



Central Westchester Audubon Society News

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

VOL. XXXII, NO. 1

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 2008

Program **Slime Lab**

Thursday, October 16, 2007
7:00 PM in the nature lodge at the
Cranberry Lake Preserve



Get ready to leave the nest and go swinging on the evolutionary tree as we leap from Audubon's favorite Aves branch all the way over to the class Myxomycetes. This program, co-sponsored by the Westchester County Division of Conservation, is a crash course in all things slime mold. We'll learn the life histories of Witch's Toothpaste, Cotton Candy Slime, the always-popular Dog Vomit Slime, and more in this slide-show introduction to the creatures that literally live inside of Westchester's woods. There will be both live and preserved specimens on display as well as microscopes with which to practice your new-found identification skills. Following the program, slime molds will be up for adoption – they make great pets. Really. And, if after the program you have a craving for more things slime, there'll be the field work companion to the lab on Saturday, October 18 at 1 p.m. at Cranberry – “It Came from under the Log”.

Taro Ietaka is the curator of the Cranberry Lake Preserve – part of the Westchester County Parks system. He has studied myxos with Steve Stephenson, author of *Myxomycetes – A Handbook of Slime Molds*. Cranberry Lake offers free weekend nature programs from September – June (<http://www.westchestergov.com/parks/NatureCenters05/Cranberry.htm>).

In Memoriam: Audrey Ackerly. Recently, I had a note from Audrey's daughter Gail that her mother had passed away in the summer of 2007. According to our newsletter archives, Audrey was on the CWAS board from 1988 through 1996, serving as membership chair, field trip leader and coordinator for pecan sales. An avid birder, Audrey moved to Arizona, a very “birdy” place, but faithfully continued her membership to our chapter, corresponding yearly with her Arizona bird notes along with a generous contribution to our scholarship fund. Audrey was a good and loyal friend – we will miss her.

Field Trips

Sunday, September 28, at the Audubon Center in Greenwich. Meet at the Center. (613 Riversville Rd., Greenwich 203-869-5272) **8AM**–Walk around the property. **9:30AM**–Hawk watch. This is a manned hawk watch site, so there will be plenty of counters to help us with identification of the hawks as they fly by on their annual southward migration. If you wish, bring a lawn chair as there is no seating at this site. Terrain is level. *Co-sponsored with Bronx River/Sound Shore Audubon.*

Saturday, October 18, “It Came from under the Log”, 1PM at Cranberry Lake Preserve is the field work companion of our program on slime mold earlier in the week.

Directions to Cranberry Lake Preserve

1609 Old Orchard Street, North
White Plains (Off Route 22)
(914) 428-1005

From 287 take exit 6 Route 22. Turn (left from eastbound, left then right from westbound) from the exit onto North Broadway/route 22. Go straight to the 4th light and bear to your left onto Broadway. At the next light and bear to your right onto 22 north. Go to the 3rd light and make a right onto Old Orchard Street. The park entrance is on the right.

CENTRAL WESTCHESTER AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 359, WHITE PLAINS, NY 10602

www.centralwestchesteraudubon.org

e-mail: cwas@centralwestchesteraudubon.org

President	Jeanne Alpert	946-1780
	jsalpert@optonline.net	
Vice President	Open	
Recording Secretary	Rotating	
Corresponding Secretary	Lois Stierhout	948-2706
Treasurer	Nancy Moore	997-9359
	NMoor02@banet.net	
Birdathon	Open	
Bird Seed	Hank Weber	713-0630
Conservation/Legislation	Catharine Raffaele	
	callen150@juno.com	
Education	Susan Fried	949-1780
Field Trips	Open	
Hospitality	Dorothy Vieni	948-2175
	Cesiradotsok4u@aol.com	
Immediate Past President	Gladys Goldmann	949-3486
Membership	Nancy Moore	997-9359
Newsletter -		
Editor	Nancy Moore	997-9359
Distribution	Connie Petagine	406-0578
Pecans	Beth DaSilva	949-5249
Programs	Joan Conca	681-8967
	Barbara Ferrari	946-5741
Publicity	Marisa Rosiello	948-1514
	Mrosiello@hotmail.com	
Scholarships	Gladys Goldmann	949-3486
	Barbara Ruskin	949-4429
Webmaster	Dick Budnik	
	DickBudnik@verizon.net	
Delegate at Large	Frank Alpert	946-1780
	Jefralpert@optonline.net	

Retired Board Members: Norma Canfield, Robert Canfield,
Jack O'Brien, Libby Wagner

What's New in the Courtyard Garden?

