

Volume 50, Issue I

# Northern New York Audubon

March - May 2022 Newsletter



Dear friend of Northern NY Audubon,

Over a year of hard work paid off on December 11, 2021 when we officially released Spruce Tip IPA, our collaborative beer with Raquette River Brewing.

Developed in honor of bringing more awareness to our local endangered population of Spruce Grouse, this West Coast style IPA brewed with spruce tips was a big hit with NNYA members and local beer lovers alike.

In addition to enjoying an amazing craft brew, attendees had the opportunity to donate to NNYA through the purchase of raffle tickets for one of four prize baskets (worth over \$300 each), Spruce Tip IPA logo t-shirts, NNYA branded hats, and NNYA memberships.

In all, NNYA raised over \$3,000 from this amazing event. This includes two generous donations from Raquette River Brewing: one for \$800 from the sales of Spruce Tip IPA, the other for the purchase of multiple Spruce Grouse shirts for their staff.

We want to extend a huge thank you to Raquette River Brewing for producing an amazing craft brew, Dorothy Funderwhite for designing the logo, National Audubon for providing grant funding for the production for our t-shirts, and every member of the community that came out to support Northern NY Audubon.



Northern New York Audubon is dedicated to conserving and restoring natural ecosystems in the Adirondacks, focusing on habitat of particular importance to birds, other wildlife, humanity, and the Earth's biological diversity as a whole. As one of National Audubon's 27 local chapters in New York, NNYA's mission is "to promote the protection and proper management of birds, wildlife, and the fragile ecosystems throughout Northern New York."

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# News

## Northern New York Audubon Online

### Donations and memberships

Renewing memberships and donations can be done online!

In the spirit of all-things-virtual, we've added online membership to our site. Here, you'll be able to become a member, make a donation, and order a cool hat.

We now have two hat colors available: grey and khaki.

Visit the site at: <https://nnya.square.site/>

### Spruce Tip IPA shirts

If you didn't get a chance to get a Spruce Tip IPA shirt at Raquette River Brewing, good news! Shirts are now available online via Loreman's Embroidery, Engraving & Screenprinting. Order yours today and have it delivered to your door!

Visit the site at: <https://artshop.loremans.com/nnya/shop/home>



## Newsletters

It is no secret that we feel strongly about the environment. If you receive a paper newsletter and would like to reduce your environmental impact, please feel free to contact us at [nnya@nnya.org](mailto:nnya@nnya.org) and let us know you'd like to update your newsletter preference to email. Together we can all make a difference.

## Calling All Volunteers!

Do you have a passion for birds and habitat conservation? Are you interested in newsletter design? We are looking for dedicated volunteers to help further our mission. If you are interested in helping elevate the NNYA message and contribute to our work, please email [nnya@nnya.org](mailto:nnya@nnya.org) and let us know.

### Contact Information

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### Northern New York Audubon Executive Board

Catherine Smith - Co President

Janet Mihuc - Co President

Shelly Cihan - Vice President

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Kristel Guimara - Secretary

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Mar Bodine

Joan Collins

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Hyla Howe

Tom Langen

Betsy Miner

John Thaxton (Director Emeritus)

Pat Thaxton (Director Emeritus)

Janelle Jones - Newsletter Editor

Whether you're near or far, stay connected with us virtually! Like us on Facebook

([www.Facebook.com/NNYAudubon](http://www.Facebook.com/NNYAudubon))

to keep up-to-date on future events, outings, local bird news, and information from the greater birding community.

# Northern New York Audubon Cullman Conservation Grants - Now Accepting Applications!

Do you have a project that will benefit birds and their habitats in Northern New York? Learn how a Cullman Conservation Grant can help your project take off!

Northern New York Audubon's mission is to promote the protection and proper management of birds, wildlife, and the fragile ecosystems throughout Northern New York. Since 2008, the generosity of the Cullman Foundation, with additional support for Northern New York Audubon (NNYA), has made it possible for NNYA to distribute funding for projects beneficial to bird species or promoting the enjoyment of birds occurring in the Adirondack Mountains, Lake Champlain Valley, and St. Lawrence River Valleys of northeastern New York State. Cullman Grants support research on the natural history and conservation of birds in northeastern New York, and education and outreach activities that increase public awareness and appreciation of birds and their habitat. Graduate students, researchers, teachers, environmental educators, environmental organizations, and citizen-science program leaders are encouraged to apply for Cullman Grants.

Eligibility includes, but is not limited to, environmental organizations, teachers, graduate students, and research project managers.

