



The Fledgling

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

Vol. 42 No. 2, **December 2024 — February 2025** Now in our 42nd year!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SouthernAdirondackAudubonSociety/

Website: www.southernadirondackaudubon.org

Winter programs: Moose, old growth forests, bluebirds

On **Wednesday Jan. 22**, at 7:00 p.m., researcher David Kramer will present **"The Life History of the Moose in New York State"** at Crandall Public Library in downtown Glens Falls.

The event is co-sponsored by SAAS and the Glens Falls-Saratoga Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club.

Moose were extirpated from the Adirondacks in the late 1800s and early 1900s, due to habitat destruction and overhunting. But in the 1980s, moose sightings in the Adirondacks began to trickle in. Over the past few decades, moose have established a permanent population in the New York mountains. In 2015, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) began actively monitoring it.

In the program, attendees will learn about the life history and ecology of our largest state mammal and a new research initiative NYSDEC is conducting.

David Kramer received wildlife degrees from Delaware Valley University (BS) in 2009 and from Texas Tech University (MS) in 2012. Since 2016, Kramer has been a Research Scientist with the SUNY-ESF Roosevelt Wildlife Station and provides consultation and research support for moose, deer, bear, turkey and furbearers for NYSDEC.

On **Wednesday, Feb. 26**, at 7:00 p.m., Dr. Dan Bogan of Siena College will talk about **"First Growth and**



This female moose, or cow, was spotted in Lake Placid. Photo courtesy of David Kramer.

Old Growth Forests of the Catskills" at the Saratoga Springs Public Library in downtown Saratoga Springs.

"The Catskills are underrepresented in ecological research, unlike the Adirondacks and other mountain ranges. " Dr. Bogan said. "There are very few examples of old growth and first growth forests in the Northeast."

First growth forest have never been logged or disturbed. Old growth forests have been developed over a long period of time without disturbance.

Dr. Bogan is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Environmental Studies and Sciences at Siena College in Loudonville. He enjoys integrating his research with teaching under-

graduate courses that span Environmental Science, Biodiversity, Urban Wildlife, Wildlife Conservation, and Applied Wildlife Research.

His research explores the spatial ecology and behavior of wildlife, particularly coyotes and fisher, to understand how animals are responding to suburban and urban development. His applied research seeks to better understand human-wildlife interactions as a means to reduce or prevent conflicts to maintain human valuation of wildlife species. He holds a PhD from Cornell University, an MS from SUNY University at Albany, and a BS from SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry.

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Southern Adirondack Audubon Society

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Instagram: #adkbirds

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

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Newsletter: Joyce Miller
(editor@southernadironackaudubon.org)
Programs: John Loz (Interim chair)
(programs@southernadironackaudubon.org)
Publicity: OPEN

Chapter memberships are \$20. Renew at 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

Be a citizen scientist

By Rob Snell, SAAS President

This winter, be a scientist.

Citizen scientists have provided indispensable data on bird populations for over one hundred years. These data cannot be accumulated by professional scientists alone, and are the foundation of research on long term population trends among bird species.

Without studies like these, the alarming thirty percent decline in bird numbers over the last 50 years may have gone unnoticed. This year, consider participating in one of three Audubon-sponsored studies of bird populations.

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC), which replaced shooting birds with counting them, began around 1900 and has provided vital information about bird population dynamics throughout the world. It takes place in December, and is conducted by small groups who spend a designated day counting all the birds they can find in a specific region. If you are interested in participating, contact Linda White at (518) 222-5675. See the article on the next page for more information.

A second study, Climate Watch, tracks the effects of climate change on the distribution of White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatches. It has been helping validate sophisticated modeling software used to predict the impact of global warming on bird distribution patterns. This study is done by one or two people on a single day between January 15 and February 15. If you are interested in participating, contact me at birdbrane1@gmail.com. See the article on page seven for details.

