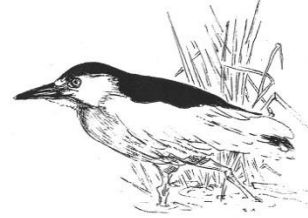


# FYKE NATURE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

www.fykenature.org

Vol. 59 – No. 3 – Fall 2013



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**September 7 – Field Trip: Saturday Celery Farm Guided Walk.** This walk is for nature-lovers of all ages and birders of all levels. We'll look for butterflies, bugs, weird plants and our feathered friends. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Greenway on the north end of the CF off Franklin Turnpike. E-mail Jim Wright at [celeryfarm@gmail.com](mailto:celeryfarm@gmail.com) if you plan to attend. Check [celeryfarm.net](http://celeryfarm.net) for any updates. Bring water and wear long pants and socks and bug spray!

**September 14 - 15 – Field Trip: Fyke Weekend at Mt. Peter.** Come one or both days and join the regulars at the lookout. We hope to catch a big broadwing flight. See story page 2.

**September 27 – Monthly Meeting: 8:00 p.m., Allendale Municipal Building**  
Join Allendale author **Jim Wright** and Allendale wood-carver **Stiles Thomas** for this special event that kicks off with Jim's short and snappy talk and slide show about his popular coffee-table book, "The Nature of the Meadowlands," which celebrates the amazing environmental comeback of this former land of landfills and pig farms. The second-half of this double-header is the unveiling and exhibition of Stiles' recent bird carvings, both wonderful and whimsical. A reception with refreshments for Stiles will follow. Call Jim Wright at 201-469-7349 for more information.

**September 28 – Field Trip: State Line Hawk Watch.** Meet at the State Line lookout in Alpine. This site has easy access and park facilities. Here is a chance to look down at migrating hawks.

**October 5 – Field Trip: Saturday Celery Farm Guided Walk.** This walk is for nature-lovers of all ages and birders of all levels. We'll look for butterflies, bugs, weird plants and our feathered friends. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Greenway on the north end of the CF off Franklin Turnpike. E-mail Jim Wright at [celeryfarm@gmail.com](mailto:celeryfarm@gmail.com) if you plan to attend. Check [celeryfarm.net](http://celeryfarm.net) for any updates. Bring water and wear long pants and socks and bug spray!

**October 13 (Sunday) – Field Trip: The Big Sit! at the Celery Farm.** To sign up contact Carol Flanagan, 973-423-0420 or [carolflana@aol.com](mailto:carolflana@aol.com).

**October 25 – Monthly Meeting: 8:00 p.m., Allendale Municipal Building**  
**Winter Birding North of New Jersey – Kurt Muenz.** Kurt will present a program including various bird species photographed on two winter birding trips in early 2013 to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and to Ottawa. He will tell of how he came to take them, failures and successes with target birds, people met, description of the birding venues all illustrated by pictures of the full variety of birds including Northern Hawk, Snowy and Great Gray Owls.

**October 27 (Sunday) – Field Trip: Ducks at Dusk.** Meet at the Celery Farm Warden's Watch at 5:30 p.m. Leader: Mike Limatola (201) 739-8062 or [mike.limatola@gmail.com](mailto:mike.limatola@gmail.com).

**November 9 – Field Trip: Sunrise Mountain Hawk Watch.** Meet on site 10 a.m. Leader: Mike Limatola (201) 739-8062 or [mike.limatola@gmail.com](mailto:mike.limatola@gmail.com).

**November 22 - Monthly Meeting: 8:00 p.m., Allendale Municipal Building Members Night.** Please come and enjoy an evening of short presentations by Fyke Members or better yet, be a presenter and share your own photos, prints, collections, stories, etc. For digital presentations, please contact Kurt Muenz at 201-447-0107 or elkumu@aceweb.com.

