



# The Fledgling

Newsletter of the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society, Inc. (SAAS)

Vol. 42 No. 1, **September – November 2024** *Now in our 42st Year!*

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/SouthernAdirondackAudubonSociety/](http://www.facebook.com/SouthernAdirondackAudubonSociety/)

Website: [www.southernadirondackaudubon.org](http://www.southernadirondackaudubon.org)



*Common Loon and chick. Photo: William Pohley/Audubon Photography Awards*

## This fall: Loons, bats, Rachel Carson

SAAS is presenting programs this fall in Lake George, Saratoga Springs, Queensbury and Granville.

On **Wednesday, Sept. 25** at 7:00 p.m. at the Caldwell-Lake George Library, Dr. Nina Schoch will present **“Are Loons on Thin Ice with Climate Change?”**

This presentation discusses climate change impacts to loon populations, including those in the Adirondacks.

Dr. Schoch is the Executive Director of the Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation (ACLC) in Saranac Lake. She has studied loons in New York’s Adirondack Park since 1998. A wildlife veterinarian and rehabilitator, she has a master’s degree in Natural Resources/Wildlife Management.

She practiced small animal medicine in New York’s Adirondack Park from 1991-2002, is a member of numerous conservation and wildlife health related organizations, and has written many scientific and lay articles about the results of the Adirondack loon research. She received the 2018

Adirondack Research Consortium’s Elizabeth Thorndike Adirondack Achievement Award, the 2011 NYS Outdoor Writers Association M. Paul Keesler N.Y. Outdoor Citizen Award, and was inducted into the NYS Outdoorsmen Hall of Fame.

The ACLC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring passion for and promoting the conservation of Adirondack loons, a sentinel of the environment. The organization focuses on scientific research, educational outreach, and conservation and management to protect and support healthy populations of Common Loons in New York State and throughout North America.

Biologist Ashley Meyer will talk



*The tri-colored bat is proposed to be federally listed as endangered. Photo courtesy of Ashley Meyer.*



*Above: Wildlife biologist Ashley Meyer holds a little brown bat. She will speak about bats on Oct. 30 in Saratoga Springs. Photo courtesy of Ashley Meyer.*

about **“The World of Bats”** on **Wednesday, Oct. 30** at the Saratoga Springs Public Library at 7:00 p.m.

Meyer will focus on New York’s bat species and the threats they face. She will also cover how the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) monitors and manages bats in the state, and what people can do to help them.

Ashley is a NYSDEC Wildlife Biologist specializing in bats. She monitors summer and winter bat populations and supports research projects to learn more about New York bats, in addition to providing regulatory oversight of these species. She has also worked previously with avian species, specializing in grassland birds and wildlife impacts from renewable energy projects.

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## Southern Adirondack Audubon Society

P.O. Box 5044  
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**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/SouthernAdirondackAudubon Society/](https://www.facebook.com/SouthernAdirondackAudubonSociety/)

**Instagram:** #adkbirds

### Board and Committees

#### Officers

President: Rob Snell  
([president@southernadironackaudubon.org](mailto:president@southernadironackaudubon.org))  
Vice-President: Mark Silo  
Treasurer: Laurie Murphy  
Secretary: Deb Ferguson

#### Board of Directors

2022-2024	Judy Staubo Laurie Murphy OPEN
2023-2025	Dusty Caldwell Mark Silo Deb Ferguson
2024-2026	Paul Lundberg Joyce Miller

Board meetings are held monthly except July, August and December. Members are invited to attend.

#### Committees

Conservation: OPEN  
Education: OPEN  
Membership Secretary: Rob Snell  
([membership@southernadironackaudubon.org](mailto:membership@southernadironackaudubon.org))  
Newsletter: Joyce Miller  
([editor@southernadironackaudubon.org](mailto:editor@southernadironackaudubon.org))  
Programs: John Loz (Interim chair)  
([programs@southernadironackaudubon.org](mailto:programs@southernadironackaudubon.org))  
Publicity: OPEN

Chapter memberships are \$15. Renew at [southernadironackaudubon.org/membership/](http://southernadironackaudubon.org/membership/), or send a check using the form on the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society (SAAS) website. Contributions support SAAS's education and conservation activities in our region.

SAAS is a certified local chapter of the National Audubon Society. SAAS has approximately 600 members in Warren, Washington, northern Saratoga and southern Hamilton counties in New York State.

