



Central Westchester Audubon Society *News*

Central Westchester Audubon Society, a Chapter of National Audubon Society serves
Elmsford, Greenburgh, Harrison, Purchase, Rye, Rye Brook, and White Plains

Vol. XXXV, NO. 2

January – February 2012

Winter Programs -co-sponsored with Bronx River - Sound Shore Audubon - Free and open to the public.

**Film: "Play Again" - What are the consequences
of a childhood away from nature?**

Thursday, January 19, 7:30 p.m.

Refreshments served at 7:00

Church Street School, Room 132

295 Church St., White Plains

This is a moving and humorous documentary following six teenagers who, like the "average American child," spend five to fifteen hours a day behind screens. "Play Again" unplugs these teens and takes them on their first wilderness adventure - no electricity, no cell phone coverage, no virtual reality.



Memories from Matinicus Rock

Speaker: Benjamin Van Doren

Thursday, February 16, 7:30 p.m.

Refreshments served at 7:00 p.m.

Church Street School, Room 132

295 Church St., White Plains



Photo by Jean Coates

Teen birder Benjamin Van Doren will share his photographs and experiences working with nesting seabirds this past summer on Matinicus Rock, a 22-acre island situated over twenty miles off the coast of Maine. As part of a long-term research and recovery program, Benjamin helped monitor Atlantic Puffins, Razorbills, Arctic Terns, Leach's Storm-Petrels, and a number of other species on one of the most diverse seabird colonies in the eastern United States.

CENTRAL WESTCHESTER AUDUBON SOCIETY
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Program Cancellations

To find out if a program is cancelled because of inclement weather, please call 914-946-1780.

Directions to Church Street School

Take 1-287, Cross Westchester Expressway, to Exit 6, North Broadway, Going west-bound (toward Tarrytown) turn left at the end of the ramp, and turn left (south) on North Broadway. going east-bound (toward Rye) turn right (south) at top of ramp on North Broadway. Then take the first right, immediately after expressway ramp, onto Westview. Westview has a sharp left turn into Church street. The entrance to the school parking lot is on the right, 0.2 miles from Westview.

Field Trips 2012

Doug Bloom, Field Trip Leader for BR/SS invites CWAS members to join these field trips. Please call Doug Bloom for Information on trips at (914)713-0630 days between 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM Tuesday-Saturday, or evenings at (914) 834-5203 until 10:00. Beginners are always welcome.

Sunday January 15 - Jones Beach - meet at 7:00 AM at Scarsdale Village Hall. Wintering ducks and other birds. Possibly snowy owls

Saturday February 4 - Hudson River Eagle Fest, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM with events at parks along the Hudson River. See www.Teatown.org/eaglefest/ for information.



Saturday February 11 - Croton Point Park Eagle Walk – Meet at 8 AM Wild Bird Center on Central Ave, Scarsdale or Croton Point Park 8:40 AM in big parking lot near large pavilion.

Weekend trip week of February 18 - Cape Ann, Massachusetts co-sponsored with Saw Mill River Audubon

Sunday March 18 - Read Sanctuary and Marshlands Conservatory – meet at Read at 8 AM. Looking for late wintering waterfowl and early spring migrants.

Sunday April 15 - Larchmont Reservoir and Hommocks nature area. Meet at 8 AM at Reservoir. Looking for spring migrants.

Citizen Action Claims Victory for the Parks

If you didn't have access to local newspapers, you might not have known about the alarming cuts County Executive Astorino planned for the 2012 budget. He proposed cutting the funding for and closing the County Nature Centers (Marshlands, Read, Cranberry Lake, Lenoir, Trailside Nature Museum, and Croton Point) and laying off their curators. All five Westchester Audubon Chapters, Audubon New York, the Friends groups, some of the PTA's and other informed and interested parties were galvanized into action – writing and phoning the legislators and the County Executive, sending letters to the newspapers, and appearing at all three budget hearings, advocating for the restoration of park funding.

At the final budget hearing on December 6th, at which I spoke as a representative of CWAS, a group of more than 30 children, dressed in animal costumes, and their parents rallied on the steps of the County Center in support of retaining the funding for the parks. And at the hearing itself, many of the children spoke passionately and convincingly of the importance of the parks to their lives.

Fortunately, funding for the parks and other important services has been restored, at least for 2012. Funding for the parks is not guaranteed for the 2013 budget year when there will not be a super-majority of legislators to override a veto by the County Executive. I believe the outpouring of opposition helped win the day, but we have to be diligent in our activism when the composition of the Board of Legislators, which will decide the 2013 budget, changes.

If you wish to take part in any future actions, please let us know by e-mailing us at cwas@centralwestchesteraudubon.org so we can inform you when the next urgent issue comes up.

Please refer to our website for a copy of the Audubon New York letter to the Board of Legislators and the County Executive, which was signed by all of the Westchester chapters and David Yarnold, President of National Audubon and a Dobbs Ferry resident.

