



Orange Feather

Spring 2022



Welcome to the Spring 2022 Orange Feather!

This newsletter includes detailed reports from seventeen recent Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club trips, plus two major annual bird counts. During these events, club members cumulatively observed more than 30,000 birds and over 170 species.

Also included is a detailed list of twenty-five upcoming Mearns birding trips scheduled for March - Sept. 2022.

Thank you to all of the trip and count leaders for managing these impressive and educational outings!

Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club

Website: <http://mearnsbirdclub.org/>

Groups.io: <https://groups.io/g/MearnsBirdClub/>

Email: mearnsbirdclub@gmail.com

Cover Photo: Mountain Bluebird, Esopus Meadows Preserve, Ulster County NY, by Joyce Depew

All photographs and other provided content are the property of the club member indicated.

Board of Directors

Kathleen Ashman, President
Joyce Depew, Vice President
Linda Strohl, Treasurer
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Volunteers

Bob Slechta, Chair of Outings
Karen Miller, Christmas Count Coordinator
Don Aitchison, Program Chair
Della Wells, Membership Chair
Rich VanTieghem, Newsletter Editor

Welcome to our newest members!

- Theodore Anderson, Chappaqua, NY
- Mark Williams and Lynn Crevling, Washingtonville, NY
- Elise and Patrick Hagan, West Point NY
- Anne Swaim, Chappaqua, NY
- Kathy and Bob Wilson, Newton, NJ
- Alex Rabb and Anne Lessy, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY
- Jim Schlickerrieder, Butler, NJ
- Chuck and Nancy Thomas, Newburgh, NY

We look forward to getting to know all of you in the coming months while out in the field and at our interesting club meetings.

2022 Membership Dues

Mail a check – made payable to E. A. Mearns Bird Club – to the club treasurer:
Linda Strohl, 8 Park Road, Salisbury Mills, NY 12577. Annual dues are \$20 for an individual membership, \$30 for a family membership, and \$8 for a student membership.

2021 Financial Report – by Linda Strohl

Beginning Balance – January 1, 2021	\$ 3,105.57
2021 Income	
Dues, donations, interest and sales of club items	\$ 1,188.09
Subtotal	\$ 4,293.66
2021 Expenses	
Printing of Orange Feathers (Feb. \$387.67, Aug. \$111.37)	(\$ 499.04)
Postage	(\$ 64.80)
State Farm Insurance	(\$ 477.97)
NYSOA	(\$ 50.00)
New York State Young Birders Club	(\$ 25.00)
Club Plaque at Grasslands NWR	(\$ 25.00)
Speaker Fees/Donations Friends of the Wallkill River NWR, Saw Mill River Audubon	(\$ 250.00)
Total 2021 Expenses	(\$ 1,391.81)
Ending Balance in Checking Account	\$ 268.56
Ending Balance in Savings Account	\$ 2,633.29
Ending Balance – December 31, 2021	\$ 2,901.85

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – August 21, 2021
Owens Station Crossing to Liberty Marsh and Oil City Rd. Platform,
Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge

Trip Leader: Joyce Depew

This trip was originally plagued with uncertainty a few weeks earlier with the knowledge that Owens Station and Liberty Marsh trails were closed by the NJ Department of Health due to Jamestown Canyon virus being discovered in mosquitoes there. Thankfully, after spraying for control of these insects, the area reopened in time for our first outing as we approach fall migration. The day was humid but not extremely warm, but lighting made identification difficult at times.

At the start we were greeted by a convergence of approximately 200 Tree Swallows, which were joined by smatterings of other swallow species: Bank Swallow, Barn Swallows, and Northern Rough-winged Swallows. These birds lined up on power lines and perched on the large shed in the parking lot of Owens Station. In a tree nearby were a group of Purple Martins, which were identified by Barry. Later, as we headed toward the marsh, a Little Blue Heron was located on the Sussex County, NJ, side today along with 15 Great Egrets. On the NY side we had 2 Wilson's Snipes and an American Kestrel, which were located by Bob. We had 9 eager participants: J. Trapani, B. Thomascall, B. Slechta, Zenon, C. Weiss, E. McKnight, L. Strohl, B. Babcock, D. Aitchison. Total count for trip: 37 species. The listings below are shown by county and state. Species seen in both areas are listed once under NY (with NJ indicated if found in both areas).

From Owens Station to Berm of Liberty Marsh, Sussex County, NJ: Wood Duck (NY), Blue-winged Teal, Mallard (NY), Mourning Dove, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Common Gallinule (NY), Spotted Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs (NY), Great Blue Heron (NY), Great Egret, Little Blue Heron, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Gray Catbird, Cedar Waxwing, American Goldfinch (NY), Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

Oil City Rd. Platform, Orange County, NY: 16 species. The following were found only in NY (not included on NJ listing): Pied-billed Grebe, Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe, Least Sandpiper, Green Heron, Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, American Kestrel, American Crow, Pileated Woodpecker.

TRIP PHOTOS:



Tree Swallows by Joyce Depew



Wilson's Snipe by Joyce Depew



American Goldfinch
by Joyce Depew

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – August 28, 2021
Black Dirt Region, Orange County, NY

Trip Leader: Karen Miller

Weather: Cloudy, no rain; 70 degrees at end time.

With 16 birders coming together for this first Black Dirt trip in months, it was obvious to me that our Mearnsers were happy to get together again and head for a morning of birding.

Following eBird's most recent local reports, we started at Pine Island Turf Nursery. As we drove down the road, we were greeted by a Sandhill Crane family of three birds. They were very confiding and stayed with us for nearly two hours, before they picked up and flew off the farm. Hanging in the back of the field were several shorebirds, which took some time to identify because of the distance. Included were Killdeer, Solitary Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpipers, Semipalmated Plovers, and one bird that the group could not come to consensus on. As frustrating as that was, we left with 17 species for the Pine Island Turf Nursery.

Skinner's Lane was next on the agenda and brought us 17 species. A stop along the creek gave us lots of time to evaluate, question, and discuss the species of several flycatchers in front of us.

Our last stop was Lynch Avenue, where some mature sunflowers provided plenty of nutrition for American Goldfinches, Indigo Buntings, sparrows, and other birds. It was fun to be in a spot where there were a lot of birds, not just small numbers.

Over lunch we evaluated our birding results and were pleased to see a total of 42 species for the morning. Thank you to everyone who joined us as we explored the Black Dirt Region again.

TRIP PHOTO:



Sandhill Cranes by Karen Miller

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – September 5, 2021

Pop-up Trip to Black Dirt Region, Orange County, NY

Trip Leader: Bob Slechta

The day was overcast with the threat of rain. Even so, four Mearnsers showed up for this short-notice pop-up trip. Our route today was Skinners Lane – Indiana Road – Pine Island Turf Nursery – Mission Land Road – Oil City Road – and a quick stop at Winding Waters Trail.