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**Mount Peter: 56 Years Old and Still Counting**  
By Judith Cinquina

Mount Peter's fall hawk watch begins September 1 and will run through November 15, from 9a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Come on up, enjoy the birds and the view and help keep a lonely hawk watcher sane. Leaders are glad to answer questions and always welcome more eyes on the sky. I'll be there most Mondays, Denise Farrell mans the watch on Wednesdays, and Ken Witkowski provides his expertise on many Sundays in September, but any day you'll find friendly leaders who appreciate your company. And don't forget to check us out on hawkcount.org. Thanks to one of our volunteers, you can also like us on Facebook this fall.



If you can identify a few hawks, we always need leaders. Half days are available, and you don't have to be an expert if you're willing to learn on the job. To volunteer, please contact me at judycinq@optonline.net. The lookout is located on the top of 17A, between Greenwood Lake and Warwick, NY, and is marked by a pair of microwave towers. To reach the lookout, take Route 17 through Tuxedo to 17A and turn left. Follow 17A up the mountain and into Greenwood Lake. Keep right when you reach the lake and follow 17A up the second mountain. When you reach the top, you will see a sign for Bellvale Farms Creamery (excellent homemade ice cream) ahead. Turn right at the ice cream shop onto Kain Road and turn right again up the pot-holed dirt road to the lot or park down below.

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**Stiles and Lillian Thomas Scholarship Winner – 2013**  
By Carol Flanagan

The Stiles and Lillian Thomas Scholarship was initiated to honor Stiles and Lillian Thomas for their life-long commitment to preservation and conservation. This annual scholarship is awarded to a graduating senior student of Northern Highlands Regional High School who is pursuing a college degree in the environmental sciences, and who has demonstrate a commitment to the environment through participation in related community and school activities such as recycling, clean up, and green-conscious projects.

This year's award of \$1000.00 was presented to Jessica Dowicz at the high school's award ceremony held in June. Jessica has been active in the Green Club, the Ecofriendly Club and a Youth Group that helped plant gardens at schools and churches. She taught preschoolers about the environment and recycling. Watch for her scholarship essay in the Winter newsletter.



The 2014 Celery Farm Calendars will be available soon! The proceeds from calendar donations, after covering costs, will continue to fund the Stiles and Lillian Thomas Scholarship.

## STEPPING UP FOR LORRIMER 2013

We had a total of 79 species recorded during our fourteenth Stepping Up for Lorrimer held on Saturday, May 11, 2013! A donation of \$1712.50 was presented to Patrick Scheuer, Sanctuary Director, NJ Audubon Lorrimer Sanctuary. Patrick expressed his thanks for our continued support of Lorrimer. Thanks to all who participated, whether counting or pledging, your support is greatly appreciated. And special thanks to those who took extra shifts, started early or worked overtime, birded alone or in teams, to beat last year's total by 9 species!!



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**A special thanks to Gabriele Schmitt who arranged this event!**

Here is the list of species seen at the Celery Farm on May 11, 2013:

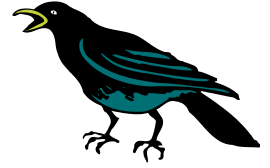
|                             |                               |                              |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Loon, possible Red-throated | Eastern Phoebe                | American Redstart            |
| Double-crested Cormorant    | Great Crested Flycatcher      | Blackpoll Warbler            |
| Great Cormorant             | Barn Swallow                  | Black-throated Blue Warbler  |
| Black-crowned Night-Heron   | Northern Rough-winged Swallow | Black-throated Green Warbler |
| Great Blue Heron            | Tree Swallow                  | Common Yellowthroat          |
| Great Egret                 | Cedar Waxwing                 | Nashville Warbler            |
| Green Heron                 | Carolina Wren                 | Northern Parula              |
| Canada Goose                | House Wren                    | Northern Waterthrush         |
| Mallard                     | Marsh Wren                    | Pine Warbler                 |
| Mute Swan                   | Gray Catbird                  | Prairie Warbler              |
| Wood Duck                   | American Robin                | Worm-eating Warbler          |
| Turkey Vulture              | Veery                         | Yellow-rumped Warbler        |
| Osprey                      | Blue-gray Gnatcatcher         | Yellow Warbler               |
| Broad-winged Hawk           | Black-capped Chickadee        | Rose-breasted Grosbeak       |
| Cooper's Hawk               | Brown Creeper                 | Chipping Sparrow             |
| Red-shouldered Hawk         | Tufted Titmouse               | Field Sparrow                |
| Red-tailed Hawk             | American Crow                 | House Sparrow                |
| Spotted Sandpiper           | Blue Jay                      | Song Sparrow                 |
| Mourning Dove               | Fish Crow                     | Swamp Sparrow                |
| Chimney Swift               | Common Raven                  | White-throated Sparrow       |
| Ruby-throated Hummingbird   | European Starling             | Northern Cardinal            |
| Belted Kingfisher           | Blue-headed Vireo             | Baltimore Oriole             |
| Downy Woodpecker            | Red-eyed Vireo                | Brown-headed Cowbird         |
| Hairy Woodpecker            | Warbling Vireo                | Common Grackle               |
| Northern Flicker            | American Goldfinch            | Red-winged Blackbird         |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker      | House Finch                   | Eastern Screech Owl          |

