

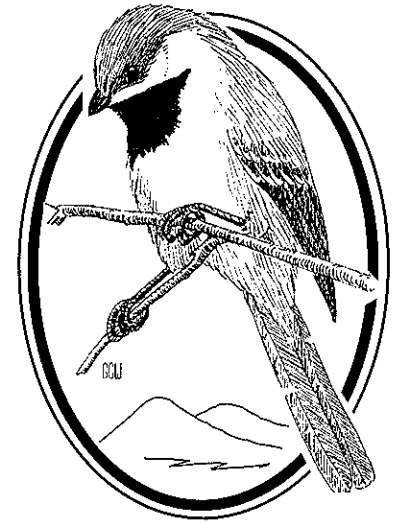
# High Peaks Audubon

Adirondack-Champlain Region of New York State

Mission: To conserve and restore natural ecosystems in the Adirondacks, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the Earth's biological diversity.

Volume 33 Number 4

September-November 2005



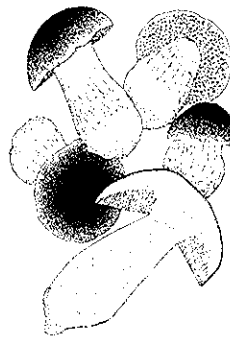
## September & October Monthly Program Meetings

Saturday, September 3, 2005

“Mushroom Identification Workshop”

Newcomb VIC at 1:00 p.m.

Even in relatively dry years, our forests are full of mushrooms from July through October. Many species and ecological roles are represented. Tom Horton will give a 45-minute presentation that will introduce 1) the Kingdom Fungi including aspects of their ecology, and 2) a very brief set of characters used in taxonomic keys for identification purposes. A few commonly encountered species in our area will be highlighted. After the presentation, we will take a walk through the forest and collect some examples. With many eyes we can find many species, and at the end of the walk we will gather around to share what we have found with each other. After the walk, a short demonstration of microscopic techniques will be offered.



Mushrooms by George West

Tom Horton received his BA at Humboldt State University, his MA at San Francisco State University and his Ph.D. at U.C. Berkeley. Tom then worked as a postdoc at Oregon State University until he joined the faculty at SUNY-ESF in 2001. Tom's research is primarily focused on ectomycorrhizal fungi and their influence on plant community dynamics. A second focus is on the use of molecular genetic techniques to identify fungi. While the genetic approaches for identification are powerful, they are particularly useful when we have good taxonomic knowledge based on the morphology of the organisms. Besides, a walk in the woods looking for mushrooms beats a day in the lab any day!

Saturday, October 1, 2005

“Wildlife Conservation Society's Boreal Birds Project”

Paul Smith's VIC at 11 a.m.



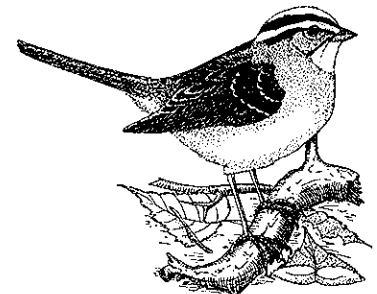
Olive-sided Flycatcher by George West

Michale Glennon, of the Wildlife Conservation Society, will present a lecture on their Boreal Birds Project. The project is a State Wildlife Grants program to investigate the distribution and abundance of a suite of boreal birds in the Adirondacks. The target species are Spruce Grouse, Three-toed Woodpecker, Black-backed Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Palm

(Monthly Programs continued on page 36)

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White-throated Sparrow by George West

# HPAS

High Peaks Audubon Society, Inc.

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A chapter of National Audubon Society  
serving the Adirondack/Champlain region  
of northern New York, including Clinton,  
Essex, Franklin and Hamilton counties.

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(Adirondack Birding Festival continued from page 35)  
Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Rusty Blackbird. Boreal birds are surveyed through a series of five ten-minute point counts at boreal habitats primarily located in the northwest section of the Adirondack Park. Michale will talk about boreal habitats in general and why they are of interest. She will also discuss some of the threats to this habitat type, and some of the preliminary results from three summers of data collection.  
Michale Glennon has a B.S. in Environmental and Evolutionary Biology from Dartmouth College (1995) and an M.S.(1997) and Ph.D. (2002) in Environmental and Forest Biology from the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse. She grew up in the Adirondacks, in Lake Placid.

## Message from the President

It is a pleasure, in my first message as president of HPAS, to thank Joan Collins for the wonderful, ambitious and enthusiastic job she has done as president for the last two years and continues to do as editor of the newsletter.

I enjoyed seeing so many HPAS members at the annual meeting. The morning canoe trip on the Osgood River, led by Larry Master, was great fun and a lovely, relaxing way to interact with others (and see some birds and dragonflies, too).

