December 2015

N E W S & N O T E S

QUEENS COUNTY BIRD CLUB
228-06 NORTHERN BOULEVARD,
DOUGLASTON, NY 11362
(ALLEY POND ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER)

JUST EAST OF CROSS-ISLAND PARKWAY

Visit our Website: http://www.qcbirdclub.org

Queens County Bird Club presents

"Harbor Herons: Waterbirds of New York Harbor" by Susan Elbin

Wednesday, December 16, 2015, 8 pm.
Alley Pond Environmental Center,
228-06 Northern Blvd., Douglaston, NY 11362
www.qcbirdclub.org
Free Admission. Light refreshments served

The purpose of NYC Audubon's Harbor Herons project is to monitor the population status of wading birds (including herons, egrets, and ibis) and other waterbirds (cormorants, gulls, and terns) on select islands in the New York/New Jersey Harbor and surrounding waterways, while also noting the presence of other nesting bird species and current nesting habitat.

Susan Elbin is the Director of Conservation and Science for New York City Audubon where her work is focused on urban ecology—conservation of waterbirds and migratory landbirds in New York City. Current projects include long-term monitoring of and research on nesting and foraging herons, egrets, ibis, and cormorants in the New York Harbor; monitoring migratory and beach-nesting shorebirds in Jamaica Bay; participating in salt marsh bird surveys. These projects have been designed to employ citizen science volunteers and graduate students as well as program staff. Her projects have avian behavioral ecology as their core, leading to conservation action. For example, she is co-author of the Harbor Herons Conservation Plan (2010).

Susan has worked in the field of conservation, within the US and internationally, for more than 25 years. She holds an MS degree in Ecology (Pennsylvania State University) and a PhD in Ecology and Evolution (Rutgers University). She serves on several graduate committees and is an adjunct professor at Pace and Columbia Universities where she teaches courses in ornithology and migration ecology. Susan is the current President of the Waterbird Society.

QCBC TRIPS & EVENTS

Please Register. Let leaders/coordinators know you're participating!

QCBC Christmas Bird Count
Date: Sunday, December 20
Coordinator: Corey Finger
Phone: (518) 445-5829

Coming in January

Point Lookout
Date: Saturday, January 9
Leader: Arie Gilbert
Phone: (917) 693-7178

Montauk Point
Date: Sunday, January 17
Leader: Ian Resnick
Phone: (917) 626- 9562

Meeting: Wednesday, January 20
Program: Bird Life In Brazil
Speaker: Paulo Boute

QCBC OFFICERS

Arie Gilbert
President

Nancy Tognan
Vice President

Lisa Scheppke
Secretary

Ian Resnick
Treasurer

MEMBERSHIP

Annual membership dues:

Individual $27.00
Family* $33.00
*Two or more individuals residing at the same address.

Send dues to:

QCBC – c/o Ian Resnick
220-55 46th Avenue
Apt. 6D
Bayside, NY 11361

NEWS & NOTES

Publication deadline is the first day of the month. Please email articles (Word format preferred) and photos or provide a link to a site where they can be downloaded .
Lisa Scheppke - Editor

Send articles and photos to:

Lisa Scheppke
(347) 531-3019
lmscheppke@gmail.com

FIELD NOTES

Seeking members for new Field Notes Committee.

Contact Arie Gilbert if interested

Arie Gilbert
(917) 693-7178
ariegilbert@optonline.net

QCBC Guest Speaker Notes - November 18, 2015
by Nancy Tognan

The speaker at this month's meeting was Ardith Bondi, photographer, classical flute-player, and pharmacologist. In order for Ardith to view her favorite birds, penguins, she has made several trips to Chile, the Falkland Islands, and the South Georgia Islands of the South Atlantic. The dates of the trips she mentioned were December 1992, October 2012, and November 2014 – all late spring/early summer in the southern hemisphere. She will be returning again within the next few weeks

.

The journeys to these places were not easy, although today it is possible to fly to the Falklands rather than travel by ship as in previous trips. Getting off the boat in the various South Georgia ports involves "wet landings", i.e. wading through water upon disembarking.

Ardith's photos were remarkable not just in technical excellence but in the interesting aspects of bird and animal behavior that so many of them demonstrated. For example, one photo was of a Skua eating the placenta of an elephant seal. She included an amazing video of a Skua stealing an egg from a group of Gentoo penguins. The species of penguins that she showed us included: King, Chinstrap, Gentoo, Magellanic, Humboldt, Rockhopper, and Macaroni. She also showed us non-penguin species too numerous for me to mention, as well as various seals. Her South Georgia photos over the years showed the deterioration of the port of Grytviken. The audience was completely engrossed in both the photos and Ardith's detailed narrations.

