



The Bedford Audubon Society Newsletter

Volume 52, Number 1, Spring

The Plight of the Monarchs

by Jackie Bruskin

We have recently received some distressing news about severe losses of Monarch butterflies at their overwintering site in Mexico. Torrential rains, followed by temperatures in the 20s for several days resulted in the deaths of tens of millions of Monarchs. For more details, go to www.MonarchWatch.org/dplex.

What can we do to help? 1) Keep track of Monarch sightings and report them to The Xerces Society, 10 Southwest Ash St., Portland, OR 97204. 2) Maintain a wildlife friendly garden that includes plants that provide nourishment for butterflies and their larvae. Monarchs are especially vulnerable because they have a restricted diet, feeding only on milkweeds. If you have a sunny spot with sandy soil, plant a patch of *Asclepias Tuberosa*, aka butterfly weed or orange milkweed. You can add sand, if your soil is heavy. Other plants will benefit as well. Sand is readily available at garden centers and hardware stores. Be sure to read the package labels; some hardware store sand packages contain other ingredients that can turn your soil into cement!

There are a number of butterfly-friendly plants that like similar conditions. These include fern-leaved yarrow (*Achillea filipendulina*), asters, daisies, coneflowers (*Echinacea*), daylilies, black-eyed Susan's (*Rudbeckias*), goldenrods (*Solidago*), zinnias, sages and salvias. Marigolds are recommended frequently, but I have found that they attract whitefly. If your color sense is uncomfortable with a mix of reds, oranges and pinks, make use of yellow and white varieties in between. You don't need to redo your entire garden, just tuck in a few butterfly-friendly plants in a sunny corner.

With the exception of the zinnias and some salvias, the plants in the list are easy to grow perennials and hardy in our area. Deadheading will lengthen their bloom time, but as fall approaches, allow the plants to go to seed. This helps the plants harden off for winter, and also provides food for many birds.

If you have an herb garden, try to include mint, lavender and/or rosemary. Mints, beebalm (*Monarda*) and some daylilies will tolerate light shade. Mints and beebalm are invasive. If your space is limited, you might want to keep them in pots and sink the pots into the ground. Look in garden catalogs for mildew resistant varieties of beebalm.

Among the shrubs that welcome butterflies are abelia (full sun to light shade and well-drained soil) and butterfly bush (full sun, tolerates poor soil). To keep the latter blooming, it is important to keep trimming off the dead blooms. Butterfly bushes also benefit from being cut back to about 12 inches in late winter or early spring. In our area, they can be borderline hardy. If winter causes dieback, a well-established plant should start up from the base again next spring. If it doesn't, try another variety or another spot in your garden.

The Quarterly Bulletin Spring 2002

Volume 52, No. 1

The quarterly Bulletin, USPS #61 is published quarterly by the Bedford Audubon Society, Inc.
35 Todd Road, Katonah, NY 10536

Board of Directors 2001

John Askildsen—President, 232-1701
Steven Ricker—1st Vice President, 234-2934
Jackie Jones—2nd Vice President, 666-2067
Anne Vajsabel—Recording Sct'y., 845-229-1938
Jack Seirup—Treasurer, 232-4871
Drew Reynolds—At-Large, 232-5632
Donald Pachner—Conservation, 234-6618
Jim Utter—Conservation, 845-878-0081
David Albano—Education, 203-739-0846
Ken Mirman—Hawk Watch, 277-5210
Jackie Bruskin—Membership, 961-8903
Bill Wallace—Field Trips, 845-279-8858
John Erickson—Seed Sale, 273-6967

Committee Members

Ed Fehrs—Development, 273-3631
Joan Becker—Field Trips, 203-323-0233
Jonathan Powers—Finance, 764-1252
Nelly Balloffet—Historian, 941-8166
Barbara Reynolds—Hospitality 232-5632
Jack Seirup—Hunt Sanctuary, 232-4871
Laurie Nevin—Newsletter, 767-9166
Tricia O'Donnell—Newsletter, 232-5911
Brenda Freeman-Bates—Programs, 763-9489
Pam Harper—Publicity, 234-5489
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
Our E-Mail address is: 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