I look forward to many more of these outings and to meeting even more of our HPAS members.  
*- Pat Thaxton*

## Message from the Editor

As I write this message in August, it is a hot, humid day. "Hot and humid" has typified our entire summer to date! For those of us that enjoy hiking, climbing, and canoeing, it has been a frustrating, unusual season. I have been wondering how the birds fared through it all.

With all the heat and humidity this past June, my annual citizen science project experiences were quite different this year. I survey three peaks for the Mountain Birdwatch project, and normally it is a cold experience, but this year, I struggled to breathe as I climbed in hot, heavy air on all three peaks. During the two Breeding Bird Survey routes I ran in Hamilton County, the temps quickly soared into the mid 80s with high humidity, and stepping out of the car every 1/2 mile felt like stepping into an oven. But the unexpected sightings are always fun - this year, in July, I found a male White-winged Scoter while participating in the ACLP's Annual Loon Census on Long Lake.

Just a reminder that most of our HPAS field trip results are posted to the Northern New York Birds list serve. You can view posts to this list at: [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Northern\\_NY\\_Birds/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Northern_NY_Birds/) or you can become a member by sending an email message to: [Northern\\_NY\\_Birds-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:Northern_NY_Birds-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

I will be traveling to Ithaca in October for the fall meeting of the Audubon Council of New York State. Twice a year, representatives from 30 Audubon Chapters around New York State meet with the staff of Audubon New York to discuss issues of statewide importance. I will summarize the fall meeting in the winter Newsletter issue.

On a personal note, our family is "moving" to Potsdam in a couple weeks. We will spend as much time in our Long Lake home as possible, but our already hectic life will become more hectic living between two locations. I have committed to publishing this fall issue, and the winter and spring issues, but would like to find a replacement Editor by the June-August 2006 summer issue. I will have been Editor for almost 5 years by then, and a fresh perspective is always good for an organization. If you have an interest in helping our Chapter with this very important job - our primary means of communication with members - please contact me, and I will help in the transition. The job will keep your hands in all things "birds" in the north country and you meet many wonderful people in the process!

*- Joan Collins*

## September-November Bird Walks

### Saturday, September 3, 2005 Newcomb VIC Trails

**Time:** Approximately 2 p.m.  
(following Tom Horton's 1 p.m.  
presentation)

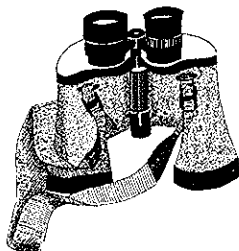
**Meet:** At the Newcomb VIC

**Bring:** Water, snacks, hiking boots,  
and binoculars

**Distance:** ~1 mile. Tom Horton will  
lead a walk to identify mushrooms  
after his presentation. We will also  
be on the lookout for birds!

**Hike Leader:** Prof. Tom Horton

**Register:** Call the Newcomb VIC at (518) 582-2000.



*Binoculars by George West*

### Saturday, September 17 Nun-da-ga-o Ridge in Keene

**Time:** 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**Directions:** Meet at the Crow's Clearing Trailhead parking  
lot in Keene

**Bring:** Water, lunch/snacks, sunscreen, rain gear, hiking  
boots, binoculars

**Distance:** A loop trail of app. 5-6 miles with numerous  
outstanding views from which we can watch for migrating  
birds; mostly short ups and downs after initial short, steep  
approach to Big Crow and later to Weston Mt. (moderate  
difficulty), the trail is unmarked.

**Hike Leaders:** HPAS members Pat & John Thaxton

**Register:** By calling 518-576-4232 or 212-475-5317  
(voicemail) or at [jpthax5317@aol.com](mailto:jpthax5317@aol.com)

### Saturday, October 1, 2005 Boreal Life Trail Paul Smith's VIC

**Time:** Approximately 12 p.m.  
(following Michale Glennon's  
presentation at 11 a.m.)

**Directions:** Meet at the Paul Smith's  
VIC

**Bring:** Water, lunch/snacks, jacket,  
hiking boots, and binoculars

**Distance:** Approximately 1.5 miles  
round trip on level terrain

**Hike Leaders:** Michale Glennon and  
HPAS members

**Register:** Call the Paul Smith's VIC  
at (518) 327-3000.



*Black-backed Woodpecker  
by George West*

## Saturday, November 12 Coon Mt./Champlain Valley

**Time:** 8 a.m.

**Directions:** Meet at the  
Westport boat launch

**Bring:** Water, lunch, sunscreen,  
raingear, hiking boots,  
binoculars

**Distance:** The hike up Coon Mt.  
is short and easy through woods  
then slightly steep near the top  
on a rocky path. If the wind is  
right, it may be good for migrating raptors. Lake Champlain  
and the surrounding countryside are good for migrating and  
early winter species.