For those who like to stay inside in the winter, The Great Backyard Bird Count can be done at home. Last year, an estimated 640,000 individuals from 210 countries submitted checklists. In the four days of the count 7,920 species of birds were recorded. You can spend as little as 15 minutes counting birds in your yard, and submit your observations through eBird, or add them directly to Audubon. The observations from these studies provide valuable data to researchers, and could prove critical to the conservation of birds throughout the world.

Please consider participating in one of these studies. For more information about them, go to www.audubon.org. Thank you.



Rob Snell, SAAS President

Win a heated bird bath!

Renew or join as a chapter supporter by January 10, 2025 to receive chances to win a heated bird bath, just in time for winter.

The bird bath was donated by SAAS president Rob Snell. It is similar to the bird bath shown on this website: www.amazon.com/GESAIL-Detachable-Thermostatically-Controlled-Terracotta/dp/Bo8FBFNC6J.

Annual chapter memberships are only \$20. They run for a year, renewable on the month one signs up. 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 chapter supporter members to financially support SAAS's local efforts. Visit www.southernadironackaudubon.org/membership/.



Birds, such as this damp Blue Jay, must maintain their feathers so they can fly, hunt, stay insulated from cold and escape from predators. Heated bird baths help with this essential task in the winter. William Baldrige/Audubon Photography Awards, 2012.



Dr. Daniel Bogan of Siena College will speak about first growth and old growth forests on Feb. 26 at the Saratoga Springs Public Library.

Winter programs

Continued from page 1

Dr. Bogan and two Siena student research fellows are mapping these forests and examining data that is helpful in learning about forest ecology nutrients, the carbon cycle and carbon sequestration – and combating climate change. These forests should also be protected simply for their aesthetic and even spiritual meaning, Dr. Bogan believes.

John Rogers, co-founder of the NYS Bluebird Society, will talk about **“Bluebirds—And More”** at the Saratoga Springs Public Library on **Wednesday, March 26**, at 7:00 p.m.

His PowerPoint presentation includes the life history of the Eastern Bluebird, other birds that nest in bluebird boxes, nest box management, and more. The focus definitely is on bluebirds, but Rogers also shares his love for the natural world in the hope that the audience will take away some broader and deeper messages about nature. Sprinkled throughout are just a few wildflowers, butterflies, other birds and quotes by some of the great naturalists of the past. With beautiful photographs, sounds, and a sincere, enthusiastic presentation style, this program is of interest to anyone who appreciates nature.

Rogers has maintained a trail of

Christmas Bird Count set for Saturday, Dec. 14

SAAS’s annual Hudson Falls Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday, Dec. 14. The snow/rain date is Sunday, Dec. 15.

Last year, 18 observers spotted thousands of individual birds totalling 60 species.

Most birding is done from a car. Some teams may walk along trails or in area parks. Birders traveled more than 346 miles and walked 21.5 miles along prescribed routes in an established 15-mile-wide diameter circle in the Glens Falls region.

For more information and to join a count team for a whole or partial day, contact SAAS count compiler Linda White at least a week before the count, at (518) 222-5675.

The Christmas Bird Count is a fun way to increase birding skills. New birders do not need to be bird identification experts. They can help spot birds and keep team records.

Counts are held worldwide each year between December 14 and January 5. Tens of thousands of volunteers participate in more than 2,000 individu-

al counts across North America. bluebird nest boxes in central New York, north of Syracuse, for more than four decades. He has offered bluebird slide programs and workshops for hundreds of organizations in 12 states and two Canadian provinces.

Rogers was a co-founder of the New York State Bluebird Society in 1982, and elected a lifetime (volunteer) board member in 2002. He has received numerous awards for his bluebird conservation work, including the Bluebird Conservation Award from the North American Bluebird Society. He is a past board member of that organization. In 2010, he was a recipient of the Hero of Conservation Award from the *Syracuse Post Standard*. He is an experienced birder and member of the Onondaga Audubon Society in Syracuse. He earned a BA in Biology, SUNY Oswego. He lives in Oneida.

