



# The Bedford Audubon Society Newsletter

Volume 51, Number 2, Summer 2001

## **BAS Takes Ownership of North Salem Sanctuary**

For almost 30 years BAS has had a stewardship arrangement with National Audubon Society (NAS) to manage the NAS owned, 208 acre **Franklin-Fels Sanctuary**, located between Titcus Road (Route 116) and Hardscrabble Road. Several years ago, National Audubon Society invited Bedford Audubon to take ownership of the sanctuary and, after a lengthy and ongoing discussion, the BAS Board voted to accept the invitation. On June 10<sup>th</sup> of this year, BAS President John Askildsen signed the Deed that officially transferred ownership.

This new arrangement will allow Bedford Audubon to play a greater role in maintaining the Sanctuary, and will also streamline management of the property and keep it more local. National Audubon is to be thanked for releasing the property to BAS, and for working cooperatively with us to transfer the deed.

Bedford Audubon's plans for the sanctuary include creating a new parking area, a marked trail system with trail map, reposting the entire Sanctuary, and constructing elevated walkways and foot bridges where needed. Keep an eye on the BAS newsletter and website for a grand re-opening event!

## **Sanctuary Memorial Fund Established**

The children of the late Jack and Louisa Baur ( Jean, Art and Susan), formerly of Mount Holly Road, recently established a memorial endowment fund for the specific purpose of maintaining trails and other amenities at the **James Ramsey Hunt Sanctuary** in Katonah.

While living on Mount Holly Road, the Baur's were literally surrounded by preserved open spaces, including the James Ramsay Hunt Sanctuary, which they cherished along with the other sanctuaries of the area.

Jean, Art and Susan felt that if they were to make any donation in their parents' names, as a lasting tribute to them, it should be to preserve some of the very same open spaces their parents held so dear. With that idea in mind, the children, their families and friends gathered on May 12<sup>th</sup> on Todd Road to celebrate the lives of Jack and Louisa Baur, and to officially establish the fund.

If you knew the Baur's, or would simply like to join with them in preserving the pristine natural setting of Bedford Audubon's premier sanctuary, please consider sending a donation to:

Bedford Audubon Society, Louisa and Jack Baur Memorial Fund, 35 Todd Road, Katonah, NY 10536

If you wish to speak with Bedford Audubon about the Fund, please feel free to call John Askildsen at 914- 232-1701. All donations are tax-deductible, and will be used specifically in maintaining the James Ramsay Hunt Sanctuary.

## **The Return of the BAS E-Mail Listserv**

Some members may recall that there was a brief time where Bedford Audubon had an information listserv. That was until National Audubon severed its electronic links with BAS due to cost-cutting measures. We are now pleased to report that we are back up and running our listserv through Yahoo!. So, if you are an on-line member, please visit our website and join our listserv again, or for the first time. When you do so, you will receive timely reminders for programs, field trips and other events, as well as last minute weather cancellations, etc. When you join, you'll soon see you can't afford **not** to belong!

## 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.

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 Bedford Audubon Society newsletter 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 visit our website at [www.Bedfordaudubon.org](http://www.Bedfordaudubon.org).

## **The Quarterly Bulletin** Summer 2001

Volume 51, No. 2

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### Board of Directors 2001

John Askildsen - President, 232-1701; Steven Ricker - 1st Vice President, 234-2934; Jackie Jones - 2nd Vice President, 666-2057; Anne Vajsabel - Recording Sec'y., 845-229-1938; Jack Seirup - Treasurer, 232-4871; Drew Reynolds - At-Large, 232-5632; Donald Pachner - Conservation, 234-6618; Jim Utter - Conservation, 878-0081; David Albano - Education, 225-9567; Jonathan Powers - Finance, 764-4320; Ken Mirman - Hawk Watch, 277-5210; Ellen Epstein - Membership, 666-7690; Pete Ainsworth - Newsletter, 276-3837  
John Erickson - Seed Sale, 273-6967

### Committee Members

Ed Fehrs - Development, 273-3631; Bill Wallace - Field Trips, 845-279-8858, 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 (All telephone numbers are area code 914 unless otherwise indicated.)

### 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:

[Info@Bedfordaudubon.org](mailto:Info@Bedfordaudubon.org)

### 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.

## **From the Membership Committee:**

by Jackie Bruskin

Your membership committee needs you! ... and you! ... and you!

We're looking for new members and your ideas. If you don't have enough time to serve on a committee, but would like to help out at individual events, let us know. Send us your e-mail address or phone so we can keep you up to date on our activities.

We'd also love to have your nominations of favorite natural places to walk and/or birdwatch in Putnam or Westchester County. Suggestions will be highlighted in future issues of the Newsletter. A brief comment on what makes the location special would be welcome.

To volunteer for the Committee, our volunteers list or to send in your favorite site nominations, e-mail [membership@bedfordaudubon.org](mailto:membership@bedfordaudubon.org) or leave a message on the BAS phone line at (914) 232-1999.

### **Newsletter Help Needed!**

In order to speed up the very slow process of putting a newsletter together we are looking for writers.

If anyone out there would like to spend a few minutes, literally, per quarter in helping to write an article or two please contact one of the board members listed on this page.

If you have some time and computer skills or if you can write come on down and give us a hand.

## Programs

**Wednesday,  
September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2001  
7:30 p.m.  
Katonah Village Library**

**“Reptiles and Amphibians of the Hudson Valley”** by Herpetologist Peter Warny.  
***EVENING PROGRAM CANCELLED DUE TO WTC CATASTROPHE***

Peter is a Research Associate at the New York State Museum in Albany N.Y. and Assistant Curator at the Long Island Reptile Museum.

