

# High Peaks Audubon

Adirondack-Champlain Region of New York State

Mission: To conserve and restore natural ecosystems in the Adirondacks, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the Earth's biological diversity.

Volume 35 Number 2

September-November 2007



## Labor Day, Monday, September 3, 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. Nun-da-ga-o Ridge in Keene

**Directions:** Meet at the Crows Clearing Trailhead parking lot in Keene.

**Bring:** Water, lunch/snacks, sunscreen, rain gear, hiking boots, binoculars.

**Distance:** A loop trail of app. 5-6 miles with numerous outstanding views from which we can watch for migrating birds; mostly short ups and downs after initial short, steep approach to Big Crow and later to Weston Mountain (moderate difficulty), the trail is unmarked.

**Hike Leaders:** HPAS Members Pat & John Thaxton

**Register:** By calling 518.576.4232; or email: [jpthax5317@aol.com](mailto:jpthax5317@aol.com)

## Saturday, September 8, 2007, 8:30 a.m. Blue Mountain Birding Hike

We will climb Blue Mountain for spectacular views and a chance to hear and observe Bicknell's Thrush before its fall migration to the Caribbean! There is a fire tower on the summit that offers 360 degree views of many High Peaks and surrounding mountains and lakes. The round trip distance is 4 miles with a 1500' elevation gain. Bring binoculars! (Rain date is 9/9.)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m.

**Meet:** At the Blue Mountain parking lot on Route 30/28.

**Leaders:** Joan Collins & Eileen Wheeler

**Register:** By contacting Joan Collins or Eileen Wheeler at 261-4246 [jecolins@twcny.rr.com](mailto:jecolins@twcny.rr.com) or 265-2013 [eiwheeler@yahoo.com](mailto:eiwheeler@yahoo.com)

This trip is jointly sponsored with the Laurentian Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club and St. Lawrence Adirondack Audubon Society.

## Saturday, September 29, 2007 Massawepie Mire– Boreal Birds Piercefield-Colton

**Time:** 7:00 a.m.

**Meet:** At the Boy Scout sign on Route 3. (Sign is on the left after traveling approximately 11 miles from the intersection of Route 30 and Route 3 in Tupper Lake. If traveling from the west, the sign is on the right just under 6 miles from the intersection of Route 3 and 56.)

**Leaders:** Joan Collins & Peter O'Shea

**Distance:** 4 miles on a level dirt road through the mire. For those who want to continue, we will also hike 2 miles round trip on the Mountaineer Trail south of Massawepie Lake.

**Bring:** Hiking boots, food, water, sunscreen, binoculars, and insect repellent.

**Register** by calling the Newcomb VIC at (518) 582-2000 or Joan Collins at (315) 261-4246.

Jointly sponsored by St. Lawrence-Adirondack Audubon, High Peaks Audubon, and the Visitor Interpretive Center at Newcomb.

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All Paintings by Susan Cassevaugh

## HPAS

High Peaks Audubon Society, Inc.

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High Peaks Audubon Society, Inc.  
A chapter of National Audubon Society  
serving the Adirondack/Champlain region  
of northern New York, including Clinton,  
Essex, Franklin and Hamilton counties.

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## President's Message

I begin my two year tenure as President of HPAS with a debt of gratitude to outgoing President Pat Thaxton. Under Pat's leadership HPAS continued to grow its membership and its treasury, which has allowed your club to accomplish great things over the past year and plan for more education and conservation projects. A big "Thank You" goes to Pat in appreciation of her hard work and dedication to the organization.

Building on last year's momentum, we have begun our new fiscal year with plans to install an osprey platform on Wickham Marsh to complement the observation platform that HPAS sponsored. The annual gathering held at the Huntington Wildlife Forest in Newcomb was well attended and even the short, but intense, downpour didn't dampen the interest and enthusiasm of the HPAS members enjoying the beauty of the lake—it was great meeting members and making new friends. I hope to meet more of you as HPAS continues to offer entertaining and educational programs, field trips and other events to our members over the coming year.