Thanks to the following people who pledged for Stepping Up:

|                           |                          |                             |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| John Bird                 | Herb & Molly Gardener    | Hans Sammer                 |
| Mimi Brauch               | Enid Hayflick            | Gabriele Schmitt            |
| Nancy Bristow             | Kathleen Hetherington    | Suzanne Serafini            |
| John Brotherton           | Linda Hingle             | Tim & Janet Tedesco         |
| Michael & Sara Buckley    | Ivan Kossak              | Lillian & Stiles Thomas     |
| Deedee Burnside           | Darlene Lembo            | Kevin Watson                |
| Judith Cinquina           | Alice Leurck             | Charles West                |
| Jean & Phil Dahlen        | Dorothy & Joe Lux        | Penny Whitlock              |
| Nancy Drabik              | Valerie & Tom Nicastro   | Rosemarie Widmer            |
| Seymour Drakes & Pat Finn | Rochana Muenthongchin    | John Workman & Andrea Snell |
| Rob Fanning               | Kurt Muenz               |                             |
| Carol Flanagan            | Bertrand & Joan Rottkamp |                             |

## Crows

By Pamela Ryder



The dog and I had started out at first light, turning into my neighbor's field, when I heard the sound of crows coming from the red pine grove one field over. It was not the diminishing sound of crows in the air and on the move—but that steady conversation of a perched flock, nagging a hawk.

I imagined the hawk, hunched on his branch, surrounded, annoyed. I knew he would soon have enough of it, and would take off with crows chasing him, making sure he was good and gone. But crows have no nests with eggs or fledglings to protect from hawks this time of year. I thought it over. Maybe crows keep to the behavior of scolding hawks—even hawks just minding their own business—year 'round. Or maybe the crows are teaching the young adults in the flock—the ones who will be making their own nests for the first time this coming spring—that chasing hawks in general is the thing to do—sure, that hawk may look innocent now but just you wait. Or maybe by now it's part of their spiral helix to chase off crows. Maybe that.

The sun was rising and the world was going golden when the shadow of something passing over swiftly moved across the snow. I looked up and caught sight of him: a red-tailed hawk, headed in the direction of the red pine grove. Had he heard the crows? Did he know that the sound of a brother hawk's harassment might mean there's good crow-hunting nearby—so just follow the nervous caws? Or, since it's almost the time for taking a mate—had the hawk considered that crow-scolding means a potential partner is near and may as well head on over to take a look?

Or maybe I was wrong about it, all of it. Maybe it was just a random red-tail passing over this early morning, heading nowhere in particular and his shadow traveling behind him, here on my neighbor's field.

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## Belize Scholarship Update

By Nancy Drabik

### *A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.*

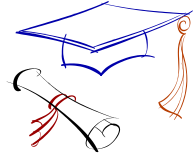
Nancy Rivas, a young girl from Belize, first caught our attention when a group of Fykers joined Stiles and Lillian Thomas on a tour of Belize several years ago. Nancy is the daughter of Mauricio, who was our driver and all around assistant. Mauricio has two older children who are now successful adults, employed in full time professional jobs. His youngest, Nancy, was completing elementary school at that time and demonstrated no interest in attending high school. Mauricio, realizing how important education was, tried to persuade Nancy to attend, but also knew it also represented a financial challenge for him. High school is not free in Belize; tuition, books, uniforms and transportation are all expected to be paid for by the student's family.