SAAS's primary goal is to protect the environment by preserving natural habitats and promoting environmental education. Contact a board member to learn about SAAS volunteer opportunities.

### President's Message

## New preserve in Moreau

By Rob Snell, SAAS President

Moreau's Big Bend Preserve was opened to the public on July 11.

Less than a decade ago, the property was in tatters. More than 880 acres of clear-cut property was hidden from view on the Hudson River by a narrow white pine forest. It is now evolving into one of the region's most diverse and beautiful nature preserves.

Since its transfer to Moreau Lake State Park a few years ago, extensive work has been done to establish a trail system and restore much of the area to its original pine barrens habitat.

The 400 acres of revitalized pine barrens will be inoculated with purple lupine, and fire-managed to support a reintro-

duced population of Karner Blue and Frosted Elfin butterflies. In addition, there are hundreds of acres of forest, wetlands and riverfront.



Rob Snell

SAAS volunteers have identified more than 110 species of birds on the property so far. I am confident that this number will grow rapidly. SAAS is collaborating closely with the park to add bird nest boxes, viewing platforms and eventually an adaptive trail system to enhance visitor experience.

I encourage everyone to visit this spectacular ecosystem. It is a true Cinderella story.

See the article and photos on page 10 about our region's new nature preserve.

## Help us soar

By Judy Staubo, SAAS Board Member

Want to support our environmental education efforts? Here are some ideas:

- Provide birding backpacks to more libraries
- Sponsor a bird walk
- Track migrating birds via a new Motus system
- Take a birding trip to Panama
- Attach some bird boxes to trees

- Increase your membership level

What's your idea?

You can make our goals come true, or sponsor one of your own.

Make a donation today – perhaps pre-tax via your IRA – or remember us in your future planning.

We can make goals reality.

Please visit the SAAS Donation page: [www.southernadironackaudubon.org/donate/](http://www.southernadironackaudubon.org/donate/).

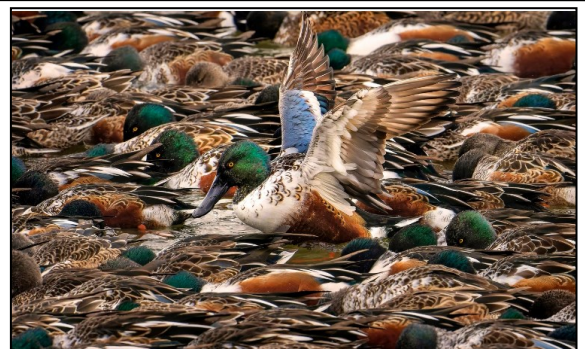
## Win this poster!

Renew or join as a chapter supporter by **September 30** to receive three tickets to win this 2022 Audubon Photo Award winning photograph.

It is 36" x 24" mounted on foam board, and can be hung as is.

Chapter memberships are \$20 and run for a year on a rolling basis. An additional ticket will be allotted for every \$5 donated through the SAAS membership or donation page.

Contributions support SAAS's local educational and conservation activities. Many National members also become



Northern Shoveler ducks. Photo: Steve Jessmore/Audubon Photography Awards, 2022

chapter supporter members to financially support SAAS's local efforts. Visit [www.southernadironackaudubon.org/membership/](http://www.southernadironackaudubon.org/membership/).



## Fall programs

*Continued from page 1*

Three daytime programs will be offered in October and November.

Debbie Philp will present “**Adirondack Turtles**” on **Saturday, Oct. 19** at 11:00 a.m. at the Pember Museum in Granville, Washington County.

The program will offer a glimpse into the lives of freshwater turtles and their unique history and anatomy. Philp will bring “ambassador turtles” from the Adirondacks and beyond. She’ll discuss why turtles are disappearing and how to ensure turtles are around for generations to come. Philp is a N.Y.S. licensed wildlife rehabilitator and the founder of Dancing Turtle Rescue, a small nonprofit dedicated to saving native freshwater turtles and their wetland habitats. Philp is a certified master herpetologist and brings a strong background in natural history to her public education programs.

Philp is a member of North Country Wild Care, a network of wildlife rehabilitators in northeastern New York.



SAAS is partnering with the Glove Theater to offer two programs this fall. The theater is located at 42 North Main Street, Gloversville, in Fulton County.