—Charlotte Demers

## Annual Outing/Meeting/Raffle Winner

Despite a ninety percent chance of showers and thundershowers thirty HPAS members and friends showed up at the Huntington Forest and actually got away with paddling for two hours before it rained so hard we had to raise our voices to converse inside the cabin on the shore of Catlin Lake. When a mountain a few miles distant went from hazy blue to hazy white I suggested to Pat that we paddle back toward the cabin, and when we got to within a quarter mile of it we pulled up alongside President Charlotte Demers and rode at anchor for a while. Apropos of nothing I could detect Charlotte did something of a double-take and smiled.

"I can hear the rain moving through the forest," she said, smiling widely.

We had never heard rain moving through a forest before, so we smiled at anchor with Charlotte for a while, wondering at how we hadn't associated the noise with sheets or approaching rain. I think I had subconsciously attributed that background noise to wind, even as I watched the leaves of a nearby birch tree hanging almost motionless above its reflection.

After a brief board meeting, 3-year-old Owen Casker reached into a large plastic jug and pulled out a few raffle tickets. He offered one of them to his father, but Charlotte snatched it away and announced the winner: Yvette Tillema, whose daughter told me that as she lay confined to the living room couch recovering from knee surgery her mother sat fifteen feet away at the kitchen table playing bird songs on her computer all day.

After the raffle-drawing we wended our way slowly through the Huntington forest, stopping a few times and listening to Charlotte's descriptions of the work SUNY ESF does there with wildlife big and small.

—John Thaxton

## Black-capped Chickadee Chicks



Susan Cassevaugh

**Saturday, Sept. 22, 2007, 1:00 p.m.**  
**Beech Bark Disease in Aftermath Adiron-**  
**dack forests: A comparison of managed**  
**and preserved forests.**  
**Paul Smiths Visitor Interpretative Center**  
**Speaker: Celia Evans, PhD.**

We have spent 3 years collecting data about the structure of Adirondack forests and the 'health' of beech trees and abundance of beech and other saplings. BBD came to the Adirondacks probably some time in the 1960's and remains a challenge for forest managers and a concern for wildlife biologists still. Now, in the 'aftermath' stage of the disease, we are taking a broad look at what it looks like across New York and New England. This presentation will focus on Adirondack data. The presentation will address the following questions: What is the disease and what is its history in the northeast? How variable are the impacts of the disease across different spatial scales? What are the implications of management on forest structure and disease status? Can we use these data to make predictions about the future of beech in our forests?

Celia Evans, a forest and plant physiological ecologist, is Associate Professor of Ecology at Paul Smiths College.



American Kestrel Susan Cassevaugh

**Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007, 1:00 p.m.**  
**“This Land is Your Land: The Battle for**  
**the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge”**  
**Newcomb Visitor Interpretive Center**

Join Sue Krause, environmental educator and president of the Four Harbor Audubon Society in St. James, New York, for a telling powerpoint presentation about one of the most hotly debated wilderness areas in the world. Sue will discuss and show photographs of the mammals and birds that breed in and migrate through this magnificent refuge, tell us about the history of the place and what we can all do to protect this stunning, unspoiled wilderness.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak



Susan Cassevaugh

**Saturday, October 27th**  
**Coon Mt./Champlain Valley**

**Time:** 8:00 a.m.

**Directions:** Meet at the Westport boat launch

**Bring:** Water, lunch, sunscreen, raingear, hiking boots, binoculars.

**Distance:** The hike up Coon Mt. is short and easy through woods, then slightly steep near the top on a rocky path. If the wind is right it may be good for migrating raptors. Lake Champlain and the surrounding countryside are good for migrating and early winter species.

**Hike Leaders:** HPAS members Pat & John Thaxton

**Register:** Call (518) 576-4232 or email: [jpthax5317@aol.com](mailto:jpthax5317@aol.com)

**Saturday, November 10, 2007, 1:00 p.m.**  
**“Light on the Adirondacks:**  
**Photographs of Landscapes”**  
**Speaker: John Thaxton**

Join *Adirondack Explorer* columnist and HPAS board member and newsletter editor John Thaxton for a photographic tableau of Adirondack landscapes and habitats. John divided the Adirondacks into what he sees as its essential ingredients—clouds, rocks, forests, fields, wetlands and water—and put together a slide show that includes everything from shadow-dappled High Peaks' panoramas to close-ups of hysterically chartreuse map lichen.



