

The BIRD CALL

Newsletter of the Bronx River-Sound Shore Audubon Society, Inc.

BRSS Annual Meeting June 7th

Honorees Crandall & Van Doren have made exceptional contributions

Five Island Park will be the beautiful setting for our Annual Meeting, thanks again to the very generous hospitality of the New Rochelle Department of Parks and Recreation. The business meeting begins at 6:30 PM., with an optional guided bird walk at 6:00 PM.

It's a great opportunity to meet and chat with other members. Wine and cheese, plus other light refreshments will be served. All BRSS members and friends are encouraged to attend.

This year BRSS Audubon honors two people who have made exceptional contributions. One is an environmental activist in her community and the other a student who is an Intel Science Finalist.

Lena Crandall is Tireless Grassroots Worker



Scarsdale resident Lena Crandall first got involved with the greening of her community when she was asked by a parent if it was safe for her child to go into the woods by the school in her neighborhood. Lena then looked at the overgrown two and a half acre woodlot and wondered, why not?

She investigated the history of the woodlot and then made it her quest to restore the Fox Meadow Nature Park to its original function as an outdoor classroom.

Lena was thus launched into the world of environmental protection and conservation. It was then that she first learned about the importance of native plants and the destructive power of invasive non-natives.

After this first effort, she took the initiative to improve Scarsdale's record on environmental protection to many fronts.

She helped form the Sustainable Scarsdale Committee, now part of the Scarsdale Forum. She is on its Zoning and Planning Committee, where she contributed to reports on the effects of clear-cutting land for development. She discovered that the town's landscaping guidelines were still recommending invasive species and worked to change that.

She is finishing a term as Co-President of the Friends of the Scarsdale Parks. With her help, this organization has turned its focus from beautification to conservation. She has served as mentor to both a Girl Scout and a Boy Scout, each working on award projects that involve restoring parks using native plants.

The Village Trustees appointed her to the Conservation Advisory Council, where she is working to strengthen the Tree Ordinance, and where she has been successful in getting community and government groups to work together on projects. After pervasive flooding in the past few years, she is learning all she can about storm water management and hopes to focus on this major component of a healthy environment.

We have no doubt Lena will continue to make significant contributions to ensure her community is green and sustainable for future generations.

Student Benjamin Van Doren Contributes to Bird Research



BRSS Audubon can only hope that its initiative to engage our youth with birds will produce a Benjamin Van Doren. Our student honoree has accomplished so much by age 17.

He was one of 40 finalists in the prestigious 2012 Intel Science Talent Search. In March he traveled to Washington DC for the final competition, and was awarded 5th Place. This is quite an accomplishment considering there were approximately 1,800 research projects submitted.



His original research on Morning Flight Migration won accolades from scientists. His research results can be used in many ways, including placement of communication towers and wind turbines and understanding the effects of climate change on migration patterns.

Benjamin got hooked on birds in the third grade when his teacher, Joan Conca, had

BRSS AUDUBON

P. O. Box 1108
Scarsdale, NY 10583
www.brssaudubon.org

**Board of Directors
and Committee Members**

*Officers**PRESIDENT*

Sandra Morrissey (h) 949-2531
sandym@cloud9.net

VICE PRESIDENT

Doug Bloom 834-5203

TREASURER

Jeff Zuckerman 395-3083
jeffzuckerman2000@yahoo.com

SECRETARY

Diane Morrison 725-7351

*Committees**MEMBERSHIP*

Clare Gorman 395-3083
claregorman@yahoo.com

FIELD TRIPS

Doug Bloom 834-5203
Neil Powell 437- 8348

YOUNG BIRDERS GROUP

Dave Kaufman, Chair 777-1633

CONSERVATION

Bernie Conway 413-210-0041
Cece Fabbro 472-6596
Bonnie Gould 723-6332
Orlando Hidalgo 698-3907
Dave Kaufman 777-1633
Henry May 667-6144
Scott Mellis 235-5145
Bob Wirsneck 834-1409

HOSPITALITY

Diane Morrison 725-7351

PROGRAMS

Diane Morrison 725-7351

PUBLICITY

Roz Wood 698-3568
rozandalan@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER

Clare Gorman, Editor
claregorman@yahoo.com

WEBSITE

Sandra Morrissey
sandym@cloud9.net

*Bronx River-Sound Shore Audubon Society, Inc.
is a chapter of the National Audubon Society
serving the communities of
Bronxville, Eastchester, Edgemont, Hartsdale,
Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Mount Vernon, New
Rochelle, Pelham, Scarsdale, and Tuckahoe*

Mt. Vernon Students Learn What Makes a Bird a Bird

By Sandy Morrissey, President

BRSS Audubon expanded its youth initiative this winter with a five session program in two Mt. Vernon elementary schools.

