

# The Bedford Audubon Society Newsletter

Volume 57, Number 3, Autumn 2007  
*Celebrating 94 Years of Conservation 1913-2007*

## President's Letter

By Tony Ianniello

I would like to begin by thanking our board of directors for giving me their confidence in taking the lead at Bedford Audubon Society for this next term. I hope to continue along the successful path John Hannan forged during his term. It gave us a more defined structure and basis on which to build our organization. Thanks again, John.

I remember the first time I got involved with Bedford Audubon Society. A friend and member told me about a winter weekend trip to see eagles along the Delaware River. As an amateur birder, I really enjoy looking for that special bird that appears in my yard occasionally. However, I have learned over the years that if you want to see a particular bird, then you need to go find it in its own habitat!

Bedford Audubon will continue to serve our communities in promoting the programs that affect the quality of life and the existence of wildlife and their habitats. We are not just about birds as our name might suggest. In accordance with our mission and that of the National Audubon Society, we are offering a variety of new programs and field trips that promote clean water, conservation, nature study, bird watching and methods of protecting our precious habitats. The changes we see over the years in wildlife species counts are the true indicators of the status of our world and the lives of future generations. Please don't forget that we are all part of this habitat as well!

Our **Bio-Blitz 2007**, held in early June, is a good example of establishing a base line from which to learn how habitat changes over time. This ambitious project required a large contingent of volunteers and scientists all coordinated by **Brian Bielfelt**, a young college graduate who tackled the project from start to finish. Everyone at Bedford Audubon, and all our volunteers, extend our THANK YOU to Brian and wish him every success in his future endeavors. In fact, please stop by Greenwich Audubon to see him at the Hawkwatch throughout the season. Brian will also help coordinate our Hawkwatch at Butler Sanctuary at Chestnut Ridge Road in Mt. Kisco with our own Hawkwatcher, Allisyn Gillet. Allisyn will be at Butler through late November. Welcome, Allisyn, to Bedford Audubon.

As you can see from this newsletter, our Events Committee has put together a fabulous assortment of trips and lectures that directly reflect our mission. We are delighted to offer these events and educational information and welcome you to enjoy them.

Please also note the heartfelt thank you for the arduous work of our two legislators, NYS Senator Vincent Leibell and Assemblyman Adam Bradley, in passing the Community Preservation Act. This is another example of two people who care deeply about the future of our environment. Bedford Audubon was proud to host this event at Bylane Farm.

I would like to remind all of you that Bedford Audubon is a 99% volunteer organization. We have one paid staff member. The board of directors and all committees are volunteers that dedicate their time unselfishly to be able to provide all these programs. My personal thanks go out to all of you. We can always use a few more volunteers, so please reach out to us as we try to learn about each other. One of our goals this season is to try to get to know our members on a more local basis, so that we can provide relevant, local events. Take a look at our Audubon chapter map to see just how large our territory is. Fill out the questionnaire and send it to us. Let's help one another in making Bedford Audubon a supportive and informative neighbor!

Lastly, Bedford Audubon reaches out to the family and friends of Marty Maguire, who passed on as a result of a car accident recently. Marty was a very special young man and we will miss him. Bedford Audubon will remember Marty by dedicating our scholarship program in his name.

Please get in touch with us with any suggestions that you may have to help us help you! Becoming a local member will also aid underwriting our programs. Thank you and stay well.



## The Bedford Audubon Society Newsletter

Autumn 2007, Volume 57, No. 3

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

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### 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.



## BAS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

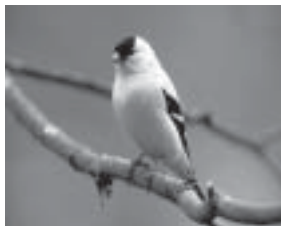
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|-----------|-----------------|---|
| 9/12      | 8-10 a.m.       | Nature Hike at Hunt-Parker Sanctuary  |
| 9/16      | 7:30 a.m.       | Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge   |
| 9/19      | 7:30 p.m.       | <b>Mushrooms of the Fields and Forests/Katonah Village Library</b>  |
| 9/23      | 8:00 a.m.       | Canoe Trip in Constitution Marsh  |
| 9/29      | 10 a.m.-1 p.m.  | Fall Migration at Butler Sanctuary  |
| 9/29      | 10 a.m.-4 p.m.  | <b>South Salem Library Book Fair/Onatru Farm, South Salem</b>   |
| 9/30      | 11 a.m.-4 p.m.  | <b>Westmoreland Fall Festival/Westmoreland Sanctuary</b>  |
| 10/5-10/8 |                 | Autumn Migration at Cape May  |
| 10/10     | 7:30 p.m.       | <b>Ancient Wisdom and Modern Medicine/Katonah Village Library</b>   |
| 10/20     | 8:00 a.m.       | Fall Foliage at The Shawangunks   |
| 10/24     | 7:30-9:30 a.m.  | Nature Hike at Bylane   |
| 11/3      | 9 a.m.-4 p.m.   | Seed Sale Pickup/Bedford Hills Park   |
| 11/7      | 9:00-11:00 a.m. | Nature Hike at Bylane   |
| 11/13     | 7:30 p.m.       | <b>Birding in China/Katonah Village Library</b>   |
| 12/1      | 7:30 a.m.       | Field Trip to Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge  |
| 12/4      | 9:00-11:00 a.m. | Nature Hike at Franklin-Fels Sanctuary  |
| 12/12     | 7:30 p.m.       | <b>The Christmas Bird Count: From Historical Conservation to 21st Century Citizen Science/Katonah Village Library</b> |

Hospitality volunteers are needed to help occasionally with setting up refreshments at our monthly meetings at the library. Please call us if you can assist us at 914-232-1999.



