



Winter Newsletter

Vol. 63 – No. 4 – 2017

www.fykenature.org

Calendar of Events

December 1, 2017 – 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 nature related slide shows, videos, artwork, photographs, poems, or collections with your fellow members. All presentations should be of five minutes or less duration so that we can maintain a reasonable total meeting time. See the article on page 2 for information on preparing and presenting digital slide shows and videos.

December 16, 2017 – Christmas Bird Count

The CBC co-compilers are Rob and Lisa Fanning. If you would like to join one of the teams, contact Lisa at 732-318-5552 or la.fanning@yahoo.com. See page 3 for details on the CBC.



January 26, 2018 -- Monthly Meeting: 8:00 p.m., Allendale Municipal Building Understanding Bears, Doc Donald Bayne

Join popular historian, educator & photographer, Donald “Doc” Bayne, at this presentation, where he will discuss the life of bears, their habitat, how we should be concerned about them and his bear encounters. He will also discuss the DEC bear team. Understanding bears is essential, especially in our region.

February 23, 2018 – Monthly Meeting: 8:00 p.m., Allendale Municipal Building Our National Parks: A Personal Journey, John Kashwick

John Kashwick will speak about the significance of national parks and why they are still important through his personal experiences visiting 46 of the 59 national parks. As the National Park Service enters begins its second century in a trying political climate for federal public lands, he will reflect on his visits, he will reflect on his visits to various parks, why the parks are more important than ever, and what the future may hold for expansion.

Members Night Presentation Information
By Kurt Muenz

Two new things this year. First thanks to Herb Gardener I'll be able to connect my laptop to the meeting room speakers for better sound projection. So, if your program includes audio, let's work together ahead of time to take advantage.

Secondly, I've opened a Drop Box account which will enable us to exchange much larger files than can be sent by email. This should do away with multiple emails if you're sending pictures and eliminate transmitting pictures, PowerPoints or videos by disc or flash drive.

If you're not familiar with preparing digital images (cropping, resizing, other enhancement) and creating presentations, I'd be pleased to assist or do this for you, providing you get the input to me prior to November 19, the sooner the better. For slide show presentations please transmit your images to me by e-mail before the deadline. I'll convert them to PowerPoint slide shows for projection and test them beforehand on the combination of my laptop and Fyke's projector. I can prepare them as an automated slide show, where you only make comments at the start, or as a traditional slide show with remarks as each slide is shown. In such case plan to come to the meeting early to go over the simple means of advancing or reversing slides.

If you don't need the above help, it would still be preferable to get your finished presentation to me by the deadline. That way it can also be tested and will be presented from my laptop along with other programs. Thus, we'll have fewer connection switch-overs and a smoother meeting. Alternately you may use your own laptop in conjunction with Fyke's projector. We've experienced a few problems in the past with such non-tested hook-ups. Therefore, I'm again planning for those using their own laptops to be the first presenters. If there's a problem with a switch-over, that presentation will be skipped but can be tried again toward the end of the meeting.



Don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or comments, elkumu@aceweb.com or 201-447-0107



Welcome New Members!

- Regina Flanagan and Mark Gaugler, Waldwick
- Marianne Herrmann, Ridgewood
- Anna Hurt, Allendale
- Liz Lodge, Allendale
- Cathy Melioranza, Hackensack
- Julianne Shinnick, Chevy Chase, MD
- Chris Stagg, Oakland



Foreshadow
By Doug Morel

Cast by a low angled sun,
Exaggerated shadows
Sow a hungry confidence
Into a sapling pine.
Through its prospective view,
A sense of grandeur
Consumes the young tree,
On this day, a mature Redwood.

Enveloped in like status,
A row of modest gravestones
Projects a city skyline
Onto vacant, manicured lawns,
A cautious, perched sparrow
Sees itself an eagle
And Goliath stretches proudly
From the boots of a working man.

Though the tombs stand unchanged,
An encouragement is instilled,
Scripted by intangible visions
In Winter's late day light.
Secure lives the small bird,
A gentleman thrives with honor
And, determined, an upstart pine
Reaches splendor in the canopy.



Christmas Bird Count – 2017
By Lisa Ann Fanning

By now, you may already have saved the date on your calendar. The 65th annual Ramsey Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be held Saturday, December 16, 2017, as part of Audubon's 118th CBC. This year, we will be counting in memory of our long-time compiler John Brotherton.