BAS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 3/13 7:30 pm *What's the Buzz* with Frances Bowen – Katonah Village Lib.
- 4/10 7:30 pm *Neotropical Migrants* with Townsend Dickinson
Katonah Village Library
- 4/12 7-9 pm *Amphibian Night Hike*
with Peter Warny
- 4/14 7 pm *The Flight of the Timberdoodle*
with John Askildsen
- 4/20 2-3:30 pm *Kids Discovery Walk* with Steve Ricker
- 4/21 *Shawangunk Earth Day Hike*
with Don Pachner
- 4/21 7 am *Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge* with Anne Vajsabel and Jill Fojtlin
- 4/27 11 am *Meander the Meadow* with Brenda Freeman-Bates
- 5/1 7:30 am *Morning Bird Walk* with Tait Johanson
- 5/3-5 *Dalmarva Peninsula* with John Askildsen
- 5/5 11 am *Critter Story Hour: Birds and Bird Sounds* with Amie Worley
- 5/8 7:30 am *Morning Bird Walk* with Tait Johanson
- 5/8 7:30 pm *Westchester's Open Spaces* with J. Henry Fair
Katonah Village Library
- 5/10-11 *Birdathon*
- 5/15 7:30 am *Morning Bird Walk* with Tait Johanson
- 5/18 7:30 am *Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge* with John Askildsen
- 5/22 7:30 am *Morning Bird Walk* with Tait Johanson
- 5/26 1 pm *Birding for Kids* with Amie Worley
- 5/29 7:30 am *Morning Bird Walk* with Tait Johanson
- 6/1 3 pm *Babes in the Woods* with Steve Ricker
- 6/8 8 am *Bartholomew's Cobble* with Steve Ricker
- 6/12 7:30 pm *Reptiles and Amphibians of the Hudson Valley*

May Means Birdathon!

BAS's annual BIRDATHON will be held from **5pm on Friday, May 10th, until 5pm Saturday, May 11th**. The funds that we raise from this event are used to support our scholarship and classroom feeder watch programs, which we expect to expand this year.

As with any other "...thon," participants are asked to enlist sponsors who will pledge a certain amount for, in this case, each species of bird sighted during that twenty-four hour period.

This is the fourth year that the Wandering Warblers team, led by Jackie Jones, has participated. This year we invite you to join our team for all, or part of the day. You will need at least one sponsor.

The core team, which includes Anne Vajsabel, Jill Fojtlin, and Jackie Bruskin, begins birding in Mt. Kisco at 5pm until we run out of steam on Friday. On Saturday visit Jones Beach, Jamaica Bay, Croton Point, and Bear Mountain. You can join us for all or part of that time. It's peak migration time, and we guarantee you will see a lot of great birds!

Please let us know you're out there, and supporting our efforts, by submitting a pledge or, better yet, joining us. If you prefer to form your own team, that's great too. You'll be getting a flyer in the mail in April, but you can also call Steve Ricker (914-234-2934) to register or pledge.

Village of Mt. Kisco Trumped by Golf Course?

by Don Pachner, BAS Conservation Committee

BAS testified at a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (*NYSDEC) hearing on a wastewater treatment system permit for Donald Trump's proposed Seven Springs Golf Course straddling Bedford, North Castle and New Castle. The course and the runoff of its toxic pesticides, pesticide degradation products and fertilizers would be situated immediately above Mt Kisco's sole drinking water source, Byram Lake Reservoir. Mr. Trump's representatives stated that the water will be cleaner than it presently is during and after construction of the golf course. Hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of earth would be moved to create this course, which will serve only a few individuals, who are able to pay the expected \$350,000 initiation fee. Meanwhile, the drink-

ing water of 10,000 Mt. Kisco residents may be poisoned by the project. The NYSDEC has indicated they will approve this SPDES wastewater discharge permit subject to restrictions should the golf course start to produce toxic chemicals after it is built. Members of BAS, of the Mt. Kisco Town Board, Planning Board and Conservation Advisory Board, along with the citizens of Mt. Kisco and Bedford spoke out eloquently in an appeal to overturn this misguided permit for an unproven wastewater treatment technology in a critical resource area. New York City Department of Environmental Protection also protested approval of this permit. Also present and articulating strong arguments against this dangerous SPDES permit were participant organizations in the Croton Watershed Clean Water Coalition from as far away as Manhattan.

