

The BIRD CALL

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

Three Upcoming Programs at Recession Prices—Free

Organic Gardening – Learn Why and How to Do It

Wednesday, February 4, 7:30 p.m.
Bronxville Public Library
201 Pondfield Rd., Bronxville, NY

The New Year's resolution of Al Krautter is to broaden gardeners' knowledge of organic gardening. His program will explain why it is important to switch to organic gardening practices and how to do it.

His newsletter reveals his passion for this healthy approach to gardening:

"Convincing people to go organic is an educational process. Once you master organics, you will never turn back. The rewards are too great, the

earth so pure, the flowers so brilliant, the birds so happy and the grass so healthy to play on. You will feel good in contributing to a better environment and in doing your part for the next generation."

Sprainbrook Nursery, owned by Al Krautter, is now the leading organic garden center in Westchester County. Al has organic programs for growing annuals, perennials, vegetables and lawns. After his talk, there will be a Q&A session.

Learn how you, too, can green up your garden and the planet by growing organically.



Al Krautter owns Sprainbrook Nursery and has converted his operations to growing all plants organically.

Life Between the Tides

Thursday, March 19, 7:30 p.m.
Church Street School
295 Church St., White Plains, NY

Join Mickey Maxwell Cohen, award-winning naturalist and marine educator, as he takes us on a slide-illustrated, virtual walk along the beaches of Long Island.

He'll tell us, among other things, about a defenseless sea creature that steals deadly weapons from other organisms which it can then use for its own protection, about a lowly marine invertebrate that might hold in its genes secrets of the electronic industry of the future, and about an evolutionary ancestor of all back-boned animals that still resides, out of sight, in our coastal waters.

Bring along your favorite "seashore treasures" for an after-lecture identification session.

Sponsored by BRSS and Central Westchester Audubon.



Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Roger Tory Peterson's Birth

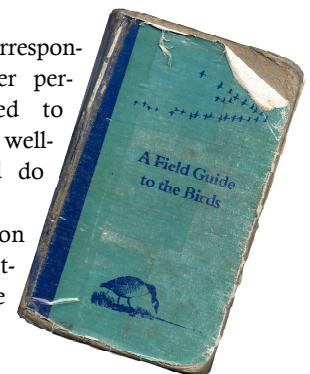
Wednesday, April 22 7:30 p.m.
Bronxville School
177 Pondfield Road, Bronxville, NY

President of Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History, James Berry, will talk about Roger Tory Peterson's place in the history of field ornithology in the United States through an illustrated lecture and video from a New York perspective.

It will include Roger's early boyhood days in Jamestown and his student days in New York City as a member of the Bronx County Bird Club.

Bring for sharing your correspondence, photographs, and other personal memorabilia connected to Roger, as well as anecdotes and well-worn field guides that would do RTP proud.

Sponsored by BRSS, Hudson River Audubon, Central Westchester Audubon and the Greenburgh Nature Center.



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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

New Peterson Biography Informs & Delights

Book Review by Sandy Morrissey

For many of us who carry a tattered, torn and taped together Peterson field guide, a new book out in time for the 100th anniversary of Roger Tory Peterson's birth is just the tonic for winter blues as we await the spring chorus of bird songs.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading *Birdwatcher: The Life of Roger Tory Peterson*, by Elizabeth J. Rosenthal.

You learn of RTP's childhood infatuation with birds and the natural world. This, along with his gifts as talented artist and writer, presaged his meteoric rise in stature as he became a world-wide authority on birds, a leading conservationist and simply known as "The Great Man."

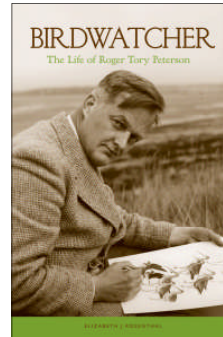
Incredibly, he was just 25 when he published his field guide with his now-famous arrows pointing to a bird's important field marks. For the first time, the general public could go out in the

field and identify birds. The number of "birdwatchers" made a quantum leap.

