the reservoir's future. Parks pledged its support for preserving the Reservoir as a nature preserve, historic site, and educational resource. The next phase of development was discussed, which includes plans to stabilize the two deteriorating pump houses—and possibly converting one into an interpretive center at some point in the future—and the remediation of ever-present phragmites as well as other invasive plants filling the reservoir's three basins.

For me, this has been a remarkable journey. Ten years ago, I lamented with Rob Jett about the futility of taking on the Parks Department and DEC. How could we possibly win? With patience and perseverance, we were able to garner the support of the community and its representatives, and in the end even those who had originally opposed our common-sense goals. I will always cherish my small part in this victory—emphasis on small. It took a lot of effort by a lot of concerned people to achieve it.

#### ***For more reading on the Ridgewood Reservoir:***

"Queens wetlands receives protected status after years of activism," [Curbed](#), Jan. 22, 2019

"Saving Queens' Secret Wetlands," [The Village Voice](#), June 27, 2017



Celebrating the victory at Yerman's Bar in Glendale, February, 2019.



# My Dream Bird

By Sheila Friedman

When I first started birding, I'd pore over my Peterson's Field Guide looking at the variety of species; some I checked off and others were ones I hoped to see. More than any other species, the Evening Grosbeak always jumped off the page for me. Maybe it was the bird's chunky, golden, white and black body that drew me. Or its oversized, pale-colored bill that peels in the spring to reveal a soft, grass green color. In truth, I'm a sucker for a bird with a crest or a mysterious mask, like the one the Cedar Waxwing sports. The male Evening Grosbeak's brilliant lightning bolt of an eyebrow gives it a superhero appeal. Birders' "dream birds" are as varied as birders themselves; for the Evening Grosbeak, I even dreamed once that a flock of them were perched on rafters in my bedroom, looking down on me as I slept!

The Evening Grosbeak, *Coccothraustes vespertinus* (*Coccothraustes* is Greek for seed crusher, an apt name for the bird) can make short work of a loaded sunflower seed feeder. It was previously named *Hesperophonia vespertinus*, which, Erik A.T. Blom explained in a 1997 issue of Bird Watcher's Digest, came from the Greek Hesperides, or "Daughters of the Night." The name was based on a misunderstanding. The birds were thought to be the "guardians of the garden where the golden apples grew located at the western edge of the world, the place of the setting sun." *Vespertinus* means night-singing: another mistake. The birds were thought to sing in the evening because a boundary agent working near Lake Superior in 1823 heard them "sing" at sunset. In fact, they had been disturbed and made alarm calls. Nevertheless, the name, *vespertinus*, has remained.

Evening Grosbeaks (EVGR) breed in the mountainous regions of the West and boreal forests of Canada. Their range gradually expanded east of the Great Lakes beginning in the 1940s, in part because the planting of their preferred box elder trees, otherwise known as Manitoba maples, created a "baited highway," according to Blom. Similarly, the boon in feeding birds, by way of home sunflower seed feeders, brought the birds beyond their old boundaries. In addition, EVGRs followed outbreaks of the spruce budworm.

The first time I heard of the spruce budworm was in a fifties comedy called "Desk Set," with Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy. Hepburn plays a TV network's researcher whose department is being threatened by an efficiency expert played by Tracy. In a contest to determine who can find the information faster, Hepburn and her colleagues are pitted against an early, room-sized computer. They test the efficiency of the computer by asking it, "How much damage is done annually to American forests by the spruce budworm?"

Evening Grosbeaks have always been considered irregular and erratic visitors to the East. They're an irruptive species, meaning that some years they remain on their breeding grounds while in others they travel farther afield in large numbers to find food. By the



Evening Grosbeak. All photographs by Karen C. Miller.

1920s, they were regular visitors to the East. Between 1969 and 1984, they were reported on 50 to 85 percent of Christmas Bird Counts in Atlantic Coast states. But alarmingly, large irruptions have declined over the last twenty years. In one survey conducted from 1988-2006, according to FeederWatch, there was a decline of 50 percent in sites hosting EVGRs and a 27 percent decrease in flock size.

EVGRs are sociable and gregarious in winter, often visiting feeders, but solitary during the breeding season. Little is known about their breeding history. The usual culprits are thought to be reasons for their decline: climate change, loss of boreal habitat, especially old-growth trees, and pesticide control of spruce budworm. Large numbers of EVGRs appearing

in fir and spruce forests of the U.S. and Canada would signal an outbreak of spruce budworm. Since spraying pesticides in the 1970s, their populations have declined precipitously.

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Thumbing through my field guide, I didn't hold out too much hope of seeing one.

My travel plans are often chosen with birds in mind. Once, in Costa Rica, my husband and I stayed at Trogon Lodge in the cloud forest near Monteverde. Tanagers, motmots, silky flycatchers and the sought after Resplendent Quetzal were some of the birds that remain etched in my mind. The guide who took us on a hike to see the quetzals said, "Once you see them, you will have them in your hearts forever." Corny, but true. I still think of their impossibly long, bright green tails.

Occasionally, a longed-for bird will just appear, without any purposeful hunt on my part. I had seen pictures of Hoopoes (*Upupa epops*) and of course, wanted to see one when we were in Sicily. On our way

to the ominous Mt. Etna, we stopped at a highway rest area similar to the gas station convenience store set-ups you find here in the States. Only in Italy, they serve espresso and cappuccino in little china cups.

As I waited for my husband I scanned the area beyond the parking lot with my binoculars. There was a Hoopoe just walking around. It was a quick glimpse but unmistakably a Hoopoe!

Back to the Evening Grosbeaks. I considered traveling to Algonquin Park in Ontario, Canada, about a three-and-a-half-hour drive from Toronto. According to the latest Winter Finch Forecast, by Ron Pittaway, they're reliably seen at the feeders outside the visitor center. Pittaway predicted a moderate irruptive year due to poor seed and cone production on their breeding grounds.

Not relishing an arctic-like experience, I hoped to see them closer to home. There were a few sightings posted on Twitter: a flyover at Floyd Bennett, a single male at Grant's Tomb and Riverside Park, and one out in Huntington, Long Island. But I was never in the right place at the right time. I felt like I was destined to





be tormented by those darn grosbeaks.

I needed a sure thing—or at least as sure as possible. I didn’t want to go on a wild grosbeak chase. I consulted eBird (a friend calls eBird “the perfect confluence of technology and humanity”) and looked for reports in New York State within a reasonable driving distance. Eureka! There were a couple of sightings in Sullivan County.

On New Year’s Day, we followed GPS to the two locations where the birds had been reported. Both private homes, they had several platform feeders and were surrounded by spruce and fir trees favored by the birds. We sat in the car and waited. Nothing. We moved to the second house just a few minutes away. Lots of chickadees, titmice, and woodpeckers, but no Evening Grosbeaks.

Quickly losing faith, we drove back to the first house. As we turned the corner I could see the chubby silhouettes of a half-dozen birds perched in a leafless tree. I quietly slipped out of the car. The birds took off. I ran down the hill following their flight, and then stopped. In a flash a flock of about 25 to 30 Evening Grosbeaks flew over my head toward the first house. I could hear their jingle-y trills.

I ran back to the first house. The birds had settled in the trees, on the ground and at the feeders. I spotted another birder snapping photographs. Over the next half hour, we enjoyed close, good looks of these remarkable golden birds. With sunlight beaming off their breasts, they looked burnished. They picked seed from the ground and the feeders. They pecked at cones in the surrounding fir trees. They dropped down to a narrow ditch alongside the road to drink water. They loafed in the trees as we took pictures. It was a feast—for them and for me.