To introduce the children to the world of birds, board members Bonnie Gould and Sandy Morrissey are visiting four second-grade classrooms once a month. Topics and activities include: what makes a bird a bird (feathers); the nesting cycle; bird song; bird adaptations such as shapes of beaks and feet; a visit from the Greenburgh Nature Center with two live birds; and an outdoor walk to look for birds on the school grounds.

Each school had a nestbox installed on the grounds in February with hopes it will



have nesting birds by the time of the outdoor walk in May.

The program has been received most enthusiastically by students and teachers alike. Of course, the ultimate goal is these children will grow up to become birders, and birders are highly likely to be protectors of the environment.



Annual Meeting

Continued from page 1

the class participate in Feeder Watch, a citizen science program of Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The assignment was to look out the window and count the birds you saw. Benjamin's interest in birds has soared ever since.

We tapped Benjamin to help BRSS Audubon set up its Youth Birding Club. At the time he was president of the New York Young Birders' Club and knew what the children might like. He wished he had known more kids who were into birds when he was younger and thought our organization was a very good thing.

We also asked Benjamin to do one of our evening programs for us this year. In February he presented his experience as an intern on Matinicus Rock studying the nesting seabirds on the island.

He will be heading to Cornell in the fall where we know he will have great success in whatever he pursues.

Election of Board Members

At the Annual Meeting, BRSS members will be asked to vote approval of the following officers for a two-year term: Sandra Morrissey, President; Doug Bloom, Vice President; Diane Morrison, Secretary; and Jeff Zuckerman, Treasurer. The membership will also be asked to vote for the slate of Directors for the class of 2015: Frank DiMarco, Clare Gorman, Neil Powell, Robert Wirsneck, Roz Wood, and Jeff Zuckerman. Frank DiMarco will be new to the board and was last year's honoree at our Annual Meeting for his contributions to the greening of Tuckahoe.

Hope to see all BRSS members on June 7th at Five Island Park in New Rochelle.

PROGRAMS 2012

PLEASE JOIN US! PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

All programs are co-sponsored by Central Westchester Audubon

May 16, 2012, Wednesday—Antarctica

Presenters: Andy and Jane Cahn

Andy and Jane are lifelong educators and have taught in secondary schools and colleges in Westchester for many years. Retired now, they spend vast amounts of time traveling to some of the most exciting places on earth. Their slides and discussion of Antarctica will make for a most enjoyable and interesting evening.

Location: Eastchester Public Library, 11 Oakridge Place, Eastchester. Time: 7:00 pm.

June 7, 2012, Thursday—Annual Meeting/Wine & Cheese

The business meeting begins at 6:30 pm., with an optional guided bird walk at 6:00 pm. This year we are honoring Lena Crandall and Benjamin Van Doren.

Location: Five Island Park, New Rochelle.

Time: Bird walk at 6 pm and meeting begins at 6:30 pm.

FIELD TRIPS for BRSS/CWAS 2012

Please Contact Doug Bloom at (914) 834-5203 if you are going on trips. Meet at the Scarsdale Village Hall unless otherwise specified.

May 6, 2012, Sunday - Central Park

Meet at 7:30 am at 77th St. at statue across from Museum of

Natural History. We will be looking for spring migrants including warblers and other song birds.

May 20, 2012, Sunday - Doodletown Road

Meet at Doodletown at 8 am. Looking for spring migrants including Cerulean Warblers.

Banded Bluebird is Spotted

By Sandy Morrissey

The nesting season is upon us. We have over 200 bluebird nestboxes ready for our returning beauties. However, there are five other species that will compete with the bluebirds for our nestboxes.

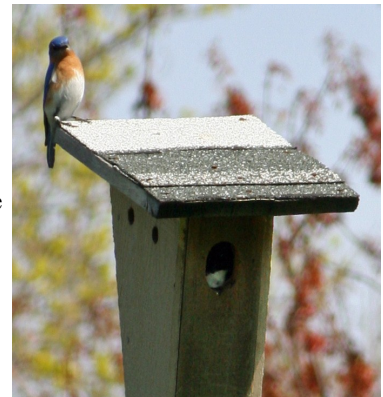
The photo to the right shows the drama that will take place this season. A Tree Swallow holds its ground inside the nestbox, while perched on top the Eastern Bluebird is proclaiming his ownership.

Most important, the bluebird is sporting a leg band, most likely

placed there in 2011 when we banded almost 300 bluebirds.

Hopefully, the Eastern Bluebird will win the battle with the Tree Swallow.

Then we need to be successful recapturing the bluebird. Its leg band number will tell us when and where it was banded. Stay tuned.