Relaxing in the magnificent setting of Pook's Hill, we spoke of all that Mauricio had done for Stiles Thomas Tours through the years and wondered how we could "pay it forward". The idea of creating a high school scholarship for his daughter, Nancy, was hatched, and, as they say, "the rest is history".

Mauricio and his family were very appreciative and our scholarship demonstrated our belief that Nancy could succeed. This spurred her on as she began her high school experience. The beginning was rocky, as Nancy entered high school a year younger and less mature than her classmates. Each year we witness her growth in a variety of subjects, and we encourage her as she struggles in other subject areas.

At this time, Nancy is entering her senior year of high school and we are thrilled that she has demonstrated stamina and a willingness to “stay the course”. We hope to be able to report to you in late spring of 2014 that Nancy has been awarded her high school diploma! In the meantime, if you have not yet made a contribution to Nancy’s scholarship, now is the time. Checks can be made out to Fyke with “Belize scholarship” in the memo line. They can be sent to: Fyke Nature Association, P.O. Box 141, Ramsey, NJ 07446.

Thank you for all of your unwavering support throughout this four year journey. It has been a unique opportunity for us to actually see our generosity making a significant difference in a child’s life.



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### **Oh my God, I’ve Become a Birder**

By John Pastore

As a child, I was very much interested in nature – catching bugs, frog and fish, listening to birds singing and squawking, and watching Mutual of Omaha’s Wild Kingdom. But I don’t remember anyone self-identifying as a ‘bird-watcher’ or a ‘birder’. I first discovered the Celery Farm, a nature preserve in Allendale, NJ, in the late 1970’s. And when I say discovered it, I really mean I discovered it. My parents had just moved to Ramsey, NJ, fairly nearby to the preserve. I was home from college for the summer, and had no idea the Celery Farm existed. While out for a walk, I saw a trail leading into some woods at the end of their street. In about 15 minutes, I had stumbled upon a swampy, marshy area. I was pretty sure no one had ever been there before (well, at least since the Indians). Many years later, my wife and I bought a house in Allendale, just down the road from the Celery Farm, which has been our home ever since.

For many years, the Celery Farm had one primary association – ice hockey. My wife, son, daughter and I would arrive about 10am, and I’d complete the arduous process of lacing up the skates. We’d glide around for a little while, shoot a puck around, before I would say “you guys look cold... why don’t you head home and warm up”. I would remain to play game after game of ice hockey, sometimes staying until dark.

From time to time, we would take the kids for a walk around the lake, but we were far from regulars. I would occasionally visit in the fall, with binoculars and a point-and-shoot digital camera. People would always ask me if I’d seen anything interesting. Initially confused - every bit of it was interesting to me - I came to understand that these people were birders. A best I could tell, they had some kind of limitation that prevented them from seeing the trees, the sky, the lake, flowers, turtles – pretty much everything I was seeing – except for birds. They certainly could see birds. They LOVED birds. They seemed to be bird-obsessed. I was always tempted to answer the question “have you seen anything interesting” with “Yes, I just saw an ostrich and two penguins, right around the bend there”, but instead I always said “I’m sorry, but I am not really a birder”. I imagine they understood this to mean that I was one of those unfortunate persons who could barely see birds, because I was so distracted by the trees, the sky, the lake, flowers and turtles.

In March 2009, I upgraded to a digital SLR camera. A couple of years later, I had a second camera, a hefty tripod, a half-dozen lenses, and was visiting the marsh 4-6 times per week. By this point I had gotten to know some birders personally, and they seemed like very nice people, despite their obsession with counting, list-making and logging “first-thises’ and ‘big-that’s’. I was beginning to learn the names of a lot more birds. But I made it clear that I was a photographer, not a birder, that I was interested in sunrise/sunset photos above all else, and that I valued all of the creatures and plants as highly as birds. “If Crestwood Lake

(Allendale's other park, with a swimming lake and ball fields) had the animals of the Serengeti", I would explain "I'd be photographing lions and zebras instead".