Please check the SAAS website and

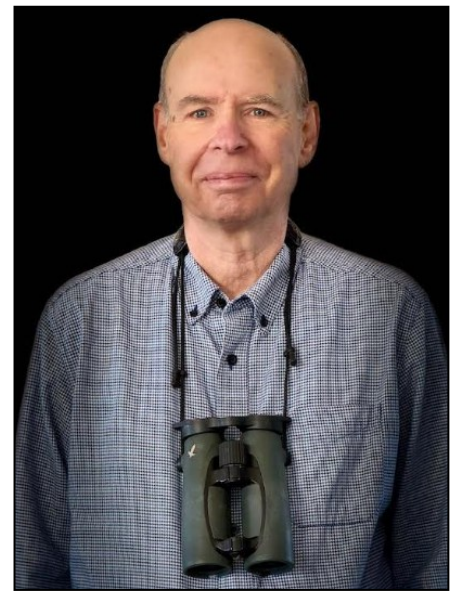


The charismatic Northern Mockingbird is often seen during the Christmas Bird Count. During the winter, they eat small fruits and berries from shrubs such as this sumac.

al counts across North America.

The event is now in its 125th year. The Christmas Bird Census started in 1900 when ornithologist Frank Chapman suggested it as an alternative to Christmas “side hunts,” which were competitions to see which teams could shoot the most birds and other animals. Now, birders simply count every bird they see in the designated count areas.

For details, see www.audubon.org/community-science/christmas-bird-count. Past results are found on this site. This year’s count results will be included in the March newsletter.



John Rogers will talk about bluebirds on March 26 at the Saratoga Springs Public Library.

Facebook pages for any program updates or changes.



SAAS members headed to Panama in February

A group of SAAS members will travel to Panama in early February on a trip organized through Holbrook Travel.

Panama boasts the highest diversity of bird species in Central America. For the map, itinerary, travel details and more, see [holbrook.travel/saas-pa24](https://holbrooktravel.com/usaas-pa24). The final payment was due in late October.

Photos from the trip may be featured in an upcoming edition of *The Fledgling*.

Native gardens planted at Long Lake Library

SAAS board members Dusty Caldwell (above left) and Joyce Miller (above right) created native perennial gardens in raised beds in front of the Long Lake Public Library, Hamilton County, on September 2. Plants included beebalm, coneflower, catmint, asters and liatris.

This SAAS project offered perennial pollinator-friendly gardens to public libraries in the SAAS membership area. Several libraries applied to be considered for this project, which will resume in the spring.



The Fiery-throated Hummingbird is one of many native birds of Panama. Photo: Debbie Jordan, Holbrook Tours.

SAAS installs nest boxes at Big Bend Preserve

In early November, SAAS president Rob Snell worked with other volunteers to erect four bluebird boxes and two American Kestrel boxes.

Board member Paul Lundberg built the boxes using material provided by SAAS. SAAS worked with Jen Selfridge, NYS Parks Capital Region Restoration Ecologist, to arrange the nest box project.

Big Bend Preserve is located in the town of Moreau, along the Hudson River. It is part of Moreau Lake State Park in Saratoga County. It opened in July, offering 860 acres of barrens, open forest, and wetlands, and more than six miles of hiking and equestrian trails. The parking lot is located at 110 Old Bend Rd, Fort Edward, NY 12828. The park website is parks.ny.gov/parks/moreaulake/details.aspx.

SAAS volunteers have recorded more than 126 bird species in the preserve so far. See the bird checklist on



Bluebirds investigate potential nest boxes like these in the fall, then return to use them in March. Eastern Bluebirds usually have three broods each breeding season in New York State. Photo: Jen Selfridge.

eBird: ebird.org/hotspot/L18828690.



SAAS president Rob Snell puts up an American Kestrel nest box at Big Bend Preserve. Kestrel populations declined about 53% between 1966 and 2019, according to the North American Breeding Bird Survey. Nest boxes like these can help increase breeding success. Photo: Jen Selfridge.