**On Sunday, Oct. 20** from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., The Glove Education Series will present “**Birds of Prey.**” Deborah Saltis of Falcon Heart Rescue will bring live birds of prey to the program.

Saltis is the President of Falcon Heart Rescue, Inc., a non-profit wildlife rescue and educational facility in Herkimer. She and Matt Perry are co-founders of the Utica Peregrine Falcon Project. Soon after starting the project, it became apparent that a closer rehabilitation option was needed to deal with injured young

falcons because the nearest one was more than an hour away. Many hours of training, testing, building, learning, and licensing went into what is now a facility that rehabs many birds each year and is home to 14 educational birds. For details, see [www.theglovetheatre.com/upcoming-events/the-glove-education-series-presents-birds-of-prey](http://www.theglovetheatre.com/upcoming-events/the-glove-education-series-presents-birds-of-prey).



*Canada Warbler by Warren Greene*

On **November 12** at 7:00 p.m., wildlife photographer Warren Greene will present “**New Bird and Nature Images from the Adirondacks and Beyond**” at the Glove Theater in Gloversville.

Greene’s program will feature his recent digital photography. He will share stories about close encounters with wildlife, while capturing behaviors in his photos.

Warren Greene is a native of Gloversville. He retired after 34 years at the Fulton County Probation Department. For the last eight years, he has been a Fulton County Supervisor representing his ward in Gloversville. Greene has been published many times through the years in books, magazines, and calendars.

Claire Nolan will present “**Conversations with the Past: Rachel Carson**” on **Saturday, Nov. 16** at 2:00 p.m. at Queensbury Senior High School. The school is located on Aviation Road, west of Northway (I-87) Exit 19 in Queensbury. This event is a collaboration between SAAS and the Chapman Historical Museum in Glens Falls.

The program is free, but requires a reservation. To register, please call

the Chapman Museum at (518) 793-2826.

Nolan will perform as Rachel Carson, the pioneering environmentalist who published the groundbreaking book *Silent Spring* 62 years ago. Dressed in period costume, Nolan will share Carson’s inspiring story and emphasize the crucial need for environmental protection and preservation.

A lifelong environmentalist, Nolan is a member of Save the Pine Bush, an advocacy group dedicated to preserving the unique splendor of Albany’s Pine Barren. Nolan’s love of history has sparked her interest in learning about women who have changed the world.

Nolan teaches English as a Second Language at the University at Albany. She has combined her passions for education and storytelling by portraying important historical figures from U.S. and world history. Nolan’s repertoire also includes Mary Harris (Mother) Jones, Georgia O’Keeffe and Marie Curie. She has performed throughout the Capital District.



*Claire Nolan will perform as Rachel Carson in Queensbury on Saturday, Nov. 16. The event is co-sponsored by SAAS and the Chapman Historical Museum in Glens Falls.*





Left: The Fiery-throated Hummingbird is native to Panama. Photo: Debbie Jordan, Holbrook Tours

Above: Birding in the lush Gamboa Rainforest. Photo: Javier Losa

## Join SAAS on Panama trip in February 2025

SAAS is organizing a small-group trip to Panama from **February 1 to 8, 2025**, through Holbrook Travel.

The trip is \$3,450 excluding airfare. Limited single rooms are available for an additional \$375.

The final payment is due on **October 29**. The trip is limited to 8 to 12 participants.

Panama boasts the highest diversity of bird species in Central America. The country's location at the convergence of two continents makes it the prime respite for migratory birds from both North and South America.

The group will bird in two distinct regions:

- the tropical rainforests border-

ing the Panama Canal, and

- the midlands and highlands of Chiriquí Province in western Panama.

The group will visit well-known birding hotspots like Pipeline Road, see the Panama Canal's Miraflores Locks in action, and spend eight days immersed in the country's culture and natural landscapes.

Highlights include:

- Hiking the world-famous Pipeline Road, where target species include Black Hawk-Eagle, Purple-throated Fruitcrow, Masked Tityra, and hundreds of others.
- Scaling the Panama Rainforest Discovery Center's 130-foot

tower for the chance to see upper canopy species, including the coveted Blue Cotinga.

- Searching for Resplendent Quetzals in Volcán Barú National Park and on the Pipeline Trail in Boquete, near Costa Rica's border.
- Visiting Panama's highest elevation natural wetlands at Las Lagunas, 4,000 feet above sea level, to see Masked Duck, Chiriquí Yellowthroat, and Crested Guan.