Just recently, I made a startling discovery – birders might just be well-rounded, diverse people, with interests beyond birding. Early one morning on the Warden's Watch lookout platform, I was chatting with Rob, one of the most passionate and knowledgeable birders I know. Rob hit me with a barrage of incongruous information:

1. First he said that he was excited about the upcoming NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four, since he was a fan of Louisville. I was taken aback - could he possibly be interested in basketball? And if he stayed up late to watch the game, wouldn't he oversleep and miss his pre-work birding session the following morning? But I was able to reconcile this when I remembered that Louisville's team name is the Cardinals (so it really was more of a bird-watching activity after all).
2. Next, Rob told me that he and his fiancé were going to see a Philadelphia Phillies baseball game over the weekend. What, baseball too, and not the Orioles or Blue Jays? I was truly perplexed.
3. Wait a minute, did he say fiancé? How could he possibly have time for a committed relationship – he's a birder! He did say that his bride-to-be was also a passionate birder, and that he anticipated the biggest challenge in their marriage might come when he wanted to go to Sandy Hook, and she insisted on Cape May. I imagined the divorce court proceedings: "Irreconcilable birding differences, your honor".

I left somewhat shaken, my notion of the single-mindedness of birders now called to question. I might have been able to get through this, but I made another startling discovery – a greatly admired naturalist and presumed birder named Jim writes murder mysteries and ghost stories. I mean, I would understand if he wrote books about birds, but crime stories – what's that got to do with birding?

These revelations led to a great deal of soul-searching - I became deeply introspective. Was it possible that birders are actually well-rounded people with a wide range of interests? Is it possible to be a committed birder and still have time left for other pursuits? Could a person who loves birds still have the capacity to love a spouse, a basketball team, or spending hours with a word processor composing a novel? I was always certain that I wasn't a birder, for I have so many other interests. I was forced to confront the possibility that I might actually be a birder. I needed some way to know for sure - some sort of litmus test. I came up with the following top ten indicators that you might be a birder:

1. You have a copy of Peterson's "A Field Guide to the Birds East of the Rockies", and you've had it so long that you can't remember being without it – if true, you might be a birder.
2. In your copy of Peterson's field guide, is a checklist of the birds of the Celery Farm, and you have checked off the birds you have seen – if true, you might be a birder.
3. You have taken thousands of pictures of birds, and while you know you don't need any more, you just keep on taking pictures of birds – if true, it is possible you are not only a photographer, but you might be a birder.
4. You are in Minnesota, standing on the banks of the Mississippi River, and it is 8 degrees (without the wind chill) but you really need to get pictures of bald eagles, so you shiver for two hours and snap away – if true, you might be a birder.
5. You have seriously considered installing electrical wiring on your bird feeders, with remote control operation, so you can gently but firmly zap squirrels that hog the bird seed – if true, you might be a birder.

6. After years of being satisfied to say “that’s a sparrow”, or “that’s a duck”, you are starting to feel the need to know which sparrow and which duck – if true, you might be a birder.
  7. When someone says “Oh look, there is a Great White Heron” or “that’s a shovel-bill”, you feel compelled correct them (Great Egret/Northern Shoveler) – if true, you might be a birder.
  8. You are driving your car with your window down, your head hanging out, looking up, because for the first time, you see a bald eagle in your home town – if true, you might be a birder.
  9. You have books about how to photograph birds, a book that plays recorded bird songs, and your friends give you bird-themed gifts – if true, you might be a birder.
  10. You have duct-taped a tripod to a step-ladder, so you can remotely photograph a cardinal’s nest – from Mama incubating the eggs, to the just-hatched chicks, to Dad feeding his babies, and finally the empty nest – if true, you might be a birder.
- As evidence please see [www.flickr.com/photos/catfishjohn/sets/72157622076615321/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/catfishjohn/sets/72157622076615321/)

So I took this little quiz, and guess what – ten for ten true!!! It couldn’t be more definitive, I have become a birder!!! So now I am really at a crossroads. Do I accept this gracefully, or fight it? Am I doomed to memorizing the songs, calls and appearance of every bird? Must I learn to distinguish one sparrow from another - or worse, all those confusing fall warblers? Or is it time for Birders Anonymous – “Hello, my name is John, and I am a birder.” So let this be a warning to all. It starts very innocently, with the purchase of a birdfeeder (the ‘gateway drug’ of birding). You will find yourself watching birds (and cursing squirrels), and before you know it, you are a full-fledged birding addict. If it can happen to me, it can happen to anyone.

