



Volume 50

Number 2

Quarterly

Bulletin

of the

Bedford Audubon Society

Fall 2000

## President's Message

### Preservation 2000?

Election Day, November 7, 2000 will be one of the most important days in the natural history of Westchester County. Seven towns in Westchester including Bedford, Pound Ridge and Lewisboro, may have open space referendums on the ballot, leaving this much debated and discussed issue to the voters.

It seems as though each town has a vast majority of citizens in favor of open space preservation and are likely to vote "yes." However, my recent observation at a meeting in one of the aforementioned towns, is that there actually is a quite vocal segment of the population that is against this proposal for economic reasons. By listening to the opposing comments made, it seems that some of these voters are still in the dark about the entire topic. For example, the most commonly misunderstood premise is that by purchasing open space through a bond or tax, taxes will go up significantly. It is true that taxes will rise, slightly. In some cases, tax bills will go up \$150-\$350 a year. However, if open space is not purchased, taxes will go up anyway as over-development creates a need for bigger schools and in turn an increase in school taxes. We all know very well at what a rapid rate school taxes rise! To a lesser extent, municipal taxes for fire and police protection, highway maintenance, etc., will also go up as the population increases.

So, for those of you responsible for spreading the word and educating the community on the virtues of open space preservation, you need to redouble your efforts. And to the people who are currently planning on voting "no," I ask you to reconsider your decision. Look at how your community's school tax has sky rocketed in the last 10 years. Do you believe allowing further development in your town will not effect your taxes? Of course it will. So why not allow the community to deal with this inevitable increase by diverting these taxes into open space, keeping the rising taxes "at bay" somewhat. This is something that will benefit the entire community, young and old. Westchester is at an important environmental crossroads. Let's not make a wrong turn.

*John Askildsen*

### Our Mission

The Mission of the Bedford Audubon Society is to Promote Conservation and Protection of Wildlife Habitats in the Northern Westchester and Eastern Putnam Region through Education, Advocacy, Nature Study and Birdwatching.

## Who We Are

The Bedford Audubon Society, Inc., is a locally based 1,000 member chapter of the 550,000 member National Audubon Society. Founded in Bedford on February 13, 1913, today, BAS services much of northern Westchester and Putnam Counties.

It is this organization's mission to promote environmental education, grass-roots activism, public and private conservation efforts, preservation and protection of open space. A full statement of the Society's mission may be found below.

To date, Bedford Audubon owns and manages over 558 acres of land at three sanctuaries, all located in north eastern Westchester County. Our sanctuaries are open to the general public dawn to dusk and admission is free.

Programs and lectures are conducted the evening of the second Wednesday of every other month, excluding July and August. Field trips are conducted several times monthly and are also open to the public.

The Society is supported by membership dues, donations made by individuals, corporations, and foundations. The Bedford Audubon Society, Inc., is recognized by New York State and the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as a 501 (c) (3), not-for-profit, charitable organization.

The Quarterly Bulletin, the newsletter of the Society, is published four times yearly and is distributed to all members in good standing, and to nonmembers for a nominal annual fee. For further information on membership or activities, contact the BAS information line at (914) 232-1999, or via E-mail at [Bedfordaudubon@banet.net](mailto:Bedfordaudubon@banet.net).

## **The Quarterly Bulletin**

Fall 2000

Volume 50, No. 2

The Quarterly Bulletin, USPS #61 is published quarterly by the Bedford Audubon Society, Inc.  
35 Todd Road

### **Board of Directors 2000**

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Pete Ainsworth	Newsletter	276-3837
John Erickson	Seed Sale	273-6967

### **Committee Members**

Bill Wallace	Field Trips	279-8858
Joan Mish	Field Trips	203-323-5137
Nelly Balloffet	Historian	941-8166
Barbara Reynolds	Hospitality	232-5632
Jack Seirup	Hunt Sanctuary	232-4871
Brenda Freeman-Bates	Programs	763-9489
Pam Harper	Publicity	242-2050
Steven Ricker	Seed Sale	234-2934
Ginny Powers	Trip Registrar	764-4320

Please submit any articles, ideas, events, or illustrations to:

Pete Ainsworth

165 Arbor Crest

Somers, NY 10589

E-Mail: [HAinswo292@AOL.COM](mailto:HAinswo292@AOL.COM)

### **Birding Hotlines**

New York City/Long Island Rare Bird Alert 212-979-3070

BAS Hotline, Chapter Activities 914-232-1999

BAS Fax Number 914-232-5038

BAS Website [www.bedfordaudubon.org](http://www.bedfordaudubon.org)

Our E-Mail address is [BedfordAudubon@Banet.net](mailto:BedfordAudubon@Banet.net)

*Shop with us on the Web  
Click the Link at [www.bedfordaudubon.org](http://www.bedfordaudubon.org)*

## Annual Seed Sale Announcement

*Order Deadline – October 6, 2000*

*Pickup - October 28, 2000*

It's that time of year when all birders and would-be birders start to think about buying birdseed to replenish their diminishing supplies and start feeding birds. We all like to place a feeder in our yards, so we can sit and enjoy watching birds.