Peter has been studying the behavior and habits of snakes, turtles, frogs and salamanders since childhood. His slide lecture presentation will focus on his field trips in N.Y. and N.J. as former zoologist with the Nature Conservancy and N.Y. Natural Heritage Program. He will discuss the reptiles and amphibians of the Hudson Valley and ongoing ecology and conservation projects. Peter will also bring along some of his creatures for a close-up look.

**Wetland Zoology  
and Ecology field trip  
by Peter Warny**

The above evening presentation will be followed by a daytime field trip to Ward Pound Ridge Reservation, Cross River, N.Y., cosponsored by Westchester County's Trailside Nature Museum.

The trip will be Sunday, September 16<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 – 1:00 and meet at the end of Michigan Road. Participants are encouraged to wear comfortable shoes that can get muddy as wetland ecology will be a major focus along with reptiles and amphibians.

Peter has done much research in the park and if you are interested

in wetland ecology and reptiles and amphibians, this trip will be sure to please.

**Wednesday,  
November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2001  
7:30 p.m.  
Katonah Village Library**

**“Winter Feeder Birds”** with Ted Gilman

Ted Gilman, staff Naturalist with the Greenwich Audubon Society, will provide a slide lecture presentation on winter feeder birds. He will familiarize us with the birds that frequent our feeders over the winter months with tips on the best types of seed for different types of birds and how to attract specifics.

Ted is also very involved with Cornell Lab for Ornithology's Project Feeder Watch. He will explain the importance of the data collected, his involvement and how we can become involved also, as Project Feeder Watch is an invaluable scientific resource that anyone can be a part of.

**Field Trips  
Migration Crossroads  
with John Askildsen  
Cape May, new Jersey  
October 5-8**

Join Bedford Audubon Society for our annual Cape May pilgrimage. This will be the long Columbus Weekend, which affords us an extra day on the Jersey Cape. Birds of prey, herons, shorebirds, seabirds and even butterflies will be the main fare. As a bonus this year we will take a backbay boat tour along the inter-coastal waterway.

The cost for three nights lodging and the boat trip is \$250.00 for a single and \$270.00 for a double room. Meals are not included.

**Bedford Audubon Society  
Visits Bartholemews Cobble,  
Ashley Falls, MA**

On Sunday, August 5 at 8 a.m., Vice-President and professional Naturalist Steven Ricker will lead a field trip to Bartholemews Cobble, located along the banks of the Housatonic River, in the Berkshires Mountains of Massachusetts.

Recognized as a National Natural Landmark, and owned by the Trustees of Reservations, the 329 acre preserve boasts a very impressive list of wildflowers and plants, including 50 species of ferns alone! Although this trip will focus on the botanical interests of the Cobble, we will not ignore the birds. We will stop to view the local avian activity.

This trip will require easy to moderate hiking, and will be an all day field trip. Remember to bring appropriate footwear, a lunch, refreshments and binoculars. Please sign up with trip registrar Ginny Powers at 914 764-4320.

**Bedford Audubon's 2001  
Birdathon  
by Steve Ricker**

*John Erickson and I have just coordinated Bedford Audubon Society's Fourth Annual Birdathon, and I think we are almost a smooth running machine. This year we had a lot of help from Vice-President Jackie Jones, and Secretary Ann Vasjabel. They really brought a fresh perspective along with the extra help*

For those of you who are not familiar with the Birdathon, it works like a walkathon. The exception is we are not counting the miles we walk. We are counting the different species of birds we see. Participants help gather pledges, and then teams or individuals set out to count birds. Some people count birds at their feeders, and some travel to many "hot spots" around the area. Money raised from all this effort goes to Bedford Audubon's Education Programs. Thanks to our Education Chairman, David Albano, **Bedford Audubon presented a scholarship**

**to Fox Lane High School Senior, Joyce Diener**, who has shown a commitment to preserving the environment and the birds that are a part of it. For further info contact us at [education@bedfordaudubon.org](mailto:education@bedfordaudubon.org).

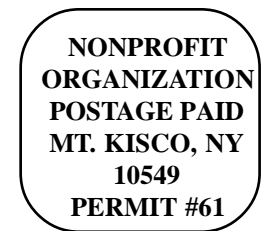
This year we had three main teams; the Frolicking Flickers (led by Dave Albano), the Wandering Warblers (led by Jackie Jones), and the Roaming Robins (led by yours truly). These teams birded for a 24-hour period starting Friday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM. They covered a large area, and visited many birding "hot spots". Some places visited include; Central Park, Constitution Marsh, Jamaica Bay, Croton Pt. Park, Ward Pound Ridge, Doodletown Rd., Jones Beach, Westmoreland Sanctuary, and Butler Sanctuary.

The day of the Birdathon was not the best we have had. We seemed to be between weather fronts, so the birds were not moving much. Plus, with the very warm spring, the trees leaved out about 80%, which made it very hard to spot the birds. Still, teams spotted

some good birds, and most of the "regulars". The Roaming Robins spotted some bay-breasted warblers, which we haven't seen at Westmoreland for a few years. Conspicuously absent from the teams lists were hermit thrush, pileated woodpecker, yellow and black-billed cuckoos, and cerulean warblers. All of these birds have been spotted since the birdathon. In fact, it looks like it is a good year for cuckoos, especially because of the large tent caterpillar population this year.

The birdathon was very successful, and a lot of fun! I want to thank everyone who participated, especially those who made pledges. Your generosity will help Bedford Audubon keep its commitment to reach out to our local students and teachers in our efforts to encourage their environmental interests.

Bedford Audubon Society, Inc.  
35 Todd Road  
Katonah, NY 10536



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*Serving Communities in Northern Westchester and Eastern Putnam since 1913*