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## Ode To Odonata

By Charley West

Of fleeting gems I’ve grown quite fond - -  
 As they rest upon a frond - -  
 Or dash in sunlight o’er their pond.

When they pass within my view - -  
 Every color, shade, and hue - -  
 Sparkles like the morning dew.

Some have pairs of wings extended - -  
 Some – at rest – their wings lie tented - -  
 Yet both serve as God intended.

Diaphanous with lucent cover - -  
 Enabling a static hover - -  
 Prospecting through the wetland’s bower.

A bulbous head with complex eye - -  
 Scrutinizes marsh and sky - -  
 Anywhere their prey might lie.

So don’t mistake the fragile beauty - -  
 Therein lies potential fury - -  
 For Odes are Predators most truly.



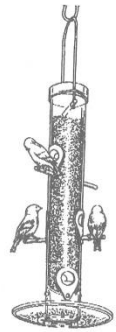
Unicorn Clubtail © Kurt Muenz

## Field and Feeder Notes

By Judith Cinquina

### ***When a Western scrub jay dies, researchers report, other jays may hold a kind of Funeral — screeching over the body for as long as half an hour.***

*NY Times Science, Tuesday, January 8, 2013*



We've come on a long journey from the days ornithologists believed birds functioned solely by instinct. If we watch them long enough and with open minds, there's much to discover about their individual personalities. Take the Moonbird that has traveled virtually to the moon and part way back. The Moonbird or Red Knot B95 has racked up those miles commuting from its breeding grounds in the Arctic to its wintering area in Tierra del Fuego and back since it was banded in 2006. Not all Red Knots are "Moonbirds." B95 must have made good flight decisions to survive this long: decisions that only a healthy and experienced knot could make.

Yellow Warblers can have standout personalities, too, as Doug Morel discovered, May 21. He pulled his truck into the dirt lot off Halifax Road, Mahwah that evening, and a female Yellow Warbler seemed to find his truck irresistible. "Chipping like mad the whole time," Doug wrote, she performed continual flybys and landed repeatedly on the truck's mirrors and windows. Doug birded for over an hour and a half, returned to his truck, and found her still there. A male had joined her but gave up and flew off to feed when Doug arrived, but that female didn't give up even while Doug drove away. That's not the end of the story. Four days later, Rosemarie Widmer inadvertently pulled into the same location off Halifax Road and that female was all over her SUV for 25 minutes, perching on the mirrors, windows and windshield wipers. The male flew in to a nearby bush for a few moments and she joined him, but as soon as he flew off, the female Yellow Warbler was back on the SUV. More than likely, that female had a nest in the tree over that parking space, and the vehicles may have impeded her commute to and from that nest. Or maybe, she just had a thing for vehicles.

An American Goldfinch behaved in an interesting manner in Rosemarie's Allendale backyard, July 19. The Widmers have had a resident Green Frog living in their water feature for the last three years. On July 19, Rosemarie happened to glance up at her waterfall, when her frog jumped up and snatched a Goldfinch in midair, fell back into the water, and with much thrashing and splashing, drowned the finch. The frog then climbed onto the shore of the water feature and manipulated the bird in its mouth, so first the bird's feet and then its tail was exposed. Meanwhile, a male Goldfinch flew back and forth over its head. Was that male mourning the loss of a companion, merely curious, or wanting a better look at an enemy? We don't know. Rosemarie lost sight of the frog, so cannot confirm it ate the bird; however, there was not even a feather left of the hapless finch the next morning.