BRSS Audubon members will learn more about the history of the National Audubon Society. You follow RTP's involvement from Junior Audubon Member, through his early employment, and then his continuing association with Audubon as a board member and contributor to its magazine and conservation projects.

The author, Ms. Rosenthal, has researched her subject well, listing 112 people she interviewed and using their direct quotes. We hear from most of the top people in the bird world, including Sibly, Kaufman and Dunne.

Ms. Rosenthal does an excellent job of helping us feel RTP's passion and single-minded focus on birds and their conservation. Those of us who have our own passion – bluebirds in my case – will identify with "The Great Man."



Contributing to the Scientific Study of Birds

By Orlando Hidalgo, a BRSS Board Member

Birds in Forested Landscapes is one of the ways that the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology has made bird research using standard scientific protocol available to regular citizens like you and me. The project's objectives are to determine habitat and landscape requirements of forest dwelling birds and to determine how forest fragmentation has affected bird populations.

I decided to try my hand at this study this past spring. I chose the three local species of thrushes: wood thrush, veery, and hermit thrush. The first step was to select a study site of 500 feet in diameter with a center designated as the study point. Upon arriving at this study point site you follow a three step procedure. First, for 10 minutes, you observe the area silently recording your observations. Then for another 10 minutes you play a CD of your chosen species' calls, first for 1 minute, then 2 minutes, to see if you attract your spe-

cies. Then, lastly, you play a recording of a screech owl being mobbed by chickadees for 5 minutes.

I didn't end up with any breeding thrushes, although I had wood thrushes in residence. But that last step, wow, proved lots of birds in the area. I found this program very rewarding and will continue again in the spring.

Anyone interested in contributing to bird research can find many projects on the Cornell Lab's website at www.birds.cornell.edu.



Does forest fragmentation threaten this hermit thrush?

Save the Dates

Upcoming Field Trips

Feb. 1—Owl Prowl, Pelham Bay Park

Feb. 7—Eagle Fest, Croton Pt. Park

Feb. 14—Bald Eagle search, Croton

Feb. 20-22—Cape Ann Weekend

Mar. 22—Edith Read Sanctuary

Apr. 5—Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

Apr. 17-19—Delmara Weekend

May 3—Central Park

May 24—Doodletown Road

May 31—Shawangunk Grasslands

For times, meeting places and more information, call Doug Bloom (914-834-5203) or look on the BRSS website at www.brssaudubon.org.



Join the 12th annual

Great Backyard Bird Count

Feb. 13—16

Anyone from novice to expert bird-watchers can help count birds for as little as 15 minutes to as long as you want. Help contribute to bird research as a citizen scientist.

For more information and to participate go online to www.birdcount.org

A joint project of the National Audubon Society and Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Welcome New Members

Bronxville: L.B. Annes, Sharon Deckelmann, Edmond Zteggins. **Eastchester:** Christopher Cain. **Hartsdale:** Annie Sternberg. **Larchmont:** Stewart Barton, Stuart Green, Ruth Lowy, Jason Martz, Bonnie Rodney. **Mamaroneck:** Ben & Zed Hoffhine, Laura Peskin. **New Rochelle:** Lisa Bucknor, Scarlett Garceau, Joyce Kent, Richard Klein. **Pelham:** Amy Dunkin. **Scarsdale:** Jolan Bloss, Julian Schorr, R. Neil Sudol. **Tuckahoe:** M. Schultle

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Greenwich Hawk Watch Sept. 28

By Neil Powell

Regrettably, the weather didn't cooperate from a hawk-watching point of view. The few hawks we got to see were most likely not migratory. We saw one sharp-shinned hawk, one broad-winged hawk and one red-tailed hawk, along with two turkey vultures. Fortunately, we got there early and had an otherwise nice walk in the woods and productive bird watching day. In all we spotted 37 different species including a pileated woodpecker (a particular thrill for the one member of our group who hadn't seen this beautiful bird before). Many thanks to Doug Bloom who worked hard to make the day interesting in spite of the paucity of hawks.