See the trip website for details, map, itinerary, travel details and more: [holbrook.travel/saas-pa24](http://holbrook.travel/saas-pa24).

Contact SAAS president Rob Snell ([birdbrane1@gmail.com](mailto:birdbrane1@gmail.com)) for more information.

## Emerald Ash Borer infestation continues



Emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) on a penny for scale. Photo: Howard Russell, Michigan State University, Bugwood.org, Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 us, Wikimedia

The invasive Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has now "been confirmed in all New York counties except: Essex, Hamilton, and Lewis," according to a website by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. "All of New York State's native ash (white, green, and black) are at risk from EAB."

The site "Emerald Ash Borer" reports that the insects were discovered in New York State in 2009. This insect, native to Asia, was first discovered in Michigan in 2002. It is now found in at least 35 states.

Infested ash trees can have a 99% mortality rate. Humans can spread it by transporting infested firewood.

To learn more, see [dec.ny.gov/nature/animals-fish-plants/emerald-ash-borer-eab](http://dec.ny.gov/nature/animals-fish-plants/emerald-ash-borer-eab).



An Emerald Ash Borer created this hole in firewood. Photo by Susan Greenhouse from California Department of Fish and Game, 2011, Wikimedia Commons.



## First Saturday Bird Walks continue

Join SAAS members for morning bird walks along the beautiful Spring Run Trail in Saratoga Springs on the first Saturday of each month. Walks start at 8:00 a.m.

The **September 7** walk will be a member-led walk, with one of our regular first Saturday walkers leading the group. Ray Perry will lead the walks on **October 5** and **November 2**.

The one-mile trail is paved and flat. It is used for walking, running and biking, as well as birding. It offers a variety of habitats.

So far, 133 bird species have been reported along the Spring Run Trail. See Cornell's eBird online checklist for this hotspot: [ebird.org/hotspot/L1548124/bird-list](https://ebird.org/hotspot/L1548124/bird-list). The "Bar Charts" link show species seen for each month.

Bring binoculars if you have them. All skill levels are welcomed. Meet at 8:00 a.m. sharp at the Spring Run Trail parking area near the corner of East Ave. and Excelsior Ave. If the parking area is full, park just slightly down the road on Excelsior Ave. in the EBI Beverage Center parking lot adjacent to the Spring Run Trail.

For directions and details, see [www.southernadironackaudubon.org/Spring-Run/](http://www.southernadironackaudubon.org/Spring-Run/).

## Birdability Week in October

Birdability Week is set for October 21 to 27.

Birdability® is a non-profit organization that strives to make the birding community more inclusive for birders with disabilities and other health concerns.

The virtual event will include speakers, backyard birding workshops, an "Offbeat Photography" contest and events that showcase adaptive equipment, birding locations, and the experiences of birders with disabilities and health concerns across the country. See [www.birdability.org/events/birdability-week-2024](http://www.birdability.org/events/birdability-week-2024) for details.

The organization focuses on people with mobility challenges, blindness or low vision, chronic illness, intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental illness, and those who are neurodivergent, deaf or hard of hearing or who have other health concerns, according to their website ([www.birdability.org/](http://www.birdability.org/)).

Birdability® worked with the National Audubon Society to create The Birdability Map ([gis.audubon.org/birdability/](https://gis.audubon.org/birdability/)), a "crowdsourced map which describes the accessibility features of birding locations all over the world." SAAS board members have contributed several local birding trails to the site.



*American Goldfinches can breed as late as September in our area, long after other birds have raised their chicks. Thistle seeds, which form in late summer, are an important food source. Goldfinches use the silk from milkweed pods as nesting material. Photo courtesy of Gordon Ellmers.*

## Field trip guidelines

- Review our SAAS **Field Trip Guidelines** ([southernadironackaudubon.org/field-trip-guidelines/](http://southernadironackaudubon.org/field-trip-guidelines/)).
- SAAS trips follow the American Birding Association's **Code of Birding Ethics** ([www.aba.org/aba-code-of-birding-ethics/](http://www.aba.org/aba-code-of-birding-ethics/)).
- Check the SAAS website and Facebook pages for updates. on trips.