Thank you Ardith, for visiting us in Queens! Bon voyage on your latest return to your favorite part of the world!

Tribute to Zu Proly

I didn't meet Zu until about 3 years ago. At that time, she would drive herself to our QCBC meetings from Glen Cove where she lived. She joined in a lot of North Shore Audubon Society's Wednesday walks. When she couldn't walk distances, she would wait in the parking lot, finding almost as many birds in the parking lot as the rest of us during the field trip. She was always fun to be around

- Nancy Tognan

I am one of the most fortunate people to have known Zu.

One day on a CBC in Glen Cove she showed up on a snowy wet day to help out wearing only tennis shoes and a light jacket. Another time a field trip at age 90+ she took a tumble down a hillside. We all gasped, but Zu popped up A-OK.

With her in Washington State on a birding trip, while admiring the mountains, she told me about the great adventure she and her friends had biking the same mountains in her younger days. (What an athlete she must have been!)

Great Birder-Botanist, in the 18th century tradition of awe and teaching others, Zu was an inspiration to me of **"another life led".**

In her 80's she saw a bee-killer in CUBA.

She was active in Sea Cliff & Glen Cove worthwhile causes all her life. She helped at the GC Soup Kitchen into her nineties.

She helped save Welwyn a 225-acre nature preserve in Nassau County and home to the Holocaust Center of LI, back in the 1970's.

What a great woman, what a great life, what a great person to call a friend.

I know this is a small amount to write about a person, but I am forever gladdened that she lived and I knew her.

- Rick Kedenburg

Photo contributed by Lindy Nielsen

Photo of Zu at her "Farewell to NY" party (October 20, 2014) by Nancy Tognan

We will all miss Zu very much. She and I were roommates on many trips. She invented our annual stay at Straus Center, which always was a great Success. On the other hand, she had a LONG, entertaining, and adventurous life, and was always great to be with. I've missed her ever since I moved to NJ. and she to FLA.

_ Lore Schore

Another great thing about Zu was that her glass was more than half full; it was completely full to overflowing. She loved life and was a giving person. Even as she aged and outlived most of her "old" friends, she kept making new ones. She never was lacking for people who loved her and enjoyed her company.

- Joyce Bryk

Photo contributed by Lindy Nielsen

Zu's Farewell to NY Party - Photo by Veronica Natale

Zu was a long-standing Long Island Society member. She had multiple interests in natural history, Botanical was incredibly energetic, enthusiastic and widely travelled, including to some locales that I would not venture to visit.

- Andrew Greller

Newsday obituary, published Nov 20, 2015.

PROLY - Elisa "Zu," 97, a retired physical education teacher with the Westbury Public Schools, died peacefully at home in Boca Raton, FL on Wednesday on November 11, 2015. Originally from Jamaica, NY, Hempstead, NY and Glen Cove, NY, she was a dedicated member of the Long Island Botanical Society, North Shore Audubon Society, Inc., Nature Conservancy Long Island Chapter, and the Long Island Greenbelt Trail Conference, Inc. Zu was also a devoted friend to many as well as a long-time volunteer at the Glen Cove Soup Kitchen "The Inn" (North Shore Interfaith Nutrition Network) and the North Shore Sheltering Program. She is survived by her sister, Louise Smith, and sister-in-law, Ruth Proly, 9 nieces and nephews, 20 grandnieces and grandnephews and 12 great grandnieces and great grand nephews. Zu was an extraordinary sister, aunt, and world traveler who visited 62 countries in her lifetime, and loved sharing the knowledge from all her adventures with all of us. A celebration memorial service will be held on January 16, 2016 at the First Presbyterian Church of Glen Cove located at 7 North Lane, Glen Cove, NY at 12 noon. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the Long Island Greenbelt Trail Conference, Inc. (www.ligreenbelt.org) or the Nature Conservancy Long Island Chapter, 250 Lawrence Hill Road, Cold Spring Harbor, NY 11724.

Field Trip Report – Kissena Park & Kissena Corridor Park
October 3, 2015
Leader: Eric Miller
By Lisa Scheppke

A small group of birders showed up on a damp gray day for a QCBC trip to Kissena and Kissena Corridor Parks, led by Eric Miller. Thirteen species of warbler were recorded including Nashville and Blackpoll Warblers. Eric caught a glimpse of a Tennessee Warbler but nobody else was able to get on the bird before it disappeared.

A cooperative Lincoln's Sparrow obliged us by feeding out in the open with a Song Sparrow, near the playground, providing an opportunity for a comparison of the two species. Other Kissena Park highlights included a fly-over Common Raven, a Brown Thrasher, and a Swainson's Thrush.