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## Crown Point Banding Station

The spring bird banding station on the grounds of the Crown Point State Historic Site opened for the 32nd consecutive season of banding between May 11-28, 2007. Operated by the Crown Point Banding Association, through an agreement with NYS OPR&HP and the Historic Site Manager, the station is located in hawthorn thickets west of His Majesty's Fort at Crown Point. Birds banded this year were:

3 Killdeer; 1 Mourning Dove; 3 Downy Woodpecker; 1 Northern Flicker; 1 Pileated Woodpecker; 1 Eastern Wood-pewee; 15 "Traill's" Flycatcher; 31 Least Flycatcher; 1 Eastern Phoebe; 1 Great Crested Flycatcher; 3 Eastern Kingbird; 2 Warbling Vireo; 1 Red-eyed Vireo; 29 Blue Jay; 7 Tree Swallow; 19 Barn Swallow; 14 Black-capped Chickadee; 4 House Wren; 1 Marsh Wren; 4 Ruby-crowned Kinglet; 7 Eastern Bluebird; 1 Veery; 8 Swainson's Thrush; 2 Wood Thrush; 15 American Robin; 32 Gray Catbird; 9 Brown Thrasher; 3 European Starling; 5 Cedar Waxwing; 1 Blue-winged Warbler; 9 Tennessee Warbler; 11 Nashville Warbler; 1 Northern Parula; 71 Yellow Warbler; 6 Chestnut-sided Warbler; 31 Magnolia Warbler; 18 Cape May Warbler; 3 Black-throated Blue Warbler; 416 Yellow-rumped Warbler; 2 Black-throated Green Warbler; 2 Prairie Warbler; 5 (Western) Palm Warbler; 3 Bay-breasted Warbler; 18 Blackpoll Warbler; 1 Black-and-white Warbler; 13 American Redstart; 3 Ovenbird; 8 Northern Waterthrush; 1 Mourning Warbler; 60 Common Yellowthroat; 4 Wilson's Warbler; 2 Canada Warbler; 1 Scarlet Tanager; 1 Eastern Towhee; 6 Chipping Sparrow; 7 Field Sparrow; 1 Savannah Sparrow; 7 Song Sparrow; 5 Lincoln's Sparrow; 2 Swamp Sparrow; 3 White-throated Sparrow; 3 White-crowned Sparrow; 1 Northern Cardinal; 1 Rose-breasted Grosbeak; 1 Indigo Bunting; 1 Bobolink; 15 Red-winged Blackbird; 1 Eastern Meadowlark; 21 Common Grackle; 6 Brown-headed Cowbird; 2 Orchard Oriole; 30 Baltimore Oriole; 155 American Goldfinch. TOTAL: 1,183 individuals of 73 species.

The 73 species broke the old record of 70 set in the great fall-out year of 1996. Warbler variety was superb, the 23 species breaking the record of 21 set in '96 and then tied last year. The 1,183 individuals rank third behind 1996 (1,706 birds, including a record 694 Yellow-rumped warblers) and 1997 (1,239 birds, including a record 376 American Goldfinches). New species were a transient Marsh Wren netted on the evening of May 14th by Mike & Susan Peterson and a nesting Eastern Meadowlark netted by Woody Cyr & Gary Lee on May 27th, bringing the all-time list to 99 species banded since 1976. New high records were set for Barn Swallow, Eastern Bluebird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, and Common Grackle.

The OPR&HP survey again found grassland birds in the recently-reclaimed Bobolink Field to the south, and Ospreys again claimed the recently-cleared nesting platform at Fossil Rocks. CPBA is proposing further habitat improvements at

the banding station with thinning of invasive Common Buckthorn.

