



EST. 1947

# The BIRD CALL

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

## Bluebird Parents Adopt 5 Babies

By Sandy Morrissey

Imagine having an only child and then suddenly having sextuplets! This is what happened to bluebird parents at Burke Rehab Hospital in White Plains.

Only one egg hatched of their clutch of 5 eggs. The other 4 eggs had disappeared.

Over at Scarsdale Golf Club, a clutch of 5 eggs hatched about the same time. The Dad was nowhere in sight, and Mom was feeding alone for a few days. But on day 5 she also disappeared and the babies were starving.

Past experience told us that the babies would die if they didn't

get adopted by other bluebird parents, and past successful adoptions gave us hope this was possible.

However, we were in the middle of the nesting season. Most first



*These 5 nestlings were starving and would die if not adopted.*

broods were older babies or had fledged. Second broods were in

the egg stage. Only one nest of bluebirds was eligible - the nest with the single nestling.

With a leap of faith, we placed the 5 hungry babies into the nestbox at Burke with the only child, instantly creating sextuplets. We watched to see how the parents handled this radical change. Would they remove the babies? They didn't. Would they abandon their parental duties? They didn't. What we watched were two fantastic parents who just upped the speed of insect delivery.

Whew! This was working.

But the drama wasn't over. On about day 10, one of

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## Summer Camp Experiences

By Julien duChateau

This was my second, and fun-filled year at Rye Marshlands. This year I was an ecologist in training (EIT)! I made new friends, and saw many new animals. Each day the EIT group would hike through the marshlands, observing plants, looking at animals such as a box turtle, deer, horseshoe crabs, and playing nature inspired games. On the last day we went seining in the Long Island sound where we caught jellyfish, shrimp, silver fish, hermit crabs, and lots of seaweed. I would definitely recommend this camp to anyone who is interested in nature and am hoping to return again next summer. Thank you Audubon Society!!



By Fabien duChateau

It was my first exciting year at an ecology camp. I made friends with a boy named Benny who was in his third week of camp!

At Cranberry Preserve there was a huge quarry that we hiked to, and then climbed down. The rocks from that quarry built the Kensico Dam! We saw LOTS of frogs. We went ponding, which is like fishing on the shore. My group caught a leech, and I can't remember what else. I wrote a daily paper for my group called "The Daily Tracker". My group leaders, Erin & Aaron, were both great.



I'm so happy I went. Thanks Audubon Society for sponsoring me to go to this camp!

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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*

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the adoptees was discovered dead. Since it had been banded, including being weighed, our records showed that it was the "runt" of the brood. So nature was taking its course



*Dad of the Year!*

Another big worry came when only the male was observed feeding the nestlings during the entire last week before they fledged. However, he was up for the challenge, making non-stop deliveries of insects to his large family. On the day they fledged, I arrived to check to see how things were. An empty nestbox proved that all had fledged successfully. But, Dad was still on the job. He dive-bombed me continuously. I soon realized that the fledglings were in the nearest tree. I was thrilled to get a picture and close view of one of them, but then I left quickly so the Dad could continue his job of feeding and looking after his brood for the next several weeks until they are totally independent.



*Rescued bluebird successfully fledged. Dad was still looking after it.*

How rewarding it will be to ever recapture any of these "rescue" nestlings!

*Sandy Morrissey is president of BRSS Audubon, creator of its Eastern Bluebird Project and licensed to band birds. She thanks bluebird monitor Bonnie Gould who helped with this rescue by providing mealworm supplements in the early days of the adoption. She reminds the public not to attempt an adoption at home. Unless trained and licensed as we are, it is illegal to handle or interfere with nesting wild birds.*

## Sandy Morrissey Receives Garden Club of America Award



On June 10, Sandy Morrissey was awarded the Garden Club of America *Zone III Conservation Commendation*, "For her vision in establishing the Eastern Bluebird Project and her significant achievement in restoring the bluebird population." The award was presented at the Huntington Country Club on Long Island and is the highest honor Zone III, which comprises the entire state of New York, can bestow.