For more information, to apply, and to see past winners, please visit [www.nnya.org/cullman-grants](http://www.nnya.org/cullman-grants).

Applications are due by March 15, 2022.



## **Background information:**

Joseph and Joan Cullman owned the Kildare Club just north of Tupper Lake and loved the Adirondacks with a respect bordering on reverence. The chairman of Phillip Morris, Inc. from 1957-1970, Joseph F. Cullman 3rd believed that a capitalistic, democratic society depends in many ways on its citizens' dedication to philanthropy. An admirer of Teddy Roosevelt, Joseph Cullman took great pride in his work as a conservationist. The range and magnitude of his generosity to conservation causes boggles the mind. He helped start the World Wildlife Fund and The Atlantic Salmon Federation. A hunter who went on an African safari nearly every year, he co-founded Conservation Force, an organization in Tanzania that has built 26 schools, 6 medical dispensaries and operates anti-poaching teams to protect elephants and other wildlife. He endowed the Joseph F. Cullman Library of Natural History at the Smithsonian as well as the Joseph F. Cullman 3rd Professorship in Wildlife, Ecology and Biodiversity at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. He contributed handsomely to The Museum of Modern Art, The Whitney Museum of Art, The Jewish Museum, American Public Television, New York City Council on the Environment, The Committee to Protect Journalists, Women's Sports Foundation, New York City Audubon Society, The Neurosciences Institute at Rockefeller University, the New York Restoration, The New 42nd Street – the list goes on and on.



# Hog Island Audubon Camp Educator Scholarship

Northern New York Audubon is offering a scholarship for one educator in our area to attend a session at Hog Island Audubon Camp in Bremen, Maine. The session runs July 17-22, 2022, and is titled Sharing Nature: An Educator's Week.

The following is the description of the course from the Hog Island website:

Learn practical approaches and add inspiration to your environmental education curriculum during this action-packed program. Our experienced and enthusiastic instructors share their favorite approaches, methods, and activities for engaging both children and adults with nature.

Workshops using techniques in art, music, theater, journaling, and other disciplines will be presented. Participate in a host of classic Audubon Camp field trips, including a boat trip around the restored Atlantic Puffin and Tern colony on Eastern Egg Rock, intertidal explorations, and hiking through Hog Island's unspoiled spruce-fir forest. In a beautiful outdoor setting, these experiences provide a wonderful opportunity to learn new methods of teaching to bring home to your students. We'll explore citizen science, create inquiry-based lessons on birds and other topics, and demonstrate low and high-tech methods of teaching.

Northern New York Audubon recognizes the importance of inspiring our youth and this opportunity helps us fulfill our goal of connecting them with the important role birds play in our communities. We are looking for a passionate educator that shares our goal.

If you have any questions please email [nnya@nnya.org](mailto:nnya@nnya.org) and someone will get back to you. You may also contact Hog Island directly if it is related to camp or the program.

Applications are due by March 13, 2022 and can be emailed to [nnya@nnya.org](mailto:nnya@nnya.org).

We look forward to hearing from you.



# 16th Annual Hamilton County Birding Festival

June 9 - 12, 2022

Registration opens May 7, 2022

The Hamilton County Department of Tourism and Audubon NY welcome you this June for the 16th Annual Adirondack Birding Festival. The three-day Festival features birding hikes, walks, safaris, outings, and seminars throughout Hamilton County and the central Adirondacks. All field trips are free, but registration is required for each outdoor event.

A full schedule of events is available at [www.AdirondackBirds.com](http://www.AdirondackBirds.com).



A big thank you to Larry Master for all the wonderful photos!

# Spring Field Trips

## Spring Waterfowl at Ausable Point WMA

Friday, April 15, 2022

**Meeting Time:** 9:00 a.m.

**Meeting Location:** Ausable Point Wildlife Management Area, Fisherman's Parking Lot

**Bring:** Binoculars or a scope (if participants have them).

**To Register:** Please email [derek.rogers@adirondacklandtrust.org](mailto:derek.rogers@adirondacklandtrust.org) (trip is limited to 10 spaces).

**Brief Description:** Join Champlain Valley birders Stacy Robinson and Derek Rogers, Stewardship Manager at the Adirondack Land Trust, in search of spring waterfowl at Ausable Point Wildlife Management Area in Peru. Ausable Point can be a great place to bird in April, as waterfowl congregate in preparation for their final journey to their northern breeding areas.