The money raised is used by Bedford Audubon Society to provide programs you enjoy and in return, we provide you with the opportunity to buy good quality birdseed at competitive prices. We are available to answer any bird feeding questions you have. Call Steve Ricker at (914) 234-2934 with your questions.

The Bird Seed brochure will be mailed by the end of August, and all orders will be accepted up to October 6th; if you don't receive a seed Brochure call (914) 232-1999 to order one. The distribution and seed pickup date is Saturday October 28<sup>th</sup> at the Bedford Hills Memorial Park. The brochure will also be available on our web site at [www.bedfordaudubon.org](http://www.bedfordaudubon.org).

## Annual Membership Appeal Another Great Success

by John Askildsen

The Annual Membership Appeal Campaign conducted between December 1999 and March 2000 raised over \$13,000.00. The greatly needed funds will be used to support environmental education projects in our sanctuaries and other programs that the Society conducts in the communities that we serve. The Board of Directors and the Fund-raising Committee extend their sincere thanks to all those who donated.

Special thanks go out to Mill River Supply Garden Center on Adams Street in Bedford Hills, Wild Birds Unlimited and The Mail Pouch, both on Bedford Road also in Bedford Hills, for their underwriting a portion of the expenses from Don and Lillian Stokes' talk at the Annual Meeting in May of this year.

If you made a donation to the 1999-2000 campaign, but forgot to send in your Corporate Matching Grant form, it's not too late! Send it in today to BAS, 35 Todd Road, Katonah, NY 10536.

## Join Audubon Today!

Yes, I would like to join the Bedford Audubon Society (a chapter of National Audubon).

I am enclosing this form along with a check made out to "The National Audubon Society, Bedford Chapter."

- Individual \$35.00
- Student \$18.00
- Introductory \$20.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Bedford Audubon Society  
35 Todd Road  
Katonah, New York 10536

Bedford Audubon Society, Chapter Code: R00 7XCH

## **Sale Days At Bedford Audubon Society Starts September 1st**

The Bedford Audubon Society On-line Nature Shop ([www.birding.com/bedfordaudubonshop](http://www.birding.com/bedfordaudubonshop)) will be having a major sale on many items throughout the store. Check out our great prices on binoculars and telescopes, books on every topic (not just birds), gift items, bird feeders, shade-grown coffee and much more.

You will not only save money by shopping with Bedford Audubon Society, but you will be supporting our common cause, too. This is a great time to buy your hawkwatching field guides, bird feeders and bird-friendly java now to prepare for the fall bird migration! Go on-line today at [www.bedfordaudubon.org](http://www.bedfordaudubon.org) to check us out. Click the On-Line Store link to start shopping!

## **Hawk Watch Begins in Late August**

Jamie Zambo of Allentown, Pennsylvania, has signed on as our fall, 2000 Hawk counter at BAS' Hawk Watch Station at the Butler Sanctuary on Chestnut Ridge Road in Bedford Corners. Jamie will be focusing primarily on identifying and recording all migrant birds of prey that pass our hawk watch site. Forms are filled out on a daily basis, recording a number of different weather items such as wind direction, precipitation, cloud cover, etc.

Nick Polato of Lewiston, New York has accepted the position of Hawk Watch Educator. Nick will answer visitor's questions, help visitors identify migrating birds of prey as they pass the watch site, and give outdoor classes on the identification of birds of prey.

Nick will be with us from late August through mid-November. Visit the hawk watch and learn about one of the area's best kept secrets, hawk migration!

## **Conservation Jamaica Bay Bike Path**

The Society sent a letter of protest to the National Park Service (NPS) with regard to their proposal to install a "multiuse paved path" through the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge in Queens, NYC.

BAS advised the NPS that we are concerned that they have conducted virtually no environmental studies to determine the impact the pathway will have on wildlife, both resident and migratory. We also objected to placement of the pathway in the Wildlife Refuge, pointing out that this type of activity is in conflict with the mission and

goals of the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. To view a copy of the letter, please go to the Conservation Log on the BAS website and look under "Jamaica Bay Bike Path".