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A final note: the other birder at the feeders was Karen C. Miller, president of the Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club of Orange County. She generously sent me her photos to include with this article. I also found the blog [Bashakill Birder](#), which is a great resource if you are traveling to Orange and Sullivan Counties (and maybe others).



*Evening Grosbeak.* Mixed-media artwork by Charles Tang.



# SPARKS!

By Cyrus Baty





I grew up on a small farm in southern Missouri. I was surrounded by nature and enjoyed my time outside. However, I never gave much thought to the birds. I could identify a male Cardinal or a Blue Jay, and I knew the songs of the Whip-poor-will and the Northern Bobwhite, but that was about the extent of my bird knowledge.

My discovery of birds and birding came many years later in Brooklyn. It started when

I found a small parrot that someone had abandoned. I

don't like the thought of birds in captivity, but this bird clearly couldn't survive in the

wild, so I took it home to care for it until I could find it a home. The bird didn't survive long, but I learned it was a Sun Conure from South America, a popular bird in the pet trade. While searching online to learn more about Sun Conures, I discovered the quaker parrots, or Monk Parakeets, that now reside here. I also learned about the recently extinct Carolina Parakeet, the once-native parrot species here in the eastern U.S. I was fascinated, so over the next couple months I took frequent trips to see the Monk Parakeets at Green-Wood Cemetery.

One late fall day in 2015, while returning home from a trip to Green-Wood, I passed through Prospect Park and saw a large group of people near the LeFrak Center looking at a bird in the grass. It was a Painted Bunting. I didn't see the bird that day, but I returned a few times that week and got to see it. Then came a flood of questions. Where's this bird from? Are there other birds like it here? How many? What kinds? At this point my curiosity peaked and I knew I had to do something about it.

At noon the following Saturday, I joined Michele Dreger's weekly Introduction to Birdwatching. I was immediately hooked. I think we saw over 30 species that day. I hadn't even heard of most of these birds. For that matter, I had been a frequent visitor to the park for years and hadn't even noticed birds. I couldn't believe there was so much bird diversity here in the city, all around me.

Suddenly I began noticing birds everywhere. Even from within my apartment I could hear the soft owl-like call of a Mourning Dove and the slow sweet song of a White-throated Sparrow. That first year, I went out

birding four or five times each week. Every chance I got I'd escape to the park or botanic garden. I'll never forget spotting my first Belted Kingfisher or my gasp of delight upon seeing my first Yellow Warbler. I remember exactly where I was standing in Prospect Park when I saw my first Indigo Bunting (at the Fallkill Falls) and my first Hooded Warbler (at the top of the Ambergill Falls).

I'm fortunate to have begun my birdwatching here in Brooklyn, surrounded by so many birders who are willing to share their knowledge. On almost all of my solo visits to the park, I'd encounter more experienced birders who eagerly answered my questions and offered pointers. Most of my learning, though, took place on Saturdays at noon. Michele had led the walk for 15 years and had built a core group of birders passionate about learning and sharing. I was extremely fortunate to find her and the walk's devoted regulars; learning became easier and more fun. Now Michele, having retired, has given me the chance to lead the group and share my passion for birding with others.

I've been birding for a few years now and I still have many more firsts to experience. Each outing teaches me something new. Recently, I visited the farm where I grew up. Again I was surprised. There are so many birds! Red-headed Woodpeckers and Pileated Woodpeckers, Indigo Buntings and Yellow-billed Cuckoos. I may not have seen them when I was younger, but I'm thrilled to notice them now.



# Meet The Artist: Sam Dean Lynn

By Linda Ewing

**T**he evocative illustrations that have accompanied the “Sparks” column since the fall of 2017 are the work of Brooklyn artist and educator Sam Dean Lynn. A native of Plymouth, Mass., Sam moved to Brooklyn almost eight years ago to study illustration at the School of Visual Arts in Manhattan. She now lives in Sunset Park, not far from birding hotspot Green-Wood Cemetery.

Creating art from nature goes back to Sam’s childhood: she has loved to draw for as long as she can remember, and animals and flowers were some of her earliest subjects. She develops her drawings with pen and ink, then uses pencil, watercolor, and sometimes acrylics to add color. Compared with really tough subjects—cars, say, or realistic portraits—she finds drawing birds relatively easy. The internet puts hundreds of photographic models at her fingertips, and she also keeps multiple field guides on hand to consult for details if needed. Even so, translating a photographic image or picture in a field guide into one of her distinctive illustrations draws on a mix of skill, imagination, and research.

“What can be difficult,” Sam explains, “is portraying the birds in a way they would actually behave and look like in their natural environment. It’s fun to draw a pretty picture from the imagination, but for me, at least for the Clapper Rail, I like to keep one foot in real life, too. That way the image I produce can

hopefully be more closely connected to the author’s memory. Sometimes I alter the way the birds look as a stylistic choice, but I always try to keep some element of how the species would really act.”

Sam often finds herself moved by the “Sparks” stories she illustrates...and her drawings, in turn, have moved the individuals who shared those stories. In the Fall 2018 issue, Chris Laskowski rejected the idea of a single “spark” bird, comparing his love of birds to an ember kindled over time. The ember, in Chris’s telling, was his family’s backyard bird feeder, stocked with his father’s proprietary seed mix—heavy on the thistle seed, the better to attract finches—that he and his dad would preload into old coffee cans to fill the feeder all winter.

Sam’s illustration depicts a gangly goldfinch perched on a battered, seed-filled coffee can. “When I first saw the picture, it sent chills up my spine,” Chris says. “It was very emotional. It brought back all kinds of memories of my dad, and those coffee cans he’d collect all year.”

Chris contacted Sam, explained how much he loved the picture, and—though he’s not big on buying things—asked if she’d consider selling it to him. The picture now hangs in the main room of Chris’s apartment; it’s the first piece of original art he’s ever owned.

Between her freelance illustration work, juggling multiple jobs as an art teacher, babysitter, and retail worker, and applying to graduate programs in Art Education, Sam hasn’t had

time to do much birdwatching of her own recently. When the weather warms up, though, she hopes to hit Green-Wood Cemetery with binoculars (and possibly a sketchpad) in hand.

Sam’s own spark bird? Probably a cardinal—less for its brilliant red color, she says, than its beautiful song.