# Birding 101: The Birds You Didn't Know All Around You

By Catie Beveridge

I've been a lover of birds for ages. I have collected stuffed birds from the National Audubon Society as long as I can remember, and have gone on many bird walks. When the



*Catie teaching middle schoolers*

Scarsdale Village government started to argue about the problems with the Canada Geese in town, I wanted to help the younger generation to understand the lives of birds and appreciate how many are always all around us.



The first thing I set out to do was to learn more about birds in my area. I met the Bronx River Audubon President, Sandy Morrissey, by researching local

Audubon chapters, and the Bronx River chapter was the only one with an active youth program. With Sandy's guidance, I met other birders in the area and attend monthly bird walks at local reservoirs and nature preserves. There I learned about the Audubon's Bluebird Project and went to the annual banding. I noticed that my middle school had several bird boxes in poor repair and Sandy

said that the Audubon connection had disappeared and the box program was inactive. I thought that if I could educate interested middle school students, the program could return to my school.

After my teaching two classes to the Ecology Club at Scarsdale Middle School (SMS) and four classes of sixth graders, two science teachers and the Ecology club will now be in charge of maintaining the Bluebird boxes there, keeping track of bird migration and population on the school campus, and educating future members about them. This maintaining will create a stronger bond between Audubon and SMS. Having taught a new group of science teachers, I look forward to those boxes becoming perfect Bluebird homes for seasons to come. The birds' presence will hopefully bring attention and entice future students.



*Catie teaching about wingspan.*

## BRSS Annual Meeting

Over 60 people attended our BRSS Annual meeting in June. Mary Davis, our honoree, received many accolades for her dedication as an environmentalist and nature educator. Indeed, many in attendance acknowledged that they had received their first spark and enthusiasm to pursue a role of engaging others in the discovery and joy of nature through a program Mary ran. She was presented with many proclamations and plaques, and Westchester County declared June 5<sup>th</sup> as "Mary Davis Day." We elected a new slate of officers for a 2-year term: Sandy Morrissey, President; Doug Bloom, Vice President; Diane Morrison, Secretary; and Jeff Zuckerman, Treasurer. We elected two new members to the Board, Miriam Beveridge and Elizabeth Poyet, as well as returning Board members Doug Bloom, Dave Kaufman, Scott Mellis, Diane Morrison, and Sandy Morrissey.

*New York-State Senator George Latimer honoring Mary Davis*



*Mary with her family*

## PROGRAMS 2014/2015

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

All programs are co-sponsored by Central Westchester Audubon.

Evening programs will begin with refreshments at 7 pm and the program begins at 7:15pm unless otherwise stated.

### September 17, Wednesday - Hawk Migration Presenter is Ted Gilman - 7:30 pm

The birds are on the move, so come learn more about what's happening! Ted Gilman, a well respected naturalist and fantastic speaker from Greenwich Audubon, will bring us up to date on what's going on along the Atlantic Flyway. Ted will also help us understand how climate change is impacting the birds, and the implications of these changes on our natural environment. We hope you can join us for this look at the world around us. Refreshments served at 7:15 pm. Program at 7:30.

Location: White Plains Presbyterian Church, 39 North Broadway, White Plains. Parking lot is accessed from Barker Avenue.

### October 22, Wednesday - Walkable Westchester Presenter is Jane and Walt Daniels authors of the book *Walkable Westchester*- 7:30 pm

Join Jane and Walt Daniels, Westchester residents who are avid hikers, as they take you on a tour of selected parks around the county. While you view great photographs, listen to stories and tales of some of the nearly 200 parks in the county. Copies of the book will be available to purchase. Refreshments served at 7:15. Program at 7:30.

Location: White Plains Presbyterian Church, 39 North Broadway, White Plains. Parking lot is accessed from Barker Avenue.

### November 20, Thursday - Live Hawk Program

**Presenter is Jim Eyring - 7 pm** - Jim Eyring, Assistant Director of the Pace University Environmental Center in Pleasantville and master falconer, returns with his annual program featuring live owls, hawks and falcons and a free flying demonstration. Jim always presents a fascinating program which mesmerizes children and adults alike.