The reason for this trip was all the ponding on the fields thanks to Hurricane Ida – which dumped lots of rain three days prior, making it attractive for shorebirds, of which we saw plenty – some too far off, but others nice and close. “Dickie” birds on the other hand were scarce today, which kept our tally down to 35 species.

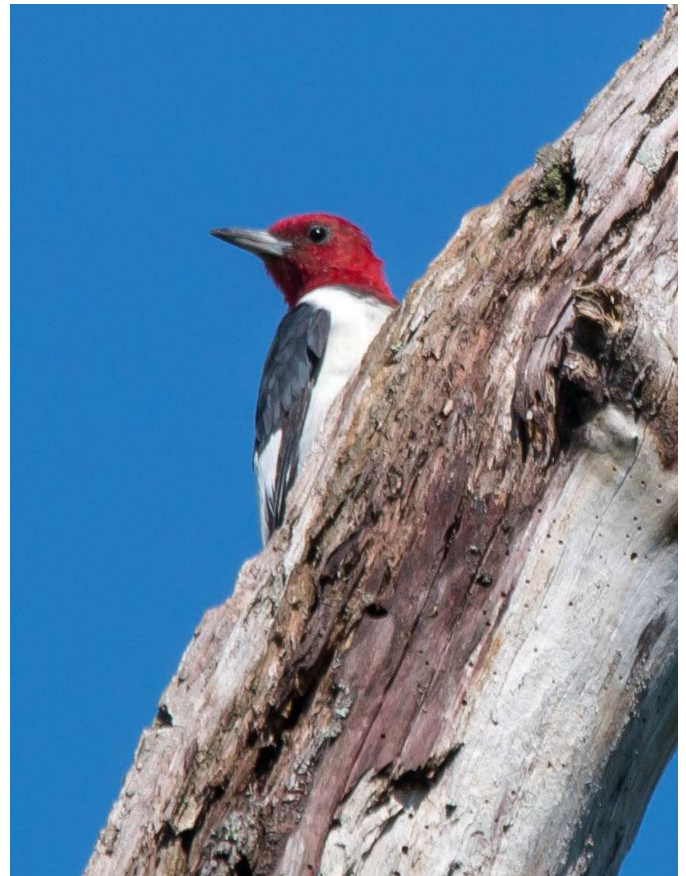
Notable sightings for our trip were – Wild Turkey, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer (40+), Baird’s Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Northern Harrier, American Kestrel (10), Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Savannah Sparrow, and Bobolink.

It turned out to be a great way to spend this gloomy holiday weekend day! – Bob

PHOTO GALLERY



Juvenile Screech Owl at Bashakill WMA
by Joyce Depew



Red-headed Woodpecker, Ulster County, NY,
by Bill Fiero

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – September 11, 2021
Hudson Highlands Nature Museum (Kenridge Farm), Cornwall, NY

Trip Leader: Jeff Goulding

The original trip to Stewart State Forest was cancelled due to the opening of small game hunting season. This alternate field trip was to Kenridge Farm in Cornwall. About 15 Mearnsers met in the parking area near the big barn. It was a rather auspicious day and very similar to the weather twenty years ago. I don't think anyone could forget that clear cloudless sky.

What better way to remember that day than to be out birding. We all started out by heading to the large pond, where a Great Blue Heron flew in to greet us. Along the way an Eastern Bluebird or two were observed. A Brown Thrasher was spotted, and we all saw this bird a couple of times throughout the morning. Wood Ducks were also spotted as we paused to admire the nicely colored speculums. Continuing along the patch, Song Sparrows made their presence known, and the cackle of a Belted Kingfisher was heard, followed by the bird himself. Scanning the trees on the back side of the property, we spotted a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak. A Pileated Woodpecker was pointed out as it flew across our field of vision.

Next up we journeyed into the back woods in hopes of tallying some warblers. Before we reached the woods, a good size flock of juvenile Cedar Waxwings flew in to the tops of a juniper. Once we made it to the woods...first off a Gray Catbird mewed at us it dashed off into the woods. Then most if not all had good looks at a Magnolia Warbler.

We then headed to the far back side of the woods, where nothing was seen, but it was a good walk with good conversation. About 43 species were seen. Note to self and perhaps others...Write the trip summary up ASAP so that you don't forget!!!

TRIP PHOTOS:



Belted Kingfisher by Jeff Goulding



Magnolia Warbler by Jeff Goulding



Wood Duck by Jeff Goulding



Great Blue Heron by Jeff Goulding

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – September 18, 2021
Winding Waters Trail, Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge, Orange County, NY

Trip Leader: Bob Slechta

Eleven of us braved the dire warnings pertaining to MOSQUITOES, and we came prepared with plenty of repellant and protective clothing. Even so, we would have to grab someone now and then to prevent them from being carried off by the bloodsuckers! What we needed today was a good breeze!

Regardless, we did get nice sightings of a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Belted Kingfisher, Downy Woodpecker, Phoebe, Red-eyed Vireos, Song Sparrow, Bobolinks, Common Yellowthroat, and Magnolia Warbler.

Other birds not seen by all were Northern Flicker, Peregrine Falcon, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Warbling Vireo, House Wren, American Robin, Lincoln's Sparrow, Black-and-White Warbler, Palm Warbler, and a Connecticut Warbler (only seen by two). Add in the "heard birds" and we ended up with 34 species on the Winding Waters trip, ending it sooner than expected for fear of passing out from the loss of blood!

We then proceeded to the platform on Oil City Road, where there was a nice breeze and we added Green-winged Teal, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Common Gallinule, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, and Tree Swallow.

Our last stop of the trip was Skinners Lane in the hopes of finding Golden Plovers, but we were disheartened by all the farm activity. Luckily we did manage to find one lone Golden Plover and ended the trip with a tally of 42 species. – Bob

PHOTO GALLERY:



Peregrine Falcon (Juvenile)
by Karen Maloy Brady



Barred Owl, State Line Lookout, NJ,
by Karen Maloy Brady

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – September 25, 2021

Bashakill Wildlife Management Area, Sullivan County, NY

Trip Leader: Scott Baldinger

Seventeen club members met at the Bashakill Deli Fields on a cool fall morning for today's field trip. Temps were in the low 50s, and there was some fog, which started to lift as our group arrived. The DEC had just mowed the fields and cut some additional paths through the fields for the hunting season set to begin on October 1, which we took full advantage of to get us closer to the birds. We had an excellent array of species as we made our way around and through the fields. Species found included Northern Waterthrush, Black-throated Green Warblers, Black-throated Blue Warblers, Magnolia Warblers, Common Yellowthroats, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Palm Warblers, American Redstart, Blue-headed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireos, Brown Thrashers, Swainson's Thrushes, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Wood-Pewee, House Wrens, Carolina Wrens, Eastern Bluebirds, Scarlet Tanager, Swamp Sparrows, White-throated Sparrows, Song Sparrows, Field Sparrows, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Flickers, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, a pair of Cooper's Hawks, adult Bald Eagle, Common Raven, Tree Swallows, large numbers of Cedar Waxwings, and big numbers of Blue Jays moving overhead.