The best bird of the day (at least, to me, because I see them so rarely) was a Wison's Snipe that was spotted at Kissena Corridor Park. The bird, inadvertently flushed from the puddle where it was feeding, flew a short distance away and hunkered down in a small patch of grass where its cryptic coloring allowed it to virtually hide in plain sight.

Canada Goose	Red-bellied Woodpecker	American Crow	European Starling	Blackpoll Warbler	Swamp Sparrow
Mute Swan	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Common Raven	Cedar Waxwing	Palm Warbler	White-thr. Sparrow
Ring-necked Pheasant	Downy Woodpecker	House Wren	Northern Waterthrush	Pine Warbler	Northern Cardinal
Osprey	Northern Flicker	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Black-and-white Warbler	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Indigo Buning
Sharp-shinned Hawk	American Kestrel	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Nashville Warbler	Bl-thr. Green Warbler	Red-winged Blackbird
Red-tailed Hawk	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Swainson's Thrush	Common Yellowthroat	Eastern Towhee	American Goldfinch
Wilson's Snipe	Eastern Phoebe	American Robin	American Redstart	Chipping Sparrow	House Sparrow
Ring-billed Gull	Red-eyed Vireo	Gray Catbird	Northern Parula	Savannah Sparrow	
Rock Pigeon	Blue-headed Vireo	Brown Thrasher	Magnolia Warbler	Song Sparrow	
Mourning Dove	Blue Jay	Northern Mockingbird	Yellow Warbler	Lincoln's Sparrow	

Western Kingbird at Edgemere Landfill
October 3, 2015
By Lisa Scheppke

Following the Kissena trip I headed over to Southern Queens since I needed to make a work related visit to Dubos Point. I decided to take a quick tour of nearby Edgemere Landfill (a good spot for migrating/wintering sparrows and raptors) and also, apparently a good location to check for migrating flycatchers who have lost their way. The previous year around the same time, a Say's Phoebe had been discovered at Edgemere.

My visit proved to be rewarding when I came across a Western-type Kingbird. The bird was a very pale individual and I did not have a field guide with me so I was not positive which particular species it was, although I assumed that it was the default species, Western Kingbird. Although I have recently begun recording my sightings in ebird, the thought of posting a bird sighting in other venues is off-putting to me.

Although I have the utmost respect and gratitude for those who do post (since I have added many life birds based on their info) I have also seen that those who do post have been criticized for incorrect ID's, posting untimely, posting too many or too few details, posting birds that are not rare enough, etc. Compared to some of my compatriots I am still a novice, and I would rather avoid such criticism so my strategy is to immediately convey my sightings to a more experienced birder who can then decide how to disseminate the information. In this case my sighting was ultimately relayed to Corey Finger who re-found the bird the next day and confirmed that it was indeed a Western Kingbird.

Painted Bunting in Prospect Park - By Lisa Scheppke

A Partridge in a Pear Tree is nothing compared to thee!

He walks in beauty
like the night,
His plumage a quite
spectacular sight.
But even more wondrous
than his technicolor,
Like his female counterpart
who's far duller,
Is his ability to hide himself
amongst the leaves
As his expectant audience
stands and grieves,
Their inability to get
a better view.
Oh what, pray tell, is a
painted bunting seeker to do!

Supreme patience
is often required
To indulge this passion
that has us so inspired.
Jostling our way in
amongst the herd,
We try to position ourselves
to best see the bird.
But after braving Brooklyn's
traffic woes
And the hordes of birders
stepping on each other's toes
We finally catch a glimpse of
What we came to see!
Now, lets find a way to
entice him to Queens for the CBC!

OK. I confess, I took the above photo of this Painted Bunting in Florida and not in Prospect Park, since I was not lucky enough to capture even a bad photo of this extraordinary but frustratingly skulky visitor which has been causing a stir in New York (and I simply could not write about a Painted Bunting without including a photo.)

The PP bird has been featured in a variety of venues such as the NY Times, USA Today, WPIX News, NY 1, WCBS Radio & the Weather Channel. QCBC's very own Arie Gilbert and Nancy Tognan were even interviewed (pictured below with Phil Uruburu and Marla from WCBS).

So when the opportunity arose to chase the dazzling beauty with Eric Miller and Jean Loscalzo, I could not pass it up so I pushed back my chiropractic appointment to later that afternoon and the three of us joined many other birders who (along with non-birders that had been drawn in by the excitement surrounding the charismatic visitor) had already flocked to the site near the Lasker skating rink. We ran into several other QCBC members who had also made the trek to Prospect including Jeff Ritter, Arlene Rawls, and Donna Schuman.

It was amazing how hard it was to spot such a brilliantly colored bird amongst the drab surroundings but with the hordes jockeying for position in an attempt to spot the bird as it foraged in the brush, I only managed to catch fleeting half-obscured glimpses. However because Jean and I were operating under time constraints, and since a diagnostic glimpse was enough to add a tick to my NY Life List, I was sufficiently gratified.