BAS has been an active member of this coalition, and we have spoken out as a member of the coalition in other parts of Westchester and Putnam County wherever our neighbors' wild open spaces, wetlands and watersheds are threatened. To learn how you can help BAS fight inappropriate real estate development, such as the Seven Springs Associates Golf Course, contact Don Pachner of the BAS Conservation Committee at conservation@bedfordaudubon.org

Education News

by David Albano

The education committee has two important projects this spring. For both projects we would love members and educators in the area to help.

The first project is the Feeder Watch Program. This is a program through Cornell Ornithology, and it is designed for elementary and middle school classrooms. Bedford Audubon has graciously approved funding two programs for schools in our chapter's region. This program is a wonderful way to integrate the study of birds with language arts, geography and art. The program comes with lesson plans and other teaching materials. A large knowledge of birds is not needed to use the program. All you need is the interest in it; it is free – Bedford Audubon will provide funding for the feeder and the seed. If you are a teacher or know of a teacher who would be interested, please contact us.

The second project is a search for candidates for the annual Bedford Audubon Scholarship. Candi-

dates should be high school seniors planning to study ornithology, biology or environmental science. Teachers or Bedford Audubon members can recommend students for the scholarship. Contact the Education Committee by calling David Albano at 914-666-5983 or 203-739-0846.

About Birds: Jenny Wren

by John Askildsen

One of the plainest looking birds found in North America has to be the house wren. It is a light brown colored, but somewhat washed-out looking little bird that is attracted to the bushy tangles of the garden. Except for off-white undersides, which cannot be described as bright even on the sunniest of days, the house wren is decidedly a very nondescript looking bird.

But what the “Jenny” wren, as my friend Tom likes to call them, lacks in pulchritude, she most assuredly makes up for in song. As one of the earliest arriving spring songsters in our woodlands, I know spring has truly arrived when sometime between April 17th and 20th, my little “Jenny” lets me know she’s back home by singing her sweet song loud and clear. Her bubbling, and warbling notes start out soft and low, and work up and up, until just like mom’s tea kettle on a red hot burner, little Jenny is boiling over in song.

When Jenny isn’t singing her song just outside the kitchen window, you might hear some of her call notes. These short “spish-spish-spish” call notes are the wren’s way of saying, “I’m a house wren, and I’m over here in these bushes.” The house wren may be communicating with its mate or young by using call notes.

The other wonderful thing about the house wren is that they are not too choosy about where they build their homes. Just construct one out of wood, a generic looking birdhouse with half dollar-sized entry hole. If you are not handy with a hammer and saw, take a coffee can and lid, and cut a hole in the lid. Place the lid on the can and wire it, or your generic birdhouse, to any tree or post in a shrubby or vine-covered area. It does not matter how suburban and developed your neighborhood is, you should eventually attract a house wren. Before you decide to invite a house wren to your yard however, be careful to consider what, if any pesticides you apply to your lawn and garden. Since wrens eat insects and worms, using pesticides in your yard while inviting wrens will most certainly be fatal to the birds. And, of course, living without pesticides is better for you too. Oh, and be sure to say hello to Jenny for me.

BAS PROGRAMS

Wednesday March 13, 2002, 7:30 pm

Katonah Village Library

“What’s the Buzz”

with Francis Bowen

There are thousands of species of bees. Come and learn about a few of them, from Honey Bees to the dreaded Killer Bees. Francis Bowen was designated as National Beekeeper of the Year for the North American continent. His slide program will teach us about the value of bees in your garden, and he promises we can learn to be unafraid of bees as we learn about their habits and lifestyles.

Wednesday April 10, 2002, 7:30 pm

Katonah Village Library

Neotropical Migrants

with Townsend P. Dickinson

Learn more about those brightly colored feathered friends that will soon be passing through our yards and parks. Where did they come from?

Townsend P. Dickinson is a photographer, photo editor and photo researcher specializing in natural history and editorial photography. His photographs are widely published in hundreds of books, magazines and ads, including *Audubon* and *National Geographic*. Townsend’s work is significant in that he has followed the migrants back to their wintering areas to document their lives when they are no longer “our birds but someone else’s birds for 6 to 8 months.” Please join us for an interesting evening on neotropical migrants.