From here our group moved to Haven Road and the orchard at the entrance to Stop Sign Trail. Birds added at these locations included Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Nashville Warbler, Belted Kingfisher, Great Egrets, Great Blue Herons, Double-crested Cormorant, Red-shouldered Hawk, and our bird of the day – a lingering juvenile Virginia Rail; it was hard to see just off Haven Road, but many of us were able to get some fairly decent looks.

We finished with 55 species on what was a beautiful fall day out on the Bashakill!

TRIP PHOTOS:



Rose-breasted Grosbeak
by Scott Baldinger



Great Egret by Scott Baldinger

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – October 2, 2021
Hudson Highlands Nature Museum (Kenridge Farm), Cornwall, NY

Trip Leader: Amy Greher

Sixteen enthusiastic birders met at the Kenridge Farm's main parking lot on Saturday, October 2, 2021. It was a chilly 46 degrees when we started our trip at 8:30 in the morning, but 3 hours later, it was a delightful 64 degrees. It remained sunny with little or no wind. A total of 39 species were identified by the group. We counted at least 15 Eastern Phoebe; eBird actually questioned that high number, but we had plenty of eyes that spotted these individual birds throughout the walk. They were everywhere! We were a bit disappointed by the low numbers of grassland birds. Song Sparrows and Swamp Sparrows were abundant yet somewhat elusive. We had only one White-throated Sparrow and could not find a Lincoln's Sparrow anywhere. We also had one Chipping Sparrow.

A Scarlet Tanager appeared high up in one of the trees across from the smaller pond while the group was looking down in the tall reeds for sparrows. By the time we put our glasses on the bird, it was gone. Just a few of us were able to catch it. A few warblers were around the property including Nashville, Common Yellowthroat, Palm, and numerous Yellow-rumped Warblers. Missing were water birds. Just 25 Canada Geese flew overhead. Friday, during a scouting trip at the farm, a family of 6 Wood Ducks were seen on one of the ponds. Additional birds seen during the trip were Turkey Vultures, a Cooper's Hawk, a Red-tailed Hawk, Mourning Doves, Red-bellied, Downy, and Pileated Woodpeckers, a few Northern Flickers, Blue Jays, crows, American Robins, Gray Catbirds, White-breasted Nuthatches, Northern Cardinals, American Goldfinches, Black-capped Chickadees, and Tufted Titmice. We also enjoyed hearing and/or seeing 6 Carolina Wrens, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, 8 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and 3 beautiful Eastern Bluebirds. A Northern Mockingbird entertained us in the Kenridge parking lot as well.

I had stopped at the dog park earlier in the morning and counted a least 85 Cedar Waxwings feasting on berries. Too bad we did not start the trip a half hour earlier at the dog park. Quite a sight to see as they all took off in one big group. Once again the Kenridge Farm trip was enjoyed by all the participants. You never know what will be found on the property. The abundant flat trails make it so easy to bird and visit with each other.

PHOTO GALLERY:



Northern Harrier, Indiana Road, Black Dirt Region,
by Bill Fiero



Immature Ring-billed Gull, Newburgh
waterfront, by Karen Miller

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – October 6
Stony Kill Farm, Fishkill, Dutchess County, NY

Trip Leader: Bruce Nott

What a great suggestion of Bruce's to have a fall trip to Stony Kill Farm: 16 members and 49 species!!

Walking along the edges of the surrounding fields and down the paths of the community gardens was truly phenomenal today. The gardens provided good cover, allowing the 16 of us to get nice looks at the birds as a result. Thank you, Bruce, for recommending and leading this trip!

The most numerous birds were 40+ House Finches, 25+ Savannah Sparrows, and 15+ Palm Warblers. Other notables were House Wren, Carolina Wren, White-crowned Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, 3 Lincoln Sparrows, a few Red-winged Blackbirds, one each Bobolink and Indigo Bunting, one Great Blue Heron, Common Ravens, Eastern Phoebe, Common Yellowthroat, and Yellow-rumped Warbler, plus one Cooper's Hawk. A lot of nice sightings in a very small area.

By now it was 11:30, and the remaining 7 of us decided to head over to the main farmhouse and bird the surrounding woods, where we were rewarded with a good pocket of birds. To our day's list we added – Tufted Titmouse, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Phoebe, Brown Creeper, and for Warblers – Tennessee, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green, Blackpoll, and more Yellow-rumps.

A nice finish to a great morning of birding with 49 species tallied! – Bob

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – October 9
Goosepond Mountain State Park, Chester, NY

Trip Leader: Kathleen Ashman eBird Data: Barbara Thomascall & Kathleen Ashman

Twenty-seven species were observed during the October 9 Goosepond Mountain trip. This location has a nice walking trail (most of which is an old farm road). The site includes a variety of avian habitats, including open brush, old apple orchard, a stream, wetlands, mature forests, and open grassy hills.

During the trip, the group of Mearns birders identified 27 species, including:

42 Canada Goose, 3 Mourning Dove, 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 8 Red-bellied Woodpecker, 5 Downy Woodpecker, 3 Pileated Woodpecker, 1 Northern Flicker, 3 Eastern Phoebe, 19 Blue Jay, 2 Common Raven, 2 Black-capped Chickadee, 5 Tufted Titmouse, 4 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1 Golden-crowned Kinglet, 1 White-breasted Nuthatch, 2 Carolina Wren, 1 Gray Catbird, 6 American Robin, 2 Cedar Waxwing, 59 White-throated Sparrow, 2 Song Sparrow, 1 Lincoln's Sparrow, 4 Swamp Sparrow, 3 Eastern Towhee, 2 Common Yellowthroat, and 29 Yellow-rumped Warblers.

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – October 16, 2021
Croton Point County Park, Westchester County, NY

Trip Leader: Jodi Brodsky

The field trip began at end of the road by the Croton-Harmon Train Station. We spent about 30 minutes gathering as a group and admiring the green eyes of Double-crested Cormorants. The water was high, and the only other birds seen were a Great Blue Heron, Canada Geese, Northern Mockingbird, Northern Cardinal, and a distant American Kestrel.