**Hike Leaders:** HPAS members Pat & John Thaxton

**Register:** By calling 518-576-4232 or 212-475-5317  
(voicemail) or at [jpthax5317@aol.com](mailto:jpthax5317@aol.com)



*Hawkwatch by George West*

## New York Ornithological Association 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting September 23-25, 2005

Hosted by The Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club

**Location:** Albany Marriott Hotel

### Friday:

- Field Trips
- Cocktail Reception & Dinner
- Poster Sessions, Vendors, & Ongoing Slide Show
- Evening Workshops
  - Digiscoping - Kevin and Jay McGowan
  - Bird Monitoring Methods with a Focus on IBAs – Jillian Liner
  - Mountain Birdwatch – Joan Collins
  - NY eBird – Brian Sullivan

### Saturday:

- Field Trips (Ann Lee Pond, Albany Pine Bush, Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Indian Kill Nature Preserve, Peebles Island State Park, Reist Sanctuary, Thatcher Park/Heldeberg Escarpment, Emma Treadwell Thatcher Nature Center, Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve.
- Paper Sessions
- Vendors
- Raffle Prizes
- Dinner & Keynote Speaker: Dr. David M. Bird "How Birds Do It!"

### Sunday:

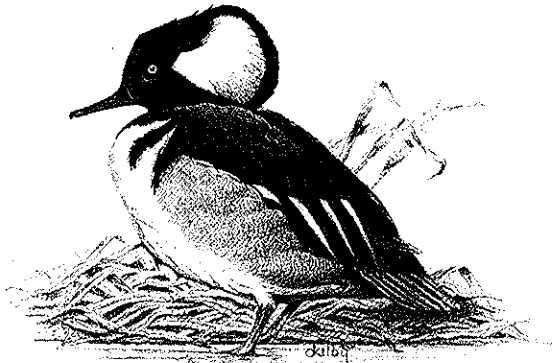
- Breakfast on the Hudson – A 2-hour cruise on the Dutch Apple
- Field Trip to Heldeberg Escarpment

For more information on the NYSOA Annual Meeting, visit  
their web site at:

[www.nybirds.org/Articles/FedAnnualMtg2005.htm](http://www.nybirds.org/Articles/FedAnnualMtg2005.htm)

## “Important Bird Area” Spotlight: William C. Whitney Wilderness Area Long Lake, Hamilton County

21,000 acres  
1,715-2,300' Elevation



*Hooded Merganser by Daniel S. Kilby*

**Description:** This site is located in the ecological transition zone between the temperate deciduous forest and the boreal forest. The main forest types are northern hardwoods (mostly beech, red maple, and yellow birch), mixed woods (hardwoods with hemlock, red spruce, and scattered white pine), and spruce flats. The site contains 11 lakes, including Little Tupper Lake, which is nearly six miles long and up to a mile wide. The landscape surrounding the lakes is composed of low, forested hills with a few modest mountains. Elevations above sea level range from 1717 feet at the surface of Little Tupper Lake to 2,297 feet at the summit of Antediluvian Mountain. Extensive wetlands stretch out from the ponds and streams. According to the NY GAP land cover data, approximately 30% of the site is wetland habitat, which includes emergent marsh/open fen/wet meadow, evergreen wetland, and shrub swamp. Except for three private holdings, the site is state-owned.

**Birds:** This site provides exceptional wetland habitat for characteristic species. Probable and possible at-risk species include the American Black Duck, American Bittern, Bald Eagle, Northern Goshawk, Canada Warbler, and Rusty Blackbird. Confirmed at-risk breeders include the Pied-billed Grebe, Osprey, and Olive-sided Flycatcher. Palm Warblers also breed here.

**Conservation:** A NYS DEC ranger is assigned to this site to help protect and manage it as a wilderness area. A unit management plan will be developed. The site provides vast areas for recreation. Heavy logging activity prior to state ownership has left a young, open forest over much of the area. A narrow band of mature trees was preserved along the shorelines to protect the view from the water and to reduce erosion into ponds and streams. Acid rain has had a negative impact on the forest and lake ecosystems, though

its long-term effects on birds are unclear. Acid rain deposition may be having an impact on the nesting success of songbirds, particularly at high elevations, by killing snails and other edible sources of calcium



*Pied-billed Grebe by Kirsten Munson*

needed for egg production. More research is needed on this. The curtailment of sulphur dioxide emissions and the reduction of acid rain is currently a significant New York State initiative. A detailed inventory and standardized monitoring of at-risk species are needed for the area.