On a very hot day in early June, I visited the courtyard garden at the Church Street School. The bushes were thriving and some, particularly the Red Twig Dogwoods, needed to be cut back. The beds were virtually weed free, a tribute to the maintenance department of the White Plains Schools which keeps the beds mulched. Students had planted 3 pumpkin patches which should yield harvestable pumpkins by the time they return to school in September.

A big change has come to the lower garden, where the soil was hard-packed, weedy and very muddy after a rain storm. Michael Lynch, the Assistant Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, saw an opportunity to recycle the paving stones, which had been removed from the Post Road School as a part of its major renovation. The lower garden is now a beautiful stone patio on which we hope to place picnic tables and benches so that students can more readily use the garden as an outdoor classroom.

Under direction of Bruce Riggs, our garden "Scholar in Residence," the students installed the new plant labels, designated with both the Latin and common names. The labels, made of aluminum, look very professional and are sturdy and weatherproof. During the lunch hour, Bruce led the Courtyard Scientists in a discussion of compost bins and then had them help construct the bin and place it in the garden. As I was leaving, they were going to the cafeteria to collect the appropriate materials to place in the bin to get the composting process started. By the time fall comes around, we hope to have some compost to add to the beds to improve the structure of the soil. The plants labels, compost bin and Bruce's services were paid for with funds provided by our Audubon Grant.

The Courtyard Garden has come a long way since planting day on June 5, 2006. Our goal now is to increase its use and thereby its value to the students of the Church Street School.

Jeanne Alpert

In Memoriam: Ann O'Brien. I am sad to report that Ann O'Brien passed away this past spring. Ann was a valued board member, always cheerful and hospitable despite many physical difficulties. She was a great baker and will be remembered for the many goodies she brought to our annual potluck suppers and her generous invitations to visit the O'Brien home on Fire Island. Our condolences to Jack and members of her extended family.

CENTRAL WESTCHESTER AUDUBON SOCIETY ANNUAL BIRD SEED SALE

Deadline to submit orders: Thursday, October 16, 2008

Pickup dates: Wednesday, October 22 to Sunday, October 26, 2008

Pickup location: Wild Bird Center, 400 Central Park Ave., Scarsdale (Across from Office Depot)

Name: (Please print) _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone with Area Code _____ E-mail _____

<i>Seed</i>		<i>Unit Price</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Total</i>
Black Oil Sunflower Seed #1 favorite for Chickadees, Cardinals, Titmice others.	20 lbs. 40 lbs.	22.00 40.00		
Hulled Sunflower Seed Black-Oil Sunflower seeds with all shells removed. Less Mess. No clean-up of empty shells. Seeds will not sprout.	5 lbs. 20 lbs. 50 lbs.	13.00 44.00 95.00		
Nyger/Thistle Attracts Goldfinch, House Finch, Pine Siskin.	8 lbs. 20 lbs.	20.00 45.00		
Safflower Seed Squirrels don't like this seed. Cardinals and others do.	5 lbs. 20 lbs. 50 lbs.	8.00 28.00 67.00		
Birdwise Blend Scientific mix of Sunflower Seed (60%), plus Nuts & Millet. Attracts greatest variety of birds.	5 lbs. 20 lbs.	8.00 25.00		
Hopper Mix: Contains only Sunflower Seeds and Nuts.	4 lbs. 20 lbs. 40 lbs.	7.00 29.00 57.00		
Millet Attracts Juncos, Towhees, various sparrows.	25 lbs.	18.00		
Patio Mix "No Mess". All shells removed. 100% edible.	5 lbs. 20 lbs.	11.00 40.00		
Cardinal Blend The most appealing blend for Cardinals	4 lbs. 20 lbs.	8.00 29.00		
Woodpecker Mix Attracts Woodpeckers, Titmice, Nuthatches, Wrens.	4 lbs. 20 lbs.	10.00 43.00		
Cracked Corn	25 lbs.	15.00		
Peanut Suet Cakes: Birds love it.	12 cakes	30.00		
Orange Suet Cakes: Attracts greatest variety of birds.	12 cakes	30.00		
Pure Suet Cakes: Squirrels don't like it, birds do.	12 cakes	48.00		
Donation to CWAS				
Total				

Please make your check payable to: **CENTRAL WESTCHESTER AUDUBON SOCIETY** and mail with your order form to **CWAS, P.O. Box 359, White Plains, NY, 10602, Attn: Birdseed**. Check and order form must be received by October 16, 2008. We will be accepting orders at the October 16th open meeting. Upon receipt of your order, we will notify the Wild Bird Center. They will have a record of your order so you can pick up your seed on any of the pick-up dates listed above. **All our seed is of the highest quality and guaranteed to be 99% pure seed.** Questions? Please call Hank Weber at 713-0630 or 669-5576.