## The American Goldfinch

By Tait Johannson



Male Goldfinch

Photo by Dick Budnick

The American Goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*) is one of our most familiar birds, especially to those who maintain bird feeders. This common inhabitant of shrubby fields, the edges of woods, and suburban areas is present here in southern New York year-round, often frequenting feeders with sunflower or “nyjer” seeds.

In spring through autumn, the male goldfinch is a strikingly colorful bird. Except for a black cap, wings and tail, a white wing bar and under- and uppertail coverts, the male’s plumage is a bright yellow. The bill, legs and feet are pinkish-orange. The female’s underparts are a dull yellow, the head and back are yellowish brown; the tail is blackish, and the wing has two buffy bars; undertail coverts are white. Her bill, legs and feet are a dull pink. In winter, both sexes have a duller version of the female’s plumage.

The goldfinch’s vocalizations include a piping three to four-note call given throughout the year (usually during its undulating flight), often rendered as “potato-chip!” In spring and summer, the male’s song consists of a long series of bouncy, bubbly notes.

The main food is seeds, though insects are sometimes added to the diet. Even the young are primarily fed seeds, especially thistle seeds, which accounts for the fact that this species is one of our latest nesters. Unlike most birds in our area, which typically nest May through June, goldfinches start nesting only in July and continue sometimes into September. This assures a steady supply of the necessary seeds, few of which are ripe earlier in the summer. The down of thistles is also used to line the small, compact nest. One interesting effect of the nestlings’ diet is that, while our local brood parasite, the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*), will lay its eggs in goldfinch nests to be raised by the parent goldfinches, the young usually die, since young cowbirds need more insect food than goldfinches bring their nestlings.



### The Birding Community Loses a Dear Friend

It is with great sadness that we write to tell you of the tragic death of Marty Maguire, 25, of Putnam County, NY, who died in a car accident last month.

Marty was well known to many of us in the Westchester-Putnam birding community as an active and enthusiastic young birder and naturalist, whose every breath was filled with his love of nature. As a result of his unbridled enthusiasm, Marty eventu-

ally rose through the ranks to become the Compiler of the Putnam County Audubon Christmas Bird Count, under the watchful eye of his very close friend and mentor, Ralph Odell of Putnam Valley, NY.

For those of you who did not know Marty McGuire, he was a typical 25-year-old in so many ways. He had lots of friends, loved life, loved the outdoors, and was filled with youthful energy; but for those of us in the birding community he was also a very unique and special 25-year-old.

As Carol Capobianco, former President of Hudson River Audubon, wrote in an e-mail: “We best remember Marty as the teen birding sensation who shadowed Ralph Odell on field trips and at Audubon State Council meetings. He was a spark of youth in a pastime dominated by the over-forty crowd.” Marty was even mentioned in National Audubon’s magazine.

Any of us who have suffered a loss know that the best way to heal is to remember the one who has passed before each and every day. The Science and Education Committee of Bedford Audubon discussed how we could remember our friend, Marty, and we have decided there is a simple but very fitting way.

For several years, Bedford Audubon has presented a scholarship award to a young, aspiring naturalist to go to an Audubon summer camp in either Maine, Vermont or New Hampshire. To memorialize Marty’s love of birding, the environment and his desire for learning, we have decided to name this scholarship The Marty McGuire Environmental Youth Leadership Award. We know Marty would be happy thinking that he is helping inspire a new generation of birders and environmentalists. Our hearts go out to Marty’s family and to his mentor and friend, Ralph Odell.



### The Environmentally Friendly Green Lawn

By Janet Andersen

Actions you take around your homes can have a significant effect on the health of our bodies of water, and even on our drinking water. By avoiding fertilizers that contain phosphorus, you can have a green lawn without adding to the pollution of ponds, lakes and streams. Phosphorus (indicated by P on fertilizer labels) is a plant nutrient that will feed algal blooms and aquatic plants in our lakes and ponds adding to the green scum and decaying matter. The decaying process also uses up oxygen in the water making it unsuitable for fish and bottom-dwelling organisms that they feed on and contributes to the general deterioration of the water quality.

Phosphorous may also degrade our drinking water. Most lawns only require nitrogen (N) fertilizer, and do NOT require phosphorus. Lawns rarely need extra potassium (K), but that chemical is not likely to be harmful to the local water. The three numbers on fertilizer bags indicate percentages of N-P-K nutrients. The preferable label is phosphorus-free fertilizer where the middle number is “zero.”