Location: Church Street School, 295 Church St., White Plains.

### January 21 2015, Wednesday - Birders: Central Park Effect - Film

Summary: "A varied group of New Yorkers with attitude reveals how a hidden world of beautiful wild birds in the middle of Manhattan has upended and magically transformed their lives." - Jeffrey Kimball Director/Producer

Location: TBA

### February 19 2015, Thursday - Pine Barrens Presenter is Wayne Cahilly

Location: White Plains Presbyterian Church, 39 North Broadway, White Plains. Parking lot is accessed from Barker Avenue.

### March 18 2015, Wednesday - Meet the Animals at the Trove- 4:30-5:30 pm

**Presented by Greenburgh Nature Center** - Join us with your children to see and learn about some of the wild animals who make the Greenburgh Nature Center their home. Location: White Plains Library, 100 Martine Avenue, White Plains. Time: 4:30 pm.

### April 22, 2015, Wednesday - Sustaining Wildlife: Creating Pollinator Habitat

**Presenter is Ursula Chance, Sara Katz, Chrissy Ward**

Location: TBA



## 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Bird Seed Sale

The BRSS Bird Seed Sale is your opportunity to buy premium quality bird seed and help us raise funds for our BRSS Audubon educational and environmental programs. **This is the BRSS Audubon's major fundraiser.** Our mixes contain only the seeds that local birds prefer, without any "filler" seeds often found in cheaper mixes sold at grocery and hardware stores.

A study by the US Fish and Wildlife Service showed that the favorite foods for birds in our area are sunflower seed, peanuts and millet. They are all available on our seed sale.

### Welcome New Members

**Bronxville**  
Jeffrey Block  
Christina Edridge  
Scott Lang  
Jennifer Miller  
Kathy Rugan  
**Hartsdale**  
Isabel Chiu  
Sandra Forster

**Larchmont**  
Elizabeth Boylan  
Carla Canonico  
Laura Chamberlain  
Stephen Eisenstein  
Amy Fuller  
Stuart Green  
Philip Heinegg  
Lisa Hochman

Greg Kaldor  
Dorothy Rainier  
Nancy Seligson  
Dan/Megan Tingley  
Gerald Varley  
Anthony Waring  
**Mamaroneck**  
Sally Feinberg  
Stephen Girsky  
Connie Mogull  
Wendy Satin

Agnes Sprouse  
**Mount Vernon**  
Ali Nedzamar  
Abdollah Yamani  
**New Rochelle**  
John Gugliotta  
Joyce Kent  
Tatyana Komin  
Eric Maidenberg  
Dilip Mukhtyar  
Billy O'Connell

Alexander Petrusus  
Vuksan Vuksanj  
**Pelham**  
Angela Ludington  
**Rye**  
Michelle Florence  
**Rye Brook**  
Penny Berman  
**Scarsdale**  
David Arnov

Andy Berdy  
Constance Dougherty  
Selma Engel  
Elena Ippolito  
Milton Koenig  
Sveta Kungurtsev  
Dorothy Kroenlein  
Dylan Monkolchayut  
Abigail Petersen

Cynthia Raha  
Kate Solomon  
**Tuckahoe**  
William Becker  
Chow Ng



## FIELD TRIPS 2014 /2015



Please Contact Doug Bloom at (914) 834-5203 for info or to register. Meet at Scarsdale Village Hall unless otherwise specified

### September 14, Sunday-Larchmont Reservoir / Hommocks/SMRA

Meet at 8:00 am at the upper parking lot at reservoir. Will be looking for fall migrants

### September 28, Sunday-Lenoir Preserve

Meet at Lenoir at 8:30 am. Looking for migrating hawks and land birds

### October 12, Sunday- Meadowlands

Meet at 7:30 at Village Hall. We will be looking for late migrants and possibly some late shorebirds

### November 9, Sunday- Read Sanctuary/ Bedford Audubon

Meet at 8:00 am at Read which is behind Playland in Rye. We will be looking for late migrants.

### December 28, Sunday- Christmas Bird Count

Contact Doug Bloom to Volunteer for this important bird survey. Volunteer for a few hours or all day.