*Selfie. Mixed-media illustration by Sam Dean Lynn.*







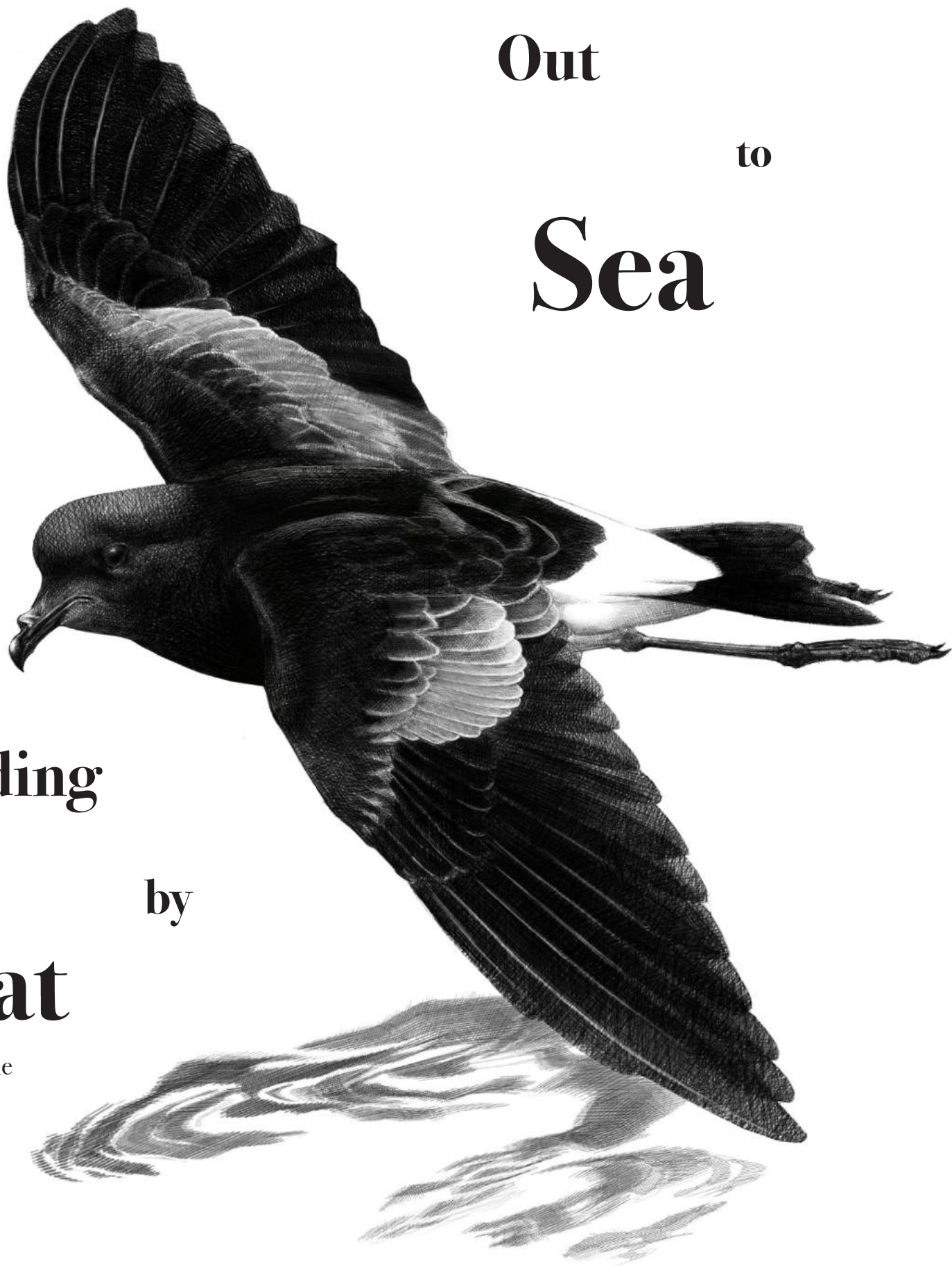
# Out to Sea

## Birding

by

## Boat

By Ed Crowne





**A**t 4:15 a.m., streetlights dimly illuminate November's chilly salt air. Small, sleep-deprived groups are concentrated near a dock on Sheepshead Bay awaiting arrivals and awaiting departure. Forty-five minutes later, an attendance roll is called while final preparations by the crew are carried out. A small potted tree—a provisional welcome mat for wayward passerines—plus birdseed and chum are last-minute additions. Soon we are all aboard the “Brooklyn VI” and bound seaward. Nearly everyone gathers in the spacious cabin to attempt recovering missing sleep. So begins a November 2018 Brooklyn pelagic trip.

Every pelagic trip must begin somewhere. My first pelagic trip in September 2000 came after I read “Seabirds and Pelagic Birding” in the concluding pages of Susan Roney Drennan’s “Where to Find Birds in New York State.” However, the geographic starting point for the trip was Brielle, N.J., not New York. As we steamed toward the deepest waters in rollicking seas, we encountered Cory’s, Great and Audubon’s Shearwaters. In the vicinity of our turnaround point,

almost 100 miles from shore, we sighted a Pomarine Jaeger, and Black and Bridled Terns. Along the way we observed some passerines too, including a wing-weary Brown Cowbird that booked temporary passage, sometimes pausing and posing on camera equipment and even tops of heads.

The weather in early September 2000 was mild enough but the lively seas and the vessel, much smaller than the “Brooklyn VI,” affected observers. “Pelagic birding [is] the hardest kind there is. The boat is moving, the ocean is moving, the birds are moving and the wind and lighting conditions are variable and ever changing.” This description from the recently published “Better Birding” by George Armistead and Brian Sullivan evokes some of the caution and challenge sea birding requires. But there are real compensations, as well as mitigations and recommendations for the troubles. If you haven’t been on a pelagic trip already, an overnight trip is probably not the best initiation, even if the birding may be much better. Beforehand, it’s worth reading the preparation recommendations found on Sea Life Paulagics’ website, for example,



Sunrise. All photographs by Ed Crowne.

and asking questions of those you know who have already gone to sea.

Target birds for pelagic trips reflect seasonal changes. For August, Sea Life Paulagics, for example, lists four species of storm-petrels, three species of



A selection of "bird food."

shearwaters, two species of jaegers, South Polar Skua, Arctic Tern and Red-necked Phalarope. On an August 2018 trip, a Trindade Petrel, one of the Atlantic gadflies, was sighted! From November through January, new species (Great Skua, alcids, Northern Fulmar and Black-legged Kittiwake) are added while others retreat.

Intending to join a pelagic trip departing from Brooklyn on Jan. 20, 2018, I attended a presentation to the Brooklyn Bird Club by Doug Gochfeld and Sean Sime entitled "Victory at Sea: Offshore in the Age of Big Data." Because of weather conditions, the trip was rescheduled to Feb. 4. Then that date was cancelled because of dock insurance issues. Later that year, the original Oct. 28 date was rescheduled to Nov. 4. Dates for pelagic trips are sometimes as liquid and unpredictable as the waters on which they sail.

Following departure and brief rest, our first stop on the "Brooklyn VI" was at 6:10 a.m., 15 miles or so into the New York/New Jersey Bight. Here, among scoters, we saw two Parasitic Jaegers and a Sooty Shearwater. A Marsh Wren, like a determined brown bullet, appeared alongside and then, with enviable panache, perched on the lens of a camera. About an hour later, still heading southeast, we stopped to see Black-legged Kittiwakes, Bonaparte's Gulls, Northern Gannets, and a Great Shearwater. There were at least three passerine species in this neighborhood as well. During two subsequent pauses we added Wilson's Storm-Petrels and Manx Shearwater.

So far the air was relatively warm and sunlit while the seas were quite tame. No discomfort here to distract from birding endeavors. At 10:15, the sea temperature was a relatively warm 58 degrees at a depth of 169 feet (or 28 fathoms for the more nautically inclined). Two recent articles, one in The Wall Street Journal ("Warming Seas," Dec. 22, 2018) and another in The New York Times ("Ocean Warming," Jan. 10, 2019) raise alarms about warmer ocean waters and the implications for marine life and commercial interests.

An hour later, we reached our furthest destination, 79 miles east of the Jersey Shore's Seaside Heights. The much deeper waters of the Hudson Canyon, a desirable destination, were beyond reach today. Sailing first south and then turning northwest, we took a more southerly but parallel course for our return to port.

Rachel Carson's first book, "Under the Sea-wind," includes a scene of storm-petrels ("Mother Carey's chickens") discovering food, only to be driven off by a shearwater, in turn displaced by a jaeger. By now we had seen all three species but not together. For more recent drama, a photo on eBird documents a South Polar Skua first drowning then dining on a Cory's Shearwater in July 2018 in very close proximity to the path the "Brooklyn VI" took in November.