Teams circles will cover a 15-mile diameter circle centered on Lake Erskine, including all or part of Ramsey, Mahwah, Allendale, Wyckoff, Franklin Lakes, Oakland, Wayne, Pompton Lakes, Bloomingdale, Ringwood, West Milford, Greenwood Lake, Tuxedo, Hillburn, Sloatsburg and Suffern.

According to the Audubon website, "The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a long-standing program of the National Audubon Society, with over 100 years of citizen science involvement. It is an early-winter bird census, where thousands of volunteers across the U.S., Canada, and many countries in the Western Hemisphere go out over a 24-hour period on one calendar day to count birds."



Teams will be out all day, counting birds in each of those areas to help identify trends in species. Some teams will be in search of nocturnal birds. Last season our count was one of over 1,800 circles covered by 50,000 field observers who listed over 60 million birds in the US. Our 32 participants counted 11,023 individual birds, representing 78 species.



The co-compilers are Rob and Lisa Fanning. If you would like to join one of the teams, contact Lisa at 732-318-5552 or la.fanning@yahoo.com.

The recap meeting, to which all are invited, will be held starting at 5:30 p.m. the day of the count at the Allendale Municipal Building Council Chambers, 500 West Crescent Avenue, Allendale, NJ, second floor.

For more information about Audubon's CBC history, rules and data, please visit: <http://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count>