The annual Thunderbird Games and approximately 3,000 Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts were gathering at the park as well. Surprisingly, once we drove through the entrance and made our way up to the campground parking area, we hardly knew they were there. Sadly, we hardly saw any birds either.

At the start, while we were still optimistic and came upon a Palm Warbler, Karen Miller noted that it would be great if we beat our 36 Palm Warbler record from last year. Unfortunately, it was our only Palm Warbler of the day.

The Croton landfill had numerous Song Sparrows and Savannah Sparrows. There were also three American Kestrels. At one point, we had three Bald Eagles in the air being harassed by a pair of Red-tailed Hawks.

Seven of us had a lovely walk through the park and ended with 30 species, followed by lunch at the diner.

PHOTO GALLERY:



Ash-throated Flycatcher, Westchester County, by Karen Miller



Hermit Thrush, Liberty Loop, Sussex County, NJ, by Joyce Depew

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – October 23, 2021
Liberty Loop (Both NY and NJ) – Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge

Trip Leader: Joyce Depew

Today, under questionable weather conditions, 7 members participated in this outing beginning at the platform on Oil City Road. Welcome to current and new members: Elise, Kathy, and Bob. Thank you Rich VanTieghem for the use of your scope today!

The views from the platform yielded a nice showing of various waterfowl that we sorted through to determine species that were present. We then proceeded toward the Wallkill River side of the refuge on our walk. The passerines were just starting to become active around 9:30 a.m. As the morning progressed, raptors and Tree Swallows took to the air. We were entertained by a couple of Bald Eagles which took flight on the NJ side, and later, one individual returned to the marsh – stirring up hidden waterfowl which rose up and came down in the marsh grasses. American Crows and a Northern Harrier had a brief disagreement across the road from the platform.

Water levels, while not extremely high, prevented shorebirds from being around. The only waders present were Great Blue Herons. Ruddy Ducks were seen at the far end of the pond on the NJ side. It is the first time I've seen Ruddy Ducks on any of my outings at this location. At the end of the walk we had a total of **33 species** combined for the NY and NJ portions of this marsh.

See the listings below, which are shown by county and state. Species recorded in both areas are only listed once under NY (with NJ indicated if found in both areas).

Orange, NY: Canada Goose (NJ), American Wigeon, Mallard (NJ), Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal (NJ), Great Blue Heron (NJ), Turkey Vulture (NJ), Northern Harrier (NJ), Red-bellied Woodpecker (NJ), Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay (NJ), American Crow (NJ), Tufted Titmouse, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Golden-crowned Kinglet (NJ), White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, American Robin, White-throated Sparrow (NJ), Red-winged Blackbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler.

Sussex, NJ: American Black Duck, Ruddy Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, American Coot, Bald Eagle, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, Chipping Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow.

TRIP PHOTOS:



Eastern Phoebe
by Joyce Depew



Great Blue Heron
by Joyce Depew



American Coots
by Joyce Depew

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – November 6, 2020

Black Dirt Region, Orange County, NY

Trip Leader: Dave Baker

On Saturday, November 6, ten members of the club gathered at the Jolly Onion Inn parking lot in Pine Island to begin the day's field trip out to the Black Dirt Region of Orange County. Skies were clear but unseasonably chilly for this time of year, hovering around 30 degrees. The forecast was good, however, promising to rise into the low 50s by the time our day was done.

We began at Skinners Lane in the hopes of seeing some of the many American Pipits which had been reported earlier in the week. We did find a group of Horned Larks foraging in the straw adjacent to the furrowed black dirt, but pipits were absent and proved to be so for the remainder of the day. As we scoped the fields for other early wintering birds, our attention was caught by a group of hundreds of crows on the fields mobbing a young Bald Eagle. The eagle flew up onto a bare tree and dislodged a second young eagle. We had excellent scoped views of the crows perched only feet from the eagle, scolding and harassing the youngster, who seemed completely unfazed.

As we continued down along the Wallkill River on Skinners Lane, we encountered another huge "murder" of several hundred crows now mobbing a Red-shouldered Hawk. As with the eagle, the harassment had little effect on the hawk, which remained perched for some time.

We decided to head over to Turtle Bay Road to check the fields there. When we arrived at the usual pull-off on Turtle Bay, we found a good number of species to help pad the count. Among the more notable species here were Brown Creeper, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and White-crowned Sparrows. Still...no pipits.

Our last leg of the trip was to cover Lynch Avenue, which is generally quite reliable for sparrows. We met fellow Mearnser Jeanne Cimorelli, who had been scouting out the area for sparrows with some nice finds. As we joined her in searching for new species for the day we did find Song, Savannah, and White-throated.

Our final tally was 37 species. A generally good day of birding as we enter into the colder months of the year with the promise of new avian visitors in Orange County.

PHOTO GALLERY:



Juvenile Bald Eagle, Sullivan County
by Scott Baldinger



Dickcissel, Shawangunk Grasslands NWR,
by Bill Fiero

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – November 20, 2021

Eastern Orange County Lakes

Trip Leader: Bob Slechta

I really thought I had stepped into "it" – agreeing to substitute as trip leader, as the Walmart marsh was quiet!! Only 4 Hooded Mergansers to be found there. Thankfully there were also a couple of nice Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, a Purple Finch that Barry found, American Robins, and a flock of Common Grackles to lift my spirits a little.

Washington Lake, right next door, was also quiet, with one Common Merganser, one Gadwall, Ring-billed Gulls, Mute Swans, and best of all – one Bonaparte's Gull.

Next on our itinerary was Brown's Pond, where our fortune changed for the best. Here we had Ring-necked Ducks, Ruddy Ducks, Gadwall, American Wigeon, one Lesser Scaup, Mallard, American Black Duck, Pied-billed Grebe plus Great Blue Heron, Double-crested Cormorant, Canada Geese, Belted Kingfisher, lots of American Robins (50+), Northern Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers (at least 8 for the day), Downy, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers, Juncos, White-throated Sparrow, Red-tailed Hawk, Chickadees, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, American Goldfinch, and Carolina Wren...making me feel MUCH better with a good mix of birds for everyone to see.

From Brown's we went to Beaver Dam Lake, where we picked up more Ring-necked Ducks (45 for the day), Ruddy Ducks (90 for the day), plus Buffleheads, Pied-billed Grebe, lots of Canada Geese, Turkey Vultures, and a flurry of American Robins, Cedar Waxwings, House Finch, and two Yellow-rumped Warblers feasting on Red Cedar berries.