There were returns of 38 birds of 13 species banded at Crown Point in previous years, the oldest a Black-capped Chickadee and a Baltimore Oriole, both now at least seven years, 11 months old, demonstrating the importance of long-term data collection. A leucistic Yellow-rumped Warbler was banded May 11th. After 32 years, a total of four Pileated Woodpeckers, seven Blue-winged Warblers, nine Prairie Warblers, and six Orchard Orioles have been banded at Crown Point. Species seen or heard this May, but not banded, include Bald & Golden eagles, Black-billed & Yellow-billed cuckoos, Common Nighthawk, Whip-poor-will, Northern Mockingbird, and an adult male Orchard Oriole (a female & immature male were banded).

—John M.C. Peterson

Northern Shoveler



Susan Cassevaugh

## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Lake Placid Butterfly Count

Here are the results from the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Lake Placid Butterfly Count. Nine volunteers observed 27 species, which is average for this count, and 1 dark swallowtail, which we didn't identify to species as it flew off rather quickly. We did pretty well considering the mowing of milkweed in a couple of productive areas and a quite cloudy afternoon:

Canadian Tiger Swallowtail 1, Cabbage White 36, Clouded Sulphur 7, Orange Sulphur 5, Bog Copper 1, Coral Hairstreak 2 (1 friendly individual landed on John Thaxton's pants' zipper), Striped Hairstreak 2, "Summer" Spring Azure 2, Great Spangled Fritillary 10, Atlantis Fritillary 10, Meadow Fritillary 5, Question Mark 2, Eastern Comma 2, Milbert's Tortoiseshell 1, American Lady 1, Red Admiral 17, White Admiral 17, Northern Pearly-eye 3, Eyed Brown 9, Common Ringlet 1, Monarch 64 (nearly triples the previous high count for this species), Least Skipper 3, European Skipper 7, Peck's Skipper 10, Tawny-edged Skipper 1, Long Dash 8, Dun Skipper 9.

Too bad we didn't get a Pink-edged Sulphur, but every lemon colored sulphur that was kind enough to stop turned out to be a Clouded.

—Sheila Rosenberg

## HPAS Receives \$10,000.00 Grant from The Joseph and Joan Cullman Conservation Foundation

The chairman of Phillip Morris, Inc. from 1957-1970, Joseph F. Cullman 3<sup>rd</sup> believed that a capitalistic, democratic society depends in many ways on its citizens' dedication to philanthropy. An admirer of Teddy Roosevelt, Joseph Cullman took great pride in his work as a conservationist. The range and magnitude of his generosity to conservation causes boggles the mind. He helped start the World Wildlife Fund and The Atlantic Salmon Federation. A hunter who went on an African safari nearly every year, he co-founded Conservation Force, an organization in Tanzania that has built 26 schools, 6 medical dispensaries and operates anti-poaching teams to protect elephants and other wildlife.

He endowed the Joseph F. Cullman Library of Natural History at the Smithsonian as well as the Joseph F. Cullman 3<sup>rd</sup> Professorship in Wildlife, Ecology and Biodiversity at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. He contributed handsomely to The Museum of Modern Art, The Whitney Museum of Art, The Jewish Museum, American Public Television, New York City Council on the Environment, The Committee to Protect Journalists, Women's Sports Foundation, New York City Audubon Society, The Neurosciences Institute at Rockefeller University, the New York Restoration, The New 42<sup>nd</sup> Street—the list goes on and on.

Joseph and Joan Cullman owned the Kildare Club just north of Tupper Lake and loved the Adirondacks with a respect bordering on reverence. The HPAS board of directors formed a committee to ensure that we utilize the grant in ways that honor the spirit of these profoundly generous conservationists.