At one of our final stops, in declining late-afternoon light, we watched as the surface boiled with dozens of plunging Northern Gannets, two Fin Whales, a Humpbacked Whale, and several Common Dolphins.

Asked by a fellow birder for my favorite bird seen on the trip, I told him the Manx Shearwater.





He agreed with the choice. But the Marsh Wren that landed on a birder standing next to me was a highlight too. We had sighted nearly 40 bird species, fifteen of them passerines. One of the passerines, a Dark-eyed Junco, consumed some of the birdseed that had been thoughtfully provided.

In a back-to-earth moment, we approached land and internet service in the darkness with reports circulating of a Harris's Sparrow in Central Park. I considered chasing the Harris's Sparrow. And I looked forward to my next pelagic trip.

Two months later, Sea Life Paulagics announced that the "Brooklyn VI" and the New Jersey vessel on which they relied would no longer be available. Such

are the uncertainties of pelagic birding. The "Brooklyn VI" is relocating to the West Coast for whale-watching. Anyone headed West with it and interested in pelagic birding should certainly entertain the Pacific possibilities. While we await local replacement vessels, those willing to migrate farther north and south along the East Coast can certainly find exciting pelagic opportunities.







*Black-capped Chickadee.* Watercolor by Toni Simon.

# Happenings in Prospect Park

By Stanley Greenberg

**O**n January 22, the Prospect Park Community Committee (ComCom) met to hear reports from the Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP), NYPD, and Sue Donohue, the president of the Prospect Park Alliance (PPA). The PPA oversees many of the day-to-day operations of the park, sharing the responsibility with NYC's Parks Department.

The ComCom meeting welcomes a representative from various groups that regularly use the park, such as cyclists, dog walkers, runners, ball players, and the bird club. I am the Brooklyn Bird Club representative. These meetings give us an opportunity to ask about specific issues, raise concerns, and in general get to know the staff so we can approach them individually, if necessary.

PEPs (security in the white cars) reported eight summonses were issued in December, mostly for dogs off leash. Keep calling 311 if you have dog or other park abuse complaints.

Jerry Gallardo of the NYPD's 78th Precinct







*Common Merganser*. Mixed-media artwork by Charles Tang.



*Numenius borealis*: A Lament

Of the late Eskimo Curlew, so plump with Labrador crowberry  
their skins burst when they hit the ground,

Killer George H. Mackay wrote in 1892 from Nantucket:

“They suffer but little, however, in New England from such pursuit,  
as the number killed in the great majority of years is trivial and has no effect  
in diminishing their numbers.”

Mackay’s killing-journal tracks the decline of the species in the last quarter  
of the nineteenth century and into the first quarter of the twentieth century.

Now in the first quarter of the twenty-first we date the last confirmed sighting  
to Barbados in the year 1963, the year, coincidentally, that I was born.

“As fat as dough” in the fall, fat for the flight south,  
“doughbirds,” “the finest eating of any of our birds,”

Racing up the Mississippi Valley in spring towards tundra breeding grounds,  
down along the coast in fall towards the pampas,

through volleys of lead.

In *The Auk*, in 1920, Mackay reconsidered:

“From my earliest recollection these birds have been coming to the island,  
gradually diminishing in numbers until only a small remnant now returns...”

Not just the market hunters, of course, but the farmers who turned the prairie  
and the spring curlews’ favorite food, Rocky Mountain grasshoppers.

Mere absence, they argue, is not evidence enough for the final declaration  
of extinction of this bird with the bill like a young moon.

For my whole life, *Numenius borealis*, the numinous curlew, has been absent,  
the sky without its luminous new moon.

—Matthew Wills

## Sources:

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Nantucket,” *The Auk*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Oct., 1921), p. 600.

Gary R. Graves, “Late 19th Century Abundance Trends of the  
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The International Journal of Waterbird Biology*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (June  
2010), pp. 236-241.



# Birding Copenhagen

By Nikolaj Noel Christensen



The Amager Fælled Common with Copenhagen's city center in the background.  
All photographs by Nikolaj Noel Christensen.

If I mention Copenhagen, most of you will instantly think of The Little Mermaid, Tivoli Gardens or the waterfront district Nyhavn, with its New Nordic restaurants including the famous Noma. But Copenhagen is also about birds and birding in this calm southern Scandinavian landscape, one with beautiful beaches and a lush birch forest that is home to woodpeckers and other woodland creatures. Within the city limits, a number of micro parks and smaller woodlots have much to offer a new visitor, including all the common European species.

So for first-time visitors, how do you get around and how can you manage the most in the shortest amount of time while visiting Copenhagen? Well if you want to get around like a local Copenhagener, then renting a bike from one of the city's many bike shops is definitely your answer. But remember that the biking culture in Copenhagen is unique and that proper cycling skills are necessary. Locals tend to see quite a few tourists biking like madmen and generally feel uncomfortable with the ways foreigners take to the bike lanes. If you take out a bike, ride like the locals—that is carefully—even if there is a soaring European Honey Buzzard in the sky or Common Cranes signal their presence above you with their beautiful call. Safety first and follow the rules—the birds will be there another time.

the airport. You can get a visitor's card at all DSB stands and offices around in the city. If you're confused, just ask a local. They won't mind.

The Amager Fælled Common is by far the largest and most extensive natural area in Copenhagen and actually the most extensive wilderness close to any city in Europe. But it requires a bit of local knowledge to know how to get around and where to find the most interesting species in the shortest amount of time. This question isn't easily answered. But a good place to start would either be to take the Metro to the final station of Vestamager Metrostation and jump on the 33 bus towards Kongelunden (directly translated to the King's Woods), and then walk from there to the nearby beaches, marshes, and lakes.

The King's Woods is one of the oldest woods in the country and is known for the beautiful Collinstien (Collins walk), which cuts through the old forest straight to lovely beaches, where you can find waders and terns resting and feeding along the shore. The beaches of Amagerfælled have long been known for its breeding population of Little Tern, just as you will be able to look for the charismatic European Stonechat in the low scrub and bushes close to the beaches. In the old and lush green forest of Kongelunden you can hear the uplifting song of the Wood Warbler from the old trees. You should also listen for the beautiful call

of the European Oriole and the drumming of the many Great Spotted Woodpeckers which call this forest home.

A second possibility would be to rent a bike for 50 krone at Vestamager Naturcenter (Vestamager Nature center) near the Vestamager Metrostation and bike to the north end of Klydesøen (Avocet Lake). This area requires a scope if you want to get the full experience from your visit. But you can

survive on binoculars and camera, if you don't mind missing the most distant birds on the endless horizon and simply want to get out in the field. There will still be plenty of birds to see. The landscape here is a southern Scandinavian plain situated in a vast wetland with beautiful woodlots. On these vast plains just



A flock of Common Cranes migrating north over Copenhagen.

Your second option for getting around could be to get a visitor's card for all public transport, similar to those in other major cities like New York or London. This will give you the possibility of taking the Metro directly towards Amager Fælled Common, the city's largest nature reserve, even if you've just arrived from



outside the city center, you can watch Ruffs in their courtship dance, the displays of the Common Snipe, resting Barnacle Geese, the majestic White-tailed Eagle, Short-eared Owls hiding in the tall grass, and the special song of the Grasshopper Warbler on a late spring afternoon.

The area of Klydesøen is also famous among Danish birders for its many rarities found through the years, with quite a few records of Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Pectoral Sandpipers, American Golden Plovers, and a single Wilson's Phalarope. Just to underscore the fact that you might bump into a Yank even on the mudflats and shorelines of Copenhagen. But the most recent super rarity was the first record of a Pacific Swift in Denmark. That lingered with approximately 300 Common Swifts at Hejresøen (Heron Lake) for a couple hours before taking to the skies on a rainy spring day. The areas of Amagerfælled, Klydesøen, and Kongelunden are truly something special and a gem in the jewel box that is Copenhagen.