### Birding/Hiking/Canoeing Opportunities:

- Sabattis Bog – Take the north entrance to Circle Road and travel approximately 1 mile to the open bog on the right.
- Stony Pond Trailhead – Southshore Trail - 4 miles long (camp locations at the end)
- Burns Road Trailhead – A system of trails, Rock Pond Trail, Lilypad Pond Trail, Hardigan Pond Trail, Camp Bliss Trail, spanning 13.5 miles.
- Trail to Mt. Frederica – A 4.4 mile trail that borders Lake Lila for over 3 miles and leads up Mt. Frederica
- Road leading to Sabattis – mixed forest, lakes, and marshes along the roadway.
- Railroad Bed at Sabattis – Hike north toward Horseshoe Lake (~ 5 miles) on the railroad bed along mixed forest, bogs, river, and marshes.
- Canoe/Camp on Little Tupper Lake – The Lake is 6 miles long, and it is also possible to carry/canoe along several ponds to Lake Lila (not a trivial undertaking!).
- Canoe/Camp on Lake Lila
- Snowshoe or Ski opportunities: Road into Lake Lila, Stony Pond Trailhead, and Burns Road Trailhead.

For more detailed information about the William C. Whitney Wilderness Area, visit the DEC web site at: [www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dlf/publands/adk/whitney.htm#Trails](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dlf/publands/adk/whitney.htm#Trails)

*Editor's Note: The "Description", "Birds", and "Conservation" sections above were reprinted from the new book **Important Bird Areas of New York** (second edition) by Michael F. Burger and Jillian M. Liner (Audubon New York) with permission. The William C. Whitney Wilderness Area received an "Important Bird Area" designation in May 2005.*

## About Wildlife Rehabilitation

**H**PAS is fortunate to have several local wildlife rehabilitators as members of our chapter. Joan asked me to share with you a little about what we do and why we do it.

What we do: The goal of wildlife rehabilitation is to provide aid to injured and orphaned wildlife with the end result being the release of a healthy animal back to the wild. Rehabilitators are trained volunteers. We are not allowed to practice veterinary medicine and must work in close cooperation with a veterinarian. We may not charge a fee for our service, and in fact spend a great deal of our own money to feed and care for wildlife. Rehabilitators begin as an assistant or apprentice. We must pass an exam to become licensed in New York State. This only allows care of mammals. To care for birds, the Federal Government must also license us. Facilities must meet minimum standards and are inspected. Annual records must be kept and reports prepared and evaluated to maintain the licenses. Additional course work, vaccinations, inspections and license criteria must be met to handle rabies vector species. Special training is needed for working with oiled wildlife or during an emergency. Fortunately, New York has an excellent statewide organization that provides annual training seminars that encourage professionalism and teach the skills necessary to provide quality care for wildlife.

Why we do it: This varies with each individual rehabilitator. For some of us, it is an opportunity to educate the public about our work. For others, it helps us feel we are compensating for human impacts on wildlife. Others feel the need to fulfill the public demand for someone to provide care for injured animals. This means we provide humane care to alleviate pain and suffering in wild creatures. We all recognize that saving one animal is of no consequence to a species. However, there is always the chance to learn rehabilitation techniques with common species that may be employed in the treatment of distressed endangered species. I, for one, belong to the category of rehabilitators who enjoy the process because it allows us to learn about the behavior and natural history of our native wildlife through hands-on experience.

Why do I do it: I've worked with many species over my 40+ years of rehabbing. This summer, my assistant and husband, Steve and I have enjoyed working with young owls, raccoons, an ermine, baby finches, hummingbirds, and a really cool Pileated Woodpecker. This is the first Pileated I worked with, so I needed to do lots of research and learned many facts I had not thought about previously (i.e., the adults feed their young well into the fall). I released our baby in late July. Now that she is free and flies, roosts, and feeds in her territory (my yard and woods), she still zooms in, circles the house, and begs to be fed each morning and late afternoon. She may need the mighty meal worms and wax worms stuffed with calcium and vitamins, but more likely she just still needs to know a "parent" is there to protect her. And Grubco (the fresh insect source) is very

happy to sell me my standard weekly order of a 1000 medium mealies and 500 giant wax worms! In fact, one day while feeding at her stump filled with goodies, an adult pair flew in and attacked her. She instinctively knew what to do and hung upside down with her wings spread in a defensive pose. Steve waved his arms, yelled, and acted like a huge parent so they would let her be and move out of her territory. It worked! She now "owns" this yard and its feeding stations.



*Pileated Woodpecker by Kirsten Munson*

It is important to remember the cardinal rules of rehab:

- Let it be, wild and free.
- If you care, you'll leave them there.
- Keep your cats and dogs leashed or inside.
- Fledglings have parents—they are just hiding from you.
- Only seek help if it is obviously orphaned, is bleeding or has bones sticking out.
- If you do need the help of a rehabilitator, call your local DEC office and they will share a list of names and numbers with you. Understand that your idea of a "gift" is really just more work for the rehabilitator—do say thank you.
- If you must "catch" something to bring it to a rehabilitator—wear gloves, put it in a box, keep it quiet, and do not attempt to give food or water!