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Cornell University Cooperative Extension, in 2004, summarized the results from 1,039 soil samples submitted from Westchester County over a seven-year period. In its summary, Cornell acknowledges that these results may be skewed to problem soils, because most non-farmers do not submit soil tests unless they suspect there is a problem. Even so, Cornell found that the “majority of tested soils appear to have adequate amounts of phosphorus to grow different plants, including lawns. Specifically, no samples tested very low in phosphorus; 9% tested low, and 34% tested very high. The report continues: “This is important information because excess phosphorus continues to be a problem in certain bodies of water in Westchester County. One of the manageable sources of this phosphorus is phosphorus-containing fertilizer for lawns. ...fertilizers containing phosphorus should not be applied to established lawns unless a soil test report specifically indicates that it is needed.”

Phosphorus-free fertilizer is available at a number of local stores, but if legislation banning phosphorus fertilizer on established lawns currently before the Westchester County Legislature is passed, availability of zero-phosphorous fertilizer will increase substantially.

If you use a lawn service, you should insist that they use phosphorus-free fertilizer. You are paying for their service, and you have a right to ensure that they don't waste your money or degrade your water.

To help keep a healthy lawn, one of the best additives is to rake a half-inch or so of compost into your lawn each fall. If you overseed with additional grass seed each fall and spring, it will help to out-compete weeds and fill in any bare spots. Mowing to a height of three to four inches will help grass tolerate pests and shade out weeds. By using a “mulching” lawn mower, you can cut down on the amount of fertilizer needed – the clippings will act as a natural fertilizer. Don't fertilize before a heavy rain because the nutrients will wash off your lawn.

Switching to non-phosphorous fertilizer is a simple measure that will make a substantial contribution to preserving healthy water. Do it today!



**NYS Senator Leibell & Assemblyman Bradley  
Recognized For Securing the Hudson Valley  
Community Preservation Act**

By John Hannan

On August 2, Bedford Audubon's Bylane Farm was the host site for more than one hundred people who came together to thank Senator Vincent Leibell and Assemblyman Adam Bradley for their leadership in passing the Hudson Valley Community Preservation Act. An impressive array of elected officials, envi-

ronmental movement leaders, and concerned residents – young and old – all came out to give this bi-partisan team a rousing applause and an award for helping our communities secure another tool that will help preserve open space and critical habitat for birds and other wildlife.

The Hudson Valley Community Preservation Act passed by overwhelming margins in both houses of the State Legislature and will probably have been signed into law by Governor Spitzer by the time you read this article. This Act will enable individual towns and cities in Westchester and Putnam Counties to create, at their option, “Community Preservation Funds.” The money for these Funds would come from a transfer tax paid by purchasers of real estate in a particular town. The transfer tax could not exceed 2% of the value of the property being purchased, and anyone buying a home at or below the median value home price for the area would not be subject to the tax. Any town interested in creating a community preservation fund will be required to hold a voter referendum.

“The Hudson Valley is at a critical tipping point in dealing with long-term development trends while safeguarding the lands that matter most,” said Ned Sullivan, President of Scenic Hudson. “An estimated 100,000 acres of wildlife habitat, working farms, scenic areas and public riverfront access must be preserved over the next ten years at a cost of approximately \$1 billion to insure the long-term vitality, economic sustainability and environmental health of our region. Thanks to Senator Leibell and Assemblyman Bradley's leadership on the Community Preservation Act, our communities are closer to having an important option to fund conservation projects and achieve the goals articulated in their local comprehensive plans.”

Audubon New York Executive Director, Al Caccese summed up all of our feelings when he said “Audubon New York applauds Senator Vincent Leibell and Assemblyman Adam Bradley for providing towns in Westchester and Putnam Counties this important open space protection tool. With habitat loss remaining a leading threat to birds and other wildlife in the Hudson River Valley, the Community Preservation Act is critical for providing municipalities with the necessary resources to protect open spaces and habitat to be enjoyed by the birds, other wildlife and the citizens of the participating towns.

When Westchester Land Trust Executive Director Paul Gallay took the microphone he simply turned to our Sanctuary's sun-drenched hollow with two ponds and a hillside meadow and said “If you like what you see behind you, vote for the (Hudson Valley) Community Preservation Act in your town when it comes up.”

And this is the core of the issue. For Senator Leibell and Assemblyman Bradley have taken a politically courageous step in shepherding this Act through to passage. Many in the real estate and developer community opposed them. Many in their own parties thought this act was politically unwise. But the two lawmakers did what their constituents and what their hearts told

## Global Warming Becoming a Top Priority for Audubon

By John Hannan

The effects of global warming have long been a concern for Audubon. Back in the 1970's then National Audubon President Peter Berle wrote one of the first guides to reducing your carbon footprint - a handbook that may have to be updated and reprinted soon. But as we moved into the era of Kyoto Protocols the global warming discussion became, for a time, focused around international treaties and other topics that are not necessarily Audubon's priority and so we took a back seat allowing other institutions more versed in these areas to take the lead.

Well, times have changed once again. With every news outlet running stories about global warming, the public is once again asking: What is the truth? Depending on what station or outlet you get your news from, this could be a very different story, so Audubon has embarked on what it is best at: providing sound science and education on global warming that you can use to improve your own environment.