—John Thaxton

Evening Grosbeak

### 2007 All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory Bioblitz at Paul Smiths College

The 2007 Adirondack All-Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) BioBlitz was held at the Paul Smiths VIC, July 20-21. Over 350 species were catalogued during the 24 hour period. Sampling/observation was concentrated in and near wetland and aquatic areas on the VIC property. Scientists and volunteers worked in teams, focusing on a particular group of organisms. The groups surveyed included aquatic plants, terrestrial plants, fungi, aquatic mites, aquatic insects, dragonflies and damselflies, butterflies and moths, fish, amphibians and reptiles, birds, and mammals (represented by 2 groups, bats and non-bat mammals). Terrestrial plants were the most diverse group, with 172 species including the threatened Balsam willow (*Salix pyrifolia*). An impressive 63 species of fungi and 12 species of amphibians were found. Forty bird species were documented through bird walks and mist netting. The aquatic mites collected by University of Arizona scientist Andrea Radwell have yet to be identified but could push the species total over 400. Finding 50 species of mites at the VIC is not improbable given the diversity of aquatic environments such as marsh, bog, lake and stream on the VIC property. This ATBI Bioblitz was the first of hopefully many such events which will facilitate the formation of a database of species found in the myriad of habitats in the Adirondacks. It was a great opportunity for the public to see a variety of organisms and further appreciate the local biodiversity.

Aquatic plants 15, terrestrial plants 172, fungi 63, mammals 7, bats 7, fish 6, odonates 17, butterflies/moths 8, aquatic invertebrates 33, aquatic mites ??? Total 382 species.

—Janet Mihuc



*Susan Cassevaugh*

## Meet Your New Board Members

### Jorie Favreau, PhD

Jorie's birding interests began while she monitored nesting bald eagles for the Arizona Game and Fish Department in 1991. Her first job involved radio tracking California condors at the original release site in Los Padres National Forest, and from California she headed to Maui to search for an endangered honeycreeper, the poo-uli. In the summer of 1997 she ran a mist net station in Indiana and that fall she assisted a graduate student to document raptors island hopping across the Florida Keys as a migration path. In 1999, she monitored peregrine falcons nesting on the bridges between Albany and Bear Mt bridge for the NY DEC. Between her bird jobs, Jorie worked with many mammal species including African mammals when she was a zookeeper, flying squirrels in Alaska, and black bears in the mountains of North Carolina while pursuing her PhD in zoology. Today she is Assistant Professor of wildlife biology in the Fisheries and Wildlife Science program at Paul Smith's College. One of her research projects is mist netting songbirds for MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship), a national data collection protocol that allows ornithologists to determine population trends for North American passerines on large landscape level scales. This fall, she is beginning a pilot study for her second research project, which involves radio tracking red squirrels in the Adirondacks to answer some theoretical questions about foraging and movement behavior.

Common Loon



Susan Cassevaugh

### Leah Filo, MS

Leah's first professional ornithology experience consisted of updating a bird checklist for a local nature park during an internship at SUNY Geneseo. After graduating with a B.S. in Biology she went to work at a Raptor Center in Ohio, where she cared for and rehabilitated over 250 birds of prey. Wanting to learn more about bird biology, she focused her graduate studies at Antioch University on migratory bird research, including bird banding, breeding bird surveys and teaching about birds. Since graduating with an M.S. in Environmental Biology she has held various jobs in the field including bird keeper, park ranger and environmental educator. Leah now works for the Natural History Museum of the Adirondacks, The Wild Center, as part of the animal care staff team. She finds the most rewarding part of her job in the opportunities to share her knowledge and enthusiasm with visitors. With the museum's support, Leah spent several weeks participating in the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Ivory Billed Woodpecker project, during which she helped search the swamps and woods of Arkansas for the elusive woodpecker.

## Book Review:

### *The Songs of Wild Birds*

(Book & CD)

By Lang Elliott

Houghton Mifflin Company, \$ 19.95

The owner of several CD collections of bird songs, I have tried, tediously often, and with negative results, to sharpen my birding-by-ear skills sufficiently to identify the most common birds in my backyard. The scenario unfolds the same way every time: after getting frustrated by spending forty minutes trying to see an embarrassingly common backyard warbler whose song I couldn't identify, I storm into the house, grab a field guide and listen to the songs of the warblers. I study a picture of each warbler as I listen to its song, its call and perhaps its distress call; then I study the pictures and the calls again, and again, with maniacal assiduity, until I can't even identify the ringing telephone as I lunge for my binoculars after mistaking the smoke alarm for an ovenbird walking upside down on the ceiling above the woodstove.