- Amy Freiman

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## NYSOA Members Offered Discount on BNA Subscription!

**N**ew York State Ornithological Association is pleased to offer to its individual members a discounted price of \$25 annually (regular price is \$40 annually) for a subscription to the online version of the Birds of North America <<http://bna.birds.cornell.edu>>. For further information and instructions, please contact:

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NYSOA Website:  
<http://www.nybirds.org>

## High Peaks Audubon Society, Inc. July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2005 Accomplishments

The 2004-2005 year for High Peaks Audubon Society (HPAS) was very productive. Accomplishments for each committee are listed below following a few highlights.

HPAS continues to have mutually beneficial relationship with the New York State Adirondack Park Agency's Visitor Interpretive Centers (VIC) at Newcomb and Paul Smiths. Member programs and meetings were held at the VICs. Most of the HPAS bird walks were jointly sponsored with the VICs.

HPAS once again co-sponsored the annual "Adirondack Birding Celebration" held June 2 -5, 2005 with the Adirondack Park Agency's Visitor Interpretive Center at Paul Smiths and the Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce. HPAS organized and led the field trips.

This year, HPAS assisted the Hamilton County Tourism Office to organize the first annual "Adirondack Birding Festival" on June 17 - 19, 2005. This was a decentralized Festival with speakers, workshops, and field trips held throughout Hamilton County. The Festival was a great success with attendees that traveled from all over the United States. HPAS assisted with speakers, workshops, and leading bird walks and canoe trips.

The project to build a viewing platform at Wickham Marsh on Lake Champlain continues to move ahead. HPAS, Audubon NY, and The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) are working jointly to see the viewing tower erected. The DEC has a grant for \$10,000 worth of labor, and Curtis Lumber is offering the price for lumber at a steep discount. Audubon NY will seek funding at the state level for the lumber. Wickham Marsh is part of the "Lake Champlain Birding Trail" that spans both the New York and Vermont sides of the lake. A new viewing platform at Wickham Marsh for birding and wildlife viewing will be a great addition to the New York side of the lake. Thanks to John Thaxton for all his efforts on this project!

HPAS was featured on two different Television shows this past year! Pat and John Thaxton, HPAS board members, were featured on Channel 5 News out of Plattsburgh. The news segment featured the Great Backyard Bird Count citizen science project and featured an interview of Pat and John at their bird feeders in Keene Valley. "Adirondack Outdoors", a PBS TV show, also out of Plattsburgh, featured Joan Collins, President of HPAS, on a show dedicated to birding. Joan led the TV crew on a hike of the Northville-Placid Trail South in Long Lake through boreal habitat. Interviews were conducted all along the trail with discussions of habitat, birds, birding, and in particular, the threats to Bicknell's Thrush.

HPAS assisted the New York State Department of

Environmental Conservation (DEC) with their "Hudson River Birding Trail" project. Joan Collins and Amy Freiman traveled to Glens Falls for an all day session on the project sponsored by the DEC and Ghostwriters Inc. Important birding trails along the Hudson River in our HPAS territory (in both Essex and Hamilton Counties) were identified and descriptions of the trails were sent to the DEC for inclusion on the new birding map.

In the fall, at the Audubon Council of New York State meeting, Joan Collins received the first annual *Norman Stotz Award For Outstanding Chapter Leadership*. The award was reflective of the outstanding work by the wonderful HPAS Board of Directors.

Here are the committee highlights from the past year:

### I. Conservation

- HPAS participated in the Boquet River Association's "BioBlitz" along the Boquet River. Our chapter identified bird species for the wildlife inventory. Joan Collins camped at the site, and during the 24-hour survey period, she identified forty-five species along the one-mile survey area.
- Citizen Science opportunities continue to be highlighted by HPAS:
  1. Adirondack Cooperative Loon Program's Annual Loon Census
  2. eBird
  3. Christmas Bird Counts
  4. Vermont Institute of Natural Science's Mountain Birdwatch
  5. North American Breeding Bird Survey
  6. Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program's many activities
  7. National Audubon's Great Backyard Bird Count (with a Channel 5 News segment as described above)

### Articles on the following topics appeared in the High Peaks Audubon Newsletter over the last year:

- Global Climate Change Effects on Bicknell's Thrush habitat
- Four Brothers Islands Great-crested Cormorant Update
- Audubon's State of the Birds Report
- One in Three Amphibians Nearing Extinction
- Audubon Turns 100!
- Boreal is for the Birds
- IBA articles
- New Bluebird Trail in Newcomb
- Bicknell's Thrush Decline
- Spruce Grouse Sightings Needed
- Articles on the Citizen Science projects listed above

### II. Education

- HPAS sponsored an essay contest for NYS DEC's Pack Forest. Woody Cyr of Warrensburg was the winner. Thanks to Ellen Rathbone for her work on the contest.
- Audubon Adventure materials were donated to Saranac Central School by Janet Mihuc.
- Project Feederwatch materials were donated to

Newcomb Central School by Amy Freiman.