In May, as your chapter president and in-coming chair of the Audubon NY Council, I attended a National Audubon Leadership Retreat to help our whole organization formulate its response to global warming. Held right after National Audubon's Board of Directors Meeting, the two-day retreat brought together approximately two hundred people including National Board members, State Board leaders, Chapter leaders, State Executive Directors and other Audubon staff from all across the country.

Now that our scientists have identified global warming as one of the most detrimental issues facing birds and other wildlife, Audubon is obligated to take a lead role in this issue. Our retreat included special workshop sessions engaging key staff and volunteer leaders to help shape Audubon's strategy and implementation plan for addressing this critical environmental issue.

Guest presenters included Stephen Schneider, Ph.D., distinguished professor at Stanford University and internationally recognized as one of the world's primary experts in climate change; Dr. Schneider is actually leading one of the UN's working groups that released the earth shattering climate change report most of us have now read. Kristin Grimm, President of Spitfire Strategies, a leading consulting firm focusing on strategic communications to support social change; Winston Hickox, Partner, California Strategies, LLC and former Secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency; and Craig Tufts, Chief Naturalist and Director of Citizen Science Programs, Natural Wildlife Federation.

The retreat produced strong consensus on the need to fully mobilize the entire Audubon family to secure federal and state legislative action that will cap and ultimately reduce global warming pollution, while furthering the use of renewable energy

sources. Participants also provided critical information and ideas for enhancing campaign plans and materials.

During the fall everyone should take a moment to go to the pages on National Audubon's website that deals with global warming: <http://www.audubon.org/globalWarming/>. They contain an amazing wealth of information on the issue and what you can do to address it.

Locally, Bedford Audubon has already hosted a lecture by Dr. Allen Hershkowitz, senior scientist of the Natural Resources Defense Council and one of America's best-known and respected environmental advocates, on "Innovative Approaches to Advance Sustainable Industry." Allen is also coordinator of some of the world's most prominent institutional greening initiatives. His talk opened many people's eyes to the scope of the problem, but also to many of the creative solutions we as a society can adopt to solve the problem.

Going forward, Bedford Audubon is already working with other local and national groups and will co-sponsor educational forums, legislative initiatives, and proposals for concrete steps you can take to make your home, your community, and your world a more sustainable environment. Global warming is probably one of the most dire issues we have faced in a long time because its effects will be so all encompassing and potentially grim. The good news is we can avert the worst-case scenarios by educating ourselves, and then acting upon that education. I invite everyone to join Audubon and the many other groups working on this issue. Look for more information shortly.

### Bedford-Somers Biodiversity Lecture Series

Under joint ownership of both Towns, the Bedford-Somers biodiversity training group plans to hold the following lecture series open to the public:

#### I. "Biodiversity and Approaches to Habitat Protection"

Wednesday, September 19, 7 PM, Somers Library

A panel discussion offering an overview of the different methods of doing biodiversity assessment and its relevance to environmental issues in Bedford/Somers and northern Westchester generally. Speakers will include Erik Kiviatt of Hudsonia Ltd, as well as local expert Fred Koontz, Executive Director of Teatown.

#### II. "Cluster or Conservation Zoning / Overlay Zoning for Biodiversity"

Wednesday, October 3, 7 PM, Katonah Library

A presentation on the major planning tools available for incorporating biodiversity concerns into the planning process: their use and their prospects for success. Speakers to include: Ed Burroughs from County Planning and Tom Anderson from Westchester Land Trust (on the Eastern Westchester Biotic Corridor).