Welcome To All Of Our New Members

Bronxville

Maria Bullis
Monna MacLellan
Richard Moeller
Rosemary Omelite
Rebecca Speiser

Eastchester

Joan Dery
Matthew Kautz
Helen Snyder

Hartsdale

Joan Anthony
Ingrassia Broda
Naomi Kinsler
Ben Lederer
Polishook Family
Sarita Schwartz

Larchmont

Dorothee Ashby
Wayne Datz

Mary Ilardi

Ben Katz
Christine Ludecke
Ronald Neschis
Virginia Tucker

Mamaroneck

Marilyn Cassara
Jane Dorian
Eric Freed
Kathy MacLaughlin
Jillian Martin
Robert Milburn
Allan & Claire Wolkoff

Mount Vernon

Jaclie Allemann
Carmella Cammarota
Madeline Carter
Sheridan Denfeld
Annie Merola
Ima Moore

New Rochelle

Donald Berger
Elaine Faver
Karen Loftus
Joe Mammana
Edward Manheim
Mary Paul
John Reynolds
Otis Searcy
Joan Smith
Aileen Steiner
Michael Turek

Pelham

M. Guido
Muriel Kormann
Scarsdale
Marian Adams
Mary Caruso
Louise Clark
Daniel Del Vecchio

Lawrence Friedman

Judy Lempel
Rosemarie Meyer
Anisha Nandi
R.S. Pullman
Linette Roberts
Jmel Wilson

Tuckahoe

Susan Ciamarra
Candace Debiak
Maryrose Defino
Jane Quirk
Daniel Ruvo
Elizabeth Warner

White Plains

M. Stuart Madden
Yonkers
Florence Desola

Field Trips Report

Combined BRSS Audubon/Central Westchester Audubon Bird Trip to Croton Point and George's Island, February 1, 2011

Due to inclement weather (rain, snow) only four people showed up for this trip to Croton Point and George's Island, hoping to see Bald Eagles. In all, 23 species were spotted including only one immature Bald Eagle along with several American Coot and a Peregrine Falcon.

Joint Birding Trip, BRSS Audubon/Central Westchester Audubon, Cape Ann, Massachusetts February 18-20, 2012

There were 10 attendees plus one guest for part of the trip. The weather was fine (for a change!) 67 species were spotted including two rare vagrants; a Townsend's Warbler in Hamilton and a Spotted Towhee in Rockport. Other notable birds on the list included all three Scoters, Black Guillemot, Thick-billed Murre, several Northern Gannets, a Barrow's Goldeneye and five Snowy Owls.

Read and Marshlands March 18, 2012

We had 23 participants and 50 Species of birds on a beautiful early spring walk. Some of the highlights were 3 Species of Grebes, Pied-billed, Horned, Red-throated, also the first Osprey's of the year. We also had six species of sparrow and a Woodcock called out.

Snowy Owl Experience

By Orlando Hidalgo

Well as you already know, this year has been a banner year for Snowy Owls. Reports have been coming in from all around the country of multiple sightings. Boston, for example, at one point had 6 to 8 Snowys at their airport on the same day, and Hawaii reported sightings of Snowys but some people became alarmed, thought that they might harm their children or pets and had them shot! Here in our region, there was a report of a totally white male Snowy Owl that had been hanging around Jones Beach. So on Sunday, January 15th, Doug Bloom, myself and my wife Vicky decided to go out there and chase this beautiful visitor from the Arctic. The weather that day was frigid, I think it was 35 degrees, and out there with the wind blowing onto the beach from the Atlantic, it felt like 15 degrees. The bird had been reported to be in the vicinity of the West End parking lot. So we drove into the lot and parked at the southeast corner. There we encountered someone just coming back from seeing the owl, totally full of sand in his shoes and pants' cuffs. He directed us to a path along the dunes where we might see some other birders and photographers also looking at the bird. We followed his directions and then turned left onto the beach where we walked for about 10 minutes and on our left we saw 4 people armed with cameras and binoculars observing the Snowy Owl. This magnificent bird was everything we had hoped it would be and more. Great day, great bird and great birding!



Youth Bird Trip Report

Youth Bird Walk

Saturday, March 24, 2012

Edith Read Sanctuary, Marshlands Wildlife Sanctuary

There were five birders present; three children and two adults. A total of 48 bird species were seen at these two locations. Highlights include a Winter Wren, FOS (for the leader anyway) pair of Osprey, Common and Red Neck Loon, Pied-billed Grebe and a Great Egret. A field Sparrow was singing his heart out in the meadow at Marshlands.

Upcoming Youth Birding Club Field Trips 2012

All field trips begin at 9 am.

For help carpooling to locations, contact Dave Kaufman (dkaufman43@gmail.com).