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 walks will be held on these Saturdays: **December 7, January 4 and February 1**. Walks will be member-led, with one of our regular First Saturday birders leading the group.

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, 134 bird species have been reported along the Spring Run Trail. See the species checklist on eBird: 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.southernadirondackaudubon.org/Spring-Run/.

Pop-up bird event, Dec. 29

SAAS' next pop-up "bird sit" will be led by Damon Russo on **Sunday, Dec. 29** at 8:00 a.m. at Brown's Beach on **Saratoga Lake**.

The group will look for winter waterfowl. SAAS will provide hot beverages, coffee, tea and hot chocolate to keep attendees warm.

Email birdwalks@southernadirondackaudubon.org with any questions.

Field trip guidelines

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

Bloomingdale Bog Trail trip, Jan. 11

On **Saturday, Jan. 11**, from 8:00 a.m. to noon, Rich Hanlon will lead a trip to **Bloomingdale Bog** and vicinity. This area, near Saranac Lake in Franklin County, is an Adirondack birding hotspot.

The wide level path/road will lead through spruce peatland, swamp, alder marsh, and coniferous forest habitats. Expect to walk about four miles in total. The trip is limited to 15 participants. The event will take about four to five hours.

In the winter, the group can expect to be greeted by a friendly family of Canada Jays, to witness foraging Black-backed Woodpeckers, to encounter mixed flocks of Black-capped chickadees, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Golden-crowned Kinglets, and to hear the raspy “chick-a-drrr!” of the Boreal Chickadee. Also, given the habitat, the group may discover winter finch species visiting the Adirondacks.

Plan for lunch with Rich at Grizzle T's restaurant in the town of Saranac Lake following the outing. Please register with field trip coordinator Tony Galligani at: fieldtrips@southernadirondackaudubon.org.

Bring weather appropriate apparel, binoculars, water and snacks. If there's at least six inches of snow on the ground, bring snowshoes or cross-country skis.

Registrants can meet at the Bloomingdale Bog Trailhead (off of County

Route 55; GPS Waypoint: 44.413166, -74.121505). Participants can also meet at the Warren County Municipal Center parking lot in Lake George (near I-87 Exit 20) at 6:00 a.m. to carpool and caravan up to Bloomingdale Bog.

Directions to Bloomingdale Bog: From the intersection of Rt. 3 and Rt. 86 in the town of Saranac Lake, drive north 7.2 miles on Rt. 86. Then, turn right onto County Rt. 55. Travel east 2.2 miles on County Rt. 55, then park at the pull-off at the trailhead. There is no sign for Bloomingdale Bog, but if you've reached the pull-offs on both sides of the road you've reached the trailhead.

More pop-up events

Check SASS's Facebook and Instagram pages for more pop-up events:

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

Changes and details about scheduled events will be shared through

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.

Avian advocates

Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation

This is the third in a series of features highlighting the work of Southern Adirondack non-profit organizations that support wild birds. This information was provided by the Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation, based in Saranac Lake.

By Denise Silfee, Director of Education and Communications, Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation

The Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation (ACLC) is dedicated to inspiring a passion for and promoting the conservation of Adirondack loons as environmental sentinels.

As a charismatic species that holds immense cultural value for people throughout the North Country, the Common Loon is an excellent ambassador to spread awareness about threats to the Adirondack lake ecosystem.

ACLC's work has three areas of focus: research, conservation and educational outreach. Our research biologists study Common Loons across their life cycle to better understand loon natural history and threats to nesting success and the habitats loons rely on.

Each year, our biologists partner with organizations like NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the Wildlife Conservation Society and SUNY ESF to cap-



When a loon is rescued, ACLC research biologists check the bird's general health and treat as needed, then apply bands to the legs to help identify it in the future. Each banded loon gets one silver USGS band and three colorful bands, two bands per leg. The unique combinations of the colored bands help identify individual loons. Photo courtesy of Denise Silfee.