#### III. "Agricultural Districts and Environmental Impacts associated with Farming"

Wednesday, November 7, 7 PM, Somers Townhouse

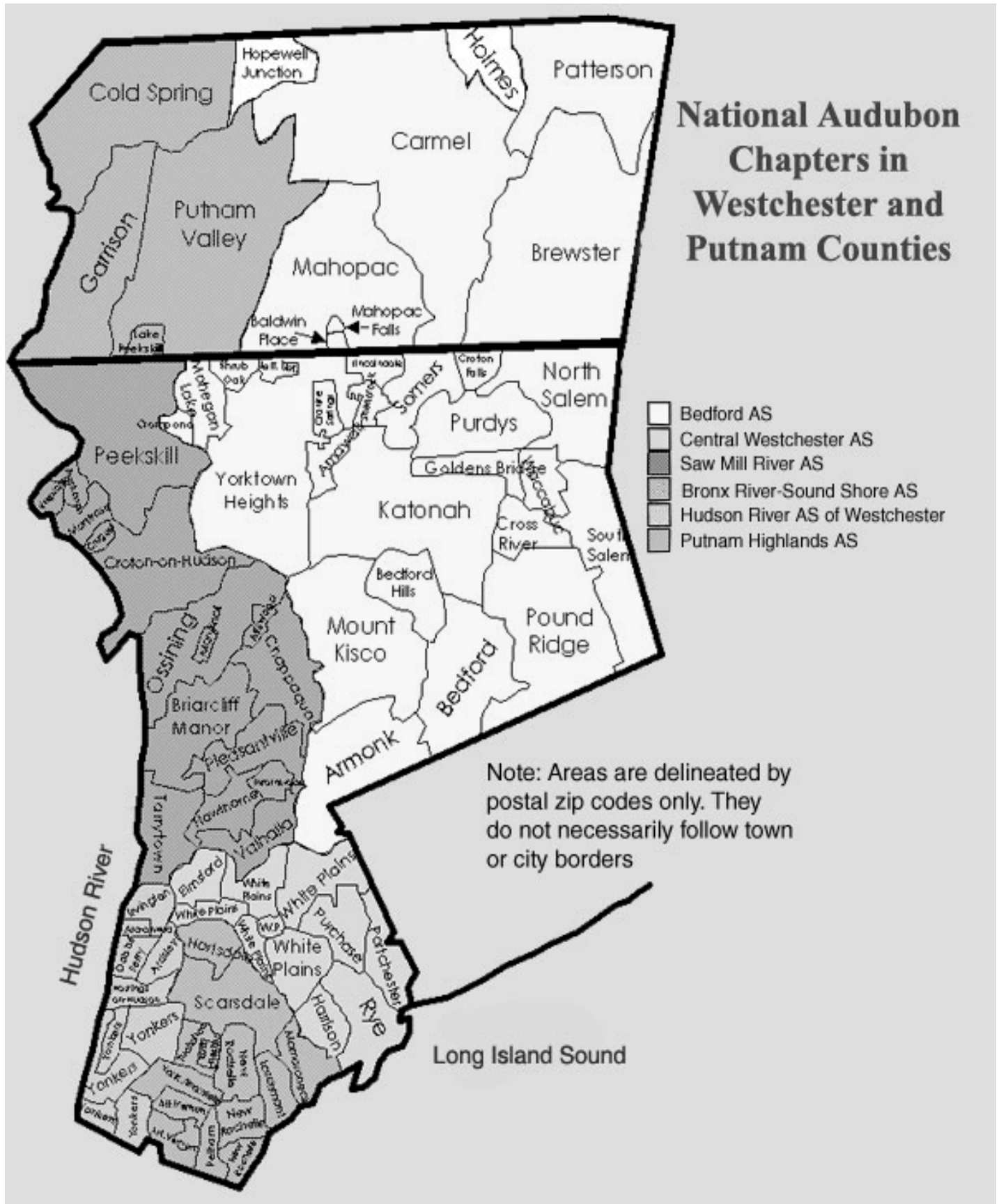
One of the major developments in the protection of farmland in the area is the agricultural district, a somewhat little known zoning tool. The purpose of this presentation will be to learn more about "ag districts" and to discuss their potential for habitat protection. Speakers to include Bob Somers of New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, Liz Brock of the American Farmland Trust, and Conrad Vispo, Farmscape Ecology Program of Hawthorne Valley Farm in Columbia County.

#### IV. "Planning and Designing for Biodiversity: A Panel Discussion"

Wednesday, December 5, 7 PM, Katonah Library

A panel discussion involving members of the building industry as well as environmental advocates and biologists on the ways in which development can be steered to minimize its impact on biodiversity. Presenters will include Lou Marquet, developer, and Michael Klemens, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Conservation Alliance.

## National Audubon Chapters in Westchester and Putnam Counties



## What Neighborhood Do You Live In?

Bedford Audubon covers a very large area, as you can see on the map of our regional Audubon Society chapters *on the facing page*. One of the misleading aspects of the names of our towns within Bedford Audubon's area is that we live in neighborhoods which do not necessarily match our towns' boundaries. To help us reach all of our members we need to learn where our true neighborhoods are and who lives there. This will help us plan future programs which reach all areas of our chapter. Please take a minute to answer the following questions:

1. Your name, street address (and P.O. box if you have one) , town and zip code

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phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_ (we will not give your e-mail to any other organization)

If you would like us to add you to our e-mail list for information on programs, field trips, etc. please indicate by stating "yes" or "no" \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name the elementary school which serves your home \_\_\_\_\_

3. Name the town or community you consider the center of your social life: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Name the meeting places closest to your home where BAS could host an event, for example community center, library meeting room, school meeting area, community house, lake community meeting house, etc.

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5. Have you ever visited Bylane Farm (BAS office & preserve)? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Approximately how far is Bylane Farm (located just east of Route 22 at 35 Todd Road, Katonah) from your home? \_\_\_\_\_ miles

7. Name the preserves or parks closest to your home that are open to the public:

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8. Please circle all that apply. "I have attended a Bedford Audubon program at the Katonah Library \_\_\_\_\_ field trip \_\_\_\_\_ event at Bylane Farm \_\_\_\_\_"

9. Please add any comments which could help us improve our outreach to you:

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Please tear off this page, fold it so the mailing address is on the outside, tape it shut and put on a stamp and mail it, or send the answers by e-mail to [vpatek@bedfordaudubon.org](mailto:vpatek@bedfordaudubon.org) , or go to our home page [www.bedfordaudubon.org](http://www.bedfordaudubon.org) and click the link for the questionnaire.