Larchmont Reservoir Nov. 2

By David Kaufman

Despite driving past the Larchmont Reservoir on Weaver St. numerous times, I really never knew its history until this trip. The larger body of water is known as Sheldrake Lake and was once used as the water supply for the Town of Larchmont. The smaller Goodlife Pond was harvested for ice in the winter. Now the Larchmont Reservoir is a 60 acre preserve with hiking trails open to the public.

Twenty five from several Audubon chapters attended. Some members of BRSS were treated to a quick view of a belted kingfisher skimming along the surface of Goodlife Pond. In addition, several water birds were identified, including northern shovelers, hooded mergansers, ruddy ducks, and pied-billed grebes.

While hiking we came upon a great blue heron, looking down on us as we approached. The photographers got some great close up photos of the bird before it tired of all the attention, spread its enormous wings and flew off. Three common species of woodpeckers, and both Cooper's and red-tailed hawks were seen soaring over the reservoir.

The only other surprise occurred at the end of the hike when we startled a group of tiny birds out of an old tree. About 20 pine siskins flew up into the



sky as we approached. A total of 31 bird species were seen that morning.

Jamaica Bay W. R. Nov. 16

By Orlando Hidalgo

We were 23 enthusiastic birders ready for anything with wings and feathers, flying, perching, swimming, walking, or wading. We were bundled up for windy weather, and believe it, it was very windy, but we were not deterred. We were like Louis and Clark. Armed with binoculars, spotting scopes, and cameras, we saw 37 species of birds. Most notable was a Eurasian widgeon, an American bittern, and a little blue heron. Had we been on a sailboat, we might not have been able to return, but we did and lived to tell about it.

Greenwich Point December 14

By Neil Powell

Five of us gathered. The weather was brisk, but the sun took most of the edge off. Greenwich Point never disappoints the patient birder (and even some impatient ones too!). With a total of 48 species identified, this morning was no exception. We were led by Doug "Sharp-Eyes" Bloom. Highlights of the trip included long-tailed duck, three types of mergansers, common goldeneye, common loon, horned grebe, Bonaparte's gull, ruddy turnstones and four types of woodpeckers.

Christmas Bird Count Dec. 28

By Doug Bloom

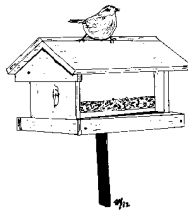
It was a strange weather day from early morning fog to 65 degrees by 2:00 in the afternoon. There were approximately 112 species and 33,000 individuals. Duck numbers as well as overall numbers in our Bronx/Westchester area were down from last year.

Bronx River-Sound Shore Audubon Society, Inc.

(formerly Scarsdale Audubon Society)
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Thank you for your support.



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

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RO8-79N9

GOING GREEN

Receive the Newsletter via Email

In an effort to use less paper, we encourage you all, if you can, to switch to receiving your newsletter via email.

In addition to saving more trees, you will be treated to a bonus: you will be seeing the newsletter in color.

Printing in color is very costly, so by receiving your newsletter via email, you will have it handy in your inbox, you will save trees, be environ-

mental, green and treated to life in Technicolor.

Please email our Board Member, Lika L. Levi, at likalllevi@aol.com with the subject "Audubon newsletter" so that you can start receiving your newsletter via e-mail.

The Board and the Environment thanks you. We will not use your email for any other purpose.

Please Turn Off Your Idling Engine

- An idling car get zero miles to the gallon.
- Turn your car off after 10 seconds of idling. It's cheaper to restart your car and your engine will run more efficiently.
- For every 10 minutes your engine is off, you'll prevent one pound of carbon dioxide from being released.
- Gasoline and diesel exhausts contain more than 40 hazardous pollutants.
 - Idling contributes to Global Warming.
 - Westchester County passed a law on Nov. 10, 2008, making it illegal for drivers to keep their vehicles running for three minutes or more while parked. Violation is a fine up to \$250.