## Pop-up fall bird walks

Keep an eye out this autumn for pop-up bird walks by checking our Facebook and Instagram pages. Don't miss an event or update! Stay connected with SAAS in any — or all — of these four ways:

- **Email:** sign up for announcements and updates at [www.southernadironackaudubon.org/subscribe/](http://www.southernadironackaudubon.org/subscribe/). You do not need to be a SAAS member to receive these email notices from SAAS's Mail-Chimp service.
- **Facebook:** Join the 2,240 people who follow SAAS at [www.facebook.com/SouthernAdironackAudubonSociety/](https://www.facebook.com/SouthernAdironackAudubonSociety/).
- **Instagram:** Follow @adkbirds ([www.instagram.com/adkbirds/](https://www.instagram.com/adkbirds/)).
- **Website:** Check [www.southernadironackaudubon.org/](http://www.southernadironackaudubon.org/) for updated and new event information.

**Edward Jones**  
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Production of this issue of *The Fledgling* newsletter is provided by Eric Snell of Edward Jones, 34 Congress Street, Suite 102, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

## Why birds hit windows — and how you can help prevent it

*This is a summary of an article about bird window strikes from Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the All About Birds website. A link to the full article is at the end of this summary.*

For birds, glass windows are worse than invisible. By reflecting foliage or sky, they look like inviting places to fly into.

Up to about 1 billion birds die from window strikes in the U.S. each year, according to a 2014 study.

Birds may collide with windows in daylight or at night. In daylight, birds crash into windows because they see reflections of vegetation or see potted plants or vegetation on the other side. At night, migrating songbirds fly into lighted windows.

When birds hit windows, the bird often dies from internal bleeding or bruising, even if it manages to fly away.

Especially in the spring when birds are territorial, birds sometimes attack their own reflections. While it can be annoying to a homeowner, the birds don't usually injure themselves this way.

To reduce bird collisions, the American Bird Conservancy and the Fatal Light Awareness Program offer various solutions:

- **Mark existing windows:** Use decals, tape, tempera paint, soap or Acopian BirdSavers (parachute cord) with close spacing to make windows more visible to birds. Decals and tape should be spaced no more than 2 inches apart. Acopian BirdSavers can be spaced 4 inches apart.

- **Install screens and netting:** Install mosquito screens or small-mesh netting on the outside of windows to prevent birds from hitting the glass.

- **Apply one-way transparent film:** Apply film that makes windows opaque from the outside but allows visibility from the inside. For new homes or when remodeling, external shutters and shades can be added, or screened windows or inte-



*Bird-friendly glass along an inner courtyard of Lauder College House at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, October 21, 2021. The window decals are used to break up the reflections birds see to prevent window collisions. Photo: Luke Franke, Audubon.*

rior vertical blinds installed.

- **Lights Out Initiatives:** Turn off nonessential lights at night to reduce the risk of attracting migrating birds to urban areas.

Audubon's Lights Out program works with building owners and managers to turn off excess lighting, as well as adopt window decals and coverings, to help provide safe pas-

sage for birds between their nesting and wintering grounds.

These measures can significantly reduce the risk of bird collisions with windows.

*The full version of this article is available at [www.allaboutbirds.org/news/why-birds-hit-windows-and-how-you-can-help-prevent-it/](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/why-birds-hit-windows-and-how-you-can-help-prevent-it/).*

### If you find an injured bird

If you find a bird that has collided with a window, act quickly to help:

1. **Capture and contain:** Gently approach the bird from behind and cover it with both hands. Place it in a suitable container like an unwaxed paper bag or a small cardboard box



*A Cedar Waxwing eats a small fruit in this photo from Gordon Ellmers.*

lined with tissue or paper towel. Keep the container dark, quiet, warm, and away from children and pets.

2. **Minimize stress:** Avoid handling, feeding, or watering the bird. The goal is to reduce its stress.

3. **Contact a wildlife rehabilitation facility** immediately for further instructions. In the Southern Adirondack region, contact North Country Wild Care at their emergency hotline: (518) 964-6740.

4. **Release the bird:** If advised to release it, choose a wooded area or suitable habitat away from buildings. Open the container at a distance from vegetation to assess the bird's flight. If it doesn't fly well, recapture it and seek additional guidance from the rehab facility.



## ***About Wildflowers***

### **Heal-all, Self-heal, Heart-of-the-earth**

*By Diane Collins, Wildflower Columnist*

This low-growing wildflower (six to 20 inches tall) has common names familiar to me, but is far from my appreciation as the wondrous plant it is.