**Bedford Audubon Questionnaire**  
**Please fill out and return**

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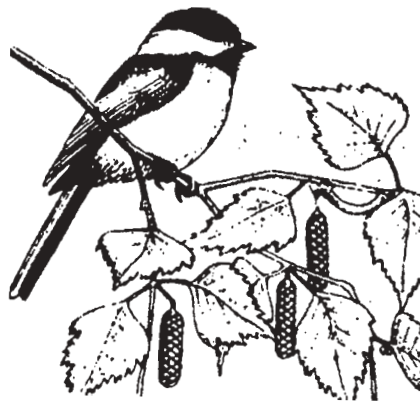
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Bedford Audubon Society, Inc.  
35 Todd Road  
Katonah, NY 10536

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them was right: they fought and won a vital new piece of legislation that will enable towns and cities in Westchester and Putnam to preserve land they never thought they would have the funds to protect. Now it is our turn to do the heavy lifting.

As I told the crowd gathered at Bylane on a beautiful sunny day, this Act will preserve “the kinds of open spaces we all love and desire to see protected, but we now have to get it passed in every town and city throughout Westchester and Putnam Counties.”

In the coming months you are going to see an ever-growing coalition of groups working together to gain passage of this Act through referendums in November of 2008. We are going to have to work hard, as those who oppose it have deep pockets and will be using every method at their disposal to persuade the public to vote against this bill.

We, on the other hand, are going to go back to basics. We are going to knock on our neighbors’ doors, talk to people in our homeowner associations, at the PTA, the community barbeque, over a cup of coffee at the local diner. And that is why we are going to need you! Whether you like to talk to people, lick stamps, write flyers, or just do whatever is needed, we will have a place for you. Let’s applaud Senator Leibell and Assemblyman Bradley today and take the baton from them tomorrow to win passage of the Act in municipalities across our two counties.



Bedford Audubon Naturalist, Tait Johansson, shows a dragonfly to Jack Kozuchowski and Jan Linskey at the July nature walk at Bylane. Nature walks are held once a month during the year and are open to the general public free of charge. The July and August walks focused on butterflies, and on damselflies and dragonflies, of which more than 30 species have been registered around Bylane Farm.



### Westmoreland 24th Annual Fall Festival

Westmoreland Sanctuary will be holding its 24th Annual Fall Festival on Sunday, September 30th. This year Westmoreland celebrates its 50th anniversary and this festival hopes to be our best yet. This year’s event will have pony rides, a petting zoo, live animal presentations and workshops throughout the day. The Festival runs from 11:00-4:00 and admission is \$4.00 Members / \$5.00 Non-Members / \$3.00 for Seniors and children under 12. For more information visit our web site at [www.westmorelandsanctuary.org](http://www.westmorelandsanctuary.org).



## FIELD TRIPS

**Registration:** Please register for all field trips (except where noted with trip registrar, Milady Valdez, (914) 962-5474 or by e-mail to [mvaldez@bedfordaudubon.org](mailto:mvaldez@bedfordaudubon.org).)

### Nature Hike at Hunt-Parker Sanctuary With Tait Johansson Wednesday, September 12, 8-10 a.m.

#### Meet at Bylane Farm, 35 Todd Road, Katonah

Join Bedford Audubon naturalist, Tait Johansson, for a walk through the sanctuary’s meadows and woods. The focus will be on migrant birds and butterflies, and autumn wildflowers should be in bloom in the meadow. Bring binoculars.

### Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Queens, NYC With John Askildsen

#### Sunday, September 16. Departure (car pool) from Bylane Farm at 7:30 a.m.

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge in Queens, NY, has something to offer birders year round. At this time, a few northern breeding shorebirds and warblers may still be seen, and herons and egrets, as well as Ospreys and terns will most likely still be busy patrolling the extensive salt marshes. Some ducks will have arrived and will be busy feeding in the West Pond. Bring lunch. Return to Bylane by 4:00 p.m.

### Canoe Trip in Constitution Marsh, Indian Brook Road, off Route 9D, Garrison, NY

#### With Bedford Audubon Vice-President John Hannan

#### Sunday September 23, at 8 a.m. (Carpooling from Bylane Farm, 35 Todd Rd., Katonah at 7 a.m.)

Constitution Marsh Audubon Center and Sanctuary is a unique 270-acre tidal marsh that has been managed by the National Audubon Society since 1970. It provides refuge for breeding and migrant birds and offers irreplaceable habitat for the plants, fish, and other wildlife of the Hudson River estuary. It has been designated an Important Bird Area by Audubon and a Bird Conservation Area by New York State.

A Marsh naturalist will lead participants through winding channels lined with cattails and other marsh plants, identifying any wildlife observed. No private canoes are permitted, but favorite paddles are welcome and personal life jackets are encouraged. There is a \$20 fee for this two-hour trip (\$5 discount for Audubon members). Registration is required.