- Participation in the Boquet River Association's BioBlitz, designed to educate the public on the wildlife along the Boquet River.
- Joan Collins presented an Eastern Bluebird PowerPoint slide show to the 7<sup>th</sup> grade at Long Lake Central School.
- Amy Freiman and Ellen Rathbone worked with the Town of Newcomb, Newcomb Central School's Technology teacher, and the Adirondack Park Agency's Visitor Interpretive Center at Newcomb, on a project to create a bluebird trail along the new golf course in Newcomb. Ellen supplied the plans, the Town supplied the wood, and the students built the bluebird houses. HPAS continues to monitor the boxes.
- Joan Collins and Amy Freiman led a bird walk at Bloomingdale Bog for the Ornithology Course students at Paul Smith's College.

### III. Field Trips

This past year, thirty-six field trips were held year-round, including several snowshoe bird walks. HPAS once again organized and led the field trips for the Adirondack Birding Celebration. HPAS also helped organize and lead field trips for the first annual Adirondack Birding Festival in Hamilton County. Many of our outings were canoe trips. Over 600 people participated in the bird walks/canoes. Makeup of the attendees was a mix of year-round residents, summer residents, vacationers, and Festival attendees. Many of our field trips were jointly sponsored with the Adirondack Park Agency's Visitor Interpretive Centers at Newcomb and Paul Smiths.

### IV. Finance

- The beginning balance on July 1, 2004 was \$2,352.63, and the ending balance on June 30, 2005 was \$5707.43. Thanks to Amy Freiman, HPAS Treasurer, for all her work!
- **Fund-Raising:**
- A fund-raiser offer of a two-night stay at the Wawbeek on Upper Saranac Lake for two is underway for our annual meeting in July. Thanks to Charlotte Demers for her work on the annual raffle.
- Membership renewal letters were sent out to all members. Four categories of membership were listed. Donations go toward the cost of the quarterly newsletter. Thanks to Pat Thaxton, Membership Chair, for sending out renewal letters.
- Donations were received for Audubon Calendars, *North American Reference Book* CDs, *Birds of Clinton County*, and *Birds of Essex County, New York*.
- A grant of \$250 was received from Stewart's Shops. Thanks to John Thaxton for his work on this grant.

### V. Membership

HPAS has a total of 444 members. National Audubon members make up 278, and HPAS Chapter-only members total 116, with 50 complimentary memberships. We are very thankful to the many chapter members that renewed or joined at a higher category. Thanks to Pat Thaxton,

Membership Chair, for keeping the membership database updated.

### VI. Nominating

The three-member committee nominated twelve people to our HPAS Board of Directors for 2005-2006. Eight board members returned, three retired after reaching the upper limit of four years of service, and four board members are new. The new slate of officers/directors was voted in at the June member meeting.

### VII. Programs

Fifteen speaker programs were held last year.

### VIII. Publications

Six newsletters were sent to members last year (bimonthly issues). A total of 60 pages were published. Feedback received from members about our newsletters - in person, by phone, and by email, has been overwhelmingly positive. This coming year, HPAS will send quarterly newsletter issues.

### IX. Publicity

- Member programs are publicized in the HPAS Newsletter, on the HPAS website, in newspapers, on the Northern NY Birds list serve, and on public radio. Programs held at the VICs are also publicized in the VIC Newsletter.
- Field Trips are publicized in the HPAS Newsletter, on the HPAS website, on the Audubon NY website, on the Northern NY Birds list serve, and in the VIC newsletter.

### X. Social

- Refreshments are served at all member program meetings!
- The HPAS Annual Meeting and Picnic was held at the Paul Smith's VIC pavilion. The all-day event started with a 7 a.m. seven-mile canoe trip on the Osgood River, picnic/meeting at the Pavilion, and an afternoon butterfly/moth presentation at the VIC.
- The "Adirondack Birding Celebration" and the "Adirondack Birding Festival" June weekends were wonderful events that brought together birders of our north country.

### XI. Website

HPAS maintains a website at [www.highpeaksaudubon.com](http://www.highpeaksaudubon.com). The HPAS Newsletter Editor works with Dana Rohleder, Web Master, to keep the site updated with all our events. Reminders about HPAS events are also sent out to the Northern NY Birds computer list serve that has 370 members. (Our Web Master is also the Moderator of the list serve.) Maps to popular birding areas in the Adirondacks can be accessed on our website also. Thanks to Dana Rohleder for all his work on the web site!