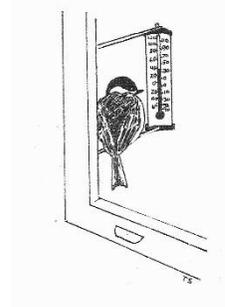
~~~~~

**Can you name the verbs which are also the name of a bird?**

(Answers page 7, no peeking!)

- 1- with 'out', to lose one's courage
- 2- to extend one's neck to better see something
- 3- to boast about one's achievements
- 4- to lower one's head to avoid something
- 5- to score two under par on a golf hole
- 6- to shine unsteadily or irregularly
- 7- give something a boost; invigorate; increase
- 8- to complain or grumble
- 9- to trick or fool
- 10- to sell one's wares
- 11- to soar in the air
- 12- with 'about', to fool around
- 13- to mindlessly repeat
- 14- to strut about ostentatiously; show off
- 15- to fear or cower before something
- 16- with 'against', to complain about
- 17- to cheat or swindle
- 18- to shoot precisely from long distance, or to make a snide remark at
- 19- to move food down one's throat
- 20- to move majestically, or wander idly

~ adapted from Facebook



## Field and Feeder Notes

By Judith Cinquina

*The (Solitary Sandpiper), which was well aware that I was watching it, stepped slowly out onto the open surface of the mud of the bog, and, standing there with its left side toward me...spread its wings about halfway, holding them stiffly in the plane of its back, neither raised nor lowered, so that the dark markings on its axillars were slightly visible. At the same time it drew its head as far backward and its tail as far forward over its back as possible, and slowly lowered its breast until it almost seemed to touch the mud. After remaining rigid in this position for 10 – 15 seconds, it would suddenly relax and become its normal self, only to repeat the entire procedure almost immediately.*

~Note from Dr. H.F. Lewis in Bent's Life Histories of American Shore Birds, Dover Ed. 1962

Charlie West's Hour on the Tower group noted a Solitary at the Celery Farm (CF), September 24, which according to Boyle's Birds of NJ, 2011, is past peak migration for this species. This shorebird is a rather common NJ migrant, especially around inland lakes, ponds and wetlands; yet, it took 90 years from 1813 when it was first described by Alexander Wilson for someone to find its nest. The problem was two-fold: first the Solitary nests in remote boreal forests where few people venture, and second it lays its eggs in abandoned robin nests, a habit that surprised ornithologists. "Since then," Hall writes in his book A Gathering of Shore Birds (1960), the Solitary "has been found using the old nests of grackles, Brewer's Blackbird, Rusty Blackbird, Cedar Waxwing, Kingbird, and Gray Jay, anywhere from four to forty feet up in some tree along the edge of a wet spruce-larch-swamp, or muskeg."



On September 21, Alice Leurck photographed Solitary Sandpipers near Lake Henry, off Halifax Rd. in Mahwah. One of the three she captured was eating a crayfish. On the 25th, at a drained swim lake in Allendale, two more picked small eels out of the muddy lake bottom. Unlike Killdeer or most other avian species, the Solitary is very approachable. Perhaps because of the remoteness of their tundra breeding habitat, they aren't very wary and don't flush easily. Near Halifax, my birding class and I got within six feet of four Solitary Sandpipers while Alice took pictures, and the pipers continued to feed as if we weren't there. Bent relates stories of hunters, in plain sight of the unwary pipers, shooting one after another with little reaction from those that remained.

Pectoral Sandpipers also turn up regularly during fall migration in NJ. Charlie's Hour on the Tower group noted the first one, October 15. Any seen in October would probably be juveniles heading toward the pampas in Chile or Argentina on their own. Adult males begin leaving in July while females are still on nests, and the majority migrates through central Canada and the U.S. Males have a pectoral pouch or sac that is used to project their owl-like hoots as they fly low over their tundra home, mating with anything that trespasses onto their territory. Since they nest far north at the edge of the continent, some of them complete migrations to Tierra del Fuego that are as long as that of the infamous Arctic Tern. Kevin Watson identified several young at DeKorte in the Meadowlands, October 19 and "at least" three adults at drained Crestwood Lake in Allendale that same day. A very rare sandpiper for our area was the Upland found by Doug Morel in a Paramus field, August 21. According to Boyle in The Birds of NJ, 2011, Uplands were once a common breeding species in our state, but they have disappeared with the old farm fields and grasslands. Their breeding grounds have been reduced to a military base and an

airport in Cumberland and Salem counties, and NJ has labeled them officially “Endangered.” Doug nabbed another grassland specialist, a migrant Golden Plover in the same area, September 11.

A rare Clay-colored Sparrow, also spotted by Doug, fed with Song and Savannah Sparrows along the grassy border of drained Crestwood Lake in Allendale, September 30. Another Clay-colored turned up there, October 13, along with a Vesper Sparrow and was enjoyed by a number of Fyke birders. Jim Wright managed to snap a photo, in spite of the Clay spending most of its time hunkered down in the short grass. Smaller than the tiny Field Sparrow that was also present that day, the Clay was often hidden in short grass, moved little as it fed, and was very easy to overlook. A Vesper Sparrow, sporting bright white eyerings, hunted nearby and is also considered rare and an “Endangered” NJ breeder. Once common here, this species like the



Upland Sandpiper, also preferred the old fields and grasslands that have succumbed to NJ development.

Peregrine Falcons are no longer rare in NJ and have been observed many times at the CF. On October 4, however, Barbara Dilger managed to capture an adult female in mid flight, wings down, face in stark focus over the CF’s Warden’s Watch. Females are almost a third larger than males, and she was obviously large. She sported black face bars, huge eyes, and a large, pale hooked bill that, from a distance, resembles a headlight when it catches sunlight. Evidently, Peregrines had a good breeding year because there have been a lot on the move this fall. Stephanie Seymour had two over her Ringwood home, September 22, Mount Peter is having a record year, and Hook Mountain has reported the same. Barbara also photographed my favorite bird, a Blue-headed Vireo in Franklin Lakes, October 17. There’s something about their white spectacles that is mesmerizing.

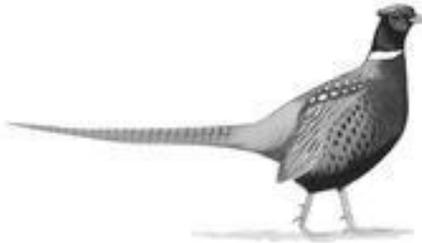
A bag of gem-like warblers turned up at the CF, September 10, Charlie West reported. They included Black-throated Green, Prairie, Magnolia, N. Parula, Wilson’s, Nashville, Tennessee and Am. Redstart. A couple of C. Nighthawks were over my Upper Saddle River yard after sunset, August 21 and 22, and Gaby Schmitt noted one hawking “supper” on the wing over the CF, September 2. On the 11th, another Fyke birder counted 30 over Linwood Ave. Ridgewood around 7 p.m. Of course, the Nighthawk is not a hawk. It’s related to Whip-poor-wills and Chuck-wills and others in the Goatsucker family. Furthermore, it’s not really active at night, although it can occasionally be seen hawking insects around field lights in the dark. It’s primarily crepuscular, hunting during the early morning and at dusk like the Screech Owl. According to the C. Nighthawk account in *The Birds of N. America Online* by Mark, Ng, Poulin and Grindal, this species forms large migrant flocks that practice close formation flights before they actually start their journey to S. America. The authors state that food availability may be their incentive to head south. They require a constant supply of flying insects, which dwindles after early September.

On October 18, Nancy Drabik was greeted by a number of White-throated Sparrows in her Wyckoff yard. That same day, Simon Streatfeild counted 18 at Mahwah Green Acres (Mary Patrick Park) in Mahwah. Simon also spotted a N. Harrier there, a species whose population is crashing as a migrant over Mount Peter. They, too, require large, open fields for hunting and breeding that developers prefer. The latest Ruby-throated Hummingbird sighting came from Edith Hayflick in Ridgewood, September 11. She heard Screech Owls calling pre-dawn a few days before. A red morph Screech roosted in Rosemarie Widmer’s owl box in Allendale, October 5 and sat out in the opening, in spite of objecting Jays. Great-horned Owls hooted around Kevin Watson’s Hackensack yard, August 24 at 5:30 a.m. Kevin wrote that one called repeatedly from across the street and was eventually answered by another very close to his house.



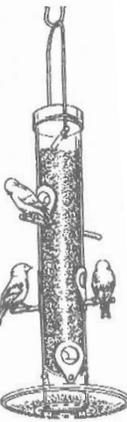
My birding class and I found a dead Cedar Waxwing at Ringwood Manor, October 19. Park employees related that a small group of Waxwings had been found dead recently. Like the immature Waxwing that we found, their group showed no obvious signs of injury. Cedar Waxwings are vulnerable to alcohol intoxication and death from eating fermented fruits, according to Witmer, Mountjoy and Elliot, authors of the Cedar Waxwing account (2014) in The Birds of N. America Online. They relate cases where 42 and 31 Waxwings died of fermented palm fruits and two died from falling to the ground after getting sloshed on fermented hawthorn fruits.

Jim Wright related that Tom Mitchell took a “cool video” of eight almost tailless young pheasants at the CF, September 1. “Ring-necked Pheasants were relatively common at the CF until about 1976 when an employee of the Bergen County Mosquito Commission trapped and removed them for his own purposes,” Stiles Thomas wrote in a 1992 Fyke Newsletter. Tom’s video elicited memories of



Eyebrow and the other pheasants introduced into the CF in the early 90’s, with hopes that they would reproduce and thrive. Eyebrow, hatched at the CF in 1992, was a tough male who survived some bad winter weather that others of his kind succumbed to and could stand his ground during many a Cooper’s Hawk attempt on his life. The last of his kind at the CF, Eyebrow’s obituary appeared in the Winter 1999 Fyke newsletter.

We’re interested in what birds you attract to your feeders and encounter anywhere in the Fyke area. Be sure to keep your feeders clean. 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. Or send your observations to me at [judycingq@optonline.net](mailto:judycingq@optonline.net).