A third possibility would be to go to Fælledparken and get comfortable with at least the most common European species, while remaining close to restaurants and within easy access to the city center either by foot, bike, or local bus.

Fælledparken is the most central park in Copenhagen and offers a variation of smaller habitats. My best advice would be to start birding in the northern part of the lake and work your way around the lake, which has a breeding pair of Little Grebes. Caspian Terns and kingfishers frequently visit the lake to catch fish in the early morning or afternoon. In the surrounding small woodlots you will be able to find warblers, flycatchers, and goldcrest in good numbers.

A fourth option would be to bike or take either the 5C or 250S bus towards Utterslev Mose, a network of three lakes with extensive reed banks and woodlots that can be full of warblers, flycatchers, redstarts, and goldcrest in the early morning or afternoon through May. You will also see White Wagtails doing as their name suggests on the grassy fields and maybe even a skylark.

The marshes of Utterslev Mose also have breeding Marsh Harriers, Eurasian Bitterns, and Bearded Reedlings. The beautiful Black-necked Grebe has its Copenhagen stronghold on these waters, in what was once Europe's largest breeding colony of Black-headed Gulls.

At last, just as in New York, there are also the cemeteries, which offer excellent birding opportunities

year-round. But spring and autumn migration are the best times for visiting birders. It is likely you will run into local birders on an early spring morning walking their local patch in search for the year's first Firecrest, Greenish Warbler, Golden Oriole or Collared Flycatcher. Because the first rule of birding is that everything and anything can turn up, if you put in the



A Pied Flycatcher (top) and Chiff Chaff (bottom) in early spring at Utterslev Mose marshes.

effort and research properly, you are bound to have a great outing.

There are a number of cemeteries in central Copenhagen. But I would recommend spending an early morning at Bispebjerg Kirkegård (Bispebjerg Cemetery), which can be absolutely full of birds waiting for flies in sunlit alleys of birch tree—Willow Warbler, Chiff Chaff, Pied Flycatcher, and Spotted Flycatcher. In large flocks of flycatchers you might be

lucky enough to find a Collared Flycatcher buzzing around the old trees.

Another cemetery worth mentioning is Assistens Kirkegården (Assisting Cemetery), located in the middle of Copenhagen in an area called Nørrebro, known for its hipsters, trendy beer bars, great coffee bars and local shops full of sustainable alternatives. But Nørrebro also offers great birding at Assistens Kirkegården with its variation of micro-habitats from low shrubs to great tall old trees. The cemetery is full of different kinds of bushes and fruits. There are always birds to be found here, although the cemetery is known for its many Firecrests and Eurasian Whynecks in early April.

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Spring migration in Copenhagen is a time of celebration and the time of year which most local birdwatchers look forward to. It starts in late March when the Common Crane returns from its Spanish overwintering grounds en route to their northern breeding grounds in Northern Sweden and southern Finland.

Another harbinger of spring that arrives shortly afterwards is the Barn Swallow, alongside the Willow Warbler and Pied Flycatcher. After these arrivals, then everything just turns on with new species showing up

on an almost daily basis from the last week of April until the third week of May. It's the time when sleep isn't as necessary (at least not as much), if you want to keep up with your fellow birding friends through Scandinavia's light summer nights.

This is also the time of the year when we stay up late at night and head for the beautiful experience of listening to the night singers, as we call them, in the reed banks and woodland edges. Listening to a Thrush Nightingale for the first time can only be described as one of the greatest joys in the natural world—not to mention when it's joined by Reed Warblers, Marsh Warblers, and Common Grasshopper Warbler. Together they make up the full night choir, and it feels like magic under the bright summer night sky.

This leads us to the third group of birds—those that will be of special interest to the American birder: the European warblers. Unlike the closely related New World wood warblers, the European wing isn't blessed with the colors of the rainbow and make less of an appearance while foraging for their favorite fruits. However, although the European warblers are characterized by few notable markings, their songs are wonderful. And our warblers sing both day and night through the summer.

A classic warbler would be the Eurasian Blackcap. The male has a black cap and the female a brownish one. When it comes to identifying European warblers,



The Firecrest is a true gem. Photograph from Utterslev Mose.





Collared Flycatcher at Bispebjerg Kirkegård in early spring.

it's really their song and overall appearance, combined with knowledge of their distinct markings, that will make the difference in the field. Therefore, before buying the ticket over the Pond, I would suggest you listen to their songs on major websites, just to get a head start before the trip. I recommend using Xeno-Canto or the Collins field guide.

Through the summer, from June until the beginning of August, birding in Copenhagen is not as exciting, even though you can still find many breeding species with chicks all over the city. For instance, in Amagerfælled and Utterslev Mose, you can find Crested Grebes with chicks on their backs and local Marsh Harriers hunting for prey in their elegant flight. But in general, the summer is calm for the experienced birder, in spite of the challenge of trying to find breeding pairs in the field and the joy of long summer nights with a good drink.

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Fall migration begins in the first weeks of August, when the late waders are still lingering on our shorelines and beaches all over the country, and birds of prey once again fill the sky on a clear afternoon in September. From August through the end of October is an exciting period if you are birding in Copenhagen and surrounding areas—especially Falsterbo, Sweden, just on the other side of Øresund, as Adelia Honeywood described in the previous Clapper Rail. In my humble

opinion, every birder should visit Falsterbo one day.

But Copenhagen has plenty to offer too. On clear days when hundreds of Common Buzzards take to the skies and pass right over your head in the middle of the city, it's magic. The same goes for the warblers zipping through the nearest bushes and trees, along the banks of streams, often in flocks consisting of Chiff Chaff, Willow Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, and Garden Warbler. Then a Spotted Flycatcher suddenly throws itself into the air for a fly and catches your attention only to disappear into the thick bushes again. Once you hear the familiar distant call of the Common Crane in the thin air, you look up to see the first flock of autumn's migrating cranes on their southbound journey to the steppes of Spain and Hungary. That's the feeling of fall migration in Copenhagen.

When it comes to fall, I'd recommend once again Utterslev Mose (Utterslev Marshes) and parking yourself on the small peninsula running into the lakes called Langholmen. This peninsula kind of resembles the point in Central Park. Local birdwatchers meet here and hang out together for long periods of time watching the migration. The great benefit of Langholmen is that you can find warblers and flycatchers in nearby old trees, bushes, and the surrounding reeds. Breeding kingfishers pass through the few canals that cut through the area in both spring and fall. Marsh Harriers and Caspian Terns also pass through as they hunt in the beautiful landscape.

I should also mention the entire area of



Eurasian Blackcap, early morning at Utterslev Mose.

Amagerfælled and especially the many small woodlots in the area with adjacent lakes. Because Amagerfælled always has something to offer in autumn, Pinseskoven (Whitsun Wood), which is close to Hejresøen (Heron Lake), is a popular place to search for Siberian rarities, such as Red-breasted Flycatcher, Yellow-browed Warbler, and Pallas's Warbler. These small green jewels can be extremely difficult to find and it often takes great effort to locate them as they hunt for insects in the green-leafed birch trees. But it makes it worth it when you finally do catch a view of one of these rare beauties from the great northern taiga forest. Just to watch the bird for a short while at one stop on its long journey.