## **Hunt Sanctuary Wetlands**

The Society acquired legal representation in an effort to protect the threatened headwaters of the Society's major wetland at the James Ramsay Hunt Sanctuary in Katonah.

A prospective purchaser has filed an application with the Town of Bedford Wetlands Control Commission (WCC), for a wetland crossing permit. This wetland, a spring-fed ephemeral pond, serves as the headwaters to the Hunt Sanctuary's 40 acre + Red Maple Swamp at the southern end of the Sanctuary. This ephemeral wetland is a major breeding pond, as Dr. Michael Klemens, a Herpetologist who assessed the wetland for its ecological value, characterized it. It is our intention to assert our "riparian rights" in order to protect the Hunt Sanctuary and the headwaters ephemeral pond.

Look for our written submissions of comment to the Town of Bedford WCC in the Conservation Log under "Hunt Sanctuary Wetlands" on the BAS website.

## **Bedford Audubon On-line**

We are pleased to remind you that you may now visit our newly updated website to check the most current "goings on" of the Society. First visit us at our web site at <http://www.bedfordaudubon.org>. Our web site has listed our most current events, field trips, conservation work and other happenings. Also, all Board Member and Committee Chair contact information is included with telephone numbers and e-mail addresses, where possible.

## **The Bedford Audubon Store**

So you say you need a new birding field guide? Your binoculars have finally quit on you? You need a new birdfeeder? No problem! Shop on Bedford Audubon's new on-line nature shop for all your outdoor nature needs. Not only will you be able to shop from the comfort of your own home, avoid the Mall and receive competitive pricing, but you will also be supporting BAS at the same time! Visit our store at:

<http://www.bedfordaudubon.org> (click the On-Line Store link to start shopping!).

## Field Trips

This year we are introducing “Leader’s Choice” field trips. In many cases, interesting birds appear in locations that cannot be planned for in advance. To take advantage of this situation, we will plan field trips to locations that will not be determined until shortly before the trip takes place. When registering, the Registrar should be able to tell you of the destination. These trips will be half or one day trips only. Watch for updates and additional trips on our web site [www.bedfordaudubon.org](http://www.bedfordaudubon.org)

### **Sat., Sept. 16 @ 11am “The Autumn Field”**

Beth Herr, Curator at the Trailside Nature Museum, Ward Pound Ridge Reservation will lead us on a tour of the spectacular array of fall wildflowers. This program is co-sponsored by BAS and Westchester County.

### **Sun., Sept 24<sup>th</sup> @ 9am Birds and Butterflies at Croton Point Park**

Join local bird and butterfly expert Charlie Roberto for a walk through “the meadow” at Croton Point Park. This will be peak time for Osprey and American Kestrel migration, and there should be quite a collection at the Park. For more information, please call Croton Point Park at (914) 271-8134. This program is co-sponsored by BAS, Saw Mill River Audubon Society and Westchester County.

### **Sat.-Sun., Sept. 23-24 “Hawk Watch Weekend”**

This is the peak weekend for migrant birds of prey. On Saturday, 11:00 am at Westmoreland Sanctuary, there will be a slide show/lecture “Raptors for Rookies”, by Anne Swaim. Sat., at 1:30pm, Westmoreland Sanctuary, join us for a Live Birds of Prey program. Sat., 3:00pm there will be a visit to the Butler Hawk Watch with Steve Ricker.

Visit the Hawk Watch all day Sunday to see migratory birds of prey. Co-sponsored by Bedford Audubon Society, Westmoreland Sanctuary, Saw Mill River Audubon Society and The Nature Conservancy. Call 666-8448 for more information. Please bring your binoculars if you have a pair. Otherwise borrow a pair from Bedford Audubon Society.

### **Sept 29-Oct 1 “Cape May Autumn Weekend” (Friday evening-Sunday)**

Join John Askildsen for a three day weekend in Cape May, NJ, for a spectacular weekend of birdwatching. Expect hawks, eagles, falcons, songbirds, seabirds and a two-hour salt marsh boat cruise. Fee-\$200 sgl/\$230 dbl. Includes two nights’ lodging, Sat. lunch and boat cruise. Reservations call Ginny Powers at 764-4320.

### **Sun., October 15<sup>th</sup> @ 7am-3pm “Birds on the Barrier”**

Birdwatch on LI’s Barrier Islands-Jones Beach and Fire Island. Expect hawks, sparrows, shorebirds and waterfowl. Binoculars, field guide and lunch required. An excellent trip for all levels of birdwatching skill.

This trip is lead by Bill Wallace and Michael Usai. For reservations, call Joan Mish at 203 323-5137.