Wednesday May 8, 2002, 7:30 pm

Katonah Village Library

Westchester’s Open Spaces

with J. Henry Fair

J. Henry Fair is a photographer, open space advocate and director of The Wolf Conservation Center in Cross River. His presentation will focus on a series of photographs created in an effort by a group of dedicated environmentalists, to identify the remaining large open parcels of land in Lewisboro, with the final goal of preserving and linking them together into greenways through the town. Some of you will remember Henry’s startling slides of wolves from one of our programs last year. Join us for another treat!

This will also be our annual Membership Meeting for election of the Board of Directors, and review of the past year's events. Let's fill up the room.

Wednesday, June 12, 2002, 7:30 pm
Katonah Village Library
Reptiles and Amphibians of the
Hudson Valley
with herpetologist Peter Warny.

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 on going ecology and conservation projects. **Peter will also bring along some of his creatures for a close up look. Another great program for the kids!**

Birdwatching Workshops for Beginners

There's still time to register for these workshops. Call John Askildsen at 914-232-1999 or Steve Ricker at 914-666-8448 or email Info@Bedfordaudubon.org for all the details.

BAS FIELD TRIPS

Amphibian Night Hike
With Peter Warny,
Friday, April 12, 7:00–9:00 pm

Registration: Westmoreland Sanctuary,
914 666–8448

Come along with Peter as we explore Bechtel Lake in search of amphibians. Bill will lead older children on a hike to a vernal pool, which comes alive this special time of year. Younger children may stay at the lake and continue to explore.

This program is cosponsored by Westmoreland Sanctuary, and will meet at the Westmoreland Museum, at 260 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Mt. Kisco. Please wear boots and bring a flashlight.

The Flight of the Timberdoodle
with John Askildsen,
Sunday, April 14, 7:00 pm

Registration: Westmoreland Sanctuary,
914 666–8448

Bring a blanket for seating. Enjoy wine and cheese while we listen for the sound and look for the flight of the Timberdoodle, otherwise known as the Woodcock. This is a unique behavior in the bird kingdom.

The program is cosponsored by Westmoreland Sanctuary, and will meet at the Westmoreland parking lot and car pool to the courtship display grounds.

Kids Discovery Walk
with Steve Ricker,
Saturday, April 20, 2:00–3:30 pm

Children of all ages can join Steve as they seek out the signs, sounds, colors, and smells of spring.

This program is cosponsored by Westmoreland Sanctuary, and will meet at the Westmoreland Museum, at 260 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Mt. Kisco. For more information call Westmoreland at (914) 666–8448.

to

send an instant message to an online friend

**Shawangunk Earth Day Hike
with Don Pachner,
Sunday, April 21**

Registration: Don Pachner at 914 234-6618 before 10
p.m. or email donp@bestweb.net

A moderate to strenuous 8-mile hike on Gertrude's Nose for experienced hikers of all ages. Bring binoculars and field guides and wear hiking boots. This will be a good opportunity to view peregrine falcons and neotropical migrants. Time and meeting place provided to registrants. Group size may be limited.

This program is cosponsored by Minnewaska State Park, Sierra Club, and The Adirondack Mountain Club.

**Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge
with Anne Vajsabel and Jill Fojtlin,
Sunday, April 21, 7:00 am**

Registration: Ginny Powers at 914 764-4320

Spring migration is one of the most productive times to visit this refuge. Anne and Jill have birded here for years, and will lead us along the trails starting at the Wildlife Observation Center. The refuge is located in Morris County in New Jersey. This will be an all-day trip with easy walking, although some of the trails may be muddy. Bring your lunch and binoculars.

**Meander the Meadow
with Brenda Freeman-Bates,
Sunday, 27, 11:00 am**

Meet at the Nature Center at Croton Point Park in Ossining, and walk the meadow area looking for spring migrants, with county naturalist, Brenda Freeman-Bates. Preregistration is not required.

**Delmarva Peninsula
with John Askildsen,
May 3-5**

Registration: Ginny Powers at 914 764 4320

Join us for a 3-day excursion to the infamous Delmarva Peninsula. We will be looking for migrating shorebirds, warblers, and other passerines. Species highlights may include Virginia rail, least bittern, prothonotary warbler, orchard oriole, and other exciting finds.

**Critter Story Hour:
Birds and Bird Sounds
with Amie Worley,
Sunday, May 5, 11:00 am**

Children will join assistant curator, Amie Worley, at Croton Point Park Nature Center for stories about birds, learning bird calls from books and all around.