Had I not previously seen a male Painted Bunting in three other states this year, though, I might have forsaken my ailing back for a better look. However, early in the year, Eric and I had been fortunate enough to see one that was repeatedly visiting a feeder in a Connecticut backyard and I had also seen one feeding with a Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Buntings & a Northern Cardinal, in Alabama. On both of these occasions the bunting had been in the open but a long distance away. My best Painted Bunting encounter had occurred in Meritt Island, Florida, where Jean, Bob Hayes, and I had been able to enjoy prolonged looks at a pair from a few feet away.

Photo by Coco

Female, Florida

Connecticut

Alabama

Field Trip Report – Prospect Park
October 18, 2015
Article and Photos By Leader: Arie Gilbert

A nice group of 10 of us met at the Prospect Park Zoo for a QCBC walk I was leading on the brisk morning of October 18. It included Arlene R, Pat A, John G, Steve S, Coco & Benny, Caesar C, Joan P, and Peggy M. Most of us were surprised by the chilly weather, and those that brought a bit of extra warmth were glad they did. At one point, though happy with my new tchachka-enabled gloves, (they permitting swiping on the screen of the smart phone) I was perturbed by the presence of chilliness in my hands which I thought should not be. Checking the weather, it was only 38! In the shadows of the trees it felt cooler, and thankfully, in sunlight it felt oh so good. What a gloriously beautiful day to be out though, without a doubt. Quite a difference from last year's dreary overcast. And kudos to Mr. Olmstead for a spectacular park. Beautiful. The birds thought so too. They were all over, and in good numbers. At the entrance was a large flock of Grackles, perhaps 50 or so being characteristically noisy. One of the first good sightings was a Turkey Vulture also as we entered the park. Coopers Hawk and Red-tailed Hawks were about as well.

The joint was jumping, with Rublets and Goblets all around, only competing with Butter-butts for sheer numbers. But with a lot of skillful eyes picking through them we also found Parula, Magnolia, Blackpoll, lots of Palm, and Black-throated Blue. But this was not the end of the warbler show... By the ponds in the lullwater we had a nice showing of quackiderms, highlighted by a Wigeon and a few Shovelers, as well as a geriatric ward of Coots. Not to feel left out, woodpeckers put in a good showing as well predominated by Flickers, but Red-bellied, Downy, Hairy, and Sapsucker were also spotted.

Last year's Philadelphia freedom was not reprised. On that trip we had a remarkable 7 of those Vireos sighted. Zilch were seen today, but Red-eyed and Blue-headed were seen, the latter in good numbers. Also in large numbers were the following: Phoebe and Hermit Thrush. Requests were made for Swainson's Thrush, but it was not to be. The other requests were for Connecticut Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, and Nashville Warbler. Two out of three ain't bad, or so says Mr. Loaf. Which two? Read on.

As the day went on, more and more people began to show up at the park, turning into thronging masses present to walk and show support for breast cancer awareness. The park was eventually turned into a sea of pink clad marchers, enthusiastic cheerleaders, music and event support stations and noise! Lots of noise! As near as we could tell they were completely oblivious to our desire to find birds! Sheesh! But it was so encouraging to see so many out in support of an important and worthwhile cause.

We did our best to stick to less traveled paths and quieter areas, and did pretty well. But even so, there is a curious phenomena in busy city parks where some birds become oblivious to people. One such bird was along the lake by the cemetery path, but being passed by lots and I mean LOTS of people. This Pine Warbler (right) was at our feet, a mere 3-6 feet away affording great looks and photos. What a thrill! And oh how I wish more birds were so amenable.

Eventually, we ended up at the 'picnic house' area, near an enclosure where they were encouraging native plant restoration and planted saplings. From the picnic tables we spotted movements in the grass in front of the enclosure, and though made up of a lot of Chipping Sparrows, other goodies were present as well. One such was a drab little warbler that satisfied one of the 'requests', and was confidently IDed by Steve S. as an Orange-crowned Warbler.

Checking the weeds, (though some objected to that moniker,) we saw much activity. The best by far was a Nashville Warbler (right), satisfying another 'request' and going above and beyond. This little beauty posed for us in sunlit splendor.

It was about this time that the crowds and the noise were overtaking us, noon was approaching, and an email was received via the NYS listserve alerting us to the location of a White Ibis in nearby Staten Island. As it was, some had to depart anyway, and a quick inquiry of the group had half having to head home shortly while the other half was enthusiastic about chasing a rarity.

