

THE HARLEQUIN

York County Audubon

www.yorkcountyaudubon.org

Spring 2016

York County Audubon joins the Global Big Day – And so can you!

Saturday, May 14th, all day

For years, YCA has held an annual Birding Challenge in mid-May. It's been a fund-raiser for our wildlife protection efforts and a day for birders to join together and have fun. This year, we're changing things up a bit, by joining with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in a citizen-science project called "The Global Big Day 2016." The idea is simple: people all over the world will go birding on May 14, 2016, and record what they see. Then they'll enter that data into eBird, where it will give a global image of bird populations and locations. There's no requirement as to when, where, or how long during that day that one looks for birds.



Black and White Warbler

YCA is always hoping to increase awareness of the fantastic birding opportunities in York County, so we're adding an additional focus to our Big Day. Following suggestions by Louis Bevier and Nathan



Ruby-throated Hummingbird – Ken Janes photo

Hall, we're going to limit our efforts to York County, and are challenging birders in Cumberland County to discover which county can log the most species that day. On last year's first Global Big Day, York County recorded 145 species, slightly ahead of Cumberland County's 139. One more special feature of the YCA count is the participation of the Hard Core Birders, a group of Middle School



American Oystercatcher – Ken Janes photo

of the Kennebunks students, organized by Nathan Hall. We especially hope that many young people will join us on our Big Day.

You are invited to join a team, or to go out on your own, to start before dawn and go all day, or simply spend an hour or two in your backyard. Whatever suits you suits the Global Big Day. The count day runs for 24 hours starting at 12:00 a.m. on the 14th. Birders from all over the world will join in the effort, and you can follow the progress of the Big Day on the Cornell Lab’s Global Big Day 2016 website: <http://ebird.org/content/ebird/globalbigday/>. The Cornell Lab website also has great information on how to get started with eBird, how to use it in the field, and how to record your sightings. It’s a good idea to familiarize yourself with it before the Big Day.

Although we encourage everyone to give eBird a try, if you are unable to submit your list via eBird for any reason, YCA members will be happy to submit it for you. However, please note where and when you were birding, so that your list can be logged correctly. More information on this will be available on our website, yorkcountyaudubon.org, and on our Facebook page.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology began the Global Big Day in 2015, when people from over 100 countries participated, logging over 6,000 species of birds! The hope is that this year will be even bigger. Your participation is a real contribution, and birding in York County in mid-May is a pleasure not to be missed. If you’d like to join a team of birders, or for more information, contact us through our website or Facebook page, or call Monica Grabin at 985-3342. All levels of experience and all ages are welcome.

There is no donation requirement to participate, although they are always very welcome. All donations help us fulfill our mission to educate the public and preserve our irreplaceable natural world.

YCA welcomes its New Members!

Peter Bastille	Buxton
Jennifer and Evan Bradstreet	Limerick
Emily Louina Cook	Alfred
Anne Cotter	Old Orchard Beach
Jeanne Farrell	Buxton
Kristina and Alex Halliday	Saco
Maureen Harding	Arundel
Nancy Jusseume	North Berwick
Alexa Keenan	Saco
Sherry McCrackin	Kennebunkport
Randolph Page	Springvale
Jane Perkins	Saco
Sethany and Dale Roberts	Saco

YCAS OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

Bill Grabin, President	985-3342
Kathy Donahue, Treasurer	967-4102
Monica Grabin, Secretary	985-3342
Mary Bateman, Publicity	646-8589
David Doubleday, Programs	967-4486
Doug Hitchcox, Field Trips	671-0185
Ken Janes, Email, Membership	967-2955
Lena Moser, Director	205-9915
Pat Moynahan, Workshops	284-5487
Joyce Toth, Director	216-4756
Eileen Willard, Director	967-5118
Marian Zimmerman, Birding Trail	710-3015

For all upcoming events and general information, please visit our website:

www.yorkcountyaudubon.org

And for the latest news, photos and updates, please visit us on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/yorkcountyaudubon

Piping Plovers are back again!

by *Monica Grabin*

There were very early sightings this year of Piping Plovers on Goose Rocks and Wells beaches, starting on March 13th. We hope they made it through the subsequent squalls and overnight temperatures down into the teens. York County Audubon is committed to working hard to increase the population of Piping Plovers on our beaches, partnering with UNE and Maine Audubon to provide monitors for Hills and Fortunes Rocks Beaches, where we teach beachgoers about the importance of protecting the birds' habitat.



2015 was a banner year for Piping Plovers in Maine. There was a 25% increase in nesting pairs, and in new locations, such as Drake's Island in Wells. There were 9 pairs nesting on the very busy Old Orchard Beach! Fears were high, therefore, that success of these nests might be difficult. But thanks to many volunteers, agencies, and local advocates, as well as some good luck, the results were fantastic. 62 pairs of Piping Plovers nested on our beaches, and they fledged 121 chicks! That's a dozen more than the second highest count in 2005.