Jeanne Alpert

You spoke and they listened. The County Parks funding reportedly generated more public response than any other issue. Thank you to all who called, wrote and emailed our County Board of Legislators.

Conservation Activism – 2011 in Review

Public advocacy has played a vital role in shaping national legislation on conservation issues in 2011:

- A major conservation victory came this past year with the House defeat of amendments which would have weakened protections of the Endangered Species Act.
- Bi-partisan action in both the Senate and the House has introduced legislation addressing the BP oil spill to dedicate funds for Gulf restoration.
- Funding was restored for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and State Wildlife Grants.

You can obtain more information at www.audubonaction.org.

CWAS Offers Camp Scholarships

Each summer CWAS offers camp scholarships to elementary school students who reside in the communities served by our chapter. Fortunately the renewed funding of the Westchester County Parks programs will allow the Ecology Camps to operate in 2012. Children entering grades 2 through 6 by September 2011 are eligible to apply for 1-week CWAS scholarships this coming summer to the Westchester County Ecology Camps at Marshlands Conservancy in Rye and Cranberry Lake in North White Plains. This is a wonderful opportunity to encourage in your children an appreciation of the natural world.

Around mid-February we will be mailing applications to the principals of the schools in the communities we serve for distribution to teachers in the appropriate grades. If you wish your child to apply for a scholarship, ask your child's teacher or principal for an application. In addition applications will be available at the children's section of your local library, at the Marshlands and Cranberry Lake Nature Centers, and on our website. You may also call Gladys Goldmann at 949-3486 for information. Following are letters from some of last summer's very enthusiastic campers.

Dear Central Westchester Audubon Society,

I had a lot of fun at Cranberry Lake Camp. I learned about different leaves on trees. Two of my favorites were the beech tree and sugar maple. I enjoyed doing ponding because we caught lots of things like the dragonfly larvae. I look forward to going back to Cranberry Lake next summer.

Charlotte

I thought Cranberry Lake Camp was very interesting. I learned that catbirds don't look like a cat, but they sound like cats. I also learned about the different kinds of frogs such as the bullfrog. Another thing that I learned is that poison ivy can grow anywhere even if it's not planted there.

Cranberry Lake Camp was very exciting.

Brenna

I had a great time at Rye Marshlands Camp. We went seining, bug searching and watching deer. My favorite part was building a fort because my dad taught me how to do it at home. Thank you for giving me a scholarship to the camp. It was a lot of fun!

Will



I had a marvelous time at Rye Marshlands Camp. We studied dinosaur bones from a long time ago. We also played deer tag. My favorite part was exploring Rye Marshlands Beach since I found a blue crab carcass.

Thank you for giving me a scholarship to the camp. It was a lot of fun. Daniel

Thank you very much for the scholarship to the Children's Summer Ecology Program. I really enjoyed it. My favorite games were Blind Old Owl, Fox in the Burrow and Animal Duel. Animal Duel and Fox in the Burrow taught me animal survival. Blind Old Owl taught me animal senses. I learned a lot on hikes and saw some pretty amazing things. For instance, a two foot wide fungi and a six inch tall mushroom. I did some pretty fun things and I hope to do them all again next year! Phoebe



I really enjoyed nature camp! It was so cool! My favorite was a game called Animal duel. That's when you act out animals. Also we did crafts every day! My favorite was a snake. Also we went to the Quarry and made mugwort crowns. I learned so much! Like Indians use black birch for tooth brushes. Also they use tulip trees for canoes. Thanks a lot! Gabby

A mom writes: We are so grateful for the opportunity the girls had to develop more of an awareness for the world around them and greater love for nature! The girls were so eager to be dropped off at camp in the morning, and couldn't wait to tell us everything they did each day!

Special thanks to Gladys Goldmann and her Scholarship committee members for all their work in reviewing and processing camp scholarship applications.

Does camp sound like fun? Consider attending an Audubon Adult or Family Camp.

Hog Island Audubon Camp in Maine is run by the Seabird Restoration Program (Project Puffin) of the National Audubon Society. All summer programs include field trips to nearby Eastern Egg Rock, where Dr. Steve Kress and his team of biologists have successfully restored an island colony of Atlantic Puffins, and Roseate, Arctic and Common Terns. Immerse yourself in the joy of birding with expert-led workshops, lively evening presentations, saltwater birding tours and trips to diverse habitats on the Maine coast. Roger Tory Peterson was the camp's first birding instructor in 1936 and many of America's finest naturalists, including Rachel Carson, have spent time on the 330-acre wildlife sanctuary, located in mid-coast Maine, on Muscongus Bay. Participants live in restored wooden buildings dating back to the early 1900's and are treated to three fabulous meals each day. For information on Hog Island and other Audubon camp programs visit www.audubon.org.

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