All the Profits of Our Bird Seed Sale Help to Support the Educational Activities of CWAS.

Birdathon Report

A list of the 101 species of birds we recorded on our Birdathon on May 10th would not begin to convey the excitement and fun we had in tracking down the birds and being together for our major fund raising effort of the year. As has been their custom for the last several years, early birders Nancy and Clarence gave up precious hours of sleep to begin birding at 5:30 a.m. at Read Sanctuary, recording several species not seen elsewhere. The most spectacular of these was a group of 3 flying Red-necked Loons – appearing for the first time in our records which started in 1990.

About 7:30 a.m. we headed out to Forest Park in search of the famed water hole which we hoped would be more generous than last year. The birds were slow to come around, but with patience eventually we got some great looks at several warblers: Common Yellowthroat, Black Throated Blue, Oven Bird, Northern Parula and Northern Waterthrush. Also in the neighborhood our team got wonderful looks at the Scarlet Tanager – a vision in black and red velvet. No matter how often we see the Tanager, this is a “wow” bird for us and one we look forward to enjoying every year. Walking through the woods on our way back to our cars, we saw 3 Veerys along the path. We thought it somewhat unusual to find those pale beauties in multiples.

From Forest Park we went on to Jamaica Bay and lunch to give us energy for the rest of the day. After lunch we started out on the path that goes around the West Pond. At the first stop on the bay side we spotted all of the herons on the list as well as the Oystercatchers and a few of the shore birds. The Osprey was sitting on its nest and there were hundreds of Brant floating on the water.

On the West Pond we had the “bird of the day,” a breeding female Red-necked Phalarope. This is a tundra-breeding bird making an unusual appearance in these parts - a first for our Birdathon and a life bird for most of the members of our team. The bird stayed close to the near edge of the pond so everyone had the opportunity to take a good look at him swimming and feeding.

Further along on the path in the grassy area near the pond, we spotted 2 male Bobolinks with their straw colored napes, contrasting black faces and underparts, and white rumps and shoulders. We have seen this species only once in the last 5 years and only twice since we started keeping records in 1990. Because of a loss of habitat due to agriculture and development, this species has experienced a worrisome decline in numbers. Audubon gives the Bobolink a red designation on its Watch List, meaning that this species is of global conservation concern. All of us felt privileged to have found the Bobolinks and were reminded of the importance that preservation of habitat plays in the survival of this and other species.

As we continued along the path around the West Pond, we saw a Northern Harrier flying low over the trees, no doubt looking for a late afternoon snack. While we have seen Harriers many times at Jamaica Bay in different seasons, according to our records this is the first time we have seen one during our Birdathon.

The final lap of the day was in the gardens which we got to rather late in the afternoon when birds are less active. However, notable among the species we managed to see or hear were: several Vireos; the only flycatcher of the day, an Eastern Wood Pewee; a Blackburnian Warbler; and a Blue-winged Warbler, also on Audubon’s Watch List of endangered species.

By about 4:30, we commandeered a room at the Nature Center and tallied our sightings which numbered 98 species. We like to reach at least 100 species so everyone was instructed to continue birding on the way home. When Liz got home she saw a Ruby-throated Hummingbird and a House Finch, while Joe mentioned he had seen a Red-tailed Hawk at Forest Park and forgot to mention it. That brought the tally to 101 species for the day – our goal was reached!

Jeanne Alpert

Team Members:

Frank Alpert, Jeanne Alpert, Barbara Ferrari, Joe Ferrari, Susan Fried, Barbara Hanan, Clarence Holmes, Liz Jamison, Nancy Moore, Catharine Raffaele, Will Raffaele, Rena Wertzer

On Plastic Bags

Reprinted with permission from the Pocono Record

Data released by the United States Environmental Protection Agency shows that somewhere between 500 billion and a trillion plastic bags are consumed worldwide each year. National Geographic news September 2, 2003

Less than 1% of bags are recycled. It costs more to recycle a bag than to produce a new one.