It was now 11:30, and the remaining 7 Mearnsers of the original 9 all wanted to continue on to my last stop – Tomahawk Lake. There we added 35 Common Mergansers, our fourth Belted Kingfisher, and third Great Blue Heron to finish up our day with a respectable 44 species...a lot better than I thought at the start! – Bob

PHOTO GALLERY:



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
by Scott Baldinger



Snowy Owl, Piermont (NY) Pier, by Scott Baldinger

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – November 28
Shawangunk Grasslands National Wildlife Refuge, Ulster County NY

Trip Leaders: Jane Vecchione and Tom Crepet

We had a cloudy day, with strong northwest winds for this trip and temperatures in the low 30s, but still a few Mearnsers – 10 to be exact – braved the wickedly cold conditions. A few folks were on their way back from Franklin Mountain, where they saw a number of Golden Eagles! Admirable!!

We met at 4:00 pm, and sunset was at 4:30, so the trip was short. The birds were few and far between but started with a distant Peregrine Falcon! Our target Short-eared Owls were not seen. We think they might not like the wind any more than we do, but for different reasons! We did see other birds, though some remained unidentified; in particular a large flock of blackbirds. As we watched for the owls, a flock of 5 Common Mergansers flew over the parking lot.

Several Mearnsers worked their way to the platform and spotted a small flock of Mourning Doves. Possibly a small flock of Eastern Meadowlarks momentarily flew up from the field in the distance. It was late when we got a small clearing of the clouds, and perhaps the highlight of the trip was being treated to a view of Venus, Saturn, and Jupiter through Tom and Gerhard's scopes! For some, seeing the rings of Saturn and the moons of Jupiter were "life" views! Our last bird of the trip was a good one: a Peregrine Falcon that flew low over the parking lot. We could see the important field marks that confirmed its identity. This may have been the same bird that we saw at first, but much closer! We wrapped it up near 5:00 pm. It was, as always, good to see friends.

Below is a recent note to visitors from the Shawangunk Grasslands NWR refuge manager:

Greetings Shawangunk Grasslands NWR visitors. This past weekend was truly a pageant of nature at the refuge with owls, harriers, and hawks putting on quite a show. Like me, many of you were at the refuge to observe and/or photograph these natural wonders first hand. The beautiful wildlife photography I see on the various social media platforms captures this spectacle and is a testament to the skill and cold tolerance of many of you. I think that you will agree that public access here presents an unique opportunity to observe and photograph wildlife close up, with these magnificent birds coming near to you on their own terms.

Regular visitors have noticed some necessary changes in the way we administer public access. These changes are largely in response to the success of the grassland restoration project completed here, the benefits of our prescribed fire program, and the resultant increases in both avian and human visitors. Partial trail closures, more signage, speed bumps, restricted parking, and an increased staff presence are targeted toward reducing impacts on wildlife and providing for public safety. So far these measures have been largely effective and your cooperation has made it so. Still, however, there continue to be a few visitors that persist in problematic behavior, like speeding down the access road (15 mph), ignoring our trail closures, and parking in undesignated spots.

If unchanged, these behaviors will lead to further measures including lined parking spaces, additional speed control measures, additional signage, and more active law enforcement. The truth is that all of these changes divert time and funding from other conservation measures which runs counter to our refuge mission and your ability to observe wildlife in the ways that you do currently. Ultimately, it is your thoughtful participation that makes all the difference and as such we may never have to evaluate the need for seasonal complete trail closures or seasonal refuge closures to protect refuge resources. Perhaps by working together, our measured steps will be sufficient to allow nature and public access to co-exist indefinitely – I certainly hope so.

– Your friend in conservation, Mike Horne

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – December 10–12, 2021

Cape Ann, MA

Trip Leader: Jodi Brodsky

Our annual trip to Cape Ann began on Friday, December 10, at noon. We kicked off the weekend with our traditional lunch stop for the best fish chowder around. Michael and I arrived a bit early and decided to scout out the area where a Tropical Kingbird had been hanging out but was not seen for several days. After lunch, the entire group returned to the Tropical Kingbird stake-out. We had numerous sparrows, cardinals, and Carolina Wrens, but no kingbird. There was also a low-flying accipiter that zipped into the woods; a Cooper's Hawk along with a Kestrel and Sharp-shinned Hawk.

The next stop was Halibut Point State Park in Rockport. Usually, there are few birds between the parking area and the ocean overlook. However, on this occasion we were treated to a flock of over 65 Cedar Waxwings eating juniper berries and drinking from a small pool of water in a swampy area close to the trail. During our time we also saw Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, American Robins, Harlequin Ducks, Common Eiders, Long-tailed Ducks, and Black Scoters. A small flock of snow buntings were singing while flying and practically landing at our feet. A few Northern Gannet came in close as well. Carlotta was lucky enough to spot a Razorbill. There was just enough light left for a quick stop at Granite Pier. The group found a Red-necked Grebe (the only one for our weekend), Purple Sandpipers, one Ruddy Turnstone, Red-throated Loons, and three Common Loons. Numerous Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls were gathered, but no white-winged gulls.

The weather report called for rain, but this intrepid bunch would not be deterred from meeting at the Fisherman's Memorial for excellent views of Common Eiders. We drove over to the State Fishing Pier, where we saw lots of Common Eiders and Red-breasted Mergansers along with the typical gulls plus a few Surf Scoters. It didn't take long for the group to decide to pause our outing and head back to the inn with the promise of playing Wingspan, a birding board game. Mary and Carlotta were experts and very patient as they guided a group of us through the rules and intricacies of the game. Carlotta's extra-special additions were a real treat.

After lunch the group headed back out. Our first stop was Eastern Point Lighthouse. The dog bar had an impressive (165, yes I counted them) number of Great Black-backed Gulls hunkering down. The only new birds we added were a few Common Goldeneye. The next stop around the cape was Niles Pond. Here we saw very close Red-breasted Mergansers. Liz Mack found a Bonaparte's Gull among a floating mixed flock of Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls, which was later joined by a second BOGU. Great spotting! As we made our way around towards Bass Rocks, we stopped for a quick peek at what I call Great Cormorant Rocks. There were no Great Cormorants around there or anywhere else during our trip. But, as I scanned the water I found a close Iceland Gull, two Black Guillemot, and a Razorbill. Many people in the group saw them as well, but the birds did not linger. We continued to the Elks Lodge and then on to Cathedral Rocks, seeing more of all three scoters and winter ducks, but no Alcids. Our last stop for the day was supposed to be Andrews Point. Unfortunately, there were so many no parking signs that we decided to head back to Granite Pier for a final look.

On Sunday the group met at the first parking lot in Parker River National Wildlife Refuge on Plum Island in Newburyport. The ocean was sparse; there was lots of wind and only a smattering of gulls, loons, and scoters. While driving we saw American Pipits, Snow Buntings, and Horned Larks. The salt pannes had a large number of American Black Ducks, Northern Pintail, a few Green-winged Teal, and Gadwall. We found a Peregrine Falcon perched on a post out past the

ducks. At Hellcat Dike, we were surprised to see a pair of Mute Swan. Karen Miller also found a two American Coot close to the reeds, and Carlotta picked up a distant Bald Eagle flying across the bay. The trip ended with lunch at Bob's Lobster Shack. The group of 12 finished with a grand total of 60 species of birds over the weekend. A special thanks to Karen Miller for graciously keeping tallies and eBird lists for every spot.