Loon chicks will ride on their parents' backs during the first three weeks of life, until they get too large. Backriding helps keep chicks safe from predators and can help with temperature regulation. Photo courtesy of Denise Silfee.

ture and band loons so they can be uniquely identified over the course of their 30 to 40 year lifespans. Blood and feather samples are collected for data about levels of environmental pollutants like mercury and PFAS – forever chemicals – in Adirondack lakes. Over 500 loons have been banded since 1998 and over 100 lakes are monitored by paid field staff and volunteers during the breeding season.

Human-related activities and the effects of climate change are two of the biggest threats to loons in the Adirondacks. Our conservation techniques include deploying nest rafts to mitigate the impacts of shoreline development and flooding from increasingly prevalent torrential rain events. We also rescue distressed loons, saving individual birds that

become grounded, iced-in, entangled in fishing line, or are suffering the effects of lead poisoning or other injuries. Because Common Loons are a long-lived yet slow to reproduce species, saving the lives of individual breeding adults is a priority for supporting population stability. We also coordinate community-based environmental stewardship programs such as the Lead Tackle

Buy Back Program, Loon Friendly Lakes Certification Program and the Fishing Line Recycling Container Program.

We partner with numerous conservation and community organizations like the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society to increase public awareness. Our staff deliver presentations and attend community outreach events year-round. The Loon Center, based in Saranac Lake, NY, is a free educational destination featuring interactive displays and a

loon-themed gift shop. Knowledgeable staff are on-hand to engage with visitors and to answer questions about loons and ACLC's research.

As a small nonprofit, we are funded primarily through grants and donations. In 2024, we launched a \$350,000 Capacity Campaign to fortify our leadership structure, streamline operations, and expand our research, conservation and educational outreach efforts. To learn more about loons, opportunities to donate or get involved, visit the Loon Center, check out our website at adkloon.org or find us on Facebook.



**ADIRONDACK CENTER for
LOON CONSERVATION**

Borrow a birding backpack!

Want to interest someone in birding? Free SAAS birding backpacks are now available to borrow in 20 public libraries in the SAAS region. For details, see www.southernadirondackaudubon.org/education/.

About Wildflowers

Fringed Polygala or Gay Wings

By Diane Collins, Wildflower Columnist

You just have to love the common name for *Polygala paucifolia*: Gay Wings! Only a few inches tall, this small perennial plant, blooming from spring to early summer, is native to North America.

Small patches resemble tiny butterflies, or tiny propellers, as one article described the shape. Its odd structure, enticing fringe, lovely purple-rose color make this wildflower a surprising treat to find low on the forest floor. It provides nectar for certain species of bees and butterflies. The scientific name gives a hint



to its ancient use. *Polygala* comes from Greek origins, where *poly* means many, and *gala* means milk. It was thought that if eaten by nursing mothers or fed to cows, it would increase milk production. Also, simmered roots containing compounds like saponins were said to be used medicinally as a mucus expectorant.

The feathery extension of the petal is a successful adaptation facilitating pollination by insects. The scientific species name *paucifolia* means: *pauci* (few) and *folia* (leaves).

The scientific name was given by the botanist John Torrey, who first described the species in 1828. But the genus name *Polygala* was described by Carl Linnaeus in 1754! I was worried for a moment before I did more research that “my guy” wasn’t part of the naming.

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.southernadirondack.audubon.org/order-betar-booklet/ to order a booklet. Collins' website is wildflowersinyourownbackyard.com.



A Tufted Titmouse perches on a branch in this photo by Gordon Ellmers.

Species Spotlight

Tufted Titmouse

By Joyce Miller, SAAS Newsletter Editor

With its distinctive gray crest, large eyes, and pert poses, the Tufted Titmouse is familiar backyard bird.

Tufted Titmice do not migrate, so can be seen year-round at lower elevations in the SAAS region. Their distinctive "peter-peter-peter" song and nasal, whiny calls make them easy to identify.