Heal-all is a member of the mint family and has been used medicinally for centuries. Its leaves and flowers are edible and can be used in salads, stews, soups, or boiled as a pot-herb for greens and food seasoning.

It grows almost anywhere — along forest trails, roadsides, lawns, meadows, and essentially around the world. It is native to the Northern Hemisphere and Central America (here before foreign settlers) but originating in Asia and Europe.

It is used to treat most ailments



*Heal-All. Photo: Diane Collins.*

known to man. It is packed full of many chemical compounds, and is antibacterial, antimicrobial, antiseptic, antispasmodic, astringent, anti-inflammatory and more. Its botanical name, *Prunella vulgaris*, was

given by (yes, my hero) Linnaeus (1707-1778) from the streptococcal tonsil infection treated then with Self-heal; the Latin species name *vulgaris* means “common.”

Purple to lavender irregular flowers bloom from June to August and attract butterflies and pollinating bees and insects — a good candidate for a pollinator garden. The stem has two paired lance-shaped opposite leaves. It spreads by seed and underground rhizomes.

It caught my eye along paths in Cole’s Woods and the Meadowbrook Queensbury trail. It is now catching the keen eyes of modern-day scientists for its remarkable medicinal potential.

*Wildflower photographer Diane Collins is the author of several local wildflower booklets, including the new [Springtime Birds & Wildflowers along the Betar Byway, South Glens Falls](#). Visit [www.southernadironackaudubon.org/order-betar-booklet/](http://www.southernadironackaudubon.org/order-betar-booklet/) to order a booklet. Collins’ website is [wildflowersinyourownbackyard.com](http://wildflowersinyourownbackyard.com).*

## ***Species Spotlight***

### **Northern Harrier**

*By Joyce Miller, SAAS Newsletter Editor*

In the Washington County Grasslands, it’s not uncommon to see a graceful Northern Harrier (*Circus hudsonius*) coasting over the fields and marshes as it hunts, its wings in a shallow V shape.

This large, low-flying hawk is easy to identify by the bright white patch at the base of the tail. The white spot almost looks like a ping-pong ball from a distance.

It’s easy to tell male from female. The females have brownish feathers. The males, nicknamed “Gray Ghosts,” are dove gray with black wingtips.

Harriers build nests on the ground in June. Males often mate with more than one female. The female incubates four or five eggs for about four weeks. The chicks leave the nest after four to six weeks. They stay near the parents for another three to four weeks. Northern Harriers can live up



*This photo by Gordon Ellmers shows the diagnostic white rump patch and mottled brown feathers of a female Northern Harrier.*

to 15 years old, according to banding records.

Like owls, harriers listen as well as look for prey, aided by their bowl-like face shapes. They’ll eat voles and other small rodents, frogs, rabbits and even small birds.

Northern Harriers can be found year-round in some grasslands in New York State, according to reports on eBird, Cornell’s online bird checklist. Their numbers increase over the winter, perhaps because northern birds might migrate to our area for the relatively milder winter.

This species can be found throughout North America, from Alaska through Central America and into northern Colombia in South America. Northern Harrier fossils as old as 40,000 years have been discovered in Mexico, according to Cornell’s All About Birds web page.

In New York, Northern Harriers’ conservation status is listed as “Threatened,” according to the N.Y.S. Department of Environmental Conservation ([dec.ny.gov/nature/animals-fish-plants/northern-harrier](http://dec.ny.gov/nature/animals-fish-plants/northern-harrier)).

Their population is declining around 1.7% a year, attributed to habitat loss and other factors. Their grassland nesting areas can be affected by spring floods, mowing or grazing. (Audubon New York offers this page on “Managing Habitat for Grassland Birds” ([ny.audubon.org/conservation/managing-habitat-grassland-birds](http://ny.audubon.org/conservation/managing-habitat-grassland-birds)).

To learn more, visit Cornell’s All About Birds: [www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Northern\\_Harrier/overview](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Northern_Harrier/overview).





Left: Tara King, lead clerk at the Waterford Public Library, holds the newly-delivered birding backpack. The Waterford Public Library is pictured above.