It pays to spend some time around Heron Lake, especially in mid-September, when the Eurasian Hobby, a small falcon, makes it migrating stopover and catches dragonflies on a daily basis into the start of October. In addition to the hunting hobbies, you should see migrating Common Buzzards and perhaps even one of the local breeding White-tailed Eagles soaring over the woods on its way to Klydesøen (Avocet Lake) for prey.

A final hotspot I can recommend is the isolated urban

location of Nordhavnstippen, which is better known among Copenhagen birders as Stubben. This super-urbanized area has often showed its potential over and over again given its proximity to the sea even as it sits in the middle of the city. Various habitats coexist in this industrial area. There are two small lakes almost next to the sea and a variety of vegetation, mostly sea buckthorn, rowan berries, and tall grass, which makes it a perfect stopover for birds migrating at night and in the early morning. Yellow-browed Warbler, Red-throated Pipit and maybe even a Bluethroat could show up in the reed banks. At the very least, you will hear the song of the European Robin and the call of Song Thrushes and Brambling Geese as the sun rises over Copenhagen once again.

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I would like to thank Ryan Goldberg and Adelia Honeywood for encouraging me to write this article, along with a great thanks to all the Brooklyn Bird Club members I met in the spring of 2018 during my inaugural New York birding trip. It can't be appreciated enough. I hope to see you all again.

If you plan on visiting Copenhagen, you can reach me at [nnc@ibrev.dk](mailto:nnc@ibrev.dk). And my website is [www.nikolajnoel.com](http://www.nikolajnoel.com).





# 2018 Brooklyn Bird Club Finances

By Heidi Steiner

I will just give a brief accounting of the bird club's finances for 2018. We began the year with \$6,046 dollars, which is the balance from the club's checking account and the PayPal account combined. Money added to the two accounts throughout the year came entirely through yearly membership dues of \$25 per person (181 members as of Dec. 31, 2018) and small donations. These credits totaled \$6,378, which, added to our \$6,046, gives us a working budget of \$12,424. Our expenses during the year were as follows:

General Liability Insurance: \$1,561 (renewed annually)

Donations: \$1,552

This year we made donations to the following organizations: the Brooklyn Public Library (host of our monthly programs), Prospect Park Alliance, Green-Wood Cemetery Historic Fund, New York State Ornithological Association, New York State Young Birders Club, the Mediterranean Alliance for Birding and Birdlife International. Separately, Brooklyn Bird Club members raised \$5,052 on 2018 World Migratory Bird Day in May. This Birdathon money was all donated to Wildlife in Need of Rescue and Rehabilitation, or WINORR, the local nonprofit volunteer organization that cares for sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife.

Programs: \$900

This year the Programs committee hosted nine outstanding programs covering a wide range of birding related topics and concerns. Each program speaker is paid \$100.

Events: \$784

These include the annual Audubon Christmas Count dinner, the gathering we held in Prospect Park to honor Michele Dreger, and for light refreshments for 2-3 council meetings throughout the year. Included in this number is the cost of two original watercolors done by Paul Keim. One, a Red-shouldered Hawk, was presented to Rick Cech, who stepped down as the compiler of the Brooklyn circle for the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count, a position he held officially for over a decade and unofficially for time immemorial. The other watercolor, of a Scarlet Tanager,

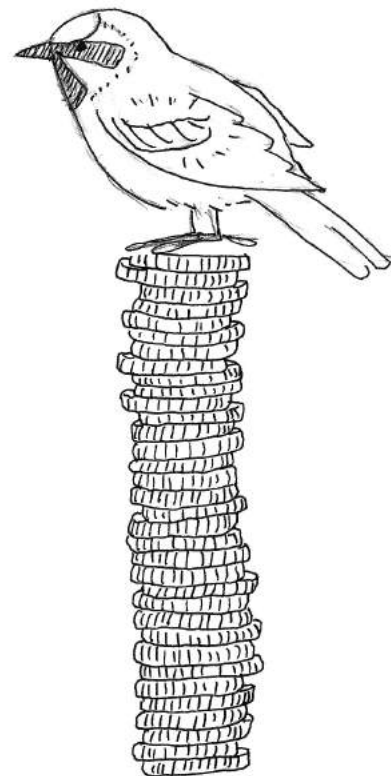
was presented to Michele Dreger, for her tremendous contribution to our club and our community over 15 years of her beloved weekly and monthly walks in Prospect Park.

Birdseed for Prospect Park feeders: \$153

PayPal fees: \$267

Software for website: \$76

Our total expenditures in 2018 were \$5,293. Deduct this from our total budget of \$12,424 and the difference is \$7,131. This is the balance of our accounts entering 2019.



# Upcoming BBC Programs

Please check the [BBC website](#) for updates. All programs begin at 7 p.m.

## 03.19.19

Brooklyn Public Library, Information Commons

### **Grace Markman** **“Homegrown Strategies: Saving our Native Flora”**

Grace Markman has worked as a field botanist and educator in New York City and the Northeast for over thirty years. Her workshop will focus on successful strategies that have been utilized to conserve and promote our native flora. A power point presentation will be given on creative projects initiated by both individuals and small groups in New York City and the Northeast. Can you help initiate a native plant arboretum or create a new plant corridor? We will consider positive effective ways to involve our local and state officials. After this presentation we will divide into small groups to share ideas and create new ones that can be implemented to address the vital issues of conservation and promotion of our native flora.

## 04.23.19

Prospect Park Zoo, Classroom C

### **Tom Gray** **“The Amazing Birds of South East Asia”**

Tom Gray is the Director of Science for the conservation organization Wildlife Alliance. He recently moved to upper Manhattan, with Fort Tyron Park slowly becoming his local patch, after 15 years living and working in South East Asia. This talk will focus on some of the remarkable birds of South East

Asia, particularly Cambodia, and the conservation efforts focused to conserve them in the face of the region’s rapidly growing economies and shrinking wildernesses. Tom will describe expeditions looking for wintering shorebirds, including Spoon-billed Sandpiper, in the Gulf of Thailand and to the peaks of the Cardamom Mountains searching for endemic partridges and Laughing Thrush. The talk culminates in encounters with the majestic Giant Ibis—one of the world’s most threatened and evolutionary distinct species.

## 05.14.19

Prospect Park Zoo, Classroom C

### **Tessa Boase** **“Mrs Pankhurst’s Purple Feather: Fashion, Fury and Feminism—Women’s Fight for Change”**

For half a century, from the 1870s to the 1920s, women on both sides of the Atlantic were gripped by a fashion craze that decreed all hats should be laden with feathers. Not just feathers, but wings, bird and whole bodies of birds—often several birds at a time. Species the world over were slowly brought to the brink of extinction, and all for the sake of millinery.

Campaigning on behalf of the birds was a small band of angry woman with a splendidly simple goal. They were going to stamp out the fashion for feathers in hats.

The “feather fight,” as it became known, was bitter, vicious, and un-sisterly. Wearers of the “bird hat” were attacked as narcissists and slaughterers. Edwardian fashion victims hit back, calling their female critics “plumage cranks” and “feather faddists.” Why shouldn’t emancipated women wear what they wanted?

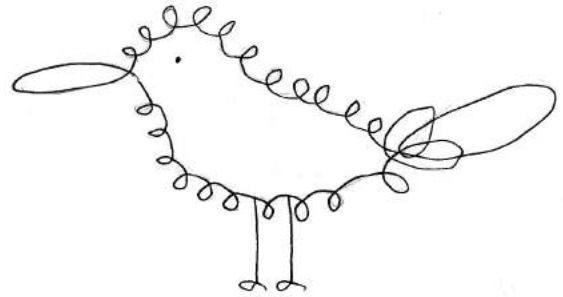
Leading the battle in Britain was a fearsome



woman who hasn't been remembered by history, and yet for 50 years was the driving force behind the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), today Britain's biggest conservation charity. Her name was Etta Lemon. Where she lead in 1889, the Audubon Society would follow.