They share many traits with their chickadee cousins. Tufted Titmice are also frequent visitors to seed feeders. They are known for caching seeds nearby for later use and will nest in birdhouses or tree cavities.



A Queensbury birder snapped this photo of a Tufted Titmouse grabbing strands of hair from her head for its nest this past spring.

Their diet varies with the seasons. In warmer months, they eat insects and spiders. They shift to nuts, berries, and seeds as temperatures drop.

During breeding season, Tufted Titmice collect animal hair to line their nests. They will pull hair from unsuspecting woodland creatures, as well as from humans and pets. They will occasionally land on people's heads to snatch strands of hair for their nests, as pictured above.

Tufted Titmice are native to the eastern half of the United States. Western and southern regions of North

Climate Watch starts January 15

National Audubon Society's citizen science project Climate Watch resumes on January 15.

The survey is conducted twice a year: January 15 to February 15, and May 15 to June 15. Volunteers look specifically for Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatches to observe how those species are affected by climate change. Using maps of a specific area, birders conduct 12 counts, observing for five minutes each. They also record the numbers and species of other birds identified within 100 meters.

Climate Watch started after National Audubon issued a report in 2014, *Birds and Climate Change*, on risks faced by North American bird species from climate change. Contact SAAS president Rob Snell (birdbrane1@gmail.com) for details.

America are home to other species of titmice: Bridled, Oak, Black-crested, and Juniper Titmice.

Unlike many bird species, the population of Tufted Titmice is actually increasing. To learn more about these personable birds, see www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Tufted_Titmice/overview.

Featured birding trails

Champlain Canalway Trail: Lock 9 at Smith's Basin

By Joyce Miller, Newsletter Editor

The Lock 9 section of the Champlain Canal Trail is an uncrowded, pleasant and bird-filled area. Located at Smith's Basin in Washington County, it is part of the Empire State Trail (empiretrail.ny.gov).

Birders can walk north towards Fort Ann or south towards Kingsbury from the lock's parking areas, making it adaptable for a long or short stroll.

At least 135 bird species have been seen in this area. Great Blue Herons, Bald Eagles, Belted Kingfishers, Carolina Wrens, several woodpecker species, Common Ravens, nuthatches and other birds have been seen and heard there. In spring, the parking lot is a great place to watch bright orange Baltimore Orioles building nests in the cottonwood trees near the road.

For a current species list, see this eBird checklist: ebird.org/hotspot/L9779594/bird-list?yr=all.

The trail is regularly but lightly used by bicyclists and walkers, making it easy for birders to pause and observe wildlife. Most of the trail is a wide, asphalt path. It turns to crushed gravel as it heads south to the New Swamp Road bridge and another parking lot. The trail is flanked by clover and grass.

Visitors watch boats pass through the lock during warmer months. Picnic tables and an accessible portable toilet are located near the lock office buildings.

The lock trail is part of the Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor. The lock has a 16-foot rise to accommodate the change in elevation between the upstream canal (140 feet) and downstream elevation (124 feet).

Lock 9 offers two parking areas. A sandy pull-off area is located at the beginning of the lock road, as one turns off Route 149. A paved parking lot is located at the Lock C-9 trail

head, at the end of the half-mile park road.

If you cross Route 149 to follow the trail northward, use caution. The speed limit for that area is 55 mph. It can be difficult to see vehicles approaching over the bridge and around the nearby curve.

For more information about this section of the Champlain Canalway Trail, see empiretrail.ny.gov/albany-whitehall/fort-edward-fort-ann.



Top photos: From the Lock 9 walkway looking north, one can often watch Great Blue Herons, Bald Eagles and Belted Kingfishers fishing in the Champlain Canal in warmer weather.

Bottom photo: Heading north toward Fort Ann, the wide asphalt trail offers easy walking and good birding along this peaceful section of the canal. Photos: Joyce Miller.