Right: Round Lake library director Jennifer Hurd (left) and library assistant Erin Jackson (right) welcome birding backpacks to the charming Clark House library branch (pictured lower right) in Round Lake. Round Lake has two library branches: Round Lake and Malta. Each has a backpack to loan.



## Borrow a birding backpack!

Want to interest a child in birding? Borrow a free SAAS birding backpack from an area library!

They are now available in these 20 public libraries in the SAAS region:

- Lake George - Caldwell Public Library - 2
- Saratoga Springs Public Library - 2 (children's area and adult's area)
- Galway - Galway Public Library
- Ballston Spa - Ballston Spa Public Library
- Warrensburg - The Richards Library
- Chestertown - Town of Chester Public Library - 2
- Speculator - Lake Pleasant Public Library
- Bolton Landing - Bolton Free Library
- Salem - Bancroft Public Library
- Argyle - Argyle Free Library
- Hudson Falls - Hudson Falls Free Library
- Greenwich - Greenwich Free Library - 2
- North Creek - Town of Johnsburg Library
- Corinth - Corinth Free Library
- Burnt Hills - Ballston Community Public Library (2) ( children's area and adult's area)
- Brant Lake - Horicon Free Public Library
- Schuylerville - Schuylerville Public Library
- Waterford - Waterford Public Library
- Round Lake - Round Lake Library Clark House Branch
- Malta - Round Lake Library Malta Branch



Three generations look forward to using the new birding backpack at the Schuylerville Public Library: Joelene Vianna, with sons John and Henry, and grandmother Jackie DeGarmo (with binoculars).

Each backpack contains two pairs of binoculars, a list of suggested bird-watching locations customized to each community, the book *Birding Adventures for Kids*, a laminated *Birds of New York* guide, a journal to record observations, and a nature themed outdoor walking Bingo game.

The backpacks can be used by people of any age. They can be borrowed for a set time, just like books.

Please talk to your community's library director if you would like to have a birding backpack added to your local public library. The library

director can contact SAAS at [www.southernadironackaudubon.org/contact/](http://www.southernadironackaudubon.org/contact/).

For details about the backpacks, see [www.southernadironackaudubon.org/education/](http://www.southernadironackaudubon.org/education/).

The backpacks were funded by a variety of sources, including a Lend-a-Hand Grant from the Adirondack Trust Company Community Fund, a grant from the Touba Family Foundation, and generous donations from several individual SAAS members.

If any SAAS member is interested in donating funds to create another backpack for an area library, materials for each new backpack cost just under \$200. Contact SAAS at [www.southernadironackaudubon.org/contact/](http://www.southernadironackaudubon.org/contact/).



***Avian advocates***

## **Grassland Bird Trust**

*This is the second in a series of features highlighting the work of Southern Adirondack non-profit organizations that support wild birds. This information was provided by the Grassland Bird Trust (GBT).*

Our land is located in the Audubon-designated 13,000 acre Important Bird Area in Fort Edward and Argyle.

We recently expanded our service area to a 102,000-acre area designated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) as the Washington County Grassland Bird Conservation Center, one of the most important grassland bird habitats remaining in New York State.

GBT is one of very few land trusts in New York State exclusively focused on grassland birds, including endangered Short-eared Owls, threatened Northern Harriers, Bobolinks, Eastern Meadowlarks, American Kestrels and Horned Larks.

The GBT operated for two years as an all-volunteer organization. Argyle resident Bonnie Nightingale, formerly the Stewardship Manager at Saratoga PLAN, recently joined GBT as Stewardship and Outreach Director. Nightingale will be stewarding the grassland habitat, initiating Bobolink Projects (working with landowners to reduce mowing on grassland habitat), and helping with events and educational programs.

Our biggest challenge? Habitat loss,



*The GBT's logo incorporates an image of a Short-eared Owl, one of the bird species that is endangered in New York State. These owls migrate from the north to spend the winter in grasslands in New York, such as in Washington County.*

exacerbated by Boralex, a CAN\$4 billion company that is planning to build a 660-acre industrial solar facility in the center of the IBA. The GBT is demanding that Boralex permanently conserve substantially more land than legally required to make up for the damage this facility will cause to vanishing grassland bird habitat.