April 28 – Harts Brook Park & Preserve, Hartsdale – nesting baby owls and woodland birds.

May 19 – Kensico Cemetery – nesting bluebirds (meet at cemetery office, 273 Lakeview Ave., Valhalla).

Planning Ahead — A Plant for Birds in the Winter

By **Bernie Conway**

For all of us who love birds and for those who have gardens and want to attract birds to our gardens and would like to use native plants then a plant that will work well is a wonderful tree called *Juniperus Virginiana* — the Red Cedar.

The peoples of this continent before Europeans used the cedar for many things. The Blackfeet used the berries to make tea to stop vomiting, and the Cheyenne steeped the leaves for a tea used in the relief of coughing and a tickling in the throat. The Crow peoples used the tea to stop diarrhea and lung and nasal hemorrhaging as well as for cleansing and healing after childbirth.

So the Red Cedar, which grows from thirty-six to seventy feet tall, and is good for fence rows, woodland edges, meadows, pastures, and backyard spaces, also provides for our wildlife as well. Many birds eat the berries of this tree as we all know cedar waxwings do, but we also find other birds during the long months of winter eating the berries such as Blue-

birds, Mockingbirds, Grosbeaks, Purple Finches, and larger birds such as Wild Turkeys, Quail, and even possibly (in the right location) Pigeons.

Some birds use the tree for nesting in the spring and summer months such as Chipping Sparrows, Robins, Song Sparrows, and Mockingbirds. The dense foliage of the tree is used by many species of birds for roosting in the evenings and during migration time. A few noted species that can be seen are the Juncos and Myrtle Warblers, as well as various species of sparrows. Some small mammals may be found using the tree for shelter or for browsing, such as rabbits and deer.

The foliage is a green color, the blooms range in color from green, purple and brown and can be seen from March to May. The red cedar requires drier conditions, from sun to shade and is cold and heat tolerant. For all the aforementioned reasons, this tree is a good native alternative for species such as *Casuarina equisetifolia*, (Beach Sheoak), and *Taxus cuspidata*, (Japanese Yew).

Put this plant in a place where you can observe your birds, near a feeder, or somewhere in your garden bed to add winter interest to your garden, and you will have the beauty of both the plants and birds next winter and for many more winter seasons to come.



"CAT astrophy"



By **Roz Wood**

All cat lovers, especially those who also love songbirds, may not realize that these furry, cuddly and graceful pets, when left to roam out of doors kill hundreds of millions of birds annually. Because cats are hunters by instinct they cannot be blamed for their actions. However, cat owners who allow their cats to roam freely out of doors should feel guilty about the damage done by their pets to song birds.

The Humane Society estimates that annually millions of outdoor

cats are hit by cars, mauled by dogs, poisoned and/or suffer from diseases such as rabies, feline leukemia and an immunodeficiency virus for which there is no vaccine. While indoor cats generally live 12-15 years, an outdoor cat's life expectancy is only 2- 5 years.

The best way to care for your cat is to keep it indoors. If you think it needs exercise or fresh air take it for a walk on a leash. Your neighbors who have birdfeeders will be grateful. Today with land development and climate changes we should do everything possible to protect the wildlife around us.

Spaces Available

Audubon Camp in Maine on Hog Island

Since 1936, the Audubon Camp in Maine has offered environmental education programs for adults, teens, families and conservation leaders on Hog Island in Muscongus Bay, Maine.

The sessions are taught by some of the country's leading birders, scientists, authors and environmental educators, including Pete Dunne and Lang Elliott.

For more information on sessions and dates visit their website:
<http://www.projectpuffin.org/OrnithCamps.html>

Bronx River-Sound Shore Audubon Society, Inc.

(formerly Scarsdale Audubon Society)
P. O. Box 1108
Scarsdale, NY 10583

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
WHITE PLAINS, NY
PERMIT NO. 7033



Join!

Support our environmental mission and receive our newsletter with information about all our programs and field trips. Annual dues are **just \$20** and include membership in the National Audubon Society, plus its magazine. Please allow 4-6 weeks for processing.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please make \$20 check to National Audubon Society and mail to:
BRSS Audubon Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 1108
Scarsdale, NY 10583

COZR080Z

PLEASE GO GREEN

Get our Newsletter Via Email & in Color

Help us save postage, printing expenses and the environment. Sign up to get our newsletter online. Email brssaudubon@gmail.com with the subject, "I want to go green." You will get the newsletter in living color in your email. You'll also get notifications of field trips and programs.



Visit our website
brssaudubon.org



We are Tweeting at
[Twitter.com/brssaudubon](https://twitter.com/brssaudubon)



Find us on Facebook
Search
Bronx River—Sound
Shore Audubon Society



Follow our bluebird blog on
bluebirdtales.wordpress.com