TRIP PHOTOS:



Snow Bunting, Halibut Point SP, MA,
by Karen Miller



Bonaparte's Gull, Eastern Point
Lighthouse, MA, by Karen Miller



Male Harlequin Ducks, Halibut Point SP, MA, by Karen Miller



Common Eiders, Gloucester Harbor, MA, by Scott Baldinger



Female Harlequin Ducks, Niles Pond, MA,
by Karen Miller



Surf Scoter by Karen Miller

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – February 12, 2022

Black Dirt Trip I, Orange County, NY

Trip Leader: Bob Slechta

The February 12 Black Dirt Trip was well attended with 17 Mearns members, but it was a little slow with only 26 species counted. No longspurs, buntings, or “good” sparrows...

BUT we did have approximately 4,000 Snow Geese in multiple skeins fly over on their way south to New Jersey. We were all thrilled to watch them in motion as the skeins constantly moved south and changed shape. The geese were brightly lit in the morning sun.

During the rest of the trip through the black dirt areas of Pine Island and New Hampton, we enjoyed great looks at Horned Larks, Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Harriers, Bald Eagles, a Peregrine Falcon, and two early arrival Killdeer!

– Bob

TRIP PHOTOS AND SKETCH:



Snow Geese
by Rich VanTieghem



Watercolor sketch of a small portion of the flight of 4,000+ Snow Geese
by Rich VanTieghem



Participants of Black Dirt Trip I, including new members Kathy and Bob Wilson, and Elise Hagan (center)

Trip Report – Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Outing – February 19, 2022

Eagle Trip II, Westchester County, NY

Trip Leader: Gerhard Patsch

Wow! What a Day!

We had sunshine, clouds, cold WINDS, snow, sunshine again, more dark clouds, strong gusts of frigid air and, finally, a partial clearing showing a few patches of blue sky, AND we had eagles!

Even though the recent Hudson River ice had all but disappeared, we still sighted 87 Bald Eagles. At times our visibility was limited, but there were plenty of eagles along our route, and they were very active, making good use of the strong winds.

At George's Island Park we observed spectacular aerial displays of 14 eagles directly overhead.

At Peekskill Bay we watched an adult eagle circle over several Common Mergansers, then hover over them, and actually descend into the water, sitting on the water briefly, looking like a huge gull, and finally lifting off again, Osprey-like, with a fish in its talons.

We found 9 species of waterfowl including 20 Common Goldeneye, several Hooded Mergansers, Ring-necked Ducks, and American Wigeon.

Other notables included 25 Great Cormorants and a Fox Sparrow found by Bob Slechta and Joe Cullen.

At the end of a memorable and exciting day, 11 members and friends tallied a total of 39 species.

PHOTO GALLERY:



Bald Eagles at Lynch Avenue, Orange County, by Joyce Depew

Mearns Bird Club Supports the 122nd Audubon Christmas Bird Count

By Karen Miller, CBC Coordinator

Thank you to the 26 birders who braved the rain and cold on December 18, 2021, to participate in the 122nd Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Nine teams covered our designated circle (measuring 15 miles in diameter) in eastern Orange County. We reported 84 species and 18,499 individuals with eight count week birds. Special appreciation to our team leaders: Bill Fiero, Bruce Nott, Kathleen Ashman, Karen Maloy Brady, Bob Slechta, Linda Strohl, Jan Fitzpatrick, Amy Greher, Gerhard Patsch, and Liza Antony.

Of note, the American Robin was seen in large numbers by every team, with Team B reporting 1,600 birds and a total of 3,187 robins for this year's count.

The Hudson River waterfront again was a hotspot for birds. The warm weather and the warm water of the Newburgh Sewage Treatment Plant along the shore of the river held several bird species in the area and added to our CBC numbers. The Franklin's Gull was certainly the star of the show for more than 10 days.

We also had two Iceland Gulls, a Glaucous Gull and a Lesser Black-backed Gull. Additionally, three warbler species were found nearly every day during the count period near the sewage treatment plant: two Northern Parulas, a Yellow Warbler, and a Yellow-rumped Warbler. A Tennessee Warbler joined the Parulas and Yellow Warbler for at least a couple of weeks. This environment attracted MANY birders to Newburgh and the river every day, who were successful at seeing these species. A Horned Grebe and a Red-breasted Merganser were also added to the rare/unusual species for our count. Thank you to John Haas and Matt Zeitler for giving our CBC teams a heads-up of birds they spotted while birding in our circle.

Bob Slechta turned over our club CBC files to me that date back to 1975, so we have been a participant in this national event for a very long time. Make a note on your calendar for December 17, 2022, to get in the game and help us keep this count going strong in our area. The weather may be challenging, but the experience is always rewarding, and the data is essential for tracking avian activity in Orange County.

CBC Teams, Participants, and Birds/Species Counted

A: Bill Fiero & Jayne Fiero: **4981/38**

B: Bruce Nott, Scott Baldinger, Jeanne Cimorelli, Jeff Goulding: **2350/49**

C: Kathleen Ashman, Liz McNight, Claudia Perretti: **2134/48**

D: Karen Maloy, Kevin Brady, Mary Buskey, Scott Graber, Patty Jensen, John Stowell: **2059/37**

E: Bob Slechta, Yahvey Hoffman: **1940/48**

F: Linda Strohl, Karen Miller, Al Strohl (feeder watcher): **1360/33**

G: Jan Fitzpatrick & Fitz, Amy Greher, Joe Cherek, Peter Cherek; Rosemary Cella, Kathy Dillinger (2 feeder watchers): **1771/41**

H: Gerhard Patsch, Dave Baker; Ronnie Stein & Linda Rohleder (feeder watcher): **546/28**

I: Liza Antony & Ajit, Chris & Desly Fryer; Elaine Frost (feeder watcher): **1358/37**

Count Week Species: In addition to the Dec. 18 species data, the following species were reported during count week: Rusty Blackbird, Double-crested Cormorant, Gadwall, Glaucous Gull, Common Loon, Redhead, Greater Scaup, Green-winged Teal and American Wigeon.

The overall summary of species counted on Dec. 18 is shown on the next page.