Flycatchers are passerines or songbirds, but their songs are not as intricate and beautiful as thrushes, orioles, warblers or finches. That's because they have a simpler syrinx or vocal organ and don't learn their songs like most songbirds. They are born with their song template already in place. Fyke members discovered a nice variety of flycatchers in our area this spring and summer. Rob Fanning bagged an amazing three Alder and five plus Willow Flycatchers at the Celery Farm (CF), May 24 and was privileged to hear both singing at once. Willows have nested at the CF for as long as I can remember, and many birders easily recognize their sneeze-like songs. But the Alder is a rare migrant in this area. The CF is near its southern limit as a nesting species, so to find three in one morning outside their breeding grounds is unusual. At least one Alder stuck around long enough to make Darlene Lembo's Hour on the Tower list, June 9. The Alder and Willow are identical twins, for all intents and purposes, and can only be identified by their songs. In fact, up until 1973 when they became separate species, they were considered one species, known as Traill's Flycatcher. Both belong to the genus, *Empidonax*, which means "king of the gnats." Another member of that genus is the Acadian Flycatcher that



Doug heard singing at Bear Swamp, above Ramapo Reservation, June 8. This species used to breed only in south Jersey and has only recently returned to its former north Jersey breeding grounds.

Another great find by Rob was a pair of Olive-sided Flycatchers at the McFaul Environmental Center in Wyckoff, August 15. Finding two is a rare occurrence anywhere in NJ, and as Rob stated, “a real treat.” They were already on the move south from their breeding grounds in coniferous forests in the Northern US and Canada. Rob said they were actively flycatching. Flycatching flycatchers generally perch on dead trees or limbs where they have a view and space to dart out after passing insects. The Acadian Flycatcher often employs a different method to secure prey, according to Alexander F. Skutch in his *Life of the Flycatcher*, 1997. It snatches prey from the undersides of leaves by “a short upward dart, perhaps followed by a brief hover.” Unlike the Olive-sided, Phoebe, or Eastern Wood Pewee, they prefer to perch in the lower canopy among the leaves and branches. Finding them is a challenge. Doug described his find as a “quick glimpse through the fairly dense lower canopy.”

On March 28, Bald Eagles were already feeding young at a nest at Woodcliff Lake, according to Rosemarie. She stated that another nest she had observed at Lake Tappan seemed abandoned. On April 28, Cooper’s Hawks were attending a nest at the CF, Penny Whitlock reported. That same day, Charlie West saw the CF pair in flight, and one was carrying “fuzzy gray prey.” Betty McDonnell discovered a Song Sparrow nest in her Mahwah yard, May 8. It was “nestled in the grass” and contained five eggs. She wrote: “I didn’t realize that they were ground nesters until I looked it up. The first nestings of the year are usually in the grass, and after that they move up to shrubs or higher vegetation.” On May 10, Rob observed one of the local Red-shouldered Hawks carrying twigs over the CF. It was chased from the area by territorial Red-winged Blackbirds. Carol Flanagan noted a Red-shouldered Hawk over the CF carrying a snake, April 8. Hooded Mergansers rarely nest in our state, and then only in our northern area. Doug Morel spotted one female with four ducklings at Halifax, May 21. Barbara Urban sought help after she discovered a female Robin dead and its three chicks abandoned in the nest, June 14 in Fair Lawn. Two days later, she was relieved to report that the nest had lost one chick but the male Robin was doing a good job feeding the two that remained.

On July 8, Jim Wright wrote that the Allendale DPW had put a cage around an active Killdeer nest at Crestwood Lake, and that Marsh Warden Mike Limatola had marked the enclosure with yellow tape to keep people away. Stephanie Seymour found a male Northern Flicker in her Englewood yard, accompanied by three fledglings. Enid Hayflick had a House Wren building a nest in her nest box in Ridgewood, July 21. She wrote: “Isn’t it a little late for wrens to be building a nest?” House Wrens have an interesting breeding strategy. The male always builds more than one nest to start out so his mate can choose the nest that pleases her. After the young have hatched and have about a week to go before fledging, the male in my Upper Saddle River yard persuaded his female to visit another nest he’d constructed. Once he had established her there, his routine consisted of feeding the first brood and intermittently singing near nest #2 to alert his brooding mate that he was on guard so she could take a break. House Wrens are quite industrious.