The GBT is also working with the NYSDEC and legislators to help ensure that, for the first time, money from the \$400 million Environmental Protection Fund and the \$4.2 billion Bond Act will go toward protecting grassland



*A male Bobolink shows its striking feather patterns in this photo by Gordon Ellmers.*



*Birders scan for grassland songbirds and hawks at the Alfred Z. Solomon Grassland Viewing Blind on Rte. 42 in the Town of Fort Edward, Washington County. Photo is courtesy of Todd Scheuermann.*

birds by conserving the grasslands they need to survive – a long overdue initiative.

The GBT invites area residents to come see these beautiful, but increasingly rare, birds at our Alfred Z. Solomon Grassland Bird Viewing Area in Fort Edward. The GBT is opening a two-mile trail this fall near the Dead Creek so people can stroll the property at a safe distance from the birds.

Visit [grasslandbirdtrust.org](http://grasslandbirdtrust.org) to learn more about the GBT's efforts. The organization looks forward to partnering with SAAS to ensure that grassland beautiful birds will be here for future generations.



*This is the view from the Alfred Z. Solomon Viewing Blind on Route 42, Town of Fort Edward. The Washington County grasslands offer prime breeding grounds for Bobolinks, Eastern Meadowlarks, Savannah Sparrows and other grassland species. In the winter, the area offers shelter to Short-eared Owls, Rough-legged Hawks, and the occasional Snowy Owl. At least 156 bird species have been reported to the eBird database ([eBird.org/hotspot/L358625](http://eBird.org/hotspot/L358625)) in this area. Photo is courtesy of Grassland Bird Trust.*



## New Big Bend Preserve open in Moreau

The new 860-acre Big Bend Preserve, part of Moreau Lake State Park in Saratoga County, officially opened on July 11.

The preserve is located at 110 Old Bend Road in Moreau, on the south side of the Hudson River. It is across the river from the Hudson Pointe Nature Preserve in Queensbury.

The ribbon-cutting event was attended by representatives from government agencies and many involved organizations, including the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society (SAAS).

During the last four years, a team of SAAS board members surveyed the birds in the area and posted the 115 species list on eBird: [ebird.org/hotspot/L18828690/bird-list](https://ebird.org/hotspot/L18828690/bird-list).

The property offers forests, wetlands, grassland and open woodlands and barrens habitats. The barrens offer habitat for the federally endangered Karner blue butterfly and the state-threatened frosted elfin butterfly. State staff are working to remove invasive plants and

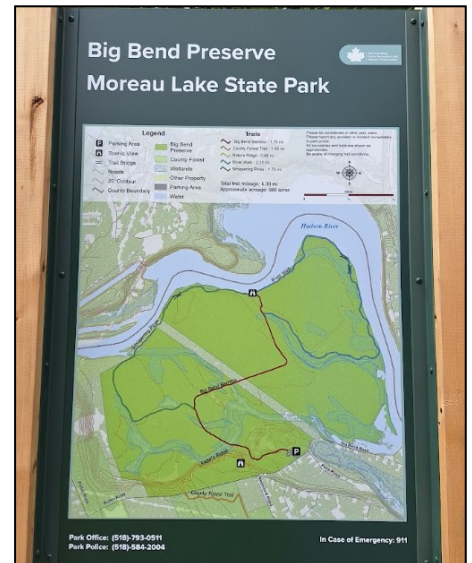


Casey Holzworth, Natural Resource Steward for State Parks' Saratoga-Capital District Region, talks about the wetlands as State Sen. Jim Tedisco listens at the opening event in July. Photos on this page by Joyce Miller.

trees. Beaver baffles are installed to lessen flooding in some areas.

The preserve's two trails total more than six miles in length. It is open from sunrise to sunset for walking, birding, leashed dog-walking, horse-riding, biking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Entry is free of charge.

Finch Pruyn Timberlands sold the land to Open Space Institute. It was purchased by the NYS Office of



Above: A map of the preserve greets visitors at the entrance to the trails.

Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation in 2021.

According to Governor Hochul's office, this addition makes Moreau Lake one of the ten largest parks in the state park system. It is about the size of Central Park in Manhattan.

See a map and more details at this page: [friendsofmoreau-lake.org/2024/07/16/big-bend-preserve-now-open/](https://friendsofmoreau-lake.org/2024/07/16/big-bend-preserve-now-open/).



The new preserve offers a large gravel parking lot at 110 Old Bend Road, off Butler Road in Moreau.



Visitors walk along the preserve's old logging roads. Many of the preserve's paths are wide and flat.