Perhaps my birding-by-ear problems owe themselves to a poor auditory memory, or perhaps to having had a mother who told me the same stories over and over again and who set off every smoke alarm she ever met. Whatever the reason, I never feel comfortable birding by ear until the end of the singing season, at which point I experience severe angst about identifying the songs and calls of the winter finches on their way down from Canada.

Although I bought my *Peterson Field Guides Bird Songs* CD fifteen years ago I haven't listened to it as much as Lang Elliott's *The Songs of Wild Birds*, which came in the mail last week. This is one fun book and CD, and I daresay it has already enhanced my birding-by-ear skills exponentially.

Not so much a comprehensive collection of bird songs as a personal selection of Mr. Elliott's favorites, *The Songs of Wild Birds* mesmerized me with sounds familiar and strange, eerie, bizarre, hauntingly beautiful, ominously scary, hilariously funny. The book and the CD complement each other completely, with the text, photos and recordings riding perfectly at anchor. The book consists of fifty, one page essays arranged in spreads that feature a beautiful, full-bleed photograph of each bird discussed or, more accurately, celebrated. Each essay ends with a sonogram or two of a bird's song and calls, and I must say I never related at all to sonograms until I read these essays and listened to the CD; before then sonograms went in one eye and out the other (Elliott includes a one-page essay explaining sonograms).

I found in the essays a lively and informative mix of science, anecdote and ornithological lore, with poetic song descriptions by the likes of John Burroughs, Arthur Cleveland Bent and Ralph Waldo Emerson enhancing Elliott's excellent descriptions of bird song and behavior. Written in a relaxed, affable, armchair style, the essays include marvelous anecdotal accounts of the author's exploits as a recordist, some of them sufficiently funny that I laughed out loud.

His recording of a yellow-bellied sapsucker, for example, which he made while living in the Adirondacks, features a cacophonous riff by a bird that "used to rattle my brain



each morning by drumming on a metal sign just outside my cabin. His irreverent banging is immortalized on the compact disc.” After describing the song and call of an eastern bluebird, and providing some excellent written versions of them, Elliott notes, “I remember hearing this wonderful call while playing golf one April with a friend. At the height of my backswing, I heard the *tru-lee* of a bluebird flying overhead. I was so affected that I completely missed the ball. Needless to say, my friend had a *tru-lee* good laugh!”

While on a recording trip to Spring Pond Bog Elliot captured an incredible antiphonal duet between a hermit thrush and a Swainson’s thrush—the two birds alternate their songs with the precision of classical musicians playing a sonata. The CD also has a recording of a pair of Carolina wrens performing a duet rather less precise, with the female blurting out her raspy buzz a few seconds after the male launches into his lyrical tune, superimposing her song over her mates. One of the most amazing recordings caught a quartet of eastern screech owls performing their tremolo calls simultaneously, in two groups of two and in tandem one at a time. It sounds like sacred, other-worldly music that would have turned Monteverdi and Bach green with envy.

I learned from the CD that the bobcats caterwauling uncomfortably close to my tent eighteen years ago were, in fact, immature great horned owls begging for food. The bizarre sonic boom of the common nighthawk’s mating ritual stunned me, as did the evening flight song of the ovenbird, which it performs at dusk or on moonlit nights. Although several of the recordings had me smiling or chortling, Elliott’s recording of snoring Atlantic puffins had me doubled over in laughter. As he aptly describes it, the Atlantic puffin’s snore sounds like someone revving a chainsaw, and in order to capture the sound he placed a microphone in the burrow of a sleeping puffin and ran a cable hundreds of feet away to his tiny research hut. You gotta like a guy who even thinks of doing something like that.

*The Songs of Wild Birds* book and CD had value for me because it brought these fifty birds and their songs so vividly to life I suspect I’m actually going to remember them for awhile. The only downside so far to this reading/listening experience was my preposterously mistaken certainty that an Atlantic puffin had fallen asleep in my neighbor’s woodlot, in the middle of day.