So it was decided to conclude the Prospect Park portion of the trip, which by all accounts was quite good, and attempt to incorporate an impromptu twitch into the wilds of Staten Island. Note: yours truly had attempted to find what appears to be the same Ibis when it had been spotted at Prospect park and then Greenwood cemetery back on the 13th.

Trip list: Mute Swan, Wood Duck, American Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Double-crested Cormorant, Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downey Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Palm Warbler, Pine Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, House Sparrow.

Three cars set off while the others bid us adieu. Pat and John went on their own, while Caesar followed Arlene and I. Following the GPS directions, and being frustrated by Sunday traffic, I was further annoyed by the navigation instructions unexpectedly changing its mind from time to time. Bear in mind I could not simply decide to turn when I thought I had to proceed straight ahead; traffic congestion and being followed made that untenable. Eventually I decided to follow a course to the highway and ignore previous suggestions for turns and even u-turns!

I made it to the Verrazano bridge, and thought it was clear sailing from there on. But the traffic gods are consistent in punishing those who venture onto this island by strangling them in slow traffic. A few miles down the highway traffic slowed to a crawl, so what else is new. And then the phone rang.

Pat and John were still in Brooklyn having been hamstrung by traffic, closed on ramps, and bad GPS info that sent them in circles. Having touched base we continued on to our quarry, while they informing that they were being delayed a bit.

Fortunately, we got to where we wanted to be. Picturesque? Far from it. This was a very industrial area and the polar opposite of picturesque. Oh well.

We parked at the end of River Road, behind two other cars. Other birders no doubt, always an encouraging sign. And as we started for the railroad tracks to walk upon to the requisite pond, they came walking out. They informed us that the pond was on the left about a half mile down, and that the bird was there, but sometimes obscured by walking behind the Phragmites.

The three of us walked on, hobbled a bit by the uneven spacing of the rail ties and the rock ballast. But walk on we did. Eventually we arrived at the pond and looked around. There was a Great Egret off to the left where we were told the bird was, as well as some Yellowlegs. Off to the right was a Great Blue Heron, and when I put my bins up I spotted the White Ibis behind it!

We got great looks and set up scopes for even better looks. In with the mix was also a female type Pintail. I set upon photographing this much desired bird, a lifer for Arlene and a NY State bird for Caesar and myself. I was also very pleased that it was NYS #410 for me.

Pat and John called again and had just arrived, but they had to traverse the tracks to get to us. We told them the bird was still there...

We observed the bird for just about 10 minutes. {I now know this from the time stamp on my photos.} Then a Great Egret landed next to the Ibis and flushed it! We watched as it circled over the pond, and we hoped it was going to land again. It just kept circling however, and getting higher and higher.

I called Pat, but she didn't hear her phone ring, and then as she and John came around the corner Arlene and I were jumping up and down arms flailing and pointing up and down in the air, desperate for them to see us and catch a glimpse of the bird as it flew past them.

They never averted their eyes from the ground. In an effort to not stumble on the uneven surface, the missed an opportunity to have possibly seen the bird at last as it flew by. GAAAAH. Shortly thereafter a text message came in from the other birders, who were still at the parking area. He inquired if the bird had flown, because they just had a White Ibis fly by. I was saddened to report that the bird had in fact just taken off. He said that they watched as it disappeared into the distance far to the south and east.

Due to the vagaries of Brooklyn traffic, and the capriciousness of GPS navigation, our co-conspirators just missed the bird, as did other birders who showed up afterwards. A bittersweet end to an impromptu twitch.

Field Trip Report - Caumsett State Park
Leader: Rich Kelly
October 25, 2015

On Sunday, October 25, 2015, six intrepid QCBC observers braved the drizzle and SW winds to bird a large portion of Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve in Lloyd Harbor, Suffolk County. The weather was not conducive to Fall migration birding, but we got to see some nice sights and some Fall foliage. We walked past the Marshall Field III Main House, around Fresh Pond, and down to Long Island Sound near the northeast corner of the park. We hit the old polo field and manure piles on the way back, but bird activity was sparse there.