Respectfully submitted,  
Joan Collins Past-President, High Peaks Audubon Society, Inc.

## Poetry Corner

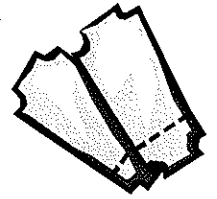
### The Exposed Nest

You were forever finding some new play.  
So when I saw you down on hands and knees  
In the meadow, busy with the new-cut hay,  
Trying, I thought, to set it up on end,  
I went to show you how to make it stay,  
If that was your idea, against the breeze,  
And, if you asked me, even help pretend  
To make it root again and grow afresh.  
But 'twas no make-believe with you to-day,  
Nor was the grass itself your real concern,  
Though I found your hand full of wilted fern,  
Steel-bright June-grass, and blackening heads of clover.  
'Twas a nest full of young birds on the ground  
The cutter-bar had just gone champing over  
(Miraculously without tasting flesh)  
And left defenseless to the heat and light.  
You wanted to restore them to their right  
Of something interposed between their sight  
And too much world at once--could means be found.  
The way the nest-full every time we stirred  
Stood up to us as to a mother-bird  
Whose coming home has been too long deferred,  
Made me ask would the mother-bird return  
And care for them in such a change of scene  
And might our meddling make her more afraid.  
That was a thing we could not wait to learn.  
We saw the risk we took in doing good,  
But dared not spare to do the best we could  
Though harm should come of it; so built the screen  
You had begun, and gave them back their shade.  
All this to prove we cared. Why is there then  
No more to tell? We turned to other things.  
I haven't any memory--have you?--  
Of ever coming to the place again  
To see if the birds lived the first night through,  
And so at last to learn to use their wings.

*-Robert Frost (written in 1916)*

## Raffle Winner!

**J**anet Stein, of Lake Placid, was this year's lucky winner of the annual raffle prize. Janet won a two-night stay at the Wawbeek on Upper Saranac Lake!!! Congratulations to Janet Stein!



## Help Sponsor a Classroom!

**I**f you would like to help young people learn more about birds, there are a couple of wonderful programs you could sponsor. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's "Project Feederwatch" allows classrooms to monitor feeder birds from November through April. The Lab collects useful data, and the students learn more about birds. The cost is \$15 or \$12 for Lab Members. National Audubon's "Audubon Adventures" is a classroom kit filled with information on birds and habitats that is geared for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The cost per classroom is \$41.50. To learn more about these programs, or to place an order for a classroom, contact Ellen Rathbone, HPAS Education Chair, at (518) 582-4198 or [ADKVICRathbone@yahoo.com](mailto:ADKVICRathbone@yahoo.com). Thank you!

## A Few Rare Sightings

- Adult **Golden Eagle** – 5/18/05 Long Lake by Joan Collins (Another July report from the Adirondack LOJ road of a Golden Eagle (unknown age) reported to Robert Hagar.)
- **Sandhill Crane** pair – 5/17/05 Tupper Lake by Spruce Grouse research team; another report of a pair on 6/7/05 from Gabriels with photographs.
- Adult male **White-winged Scoter** – 6/18/05 Little Tupper Lake by Matt Medler; another report of an adult male on 7/16/05 on Long Lake by Joan Collins; another report of an adult male on Little Tupper Lake from 7/18/05 through 7/20/05 by the Spruce Grouse research team.



## Book Review

### *Birds of New York State*

By Robert E. Budliger & Gregory Kennedy et al.  
Lone Pine Publishing 2005, 384 pp.

*Editor's Note: This book review appeared on the Northern New York Birds List Serve, and it is reprinted in our Newsletter with permission from Dana Rohleder.*

I just thought I'd give you my impressions of the new field guide, *Birds of New York State* (BONYS) written by Budliger & Kennedy. A few other members have commented on it, but not in a lot of detail. It is true field guide dedicated strictly to birds that are likely to be seen in New York State - not necessarily breeders or common birds. It includes roughly 350 species, with an entire page dedicated to each species.

The first few pages are something quite welcome in a field guide - a brief Table of Contents immediately followed by a GREAT Reference Guide that has illustrations of virtually every species crammed very neatly into 12 pages broken down into rough taxonomic orders/families... These pages include: under the picture common name, the size, and the page number. This is very similar to the way Sibley did his Family plates at the beginning of each section, but instead, all placed in the front of the book - much more convenient for a beginner that doesn't know where to look in a field guide. The sections are then color coded to match the page "tabs" for quick field location.

The Introduction is similar to most of the newer guides, with the addition of major birding areas and Top 100 Hotspots Birding Sites with a locator map showing major ecological zones within the state.