When social historian Tessa Boase told the RSPB she wanted to write their early story, they refused to let her revisit their archives. To a former investigative journalist and Oxford English graduate, this was a challenge she could not resist. Join her to hear the intriguing untold story of women, birds, hats—and votes.

After the talk, Tessa will be signing copies of her book, "Mrs Pankhurst's Purple Feather: Fashion, Fury and Feminism—Women's Fight for Change."









## *Brooklyn XMas Count: Historic Count Results*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Species</i>	<i>Regular Species</i>	<i>Irreg. Species</i>	<i>Rare Species</i>	<i># Seen</i>
1981	111	87	12	13	73,106
1982	110	86	12	13	96,869
1983	121	87	16	18	121,048
1984	119	95	14	11	93,252
1985	120	92	16	13	35,261
1986	121	93	16	13	28,969
1987	118	91	15	14	24,374
1988	119	93	15	12	30,424
1989	122	92	15	15	23,092
1990	110	90	11	10	26,482
1991	133	95	20	19	47,312
1992	126	97	12	18	36,321
1993	125	95	16	16	35,157
1994	123	97	18	9	34,176
1995	126	98	18	11	34,522
1996	119	97	11	12	33,519
1997	130	98	17	16	43,024
1998	126	96	15	15	51,636
1999	128	97	20	11	36,132
2000	123	95	17	11	46,265
2001	123	95	19	9	27,583
2002	119	97	14	8	27,818
2003	126	97	17	12	34,902
2004	128	97	17	14	29,978
2005	123	99	16	8	31,991
2006	121	98	13	10	41,164
2007	123	96	14	14	41,427
2008	123	99	18	7	46,617
2009	122	98	15	9	42,941
2010	126	97	20	9	54,822
2011	132	100	20	12	57,508
2012	134	100	20	14	41,717
2013	111	97	9	5	39,174
2014	124	97	22	5	41,923
2015	117	93	16	8	42,766
2016	119	97	15	7	34,441
2017	120	98	15	7	56,886
2018	121	95	16	10	32,568
	122.2	95.3	15.8	11.5	44,136
<b># Species</b>	230	100	32	98	
<b>Av % Seen</b>	53.1%	95.3%	49.5%	11.8%	
<b>Act % Seen</b>	52.6%	95.0%	50.0%	10.2%	

**Brooklyn XMas Highlights: 2018****Territory = TC**

Species Name	x Last 10 Years	Last Seen	All-Time			10-Year			Av	2018	Hi All	Hi 10Yr	Lo All	Lo 10Yr	Rare/ Irr
			Mx Yr	Max	Min	Max	Min								
Regular [8-10 yrs]															
American Black Duck	10	2018	1963	4,400	477	2015	1,266	485	768	485				x	
Greater Scaup	10	2018	1966	14,537	578	2010	7,405	728	2,563	728				x	
Long-tailed Duck	10	2018	2007	926	2	2018	457	82	244	457		x			
Common Goldeneye	10	2018	1937	3,000	1	2018	65	1	22	65		x			
American Coot	10	2018	1979	344	11	2010	80	18	45	18				x	
Black-bellied Plover	10	2018	2011	82	1	2011	82	7	35	7				x	
Sanderling	10	2018	1992	964	50	2018	942	50	370	942		x			
Purple Sandpiper	10	2018	1979	85	1	2009	30	6	16	6				x	
Ring-billed Gull	10	2018	2009	10,282	1,127	2009	10,282	3,373	6,518	3,373				x	
Common Loon	10	2018	2005	326	1	2018	183	41	88	183		x			
Great Blue Heron	10	2018	1991	46	10	2018	33	12	18	33		x			
Belted Kingfisher	9	2018	1994	27	1	2018	7	1	3	7		x			
Red-bellied Woodpecker	10	2018	2018	61	1	2018	61	15	35	61	x	x			
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	10	2018	2012	25	1	2012	25	2	13	2				x	
Monk Parakeet	10	2018	1999	90	1	2011	53	5	24	5				x	
Blue Jay	10	2018	1992	350	19	2018	289	19	119	289		x			
American Crow	10	2018	1995	4,457	39	2018	517	39	149	517		x			
Horned Lark	10	2018	1938	1,025	3	2016	91	25	55	25				x	
White-breasted Nuthatch	10	2018	2018	77	1	2018	77	3	30	77	x	x			
Brown Creeper	10	2018	1992	14	1	2018	6	1	3	6		x			
Northern Mockingbird	10	2018	2018	162	27	2018	162	32	82	162	x	x			
American Pipit	9	2018	2008	99	1	2010	97	1	16	1				x	
Common Grackle	9	2018	2017	153	1	2017	153	1	26	1				x	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	10	2018	1997	2,642	126	2009	500	126	243	126			x	x	



Species Name	x Last 10 Years	Last Seen	All-Time			10-Year			Av	2018	Hi All	Hi 10Yr	Lo All	Lo 10Yr	Rare/ Irr
			Mx Yr	Max	Min	Max	Min								
Irregular [4-7 yrs]															
Canvasback	6	2018	1967	4,509	1	2010	13	1	4	1				x	IRR
Common Eider	6	2018	2010	82	1	2010	82	5	31	50					IRR
Red-necked Grebe	7	2018	2014	7	1	2014	7	1	3	3					IRR
Black-crowned Night-Heron	7	2018	1971	95	1	2011	6	1	3	1				x	IRR
Great Horned Owl	8	2018	2015	3	1	2015	3	1	2	1					IRR
Snowy Owl	6	2018	2013	15	1	2013	15	1	4	1				x	IRR
Northern Saw-whet Owl	5	2018	1995	4	1	2018	3	1	2	3		x			IRR
Fish Crow	6	2018	1990	337	1	2014	87	2	31	55					IRR
Common Raven	6	2018	2016	2	1	2016	2	1	2	2					IRR
Tree Swallow	7	2018	2007	180	1	2018	174	1	53	174		x			IRR
Golden-crowned Kinglet	7	2018	2005	55	1	2011	9	1	4	1				x	IRR
Purple Finch	5	2018	1974	53	1	2018	11	1	3	11		x			IRR
Pine Siskin	5	2018	1963	256	1	2012	33	4	12	4				x	IRR
Seaside Sparrow	4	2018	1975	6	1	2012	2	1	1	1					IRR
Rusty Blackbird	6	2018	1937	12	1	2010	8	1	3	1				x	IRR
Boat-tailed Grackle	7	2018	1993	719	1	2018	88	2	31	88		x			IRR
Rare [0-3 yrs]															
Red Knot	1	2018	1985	204	1	2018	1	1	1	1					RARE
Razorbill	3	2018	2012	37	1	2012	37	1	13	1				x	RARE
Iceland Gull	1	2018	1945	2	1	2018	1	1	1	1					RARE
Barn Owl	4	2018	1992	12	1	2011	1	1	1	1					RARE
Tyrant Flycatchers															
Eastern Phoebe	3	2018	2018	3	1	2018	3	1	2	3	x	x			RARE
Wrens															
Marsh Wren	3	2018	1984	8	1	2009	5	2	3	2					RARE
Thrushes															
Eastern Bluebird	2	2018	1995	65	1	2012	8	2	5	2				x	RARE
Fringilline & Cardueline Finches															
Evening Grosbeak	1	2018	1971	110	1	2018	1	1	1	1					RARE
Common Redpoll	2	2018	1963	150	1	2018	3	2	3	3		x			RARE
Yellow Warbler	2	2018	2004	1	1	2015	1	1	1	1					RARE