If you want to learn specific bird songs you’ll need to consult one of the many resources available, for example, [www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu), but if you can content yourself with one man’s selection of world-class wild bird song recordings made by himself and others, and with having loads of fun learning, get yourself a copy of *The Songs of Wild Birds*—the photographs alone are worth the price of admission.

(Lang Elliott also wrote *Common Birds and Their Songs & Music of the Birds*; for more information see his support web site: [www.songsowildbirds.com](http://www.songsowildbirds.com).)

—John Thaxton

**Note:** This review originally appeared in *Adirondack Explorer*

## HPAS Board of Directors Meeting Saturday, September 22, 2007, 11:00 a.m. Paul Smiths Visitor Interpretative Center

HPAS board meetings, which vary from boring to tumultuous, are open to all members. The directors genuinely appreciate and encourage member attendance and input.



Common Loon

Susan Cassevaugh

### Poetry Corner The Second Coming

Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart, the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere  
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;  
The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of passionate intensity.  
Surely some revelation is at hand;  
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.  
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out  
When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi*  
Troubles my sight: somewhere in the sands of the desert  
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,  
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,  
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it  
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.  
The darkness drops again, but now I know  
That twenty centuries of stony sleep  
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,  
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,  
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

—W.B. Yeats

### Editor's Note

It almost seems as though HPAS continually danced with the rain this summer, performing an intricate series of pas de deluges with several storms that could have handily shut down our field trips, like the downpour that made normal decibel conversation impossible under the exhibitors' tent at *The Wild Center* five minutes after we returned from leading a bird walk down to an oxbow in the Racquet River, or the gentle drizzle that escalated into a light rain as we loaded our packs into the cars to drive home through a windshield-wipers-on-high hard rain immediately after our Opalescent River trip, or those thunderous sheets of rain we raced across Catlin Lake, and beat, at the annual outing.

I am pleased to report that owing to some ineffable algorithm of hard work and good luck HPAS seems poised to continue on what I can only describe as an extended roll, a years-long succession of accomplishments and opportunities. By mid-fall the DEC plans to construct an educational kiosk in the Wickham Marsh overlook parking lot and erect an osprey/eagle nesting pole visible, with a bird's-eye-view, from the viewing platform. These HPAS-initiated additions will significantly enhance this DEC *Important Bird Conservation Area* and *Lake Champlain Birding Trail* site.

We've started working more and more closely with *The Wild Center*, where we held a board meeting and sponsored a program; they asked us to consult on their *Bird Walk* and *Wings Over the Adirondacks* projects and will continue to partner with them on these and other initiatives. At a press conference on Little Whiteface Mountain to announce the forming of a fund to protect Bicknell's thrush habitat in the Dominican Republic, a public relations official from ORDA/Whiteface Mountain asked if HPAS would consider advising on and co-sponsoring a Bicknell's thrush Festival at Whiteface—a *Nest Fest* (her name for it, no kidding).

At the Paul Smiths *Great Adirondack Birding Celebration* several HPAS board members met with several St. Lawrence Adirondack Audubon board members to begin discussing the possibility of HPAS absorbing the membership of SLAA and assuming all of its administrative responsibilities, a move that would roughly double our size and territory and give us a larger voice in debates on Adirondack issues. I'll keep you posted.

The inspiration for my *Poetry Corner* selection came from a U.S. Department of Defense White Paper (on the security situation in Iraq and its neighboring countries) entitled: "Things Fall Apart." Defense Department foreign policy wonks alluding to Yeats? Who'd a thunk it?

The second in an occasional series of newsletters illustrated entirely by one artist, this issue showcases the work of Susan Cassevaugh, a Lake Placid watercolorist whose paintings of birds strike me as at once ethereally delicate and stunningly bold. You can see more of Susan's work at [www.nearnorthart.com](http://www.nearnorthart.com) or at the Lake Placid, Jay and Keene Valley Farm Markets.

—John Thaxton