~~~~~

Answers:

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|------------|
| 20- swan | 14- peacock | 7- goose |
| 19- swallow | 13- parrot | 6- flicker |
| 18- snipe | 12- lark | 5- eagle |
| 17- rook | 11- kite | 4- duck |
| 16- rail | 10- hawk | 3- crow |
| 15- quail | 9- gull | 2- crane |
| | 8- grouse | 1- chicken |

Nature Man
By Tom Mitchell

Psssst. If you see a man fast walking
The trail around the Celery Farm
Follow him at a distance and you may discover
Where he is going and what he is doing.

You'll likely see him stop and greet many people
As he seems to know everyone who goes there
So you might think for him it's just a social walk
But most often he has a different objective.

To find out you need be careful that he doesn't see you
Because he has many secrets he is keeping
Told to him in confidence by the regulars
Who frequent this nature preserve.

I too am one of those people who report to him
And once he showed me a hidden chrysalis
Pointing discreetly with his hand by his hip
As he looked all around to make sure no one else saw.

Exhorting me to tell no one the location
Wanting to protect it from harm from thoughtless people
Encouraging this precious specimen of a threatened species
To go forth and multiply in this tiny island of wildlife habitat.

One time I chanced to meet him on his rounds
When he told me where to see a monarch caterpillar
But as we walked together in that direction
He suddenly said goodbye and headed off another way.

I suppose he had something more special hidden away
Some reclusive existence not being shared that day
Which got me thinking I should observe him as wildlife
To watch for his covert behavior disclosing some undercover presence.