Northeast Orange County Christmas Bird Count December 18, 2021 – Summary Report

SPECIES	COUNT	SPECIES	COUNT	SPECIES	COUNT
Snow Goose	0	Red-headed Woodpecker	0	Dark-eyed Junco	733
Canada Goose	6,712	Red-bellied Woodpecker	84	Red-winged Blackbird	322
Mute Swan	32	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	18	Eastern Meadowlark	0
Wood Duck	0	Downy Woodpecker	78	Rusty Blackbird	0
Northern Shoveler	0	Hairy Woodpecker	10	Common Grackle	601
Gadwall	0	Northern Flicker	60	Brown-headed Cowbird	63
American Wigeon	0	Pileated Woodpecker	13	Yellow-rumped Warbler	5
Mallard	297	American Kestrel	1	Northern Cardinal	77
American Black Duck	24	Merlin	1	<i><u>Rare/ Unusual Species...</u></i>	
Northern Pintail	0	Peregrine Falcon	1	Franklin's Gull	1
Green-Winged Teal	0	Eastern Phoebe	1	Brant	0
Canvasback	0	Northern Shrike	0	Cackling Goose	0
Ring-Necked Duck	153	Blue Jay	255	Blue-winged Teal	0
Lesser Scaup	1	American Crow	170	Redhead	0
Long-tailed Duck	0	Fish Crow	3	Greater Scaup	0
Bufflehead	9	Common Raven	11	White-winged Scoter	0
Common Goldeneye	0	Horned Lark	0	Black Scoter	0
Hooded Merganser	40	Black-capped Chickadee	174	Red-breasted Merganser	1
Common Merganser	211	Tufted Titmouse	84	Ruffed Grouse	0
Ruddy Duck	33	Red-breasted Nuthatch	0	Horned Grebe	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	106	Red-necked Grebe	0
Wild Turkey	6	Brown Creeper	3	Virginia Rail	0
Pied-Billed Grebe	1	Winter Wren	8	Bonaparte's Gull	0
Rock Pigeon	345	Carolina Wren	37	Red-throated Loon	0
Mourning Dove	189	Golden-crowned Kinglet	5	Great Egret	0
American Coot	0	Ruby-Crowned Kinglet	0	Northern Goshawk	0
Killdeer	0	Eastern Bluebird	55	Broad-winged Hawk	0
Wilson's Snipe	0	Hermit Thrush	8	Northern Saw-whet Owl	0
Ring-billed Gull	709	American Robin	3,187	Say's Phoebe	0
Herring Gull	600	Gray Catbird	3	House Wren	0
Iceland Gull (Kumlein's)	1	Northern Mockingbird	17	Wood Thrush	0
Great Black-backed Gull	15	European Starling	1,624	Varied Thrush	0
Common Loon	0	Cedar Waxwing	5	Brown Thrasher	0
Double-crested Cormorant	0	House Sparrow	259	Pine Grosbeak	0
Great Cormorant	0	American Pipit	0	White-winged Crossbill	0
Great Blue Heron	13	House Finch	104	Lapland Longspur	0
Black Vulture	130	Purple Finch	13	Chipping Sparrow	0
Turkey Vulture	3	Common Redpoll	2	Lark Sparrow	0
Northern Harrier	1	Pine Siskin	0	Harris's Sparrow	0
Sharp-Shinned Hawk	2	American Goldfinch	87	Yellow-breasted Chat	0
Cooper's Hawk	2	Snow Bunting	0	Brewer's Blackbird	0
Bald Eagle	12	Eastern Towhee	2	Baltimore Oriole	0
Red-shouldered Hawk	7	American Tree Sparrow	18	Common Yellowthroat	0
Red-tailed Hawk	35	Field Sparrow	0	Wilson's Warbler	0
Rough-legged Hawk	0	Savannah Sparrow	2	Evening Grosbeak	0
Eastern Screech Owl	0	Fox Sparrow	2	Lesser Black-backed Gull	1
Great Horned Owl	2	Song Sparrow	62	Northern Parula	1
Barred Owl	2	Swamp Sparrow	6	Yellow Warbler	1
Short-eared Owl	0	White-throated Sparrow	521	Total Birds Counted	18,499
Belted Kingfisher	3	White-crowned Sparrow	1	Total Species Counted	84

Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club Event – January 15, 2022

New York State Winter Waterfowl Count

Event Leader: Bob Slechta

With our lakes frozen and a couple inches of snow on the ground, I thought for sure it would be a dismal count this year. But, as Gomer Pyle would say...“Surprise, surprise, surprise!” In fact we had a higher individual count than last year, and only 800 fewer Canada Geese – the big ticket bird for our count.

What helped push up our numbers were the 2,500 Common Mergansers on Greenwood Lake, which was not frozen like our other lakes. Thankfully we always have a few open spots on our lakes, ponds, and rivers to give us a bit of variety, producing only one less species than last year: 12 vs 13. Kudos to the fourteen participants who spent 36 hours in the field to produce these remarkable results, which are:

8,594 Canada Geese
82 Mute Swans
2 Gadwall
67 American Black Ducks
747 Mallards
17 Ring-necked Ducks
1 Greater Scaup
5 Lesser Scaup
28 Hooded Mergansers
2,603 Common Mergansers
1 Common Loon
1 Pied-billed Grebe

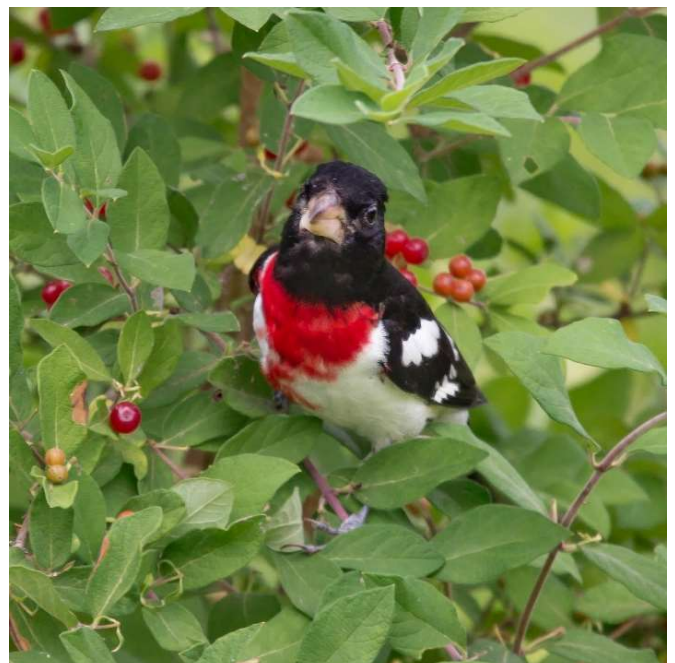
For a total of 12,148 individuals.