### **All Weekends in Sept and Oct, 9am-3pm “Hawkwatching at Butler Sanctuary”**

Join our Hawk Counter, Jamie Zambo and Hawk Watch Educator Nick Polato. This is a good time to see a variety of time to see a variety of birds of prey including eagles, peregrine falcons and much more. Fall Colors should peak about Oct 10th. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair from BAS. No reservations required. Visit the Hawk Watch and learn from the pros!

### **Sat., Nov 18<sup>th</sup> @ 3pm-5pm “Tiny Tots Bird Feeder Workshop” at Westmoreland Sanctuary**

Learn about feeding birds and constructing simple bird feeders. Suitable for children 3 years and older. For information call Westmoreland Sanctuary at 914 666-8448.

### **Sunday, Nov. 19<sup>th</sup> “Leader’s Choice”**

A birdwatching trip to an interesting location somewhere in the tri-state area. Call Joan Mish at 203-323-5137 to find out the destination and reservations.

## **BAS in Alaska!**

by Pete Ainsworth

The Alaska trip that we've been planning for nearly two years finally took place. It was my first time there and I had all sorts of expectations. As you may know, we went on a Borderland Tours trip. A few of us went on another Borderland Tour in Arizona in 1998. It was very nice and I thoroughly enjoyed it..

The Alaska trip however was simply outstanding! We saw 17 Orcas which are fascinating, and I hesitate to use the word "awesome!" Some of us, myself included, wanted desperately to see a Grizzly. We saw eight including a sow with two cubs who were nursing for a while. Moose were abundant.. Oh yes, we also saw a lot of birds.

For those of you interested in numbers, a total of 168 species of birds and 29 species of mammals were seen over the 16 days. The excellent weather, breathtaking scenery, good company, and great food contributed to wonderful Alaskan experience. Thanks Rick and your staff at Borderland Tours!

I want to thank John Askildsen for working with Rick to plan our trip. It was great.

There were literally hundreds of photos taken during the trip. Here are a few .

Photographs by Dianne Bibault  
and Pete Ainsworth

## Programs

**Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**Katonah Village Library**  
**7:30 p.m.**

### **The Butterflies of the Hudson Valley with Charlie Roberto**

Avid birder and butterflyer, Charlie Roberto belongs to the New York Butterfly Club and the North American Butterfly Association. While Mr. Roberto enjoys tracking and recording birds and butterflies on his own, he also spends much of his free time sharing his knowledge with the public. Charlie is often found doing walks for either the Saw Mill River Audubon Society or Teatown Lake Reservation.

This year he has offered to give his in-depth slide presentation on the butterflies of the Hudson Valley for the Bedford Audubon Society.

As more and more birders have taken up butterflying recently, Charlie's appearance will provide a long-awaited and comprehensive presentation on the species and a few of its host plants and predators. We are excited to have Charlie contribute his experience and familiarity with the subject and look forward to his informative presentation.

**Wednesday November 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**Katonah Village Library**  
**7:30 p.m.**  
**The World of Woodpeckers**  
**with Addison Young.**

Larchmont resident, Add Young will give a talk on North American woodpeckers. He has been birding most of his life and is a lister. But in recent years he has become fascinated with woodpeckers. He and his wife, Irma, have traveled extensively in North America and beyond.

As birding has been the motivation for their travels, his talk will focus on the interesting aspects of the life of each of the 23 species of North American woodpeckers, how they differ and what in their morphology particularly adapts them for the lives they lead. Slides will accompany his talk.

### **Putnam County 4H Fair**

by Jackie Jones

For the second year in a row, Bedford Audubon Society took part in the annual Putnam County 4H Fair held at the Veteran's Memorial Park in Carmel. Staffing this year's booth were Jackie Jones, Jackie Bruskin and Ellen Epstein.

Our tables featured lots of interactive materials. We had molds of common animal paws used with ink pads to create paw prints. There was also an electronic bird quiz. Many children passing by stopped long enough to color one of the bird prints that we had available.

Our display had a steady stream of visitors throughout the day and elicited many favorable comments, particularly for the "Please Touch" signs which invited the visitors to handle animal skins, turtle shells, deer antlers and many other items. Our bulletin boards featured our newest membership brochure, general information about our chapter and the National organization, and photos of some of our field trips and community activities.

The winner of our drawing for a bird feeder was Brandon Lalli of Brewster. His name was drawn by two young visitors who were "hired on the spot" as they passed by. It was all above board, but Brandon's name was drawn by Alanna Kohler and Nicholas Lalli, his cousin and brother. We wish you could have seen the

Bedford Audubon Society, Inc.  
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***Inside Scoop:***

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**Name or address change?  
Call National Audubon at  
1-800-274-4201**

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