Christian Science Monitor

Newspaper

“There’s harsh economics behind bag recycling: It costs \$4,000 to process and recycle one ton of plastic bags, which can then be sold on the commodities market for \$32.”

Jared Blumenfeld, Director of San Francisco’s Department of the Environment

Then...Where do they go?

A study in 1975 showed oceangoing vessels together dumped 8 million pounds of plastic annually. The real reason that the world’s landfills weren’t overflowing with plastic was because most of it ended up in an ocean-fill.

U.S. National Academy of Sciences

Bags get blown around to different parts of our lands and to our seas, lakes and rivers.

Bags find their way into the sea via drains and sewage pipes.

CNN.com/technology November 16, 2007

Plastic Bags have been found floating north of the Arctic Circle near Spitzbergen and as far south as the Falkland Islands.

British Antarctic

Survey

Plastic bags account for over 10 percent of the debris washed up on the U.S. coastline.

National Marine Debris Monitoring Program

Plastic bags photodegrade: Over time they break down into smaller, more toxic petro-polymers which eventually contaminate soils and waterways. As a consequence microscopic particles can enter the food chain.

CNN.com/technology November 16, 2007

The effect on wildlife can be catastrophic. Birds become terminally entangled. Nearly 200 different species of sea life including whales, dolphins, seals and turtles die due to plastic bags. They die after ingesting plastic bags which they mistake for food.

World Wildlife Fund Report 2005

So...What do we do?

If we use a cloth bag, we can save 6 bags a week. That’s 24 bags a month. That’s 288 bags a year. That’s 22,178 bags in an average lifetime. If just **1 out of 5** people in our country did this we would save **1,330,560,000,000 bags** over our lifetime.

Bangladesh has banned plastic bags.

MSNBC.com March 8, 2007

China has banned free plastic bags.

CNN.com/asia January 9, 2008

Ireland took the lead in Europe, taxing plastic bags in 2002 and have now reduced plastic bag consumption by 90%.

BBC News August 20, 2002

In 2005 Rwanda banned plastic bags.

Associated Press

Israel, Canada, western India, Botswana, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Taiwan and Singapore have also banned or are moving toward banning the plastic bag.

PlanetSave.com February 16, 2008

On March 27, 2007, San Francisco becomes first U.S. city to ban plastic bags.

NPR.org (National Public Radio)

Oakland and Boston are considering a ban.

The Boston Globe May 20, 2007

Plastic shopping bags are made from polyethylene: a thermoplastic made from oil. CNN.com/technology November 16, 2007

Reducing plastic bags will decrease our foreign oil dependency.

China will save 37 million barrels of oil each year due to their ban of free plastic bags.

CNN.com/asia January 9, 2008

It is possible...

Do something drastic...Cut the plastic!

Central Westchester Audubon Society
Box 359
White Plains, NY 10602



NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 702
WHITE PLAINS, NY
10602

Annual Bird Seed Sale—See Order Form Inside

Thanks to Our 2008 Birdathon Contributors

Loretta Adamo
Jeanne/Frank Alpert
Paul Baur
Pauline Berger
Dr. Irene Cannon-Geary
Jean/Colin Coates
Joan Conca
Jim Cunningham
William Davidson
Mary Degener
Christine DeLorenzo
Victoria de Martin
Fran DiQuattro
James Duggan

Barbara/Joe Ferrari
Mark Ferrari
Susan Fragala
Barry/Susan Fried
Peter Froyton
Gladys Goldmann
Elinore Gordon
Cyril Gsell
Charles Hall
Barbara Hanan
Carol Heaton
Clarence Holmes
Barbara Hurley
Elizabeth Jamison

David Johnson
Richard Kelisky
George Koplinka
Rosemary Lampo
Janet Mayrson
Nancy Moore
Richard Nanarello
Susan Nash
Harry Oster
Mr/Mrs Paul Petrone
Fred Pfisterer
John Plotke
Kate Purdy
Catharine Raffaele

Barbara Romeo
Barbara Ruskin
Cynthia Sammis
Andrea Sherman
Jean Spence
Nancy Stambler
Lois Steirhout
Peggy/Alan Stevens
Gassman
Oliver Swift
Susan Van Doren
Beth Wallach
Rena Wertzer
Robert Wiener

Thanks Also to the Following People Who Made Contributions During the Year

Barbara and Joe Ferrari in memory of Joan Dunkin
Margo Irish

Patricia Kroepke
IBM