This program is cosponsored by Westchester County Parks Department, and is most appropriate for children ages 6 to 11 years of age. Preregistration is not required.

**Wednesday Morning Bird Walks
with Tait Johanson,
May 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29, 7:30 am**

Tait will lead us every Wednesday morning during May, which is an excellent month for birding. Even better, this place is right around the corner. Meet Tait at the intersection of Maple Ave., Reservoir Rd., and Cross River Dam Rd. in Katonah, NY. Bring binoculars and bird guides. Rain will cancel walk.

**Birdathon
Friday and Saturday, May 10-11**

Registration and/or information:

Steve Ricker at 914 234-2934

Join the Wandering Warblers for all or part of the day as we travel from Westchester to Long Island to Rockland County and back. The object is to count as many different bird species as we can while raising funds for Bedford Audubon's Scholarship and educational programs. Please try to enlist at least one sponsor and join us.

**Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
with John Askildsen,
May 18, 7:30 am**

Registration: Ginny Powers at 914 764-4320

Journey with John to one of the metropolitan areas best birding spots. This is a major resting area for many migratory species. Bring binoculars. We will

meet at 7:30 am.

**Birding for Kids
with Amie Worley,
Sunday, May 26, 1:00 pm**

Children will join assistant curator, Amie Worley, at the Croton Point Park Nature Center, for games and activities that teach children about migration, nesting, and bird behavior.

This program is cosponsored by Westchester County Parks Department, and is most appropriate for children 6 to 11 years of age. Preregistration is not required.

**Babes in the Woods
with Steve Ricker,
Saturday, June 1, 3:00 pm**

At this time of year, the woods are alive with young animals, birds, and even plants. Participants will go on a leisurely hike while Westmoreland Sanctuary Director, Steve Ricker, shows us the secret places where young ones are hiding. All ages are welcome.

This program is cosponsored by Westmoreland Sanctuary, and will meet at the Westmoreland Museum, at 260 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Mt. Kisco. For more information call Westmoreland at 914 666 8448.

**Bartholomew's Cobble
with Steve Ricker
in nearby Massachusetts,
Saturday, June 8, 8 am**

Registration: Ginny Powers at 914 764-4320

Join Steve as we explore the unique limestone rock formations from which this natural area gets its name. Along the way, identify ferns, wildflowers, and birds that enrich the area. This is an all-day trip. Bring a bag lunch. We will meet at exit 4 off Route 684, commuter parking lot on Route 172 at

8:00 a.m.

**Butterfly Walk at Pound Ridge
with Bill Wallace,
Saturday, June 15, 10:00 am**

Registration: Ginny Powers @ 914 764-4320

A pastime that is growing in popularity among nature lovers is watching butterflies. Join Bill Wallace as we explore the meadows of Pound Ridge Reservation in search of these dainty beauties. If we are lucky, we may see the somewhat elusive Harris'

A Tasty Temptation!

Word has it that you can lure **Bluebirds** into your yard with this special high-fuel taste treat, and they'll keep coming back. Invite them to stay by setting up a bluebird house!

1 cup peanut butter, chunky or creamy
1 cup suet, chopped
1 cup raisins, chopped, or dried currants
1 cup peanuts, chopped
Cornmeal

Combine first four ingredients. Add cornmeal, mixing by hand until it reaches the consistency of medium-stiff cookie dough. Crumble into an open tray feeder and watch the fun begin!

**Do You Like GREAT COFFEE
and Protecting Birds?**

14 oz. Shade Grown Coffee Beans
Regular \$10
Decaffeinated \$11

Support the Bedford Audubon Society

**For pickup instructions
Call Steve Ricker
(914) 666-8448**

New Member Application

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

Send this form with a check made out to the
National Audubon Society, Bedford Chapter.

Please check the membership category.

___Introductory \$20, ___Two Year membership \$35, ___Senior Citizen (65+) \$15, ___Student \$15

I wish to make an additional donation of _____

I do not wish to have my name or contact information shared with outside organizations.

Name_____

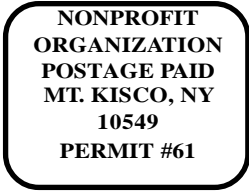
Address_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

E-Mail_____

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

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



PLACE LABEL HERE

Serving Communities in Northern Westchester and Eastern Putnam since 1913