### January 11, Sunday- Montauk/SMRA

Meet at 6:30 am at village hall. Wintering Ducks, and other birds. Possibly Snowy Owls

### February 7, Saturday- Eagle Walk Eagle Fest

Meet at Wild Bird Center at 8:00 am for our annual

Eagle walk or at Croton Point Park at 8:40 in big parking lot near Gazebo

### February 13-16, or 20-22 New Hampshire Coast

Looking for wintering waterfowl

### April 19-Sunday, Sterling Forest

Meet at 7:00 am at the village hall. We will be looking for early migrants. Warblers and other songbirds that are passing thru.

### May 3, Sunday- Central Park

Meet at 7:30 am at 77<sup>th</sup> street at statue across from Museum of Natural History. Will be looking for spring migrants such as warblers, orioles and others.

### May 17, Sunday- Doodletown Road

Meet at 8:00 am at Doodletown Road. Best place to see Cerulean Warblers nesting and other migrants.

SMRA - Saw Mill River Audubon, Bedford - Bedford Audubon, HRAS - Hudson River Audubon

## Youth (and Adult Beginner) Field Trips 2014/2015

All field trips are on Saturdays and begin at 9:00 a.m. PLEASE email Dave Kaufman [dkaufman43@gmail.com](mailto:dkaufman43@gmail.com) if you plan to attend.

**Sept. 20, Saturday - Marshlands Conservancy** – field, woodland and marsh birds.

**Oct. 18, Saturday - Crestwood Lake** – water and parkland birds (meet in Crestwood Train Station parking lot on the parkway side of the train station).

**Nov. 15, Saturday - Sheldrake Environmental Center** – Water and woodland birds (meet in Sheldrake parking lot).

**March 14, Saturday - Read Wildlife Sanctuary** – feeder birds, ducks and shore birds.

**April 18, Saturday - Crestwood Lake** – water, parkland birds and early migrants (meet in Crestwood Train Station parking lot on the parkway side of the train station).

**May 9, Saturday - Rye Nature Center** – woodland birds and spring warblers.

**June 6, Saturday - Kensico Cemetery** – band nesting bluebirds (meet at cemetery office, 273 Lakeview Ave., Valhalla).



*The Bronx River Sound Shore Youth Audubon Group has an exciting program to offer this year to past and future young birders. We encourage any children between the ages of 8 and 16 who are interested in birding to come join our adult guided field trips. No prior knowledge, skills, or expertise is required - all will be provided! Field trips to local birding hot spots are always held on Saturdays and begin at the reasonable hour of 9AM to accommodate our late sleeping teenagers. We do request that all children are accompanied by an adult for these outings. BRSS Audubon members volunteer to lead these groups, hoping to introduce the children to the fun and challenges of birding by sight and sound, potentially preparing them to participate in the Adult field trips that are held on Sundays. Youth bird walks generally do not last for more than 90 minutes and are often at the same locations that the longer Adult field trips are held. Come out with us on Saturday mornings and appreciate the surprising diversity of birds that we enjoy in southern Westchester.*

# Bronx River-Sound Shore Audubon Society, Inc.

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

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## 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.

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Please make \$20 check to National Audubon Society and mail to:  
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Scarsdale, NY 10583  
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### Volunteer Environmental Educator (VEE) Program Needs You!

Mary Davis, recently honored by BRSS Audubon, created and teaches the VEE program at Sheldrake Environmental Center, a course for adults in ecology and teaching techniques. Graduates of the VEE training program work with elementary school students from Rye Neck, Mamaroneck, Larchmont, Scarsdale, and New Rochelle schools. Throughout the school year, they take turns visiting the students at the various elementary schools (“pre-trip” sessions), and leading field trips to the Larchmont Reservoir, Sheldrake River Trail, and Larchmont’s Dog Beach. A new training session begins October 16. If interested, please contact Mary at [mdavis@sheldrakecenter.org](mailto:mdavis@sheldrakecenter.org).

### WOULD YOU LOVE TO SEE THE BEAUTIFUL PHOTOS IN THIS ISSUE IN COLOR?

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