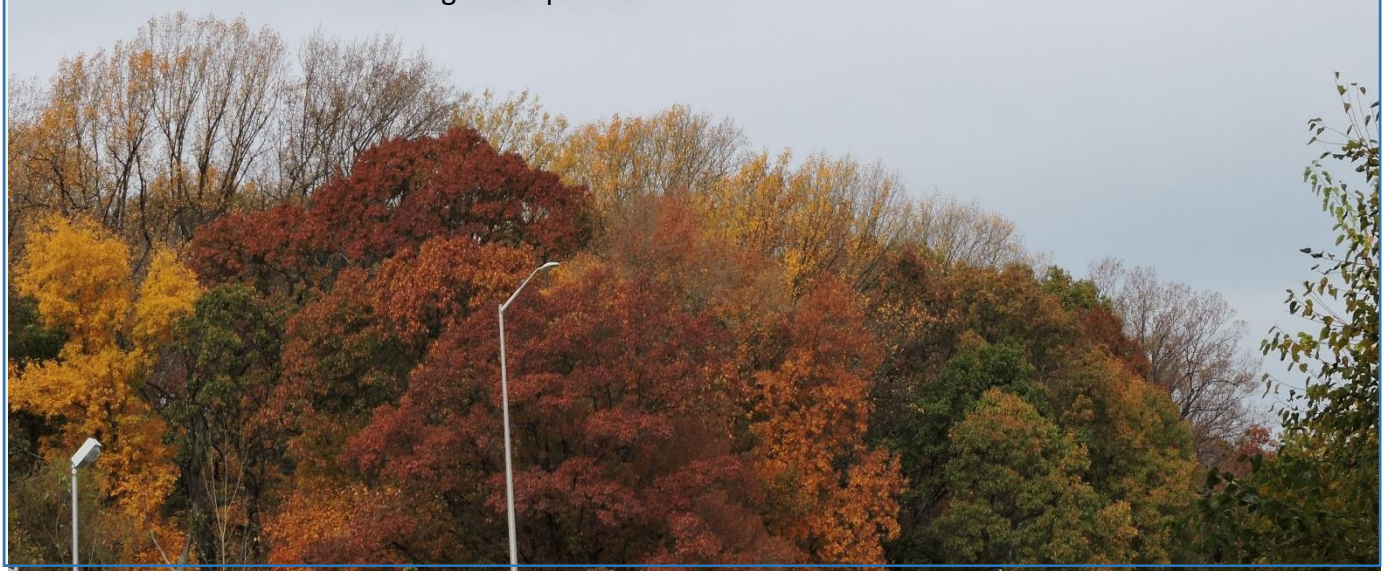
Probably the best birds were 2 Merlins, one interacting with Blue Jays at the parking lot, 4 Eastern Bluebirds seen and heard calling, and a Brown Thrasher. Complete species list below. No Woodchucks were observed.

Canada Goose	Cooper's Hawk	Mourning Dove	White-breasted Nuthatch	Northern Mockingbird	Song Sparrow
Brant	Red-tailed Hawk	Red-bellied Woodpecker	Carolina Wren	Brown Thrasher	Swamp Sparrow
American Black Duck	Merlin	Northern Flicker	Golden-crowned Kinglet	European Starling	White-throated Sparrow
Mallard	Laughing Gull	Eastern Phoebe	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Cedar Waxwing	Dark-eyed Junco
Green-winged Teal	Ring-billed Gull	Blue Jay	Eastern Bluebird	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Red-winged Blackbird
Common Loon	Herring Gull	American Crow	Hermit Thrush	Eastern Towhee	House Sparrow
Double-crested Cormorant	Great Black-backed Gull	Tufted Titmouse	American Robin	Chipping Sparrow	

Field Trip Report - Alley Pond Environmental Center, Douglaston Marsh, Oakland Lake
Leader: Eric Miller
November 7, 2015
Article & Photos by Lisa Scheppke

Close to twenty birders assembled at APEC for a QCBC Field trip on a beautiful Autumn morning. The sun was shining and the fall foliage was at its peak as we headed along the trails west of Alley Creek. A roosting Cooper's Hawk was spotted, as was a flyover Great Blue Heron.

We made our way over to the restoration pond (alternately referred to as "Alley Pond" and "the Secret Warbler Spot," as dubbed by Eric). We did not find any warblers but we did find a small group of Bufflehead females swimming in the pond.



We made our way back from whence we came and as we walked atop the berm, we were treated to a raptor show as three late ospreys appeared over us followed by a couple of accipiters and a falcon.

Before emerging back out onto Northern Blvd. we came across a large swarm of Box Elder Bugs and I had difficulty trying to avoid stepping on them as I tried to photograph a small group clustered on a fallen log. As we subsequently crossed over Alley Creek we saw a fish floundering on the shoreline. Unable to resist an animal in need, I attempted to rescue the poor thing. I found a discarded fishing pole and gently nudged the fish into the water. Unfortunately, it appeared to be too late since the ill-fated creature showed know interest in swimming.

We then took a stroll on the boardwalk that led to Alley Creek where we encountered a Greater Yellowlegs and a plentiful school of menhaden (bunker) swimming below us.

Although it was not on the original agenda, Eric decided to extend the field trip by incorporating a visit to the newly reopened Oakland Lake. Here the remaining participants added additional species to the trip list including Wood Duck and Pied-billed Grebe.