To reveal this information now marks me as untrustworthy
Not worthy to receive the whispered details of any further sightings
Shunned perhaps for violating an unwritten code of conduct
Having stepped outside the lines to watch the watchers.

But I think I have been sufficiently cryptic about him
Matching some cryptic messages he has sent me
That his sense of humor will prevail as he contemplates
The image of this nature man disappearing into the woods.



The Big Sit! 2017 — Our 23rd Year

By Carol Flanagan

Thanks to all the members of our team, the Celery Stalkers, who participated our Big Sit! The Big Sit! is an event started by the New Haven Bird Club and now sponsored by Birdwatchers Digest. The rules are simple, you sit inside a circle 17 feet in diameter for 24 hours, and count all the bird species you see or hear. Our circle is centered at the Pirie–Mayhood Tower at the Celery Farm. Our total count this year was 49 species. No new species for The Big Sit! were added this year so our cumulative total remains at 126.



Thank you to our Participants:

John Bird
Nancy Drabik
Brian Kenney
Mike Limatola

Kurt Muenz
Gabrielle Schmitt
Stiles Thomas
Kevin Watson

Charley West
Jim Wright

Species list:

Great Blue Heron
Great Egret
Turkey Vulture
Black Vulture
Canada Goose
Wood Duck
Osprey
Gadwall
American Black Duck
Mallard
Northern Shoveler
Green-winged Teal
Northern Harrier
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Cooper’s Hawk
Red-shouldered Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk

Killdeer
Spotted Sandpiper
Wilson's Snipe
Rock Pigeon
Mourning Dove
Belted Kingfisher
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Eastern Phoebe
Blue Jay
Common Raven
American Crow
Black-capped Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
White-breasted Nuthatch

Carolina Wren
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
American Robin
Gray Catbird
European Starling
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Palm Warbler
Eastern Towhee
Song Sparrow
Swamp Sparrow
Northern Cardinal
Red-winged Blackbird
Common Grackle
House Finch
American Goldfinch

Ways to Support Fyke:

Holiday Shopping?

While doing your online holiday shopping, don’t forget Fyke has a direct link to AMAZON from our website. Fyke does not endorse any particular merchant. Log onto 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!

Celery Farm Calendars, T-shirts, and Caps!

Celery Farm Calendars, T-shirts, and caps make great gifts for family and friends!

Time to Renew Your Fyke Dues

The new membership year for Fyke started September 1, 2017 and ends August 31, 2018. Your annual dues should be paid now. The annual dues is \$20 for an individual membership, and \$25 for a family membership.

You can now pay dues and make donations to Fyke conveniently online using any major credit card or PayPal. To do so, please visit our web site at www.fykenature.org and use the link on the home page to access the Payments and Donations page.

You may continue to join, renew or donate by mail. Checks should be made out to Fyke Nature Association, and mailed to Fyke Nature Association, Box 141, Ramsey, NJ 07446.

~~~~~

**Fyke Board of Trustees:**

President: Mike Limatola  
First Vice President: Gabriele Schmitt  
Second Vice President: Penny Whitlock  
Treasurer: Kurt Muenz  
Recording Secretary: Molly Gardener  
Corresponding Secretary: Mimi Brauch  
Trustees: Carol Flanagan  
Darlene Lembo  
Doug Morel

**Chairpersons:**

Celery Farm: Stiles Thomas  
Mike Limatola  
Jim Wright  
Conservation: Gabriele Schmitt  
Hawk Watch: Judith Cinquina  
Land Trust: Hugh Carola  
Newsletter: Carol Flanagan  
Programs: Penny Whitlock  
Publicity: Gabriele Schmitt  
Webmaster: Kevin Watson

~~~~~

The Fyke Nature Association, a 501 (c) (3) organization, meets at the Allendale Municipal Building, 500 W. Crescent Avenue, Allendale, NJ 07401 on the fourth Friday of every month January to May, and in September and October. The winter meeting is the first Friday in December. (No meetings in June, July, August, and November.)

Meetings and membership are open to all. Annual dues: Individual -- \$20.00; Family -- \$25.00. For further information, write to Box 141, Ramsey, NJ 07446, visit our website 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. Editor: Carol Flanagan, carolflana@aol.com. Production: Molly Gardener, Herb Gardener, and Carol Flanagan.



The deadline for the Spring 2017 issue is January 22, 2018. Send material to Box 141, Ramsey, NJ 07446, or via e-mail to carolflana@aol.com.