Stiles Thomas was glad to report that the Black Vulture pair nesting in an Allendale barn near him had raised one chick that was almost ready to fledge, August 5. The Common Raven nest he had observed in Ramsey earlier in the season, however, had disappeared. Stiles has heard no other reports of nesting Ravens anywhere in the area.

Not all this season’s highlights were on nests. On March 31, Mike Limatola noted an American Bittern at the CF. Over 40 Purple Finches mobbed my Upper Saddle River feeders for a few weeks in April. Fifteen more visited Tim Tedesco’s feeders in Oakland. May 10 produced a

singing Black-billed Cuckoo at the CF, an uncommon species there. More than one Sora Rail roamed the CF marsh and was spotted by quite a few Fyke members. Between 15 and 20 Common Nighthawks were counted by Rosemarie over a field at Garret in Woodland Park, May 21. Darlene's Hour on the Tower team scored a Glossy Ibis over the CF, July 28. Worm-eating Warblers seem to be thriving on our mountain slopes in spite of deer destroying the understory, which provides cover for this ground nester, and in spite of being a common victim of Brown-headed Cowbirds. Simon Streatfield has found Worm-eating Warblers at Mahwah Green Acres for the last three summers, Doug found them on the western slopes of the Ramapo Mountains around Bear Swamp, and I enjoyed a family of them on the other side of the mountain at Skylands Botanical Garden in Ringwood. Hurricane Sandy took down 11 trees in a narrow corridor through a wooded patch behind my home, and Brown-headed Cowbirds wasted no time taking advantage of the opening. For the first time, I observed my local Cardinals, and even more sadly, my local Wood Thrush feeding cowbirds.

Check out the Chimney Swift roost at the Washington Ave. school in Ridgewood, keep an eye out for migrant Nighthawks, enjoy the fall migration, and post your sightings on our Yahoo site or send your observations to me at judycinq@optonline.net or call me at (201) 327-1782. For information on the latest bird sightings, go to [www.fykenature.org](http://www.fykenature.org) and sign up with our discussion group where many of the reports for this column originated.

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### Welcome New Members!

Dale Bedford & William Wurst, Clifton  
Harold Jenssen, Ridgewood  
Mary Kirkegard, Mahwah

Louise & Peter Riccobene, Franklin Lakes  
Suzanne Serafini, Tuxedo, NY

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### Time to Renew Your Fyke Dues

The new membership year for Fyke starts September 1, 2013 and ends August 31, 2014. This means that annual dues should be paid now. The dues schedule is: Individual -- \$15.00, and Family -- \$20.00. Checks should be made out to Fyke Nature Association, and mailed to John Brotherton, 249 E. Crescent Avenue, Mahwah, NJ 07430. Thank you!

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### Here's an Easy Way to Support Fyke

Don't forget we now have a direct link to AMAZON from our website. Fyke does not endorse any particular merchant but just log onto [www.fykenature.org](http://www.fykenature.org) and you will find the link on the first page. Every month AMAZON sends us a sales commission check. Thank you for your participation.

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**The Fyke Nature Association**, a 501 (c) (3) organization, meets the fourth Friday of every month except June, July, August, and December at the **Allendale Municipal Building**, 500 W. Crescent Avenue, Allendale, NJ 07401. Meetings and membership are open to all. Annual dues: Individual -- \$15.00; Family -- \$20.00. For further information, write to Box 141, Ramsey, NJ 07446, visit our website [www.fykenature.org](http://www.fykenature.org), or call Mike Limatola, President, at 201-739-8062. The Newsletter is published four times a year and manuscripts and artwork are welcome.

Interim Editor: Carol Flanagan, [carolflana@aol.com](mailto:carolflana@aol.com). Drawings: Nancy Bristow and Kathryn Sjolander. Production: Molly Gardener, Herb Gardener, and John Brotherton.

**The deadline for the Winter Issue is October 21, 2013.** Send material to Box 141, Ramsey, NJ 07446, or via e-mail to [carolflana@aol.com](mailto:carolflana@aol.com).