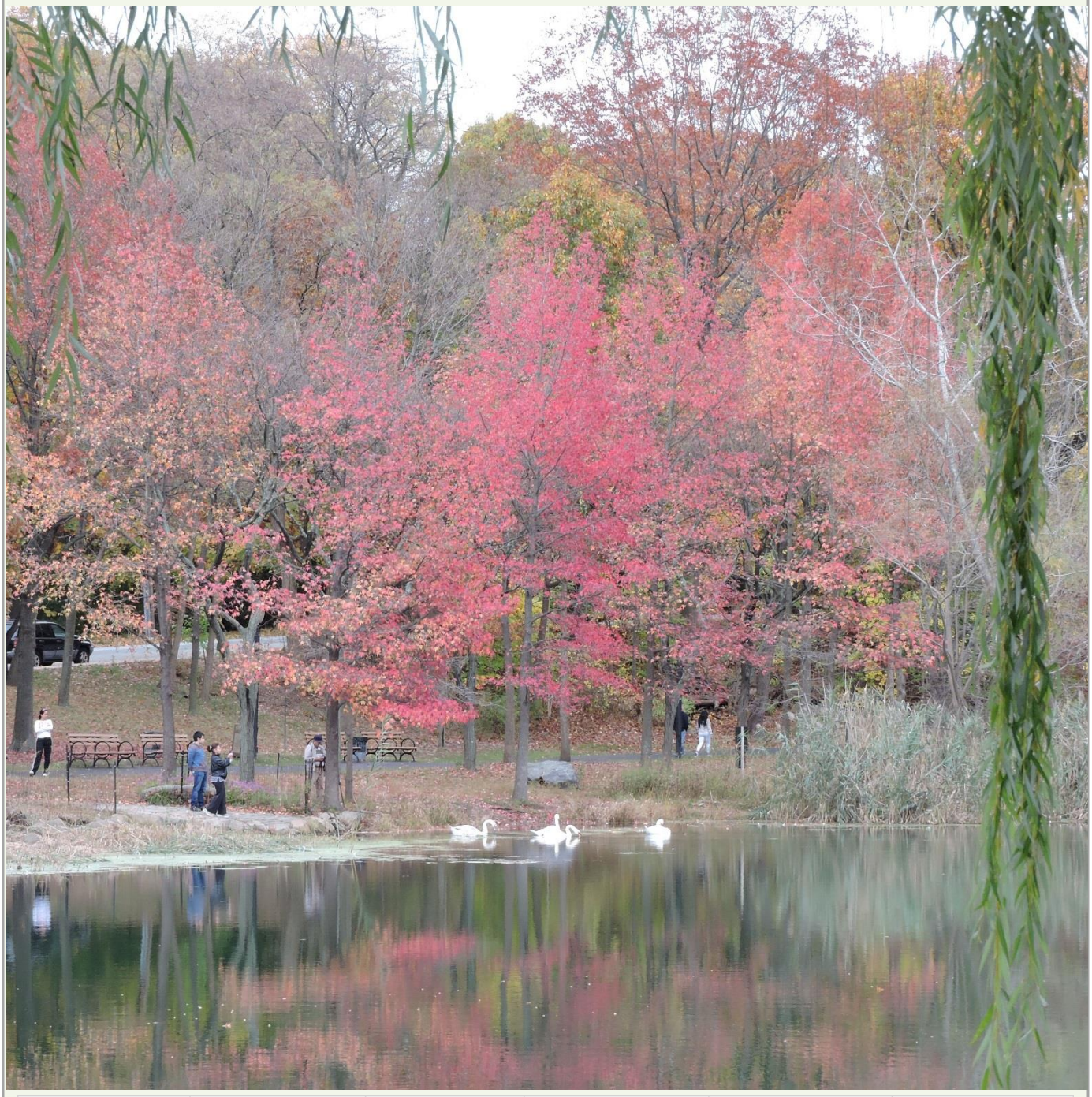
I, for one, was pleased with the relatively quick work done by NYC Parks since I like to visit Oakland Lake throughout the winter to view the varying assortment of ducks. In my experience, it has been one of the most reliable spot to see Wood Ducks in the area.

Group Photo by Coco

Box Elder Bugs

Greater Yellowlegs

After a lap around the lake we explored the field and wooded trails to the west of Oakland Lake where Eric's ears detected a Winter Wren. Steve Schellenger was able to coax the wren out of hiding briefly by playing some calls on his phone.