# Brooklyn Christmas Count Annual Report: 2018

Species	Total Seen	NS	PP	GW	OH	MP	FB	BB	SC	JB	RP	BP	BT
Snow Goose	9									9			
Brant	10,782	60			327	3195	2490	1944	1060	515	1150	41	
Canada Goose	1,938	106	299	102	65	567	21	194	294	284		6	
Mute Swan	89		1		78	2	4			3	1		
Wood Duck	4		3						1				
Northern Shoveler	342	1	235			6			35	65			
Gadwall	89	46			8				35				
Eurasian Wigeon	0					cw							
American Wigeon	68	41	2		2	7	7		7			2	
Mallard	889	19	146	4	215	258	35	23	82	101		6	
American Black Duck	485	32	7		62	71	94	39	64	99	10	7	
Northern Pintail	9									9			
Green-winged Teal	63								21	42			
Canvasback	1	1											
Greater Scaup	728	2			5	13	5	106	216	381			
Lesser Scaup	82	65							7	10			
Common Eider	50										8	42	
Surf Scoter	98				24	41	10				12	11	
White-winged Scoter	6				1						1	4	
Black Scoter	178				46	43					34	55	
Scoter (sp.)	372					10	100				12	250	
Long-tailed Duck	457				3	14	62	1			152	225	
Bufflehead	1,135	246	1		64	101	92	77	285	187	68	14	
Common Goldeneye	65	2			5		1	3	3	49	2		
Hooded Merganser	72				5	4		5	21	35	2		
Common Merganser	0		cw										
Red-breasted Merganser	484	6			14	42	85	98	23	56	81	79	
Ruddy Duck	302	3	30			60		7	113	89			
Ring-necked Pheasant	1								1				
Pied-billed Grebe	4		2			1		1					
Horned Grebe	85				2	8	16	14	20	15	9	1	
Red-necked Grebe	3						2		1				
Rock Pigeon	814	142	107	20	150	89	21	74	49	35	120	7	
Mourning Dove	239	35	59	22	68	6	4	1	1	40	1	2	
American Coot	18		10		6				2				
Black-bellied Plover	7									1		6	
Killdeer	6	2					1	2	1				
Red Knot	1										1		
Sanderling	942					72					385	485	
Dunlin	74					2	68		3			1	
Purple Sandpiper	6				5							1	
American Woodcock	3			1			1		1				
Greater Yellowlegs	3							2		1			
Razorbill	1											1	
Ring-billed Gull	3,373	444	296	52	620	757	497	114	411	24	69	89	
Herring Gull	1,208	43	42	4	50	105	172	68	270	168	192	94	



Species	Total Seen	NS	PP	GW	OH	MP	FB	BB	SC	JB	RP	BP	BT
Iceland Gull	1											1	
Great Black-backed Gull	191	9	4		19	41	23	6	5	14	19	51	
Red-throated Loon	84						1				41	42	
Common Loon	183				14	15	27	7	3	4	32	81	
Northern Gannet	21										3	18	
Double-crested Cormorant	82	11	1	1	11	3	8	23	14	8	1	1	
Great Cormorant	49	1				6	16	2	4	11		9	
Great Blue Heron	33	1	5	3	7	6	2	4	3	2			
Green Heron	0								cw				
Black-crowned Night-Heron	1								1				
Turkey Vulture	0					cw			cw				
Northern Harrier	18					1	6		7	3		1	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	7		1	1			2	1			1	1	
Cooper's Hawk	16	1	3	1		1	3		3	1	2	1	
Red-tailed Hawk	25	2	2	3		4	3	1	9	1			
Barn Owl	1						1						
Great Horned Owl	1		1										
Snowy Owl	1											1	
Northern Saw-whet Owl	3							1			2		
Belted Kingfisher	7	2			1	1		1	2				
Red-bellied Woodpecker	61		20	19	15	2	1		2	2			
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	1	1										
Downy Woodpecker	50		12	5	6	3	4	6	3	3	7	1	
Hairy Woodpecker	3		2		1								
Northern Flicker	101		3	1	4	10	54	9	12	3	1	4	
American Kestrel	13		2	2	1	1	1		2	2	1	1	
Merlin	8	1	1	1		1	1		1	2			
Peregrine Falcon	9		1	1		1	1		1	1	2	1	
Monk Parakeet	5			2	3								
Eastern Phoebe	3	1		1							1		
Blue Jay	289	3	100	82	38	23	4	8	31				
American Crow	517	23	4	1	2	2	6	458	12	2	7		
Fish Crow	55	11	24						15	5			
Common Raven	2		1		1								
Horned Lark	25						9					16	
Tree Swallow	174				5	2	1				90	76	
Black-capped Chickadee	34	2	4	6	2	1	9		1		1	8	
Tufted Titmouse	101	5	40	30	12	11			3				
Red-breasted Nuthatch	30	2	2	21			3				2		
White-breasted Nuthatch	77		39	30	5	3							
Brown Creeper	6		5							1			
Winter Wren	4		2						1		1		
Marsh Wren	2					2							
Carolina Wren	33		5	1	4	1	6	1	1	4	10		
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1									1			
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	8		1						5	2			
Eastern Bluebird	2						2						
Hermit Thrush	9	1	1	1		2	1				3		
American Robin	187	9	79	15	6	10	53	3	6	2	3	1	

Species	Total Seen	NS	PP	GW	OH	MP	FB	BB	SC	JB	RP	BP	BT
Gray Catbird	8						4			3		1	
Northern Mockingbird	162	13	5	19	4	11	48	6	14	9	23	10	
European Starling	2,549	158	182	29	175	269	432	75	412	367	235	215	
Cedar Waxwing	4		4										
House Sparrow	261	82	35	17	45	22	20	10	6	12	3	9	
American Pipit	1						1						
Evening Grosbeak	1											1	
House Finch	128		15	4	2	2	1			20	1	83	
Purple Finch	11		6				5						
Common Redpoll	3											3	
Pine Siskin	4			4									
American Goldfinch	180		42	75	2	11	7	7	17	2	15	2	
Snow Bunting	37											37	
Eastern Towhee	2									1		1	
American Tree Sparrow	31					11	5	4	5			6	
Field Sparrow	7	1				1	3		1		1		
Savannah Sparrow	39					1	29		1	3	1	4	
Seaside Sparrow	1					1							
Fox Sparrow	46		12	10	2	6	1	1	14				
Song Sparrow	271	3	17	6	17	35	53	33	39	14	41	13	
Swamp Sparrow	23		1			9	1	1	6		2	3	
White-throated Sparrow	402	56	115	76	17	7	48	23	13	23	23	1	
Dark-eyed Junco	59		12	16	1	8	4	2	10		3	3	
Red-winged Blackbird	31		12			2			17				
Brown-headed Cowbird	122						3		52		67		
Rusty Blackbird	1		1										
Common Grackle	1					1							
Boat-tailed Grackle	88									88			
Yellow Warbler	1								1				
Yellow-rumped Warbler	126					1	30	9		3	35	48	
Northern Cardinal	220	4	37	29	14	12	41	10	26	12	15	20	
<b>Species Count:</b>	121	44	59	40	53	66	67	46	68	57	54	59	
<b>Number Seen:</b>	32,568	1,699	2,102	718	2,261	6,027	4,672	3,485	3,808	2,849	2,993	1,954	