As a new season begins, YCA will again sponsor a UNE student to monitor Hills and Fortunes Rocks Beaches. Last year, Fortunes Rocks had 3 pairs, 4 nests, and 5 fledged chicks. Hills Beach, unfortunately, had only one nest, which was unsuccessful. Our monitor will be looking for nesting birds, and talking to people on the beach, to explain and help them understand the importance of making room for the birds.



Remember,

1. If signs indicate a Piping Plover or Least Tern nesting area, stay away! Don't cross fenced areas, ever.
2. **Do not let pets roam free on any beach where nests are located, at any time, for any reason.** Dogs and cats are known predators of Piping Plover chicks. **If you encounter unleashed dogs, please ask their owners to leash them.**
3. Don't leave holes in the sand that could trap a chick, leaving it open to predation or starvation.
4. Don't leave food on the beach, which attracts animals and birds which will feed on chicks.
5. Don't fly a kite near nesting areas. Shorebirds see it as a predator and will abandon their nest.
6. Notify Maine Audubon if you observe any disturbance of nesting areas.

With your help and awareness, and that of many others who work hard to protect these birds, YCA hopes that 2016 will be as good or better than 2015 for Piping Plovers on Maine's beaches. For more information and a complete report on the 2015 season, please visit maineaudubon.org and click on "Wildlife & Habitat," and then "The Piping Plover and Least Tern Recovery Project."

Welcome to our new Board members

We have had a number of changes on our Board since the last newsletter, including the loss of our much-loved friends, Ellen Doubleday and June Ficker. Ellen was our Membership chair, and Board member Ken Janes has offered to take over these duties. Also, Ann Watson, our Vice-President, and Bob Watson, our Publicity chair, are moving to Indiana to be near their grandchild. We will miss them greatly but also wish them the very best.

Mary Bateman lives with her husband, Wayne, in the Oceanside community of Wells, Maine. Mary is retired after a long and distinguished career with the U.S. Postal Service. She and Wayne, an environmental manager at the Kittery Naval Shipyard, breed and raise Irish Setters on their property, and are very active in the American and Irish Setter Kennel Clubs. Mary's love of birds was inspired by her mother, an avid bird-lover. Her parents taught her about birds, their habitats, the woods of Maine and the importance of wildlife. Since her retirement, she has joined many of York County Audubon's Wednesday Bird Walks, and been inspired by the people she has met and all she has learned. Mary will be a great asset to our Board, and has agreed to take over the Publicity duties.



Joyce Toth has resided in Maine for the past three years, but has been vacationing here for over 25. Prior to this, she lived in western Massachusetts, where she was CEO of Federally licensed Community Health and Mental Health Centers. Joyce has been actively involved in birding for over 30 years. She is on the Board of the Riverbend Woods Condo Association, and authors a birding article for their newsletter. She has attended many York County Audubon events such as



workshops, the Birding Challenge, and Christmas Bird Counts. She brings wonderful enthusiasm to the Board as well as expertise in grant writing and funding avenues. She has been in Florida over the winter, but will join us in April. We really look forward to her joining us on the Board.

Lena Moser is an enthusiastic teacher, birder, and naturalist. She shares her love of the sciences with students at UNE by helping to support their learning of chemistry and biology at the Student Academic Success Center. Lena was born in Russia and lived in Tajikistan before moving to Connecticut with her family. She received her undergrad degree in Natural Resources from Cornell University, where she also worked at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. After Masters degrees in Anthropology and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Lena was a professional tour guide and taught ecology, environmental, and biology courses

at a private high school. Lena brings a great deal of knowledge as well as energy to the Board. She is particularly interested in involving young birders in YCA activities and her contribution will surely be substantial.

We are extremely grateful to have such talented, enthusiastic new Board members, and we know they will bring a great deal to our efforts in the coming years.



York County Audubon mourns the passing of two incredible women who gave so much to our organization and the community.

June Ficker



Ellen Doubleday



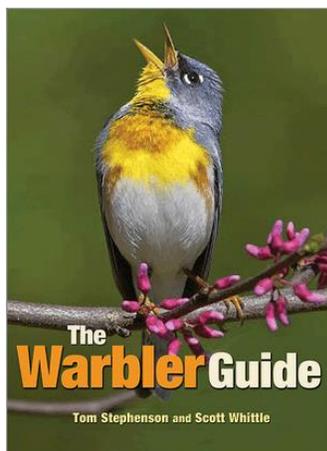
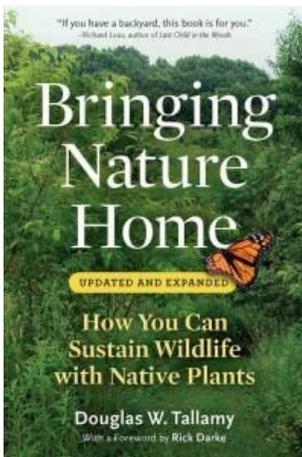
Douglas Tallamy is coming to Maine!

“Incredible!” “Life-changing!” “Fascinating and important!” These are some of the comments heard from people who have attended presentations by Doug Tallamy. And now we all can hear him speak at the beautiful Ogunquit Playhouse on Monday, June 27, at 7 p.m.