Pied-billed Grebe	Mallard	Merlin	Belted Kingfisher	Carolina Wren	Cedar Waxwing
Dbl-crstd Cormorant	Bufflehead	American Coot	Downy Woodpecker	Gldn-crowned Kinglet	Song Sparrow
Great Blue Heron	Osprey	Greater Yellowlegs	Northern Flicker	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Wh-throated Sparrow
Great Egret	Northern Harrier	Ring-billed Gull	Blue Jay	Hermit Thrush	Northern Cardinal
Canada Goose	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Herring Gull	American Crow	American Robin	Red-winged Blackbird
Mute Swan	Cooper's Hawk	Rock Pigeon	Bl-capped Chickadee	Northern Mockingbird	Common Grackle
Wood Duck	Red-tailed Hawk	Mourning Dove	Winter Wren	European Starling	American Goldfinch
Gadwall					

DEP Meeting – Chlorination – Alley Creek & Little Neck Bay

Public Meeting #3 on the CSO Long Term Control Plan for the Alley Creek & Little Neck Bay
Date of Meeting: Nov. 17, 2015

Notes by N. Tognan.
Other QCBC members in attendance: Ian Resnick, Aline Euler.

Meeting was run by Ibrahim Abdul-Lateen (not sure of spelling), Director of Communications, NYC Dept of Environmental Protection (DEP). Most of speaking was done by Jim Muller.

Definitions:
CSO means Combined Sewer Overflow, which is a combination of sewage and excess rainwater captured by storm sewers.
LTCP means Long Term Control Plan

The facility built near Alley Pond Environmental Center holds wastewater, sewage and rainwater runoff combined, so that it may be processed by the Tallman Island facility near College Point.

When there is excessive rainfall, .5 inches of rain per hour or more, the capacity of this storage is exceeded and the wastewater is dumped into Little Neck Bay. This occurs about 16 times per year (it rains about 100 times per year.)

NYC DEP has been mandated by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to reduce the amount of fecal coliform that is released into coastal waters. The goal is to have the water in Little Neck Bay as "swimmable" quality.

The "preferred alternative" method to reduce fecal coliform is chlorination. Ultraviolet and other alternatives were deemed too expensive and not practical.

NYC DEP is planning to chlorinate all CSO discharge at Alley Creek and other facilities. They realize chlorine is toxic to marine life.

First, there will be a pilot program at Spring Creek (on Jamaica Bay) to chlorinate their discharges, using advanced methods to apply a minimal amount of chlorine. If they are not able to reduce their chlorine output to an acceptable level, they will add sodium bisulfate to reduce the chlorine. This program will commence in the summer of 2016.

Next, Alley Creek will implement its program. Depending on the results of the Spring Creek pilot program, a decision will be made whether or not sodium bisulfate is necessary.

The storage facilities for the sodium hypochlorite (chlorine) and sodium hypochlorite mixing chamber will be located near the exit ramp from the northbound Cross-Island Pkwy to Northern Blvd eastbound. The building footprint for the first is 32'x32'. For the second, 40'x10'.

There is currently fecal coliform being produced by the septic systems in Douglas Manor. This was acknowledged by a NYC DEP rep named Clare Votte (not sure of spelling) However, the scope of the meeting and planning does not address this source of sewage, nor any other illegal discharge; only the waste produced through the NYC DEP's system.

She spoke on the need for NYC to eventually produce a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), so that storm runoff does not contain sewage. This is way-long-term planning.

Public comments will be accepted through December 17, 2015. For more information on NYC's CSO program, see DEP website www.nyc.gov/dep/ltcp and www.Facebook.com/NYCWater.

Queens County Bird Club Inc.

QCBC C/O Alley Pond Environmental Center
228-06 Northern Blvd. Douglaston, NY 11362
WWW.QCBirdClub.Org

Arie Gilbert — President
Nancy Tognan — Vice President
Lisa Scheppke — Secretary
Ian Resnick — Treasurer
Stu Lipkin — Council
Bob Dieterich — Council

Membership Application

Yes! I want to be a member of Queens County Bird Club Inc.

This is for ... New Member{s}___ Renewing Member{s}___

Individual: $27 ___ Family:$33___ (two or more individuals at same address)

Name: _____

Street Address: _____ Apt# _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

H-Phone: _____ Cell: _____

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News & Notes is our member publication, *and will be sent via email*. Important, sometimes last minute information is sent to members regarding meeting and field trip changes *via email* so please provide it, and check it!

Areas of interest: ie field trips, speakers, birds, botany, bugs, xmas count, big day, hawks, warblers, etc.

My interests are..._____

How can you help out in the club? Ie. meeting set up, refreshments, planning, etc.

I will help..._____

Print and fill out this form, and enclose check payable to "**Queens County Bird Club Inc**" and mail to

QCBC - C/O Alley Pond Environmental Ctr { APEC }
228-06 Northern Boulevard
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Printing and mailing the QCBC News & Notes can be expensive.
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New members are asked to complete the membership application form that can be downloaded from our website at http://www.qcbirdclub.org/Join-Our-Club
Please mail (along with your dues) to Ian Resnick.

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