### Fall Migration at Butler Sanctuary

#### Saturday, September 29, the Hawk Watch, Arthur Butler Sanctuary, Chestnut Ridge Road, Mount Kisco, NY 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Join Bedford Audubon Society’s experienced birder and Bio-Blitz coordinator Brian Bielfelt and our new hawk watcher Allisyn Gillet, who will be on hand to help identify migrating raptors and other species. Late morning is the optimal time to see hawks

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flying low over the ridge, but sightings are possible all day. We should expect to see Osprey, American Kestrel, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks and the beginning of the Red-tail Hawk migration. No registration necessary. Bring binoculars.

**Directions:** From I-684 to exit 4 (Route 172) west towards Mt. Kisco. After 0.3 miles, turn left onto Chestnut Ridge Road and go 1.2 miles. Turn right over bridge into parking area.

**Autumn Migration at Cape May With John Askildsen  
Friday, October 5 – Monday, October 8 (two day option is available)**

Once again Bedford Audubon Society and John Askildsen will lead a trip to one of the foremost birding areas on the East Coast - indeed of the world - to witness the spectacular annual fall migration. When birds migrating along the Atlantic Flyway arrive at the southern tip of New Jersey, most species take a break there before crossing the 13-mile expanse of the Delaware Bay, so this is a unique opportunity to observe them up close. Sixteen species of hawks migrate through Cape May in late September through mid-October, but we may expect to find up to 160 species of migrating and local birds. Whether you are an experienced birder or a novice, this is an experience not to be missed. A limited number of rooms have been reserved at a comfortable motel. Please make plans as soon as possible, and no later than **September 17**. Registration is required. Please contact Milady Valdez by e-mail to [mvaldez@bedfordaudubon.org](mailto:mvaldez@bedfordaudubon.org) or by telephone at (914) 962-5474 to inquire about room rates and car-pooling arrangements.

**Fall Foliage at The Shawangunks, Ellenville, NY  
With Tait Johansson  
Saturday, October 20. Departure (car pool) from Bylane Farm at 8 a.m.**

Sam's Point Dwarf Pine Ridge Preserve contains the best examples of ridge top dwarf pine barrens in the world. It is part of the 90,000-acre Northern Shawangunk Mountains, and is home to nearly 40 rare plants and animals. Depending on the group's ability level, we will pick a route that offers beautiful views but allows everyone to participate. Return to Bylane around 4 p.m.

**Nature Hike at Bylane With Tait Johansson  
Wednesday, October 24, 7:30-9:30 a.m.  
Meet at Bylane Farm, 35 Todd Road, Katonah**

Join Bedford Audubon naturalist, Tait Johansson, for a walk through the sanctuary's meadows and woods. The main focus of the walk will be on migrant birds. Bring binoculars.

**Nature Hike at Bylane With Tait Johansson  
Wednesday, November 7, at 9-11 a.m.  
Meet at Bylane Farm, 35 Todd Road, Katonah**

Join Bedford Audubon naturalist Tait Johansson for a walk through the sanctuary's meadows and woods. This walk will focus on identification of trees and shrubs.

**Field Trip to Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge,  
Smithville, NJ, With John Askildsen.  
December 1, 2007. Departure (car pool) from Bylane, 7:30 a.m. Return around 5 p.m.**

New Jersey's coastal wetlands have long been the preferred habitat of large numbers of Atlantic Brant and the American Black Duck - a species which has suffered major population declines over the years. On the 9-mile drive through the Refuge, we can also expect to see large flocks of Snow Geese that winter in the salt marshes. Flocks of Dunlin and other shorebirds may still be around. With luck, we may get a glimpse of the white plumage of a Snowy Owl hunting over the salt marshes and impoundments. We should see many species of migratory ducks, which are overwintering at the refuge. Sea ducks, showing mostly black and white plumage, can be seen bobbing in saltwater areas. Dress warmly and bring lunch and hot drinks.

**Nature Hike at Franklin-Fels Sanctuary With Tait Johansson  
Tuesday, December 4, 9-11 a.m.  
Meet at Bylane Farm, 35 Todd Road, Katonah. Carpool to Franklin-Fels.**

Join Bedford Audubon naturalist, Tait Johansson, for a walk through this lesser known 204-acre Bedford Audubon sanctuary. The preserve provides for easy walking with few steep inclines. Bring binoculars.



## PROGRAMS

**Mushrooms of the Fields and Forests:  
The What, Where, Why and How of Our Local Fall  
Mushrooms  
With Mycologist Gary Lincoff  
Wednesday, September 19, 2007 at 7:30 p.m.  
Katonah Village Library, 26 Bedford Road, Katonah.**

This presentation will help place mushrooms in the context of natural fall events in our area between Labor Day and Thanksgiving. It will appeal to the beginning mushroomer as well as to the long-time mushroom enthusiast.



Photo by J. Schein

Gary Lincoff is one of the nation's best-known mushroom experts. He is past president of the North American Mycological Association (NAMA) and has been an instructor on fungi, mosses and lichens at The New York Botanical Garden since 1976. He has written, co-authored or edited seven books, including *Audubon Society Field Guide to Mushrooms of North America* and *Toxic and Hallucinogenic Mushroom Poisoning* and has written dozens of articles about mushrooms. He has led mushroom field trips abroad to more than 30 countries on all continents except Antarctica. Currently

Gary Lincoff is engaged in a daily mushroom survey of Central Park studying population dynamics of the larger fleshy fungi. "Live" specimens will be on display.