Tallamy’s talk is entitled: *Rebuilding Nature’s Relationships at Home*. He will take us on an in-depth journey into how native plants sustain the local food web, and what we can do to make our landscapes into living ecosystems once again. Specialized relationships between animals and plants are the norm in nature rather than the exception. Plants that evolved in concert with local animals provide for their needs better than plants that evolved elsewhere. You will come away motivated to become part of the solution by planting native plants and gardening for wildlife!

Doug Tallamy’s groundbreaking book, *Bringing Nature Home*, was awarded the Silver Medal by the Garden’s Writer Association. He’s a Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Biology at the University of Delaware, where he has taught for 34 years.

Sponsors: Ogunquit Marginal Way Committee, Great Works Regional Land Trust, Marginal Way Preservation Fund, Mt. Agamenticus to the Sea Conservation Initiative, Ogunquit Conservation Commission, Wells Reserve at Laudholm, York County Audubon, York County Master Gardener Association, York Land Trust and the Ogunquit Playhouse.



The Warbler Guide App

Review by Monica Grabin

This year I was given the opportunity to try out the i-Phone app from Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle, based on their terrific book, *The Warbler Guide*. I bought this book as soon as it came out, and the information is wonderful, but it’s way too big to bring into the field. What’s special about their approach is the specificity with which birds are grouped according to easy-to-use field marks. They include small icons for where in the canopy birds are found, and face and body patterns. There are also downloadable guides to quickly compare species, even if one only got a quick look.

Now this has been brought to an app, which is available on iOS devices, and all that information can be carried in your pocket. The controls are easy and intuitive, and you can search by species, color, bottom view, side view, and a completely mind-boggling 3-D view. With this function, you can call up a warbler species and look at it in three dimensions, moving it as you wish. It’s fun just to play with.

Let’s say you’ve just seen a bird that you think is a warbler, but you’re not quite sure which one. Going to the settings you can easily select what view you’d like: side, face, 3-D, 45 degrees, underside, undertail; what region of the country you’re in; what season it is; and whether you want to look by color, taxonomy or alphabetically. Let’s say you select color, side view, fall, eastern U.S. You’ll see all the warblers you might have seen in color order. Select one and you’ll see it, as well as others that look like it, ranged below. From there you can see it in more views, including 3D. It’s incredible. And that’s just the visuals. The authors have also developed a way of notating bird calls by their sonograms. Click on a musical icon and you’ll see all the warblers’ sonograms and buttons to play their songs. Click on one of those, and you’ll see species whose song is similar to the one you’re hearing. Again, incredible.

There are two only two drawbacks to this app: it’s only for the iPhone or iPad, and it’s only for warblers!! I highly recommend it.

***** Upcoming YCA Events at the Wells Reserve at Laudholm Farm *****

Friday, April 22nd – *Earth Day Celebration* – Bird walk at 8:30 am – Visit wellsreserve.org for the details on all the additional events running from 8:30 am till noon



Tuesday, April 26th at 7:00 pm (Note: this is the 4th Tuesday!)

Why do We Need Carnivores Anyway?

Geri Vestin is a conservation biologist whose work focuses on Maine carnivores and our relationship with them. She is a terrific speaker whose informative program will better educate us on the role carnivores play in our ecosystem and help us become more knowledgeable about their ecology. You will discover connections that will leave you in awe. We should take away with a better understanding of the value of carnivores in the Maine landscape and gain in our ability to practice coexistence skills.

Tuesday, May 17th at 7:00 pm

Bird Photography: Insights and Inspiration

Michael Milicia is a gifted photographer and teacher. He will present a selection of bird images along with commentary intended to inform, entertain and inspire. This program will be of interest to both general audiences and photographers of all abilities. Using example photos, Mike will demonstrate the importance of things like head angle, catch lights, in-camera composition, knowing your subject, and being proactive in the field. The goal is to provide some insight into the many different components that must come together to create a compelling bird photograph. FMI: www.michaelmiliciaphotography.com



Tuesday, June 21st at 7:00 pm

(Brief!) Annual Meeting followed by Learning Deep Bird Language with Dan Gardoqui

Birding can be whole lot more than feeding, watching, photographing, keeping life lists, or chasing rarities. It can also involve knowing what birds are saying. Deep Bird Language requires slowing down and truly listening to the birds. For the vast majority of human existence, this was a skill we could not afford to ignore. Once critical to our survival it is now, nearly gone. Local tracker, naturalist, and birder Dan Gardoqui will give us a peek into this world. Dan is co-founder and Executive Director of White Pine Programs, and served as science editor for the book "[What the Robin Knows.](#)"



Visit us on
Facebook

Our Facebook page has experienced a steady increase in activity, rewarding visitors with “hot off the digital camera” photos of local unusual birds and other treats. Please visit the page, “like” us if you wish, and post a photo, sighting or comment of your own.

And visit our website - YorkCountyAudubon.org - to see the photos in this newsletter magically transformed from Black & White into Color!

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Maine Audubon

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York County Chapter



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