## Lake Alice Wildlife Management Area

Friday, May 27, 2022

**Meeting Time:** 8 a.m.

**Meeting Location:** Main parking area on Ridge Road

**Bring:** snacks, water, insect repellent, sunscreen

**To Register:** Group size limited to 15. Email [kenneth.adams@plattsburgh.edu](mailto:kenneth.adams@plattsburgh.edu) or call (518) 569-2855

**Brief Description:** William H. Miner returned to Chazy in 1903 to establish Heart's Delight Farm. He had a dam constructed on Tracy Brook to supply water and hydropower for the expanding farm. He named the newly-constructed lake "Lake Alice" after his wife. The hydropower infrastructure started generating electricity for the Farm during 1907-08. The W.H. Miner Foundation sold the Lake Alice property to New York State. The 1450+ acre Lake Alice Wildlife Management Area (LAWMA) is comprised of a wide variety of habitats including open water (75 acres), marsh (125 acres), field (200 acres), shrub-meadow (100 acres), and mixed forest (950 acres). Also, there are at least 13 potholes in the Management Area. Lake Alice Wildlife Management Area is one of the Clinton County top hotspots; nearly 150 bird species have been recorded on the eBird list for LAWMA. Birders of all experience levels are welcome.

## Explore Lake Adirondack From Behind

Sunday, May 29, 2022

**Meeting Time:** 7 a.m. The trip will go until 10 a.m.

**Meeting Location:** Indian Lake Town Hall, Route 28 and Pelon Road. It is a short drive to the path.

**Bring:** waterproof footwear, rugged clothing (path is narrow in spots), bug spray, sunscreen, snacks, water, medications

**To Register:** Group size limited to 8. Email [mjmoccio@gmail.com](mailto:mjmoccio@gmail.com)

**Brief Description:** This lake in Indian Lake seems inaccessible when viewing from Route 28; many houses line the shoreline. Explore a relatively unknown path behind the Lake. The trail winds along the back edge of the lake with forest on one side, and a marshy and boggy part on the other. Expect to find birds in both habitats: warblers, vireos, thrushes, sparrows. This is a prime location for nesting Broad-winged Hawks and Common Loons. Approximately 3-miles round trip.



# Learn About Neonics and Take Action

*[Re-printed with permission from Saw Mill River Audubon newsletter articles by SMRA Board Member Jennifer Stern]*

**New York may become the first U.S. state to regulate neonicotinoids (“neonics”)**, a pesticide once hailed as agriculture’s best hope but now recognized to pose severe threats to wild- life, especially bees and birds.

Created to mimic the effect of nicotine on insect nervous systems (but be relatively nontoxic to vertebrates), these chemicals are often used in the form of seed coatings, especially of corn and soybean. Some applications are beneficial: they are used to control the hemlock- killing woolly adelgid (through trunk injections) and are extremely effective in orchards.

**Neonicotinoids have most notoriously been implicated in honeybee colony collapse but are equally dangerous to native bees.** Recent studies have also strongly implicated neonics in bird population declines. A 2013 literature review by the American Bird Conservancy found ubiquitous neonics “can emaciate the birds, impair reproduction, and disrupt their migratory path- ways” by significantly reducing insect food sources. Other studies have found possible direct health problems in birds and mammals who have inadvertently consumed the chemicals.

**Highly water soluble, these chemicals spread to all parts of a plant and are now found throughout our environment,** distributed through seed spillage, leached into soil and water- ways, and blown into the air. They are found in many of our foods (a 2015 study found them in 90 percent of food samples from Congressional dining halls), and threats to human health are suspected.

**Fortunately, public education about the dangers of neonics has had an impact.** As a result of bad publicity, Home Depot and Lowe’s have discontinued their use in almost all plants for sale. Keep reading plant labels to be sure.

The proposed law, called the “Birds and Bees Protection Act,” (A7429/S699B), passed the state Senate this past June but stalled in committee in the Assembly. This bill would claim the state’s ability to regulate pesticide seed coatings: planting coated seeds is not now considered “pesticide use.”

- by July 1, 2023, ban the use on outdoor ornamental plants and turf of the five neonics under consideration (unless state authorities determine they are needed to control invasive species);
- by Jan. 1, 2024, ban the sale, distribution, or purchase of corn, soybean, or wheat seeds treated with these chemicals (with exceptions); and
- by Jan. 1, 2023, require the state Department of Environmental Conservation to conduct a study to identify alternatives to the use of these pesticides.

Bird lovers can take action by contacting your state Senators and state Assembly members regarding the legislation.

**Read labels and don’t buy or use neonics.**

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