**Ancient Wisdom and Modern Medicine:  
Plants, People, and Cultures in the Tropical Rainforest  
With Dr. Michael Balick**

**Wednesday, October 10, 2007 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Katonah Village Library, 26 Bedford Road, Katonah.**

This lecture discusses the study of plants used in traditional healing by indigenous cultures. Dr. Balick will focus on his work on the Belize Ethnobotany Project, a countrywide inventory of the uses of the plants found in Belize. Dr. Balick is also working in The Federated States of Micronesia, where an interdisciplinary team is in the process of inventorying the vegetation of Pohnpei Island and its surrounding atolls. Dr. Balick will discuss the potential for increased use of indigenous plant species in modern health care and the obstacles encountered including tropical forest destruction and the loss of indigenous knowledge about the uses of the plants. An eight-minute video of interviews with two Belizean traditional healers will follow the lecture.

**Dr. Michael Balick** is Vice President and Chair of the Institute of Economic Botany at The New York Botanical Garden. He is a specialist in ethnobotany, working with indigenous cultures to document their plant knowledge, understand the environmental effects of their traditional management systems, and develop sustainable utilization systems - while ensuring that the benefits of such work are shared with local communities. Dr. Balick has published more than 80 scientific papers and contributed to nearly 30 horticultural and general



interest publications. His latest book, co-authored with two New York Botanical Garden colleagues is entitled *Checklist of the Vascular Plants of Belize*.

**Birding in China With Ben King**

**Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2007 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Katonah Village Library, 26 Bedford Road, Katonah.**

For over 30 years following World War II, China was closed to foreigners, but now there are few places in China that are inaccessible to the outside world, though permits are required for certain areas. While China's wildlife faces some serious environmental threats, its 1,300 species of birds continue to be supported by a wide array of habitats. Mr. King will discuss these threats as they pertain to the current status and future for much of China's wildlife. In his presentation Ben King will relate some of his experiences from his decades of travel in China complemented by slides of China's natural beauty and some of its birds.

**Ben King** is a prominent ornithologist, with a special focus on Asian birds. His fieldwork covers many areas of southern and eastern Asia, his concentration being systematics, vocalizations



and distribution. He is the author of the 1975 classic, *A Field Guide to the Birds of South-East Asia* covering Burma, Malaya, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and Hong Kong, and *Checklist of the Birds of Eurasia*, in addition to over 100 scientific and popular papers on Asian birds. Ben King is president and tour leader of KingBird Tours, a travel company specializing in birding tours to Asia for 26 years. He has led 144 birding tours in Asia, including 25 in China, where he has spent nearly three years birding. Ben King has seen all but 11 of China's 1,300+ bird species, and his life list includes a record 2,100 species of Asian birds.

**The Christmas Bird Count: From Historical Conservation to 21st Century Citizen Science With Geoffrey LeBaron, Christmas Bird Count Director, National Audubon Society**

**Wednesday, December 12, 2007 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Katonah Village Library, 26 Bedford Rd., Katonah**

Many birders have participated in a Christmas Bird Count (CBC), but few people realize the importance of their contribution to furthering our understanding of how bird populations are doing on a hemispheric level. Since its inception on Christmas Day of 1900, Christmas Bird Census (now "Count") volunteers have been counting birds in specific areas during the holiday season. The CBC is the great-granddaddy of what has come to be called Citizen Science—where volunteer citizens partake in an activity and contribute data to a larger program. Scoffed at by many scientists for decades, in recent times the CBC and other large volunteer-generated data sets have become the wave of future data collection for conservation biologists. Population declines and increases, changing wintering ranges and the patterns of irruptive species over the years can all be studied by using Christmas Bird Count data.

This program will look at the history of the CBC and, using the online CBC tool set, examine how some species of birds are doing on local, regional, and continental levels.

**Geoffrey LeBaron** is the Christmas Bird Count Director for



National Audubon Society, a position he has held since 1987. He is also involved in various other Audubon Science programs including the Great Backyard Bird Count, eBird, and the Important Bird Areas. He is a consultant for Audubon Productions and *Audubon* magazine, and has worked for Audubon Society of New Hampshire and Rhode Island for many years in various capacities. In addition, Geoff has led

natural history tours to Alaska, the Aleutian Islands, the Kamchatka Peninsula, Central and South America, the Galapagos Islands, Australia and Antarctica.



## Bedford Audubon Membership

Yes, I would like to join the Bedford Audubon Society. My local chapter membership will help support local conservation efforts, programs, and sanctuaries. (Send this form with a check made out to **Bedford Audubon Society** or **fill in the MC/VISA credit card information below.**)

### **Please check your membership category.**

- New Member or Renewal \$30  Supporter \$50  
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**Mail to:** Bedford Audubon Society, 35 Todd Road, Katonah, NY 10536

**Enter your e-mail address here** and we will add you to our e-mail list for alerts on programs, field trips, and other items of local interest.

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