Species accounts are quite detailed with excellent, plain-language descriptions and "Best Sites" section to help narrow your search, as well as perfunctory range maps. Typically, one or two large, painted illustrations for each species (usually male/female) and many species have some smaller illustrations of the bird in flight. The illustrations are superb and color quite accurate and natural, which was one of my few complaints with Sibley's guides that make the bird a little too "cartoon-ish". My biggest criticism of the plates in this guide is that they were not all painted by the same person. Accordingly, from plate-to-plate and species-to-species, there are rather pronounced style differences in the illustrations. One illustrator favors smooth, soft feathering, and another prefers almost to tease the feathers out for a roughed-up appearance - like the bird just emerged from a vacuum cleaner. Both are quite attractive, but I favor the former, because that is typically the way a bird looks in the field at even a slight distance. But my complaint is that if you are trying to distinguish very similar species, such as Acadian and Alder Flycatchers, the illustrations make them appear very different, even though we know the differences are slight. But I can find few faults with the accuracy of either style - each has their own merits.

The species text I feel was reminiscent of Peterson's early field guides, but more elaborate. Interesting and informative bits of bird-lore and natural history makes reading the book from cover-to-cover an enlightening and entertaining endeavor.

The end of the book contains a glossary, checklist, and both scientific and common-name indices. The back cover includes yet another, more condensed, color coded & tab indexed "Quick Guide" with page numbers - yet another outstanding feature.

Although positioned as a state field guide, I would say it would adequately cover the northeast, with the exception of some regional specialties. I don't believe I have ever seen a regional field guide that even comes close to this volume and I would like to see a guide in the same format for North America. For \$21.95, it is an outstanding bargain!

- Dana C. Rohleder

*Editor's Note: "Birds of New York State" is offered on Amazon.com for \$14.93!*

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## October Board Meeting

The October Board of Directors meeting will be held on Saturday, October 1, 2005 from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Paul Smith's VIC prior to the 11 a.m. presentation by Michale Glennon on the "Wildlife Conservation Society's Boreal Birds Project". Members are welcome.

### Become A Member of HPAS Just \$15 a year

Benefits include: quarterly newsletter, program meetings, field trips, Great Adirondack Birding Festival, CBCs and more...

Make Check Payable to High Peaks Audubon Society, Inc. and mail to:

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## Trail Spotlight: Northville-Placid Trail S in Long Lake

**Location:** From the intersection of Routes 28 & 30 in Long Lake, drive 1.5 miles on Route 28N (toward Newcomb) to the Northville-Placid Trailhead parking area on the right.

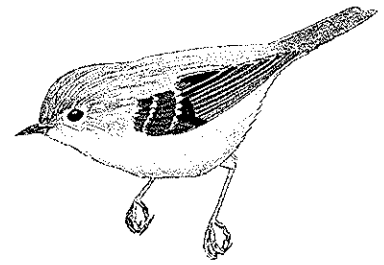
**Section of Trail Described:** 1.2 miles (2.4 round trip)

**Elevation:** Approximately 1800 feet

**T**he Northville-Placid Trail is over 130 miles long, beginning in Northville and ending in Lake Placid. The section of trail spotlighted in this article is in northern Hamilton County in the Town of Long Lake.

The Northville-Placid Trail South in Long Lake is a lovely trail that travels through boreal habitat for the first half-mile. There are both mature and young spruce-fir trees, and a carpet of sphagnum moss. Much of this section has raised wooden walkways to avoid wet areas. There is a marsh/bog about 1/3 of a mile down the trail with a short herd path leading to open views of a brook and marsh area. Some of the many species found along this section include: Black-backed and Pileated Woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied and Alder Flycatchers, Common Raven, Boreal Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Tennessee and Nashville Warblers, Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, and Bay-breasted Warbler, Swamp Sparrow, Purple Finch, and Evening Grosbeak.

At the half-mile mark, the trail leads uphill and the habitat change is abrupt! Mixed woodlands dominate the second half of this section with the sphagnum carpet turning to dirt ground. There is a transition from mostly coniferous to mostly deciduous along this section that ends at a dirt road intersection. Some of the species found along this next half-mile include: Broad-winged Hawk, Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, and Blackburnian Warblers, and Scarlet Tanager.



*Ruby-crowned Kinglet by George West*

There are currently 103 species recorded for the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas Block at this location.

In winter, the trail is a cross-country ski route. Two years ago, the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation created a ski loop trail off the main N-P Trail. The ski trail is called the "Five Brook Ski Trail". Coupled with the N-P Trail, the entire route is 5 miles round trip. The ski trail has been popular, and most of the time the trail has a good set of ski tracks.

*- Joan Collins*

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