Not bad for mid-January in Orange County! Let's see how next year turns out. – Bob Slechta

PHOTO GALLERY:



Golden-winged Warbler, Sterling Forest State Park NY, by Bill Fiero



Rose-breasted Grosbeak by Bill Fiero

UPCOMING TRIPS

Calendar of birding trips that are planned through the end of September 2022:

March 5, Sat. – Rye NY & Greenwich CT with Bob Slechta (845-541-8210). Meet at the Playland parking lot at 9:00 AM for wintering Brant, loons, grebes, and ducks.

March 12, Sat. – Black Dirt Trip II with Bob Slechta (845-541-8210). Meet at the Jolly Onion in Pine Island, NY, at 8:30 AM for longspurs, larks, and thousands of blackbirds.

March 26, Sat. – Wallkill River NWR with Kathleen Ashman (845-421-5478). Be at the platform on Oil City Rd. at 8:30 AM for large numbers of waterfowl – especially Pintails and Green-winged Teal.

March 30, Wed. – Eastern Orange County Lakes with Bruce Nott (845-542-0583) and Carlotta Shearson (234-8314). Meet at the northwest corner of the Newburgh Walmart parking lot at 8:30 AM for a good mix of waterfowl and maybe some swallows.

April 2, Sat. – Long Island Sound with Bob Slechta (845-541-8210). Meet Bob at the Playland parking lot in Rye, NY, at 8:30 AM for grebes, Osprey, egrets, Long-tailed Ducks, and much more.

April 9, Sat. – Wallkill River NWR with Joyce Depew (845-978-9952). Meet at the Oil City Rd. platform at 8:30 AM for a good variety of waterfowl with Blue-winged Teal our target.

April 23, Sat. – 6 1/2 Station Road Sanctuary (Goshen, NY) with Don Aitchison (845-281-3220). Meet where the Heritage Trail crosses the road at 8:30 AM for “buckets” of Yellow-rumps plus Palm Warblers, gnatcatchers, gallinules, and more.

April 27, Wed. – Stewart State Forest with Bill Fiero (845-728-5208). Meet at the Barron Road North parking area at 8 AM for a good mix of early migrants like kinglets in this more wooded habitat.

April 30, Sat. – Kenridge Farm with Amy Greher (845-774-9399). Meet at the Cornwall Dog Park at 8 AM as the spring migration really starts to heat up. Yellow Warbler for sure.

May 4, Wed. – Black Rock Forest with Bob Slechta (845-541-8210). Meet at 8 AM in the upper parking lot off 9W going south over the mountain. We haven't been here in a while. Let's see what we can find.

May 8, Sun. – Bashakill Wildlife Management Area with Joyce Depew (845-978-9952). Meet at the first parking lot on Haven Rd., before you cross the kill, at 7:30 AM for what should be a great day of birding – 70 species likely!

May 13 - 14, Fri.–Sat. – Break 100!! See if your team can identify 100 plus species in Orange County from 4 PM Friday to 4 PM Saturday. Contact Kathleen Ashman (845-421-5478) for info and watch the Mearns Groups.io site, as things may be in flux due to COVID.

May 15, Sun. – Kenridge Farm with Amy Greher (845-774-9399). Meet at the Cornwall Dog Park at 8 AM and let's see if we can find a Mourning Warbler.

May 18, Wed. – Baux Baum with Ajit Antony (914-475-7819). Meet at the Mobil station where you turn north onto Rte. 209 from Rte. 6 in Port Jervis at 7:30 AM to explore one of the county's western birding hotspots.

May 21, Sat. – Winding Waters Trail (on Oil City Road, West of the platform area) with Kathleen Ashman (845-421-5478). Meet in the parking lot at 7:30 AM. We usually come here in the fall. Let's see how it is in May.

May 24, Tue. (Tentatively) - **Minnewaska State Park** with Gerhard Patsch (845-258-0620). **This trip will occur sometime during the week.** Watch Groups.io for more detailed information – meeting place and time etc. Entrance to the park is free for seniors during the week.

May 28, Sat. – **Shawangunk Grasslands NWR** with Jane and Tom 845-(443-5440). Meet at 9:00 AM. Grassland birds are the specialty, especially Grasshopper and Savannah Sparrows.

June 4, Sat. (June 11 rain date) – **Annual club picnic** at the Winding Hills County Park in Montgomery, NY. More details to come as the date approaches.

July 2, Sat. – **Marshlands Conservancy** (Rye, NY) with Bob Slechta (845-541-8210). Meet there at 8:30 AM and bring a lunch for after the trip if you like. Terns, egrets, oystercatchers, and shorebirds.

August 20, Sat. - **Wallkill River NWR** with Joyce Depew (845-978-9952). Meet at the platform on Oil City Rd. at 8 AM for coots, gallinules, rails, egrets, and shorebirds.

September 3, Sat. - **Black Dirt Area** with Bob Slechta (845-541-8210). Meet at the Jolly Onion in Pine Island, NY, at 8:30 AM for shorebirds, I hope, especially Buff-breasted Sandpiper, if we are lucky.

September 10, Sat. - **Kenridge Farm** with Amy Greher (845-774-9399). Be at the Cornwall Dog Park at 8:30 AM and see what we can find at this fabulous birding location as the fall migration heats up.

September 17, Sat. - **Winding Waters Trail (on Oil City Road, West of the platform area)** with Kathleen Ashman (845-421-5478). Meet in the parking lot at 8 AM for our usual fall trip here as the birds push south. With luck, we'll find a Connecticut Warbler.

September 24, Sat. - **6 1/2 Station Road Sanctuary, Goshen, NY** with Dave Baker (845-446-4030). Meet where the Heritage Trail crosses the road at 8:30 AM for our first fall trip here, with lots of possibilities.

September 28, Wed. - **Stony Kill Farm, Fishkill, NY** with Bruce Nott (845-542-0583). Meet there at 8:30 AM. Last year's trip here was phenomenal; don't miss out!

NOTES

– The phone number given for each trip leader is there for you to call the night before or the morning of if you have any questions. You can also keep an eye on the Mearns' Groups.io site for last-minute changes.

– If you lead a trip, you are responsible for sending a write-up to Rich VanTieghem at rich.w2vt@gmail.com

– Regarding COVID protocol: If you've been vaccinated, then you do not need to wear a mask. If you have not been vaccinated, then you may need to mask-up depending on the latest government guidelines. Keep your eyes open for any changes that we make to our field trip Covid rules. – Bob Slechta, Chair of Outings

Editor's Note: Thank you to everyone who contributed articles, trip reports, data, and the more than 40 beautiful photographs that are presented in this newsletter. Also, a big *Thank You* to Carlotta Shearson for volunteering to proofread this Orange Feather newsletter!

Happy birding! – Rich VanTieghem email: rich.w2vt@gmail.com