

HPAS/SLAA

Serving the Adirondack, Champlain, St. Lawrence 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 36 Number 1

March—May 2008



Thursday, March 13, 2008
“Monitoring Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons”
Unitarian Universalist Church, Canton 7 p.m.
Speaker: Mary Beth Warburton

Mary Beth Warburton has worked for the Department of Environmental Conservation's Endangered Species Unit since 1996 monitoring Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, and other endangered species. Her work is mostly concentrated in the Adirondack Park. MaryBeth has been president and secretary of the Northern Catskills Audubon Chapter, Environmental Education Director for Greene County Soil and Water, past member of the Board of Directors of Greene County Co-Operative Extension, activities leader at the Mirror Lake Inn in Lake Placid, and presently serves as a representative on the Audubon Council of NYS and as a board member of St. Lawrence-Adirondack Audubon. She has been a volunteer at the Paul Smith's VIC, and has guided hikes and walks for many other organizations over the years. She and her husband, Bill, live in Potsdam.



Nashville Warbler Lloyd Spitalnik

Sunday, March 16, 2008
Large Mammals in the Adirondacks
The Wild Center, 12:30 p.m.
Speaker: Ed Reed, NYS DEC Wildlife Biologist

Join New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Wildlife Biologist Ed Reed for a discussion of large mammals in the Adirondacks. Ed will talk about historical patterns of distribution among several populations of large mammals and current trends and dynamics. He will also cover challenges confronting the animals, from severe weather to food availability to habitat loss.

Yellow Warbler Lloyd Spitalnik

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HPAS

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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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Vol. 36 No. 1

Sunday, April 27, 2008
Spring Wildflowers & Early Migrants
Indian Creek Nature Center, Canton

Time: 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.**Distance:** Under 1 mile on level terrain.**Meet:** At the East End Entrance. Take Route 68 to Rensselaer Falls Road, and travel 2.5 miles – the East End Entrance will be on your left (there is a barn on the right).**Hike Leader:** Peter O'Shea (315) 848-2178

No registration required.

This trip is jointly sponsored by the Indian Creek Nature Center, and the Laurentian Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club.

Saturday, May 10, 2008**Keene Valley****Hulls Falls Road, 7:30 a.m**

Meet at the Marcy Field end of Hulls Falls Road and look for birds with High Peaks Audubon Society member Ruth Kuhfahl (518) 576-4699. On a previous year's May walk in this diverse habitat we found nesting Pine warblers, Solitary sandpiper and Indigo bunting. No need to sign up ahead. Jointly sponsored by the Hurricane Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club and High Peaks Audubon Society.

Message from the President

Every morning my email Inbox fills up with information and "calls to action" regarding numerous important environmental issues threatening our region, from global climate change to wind power expansion to invasive species. There is a cataract of information in print and on the Internet about each issue and its seemingly myriad nuances.. This voluminous amount of information can discourage and exhaust anybody trying to get up to speed on all these critical issues and comprehend the components and complexities of each. I keep hoping someone will provide our membership with a distillation of the important aspects of each issue in an accessible, digestible and distributable (via our newsletter and website) fashion.

I'm hoping that someone is YOU! It strikes me as equally important that we go beyond our newsletter and web site and work to educate the public and future generations about the beauty and intrinsic value of our ecosystem. We have a fabulously talented, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable membership and I am asking that you use your talents and passion to help your organization and your neighborhood. Join the Conservation or the Education Committee. Education and conservation are significant components of our purpose as an organization and these committees need your help. If you have an interest in environmental issues or in aiding in the development of educational products such as brochures, PowerPoint presentations, or school programs, contact me at cdemers@esf.edu or (518)582-2157 and we can discuss how you can help. These essential working groups and YOUR Audubon chapter need your help.

I would like to extend a sincere "Thank You" to Matt Medler, who is stepping down as a member of the HPAS Board of Directors after three years of service. Matt had been also serving as Chairman of the Conservation Committee. I encourage everyone who has an opportunity to go with Matt on a HPAS/SLAA field trip or any other occasion in his company: his bird knowledge and birding skills are unparalleled —**Charlotte Demers**

Saturday, May 17, 2008
Breakfast with the Birds
Keene Valley
Time: 8:00 a.m.

Description: Join Pat and John Thaxton on the deck of their house in Keene for coffee, cake, fruit, juice and birds. First, we will listen for the birds and practice identifying them by ear. Then, we will hopefully see them and verify our identifications because in early May the leaves in our 16-acre yard are small and few and far between, and our deck looks directly into the canopy. Nesting warblers include Black-throated blue, Black-throated green, Blackburnian, Yellow-rumped, Ovenbird, Magnolia, Nashville and Black and white; other nesters include Red-eyed and Blue-headed vireo, Yellow-bellied sapsucker, Downy, Hairy and Pileated woodpecker, American Robin, Ruffed Grouse, Common Raven, etc. If things grow quiet on the deck, a short walk down our road usually includes stops for Chestnut-sided warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Eastern Bluebird and Red-shouldered and Broad-winged hawk. Last year those who stayed long enough watched a Ruffed grouse drumming on a log ten feet from the house.

Directions: From the intersection of Route 73 & 9N South (between Keene & Keene Valley), turn east towards Elizabethtown; go approximately 2 miles uphill to where the road levels and turn onto Baxter Mountain Lane (just beyond little yellow house) on right; go past Round Top Lane on left, pass a house on left as road levels, look for driveway on right, #84, and take it to the end.

Registration: Contact Pat & John Thaxton, 518.576.4232, or email JPTHax5317@aol.com.



Black-throated green Warbler Lloyd Spitalnik

Saturday, May 17, 2008
Indian Creek Nature Center, Canton

Time: 7 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Distance: Approximately 2 miles on level trails

Leader: Joan Collins

Meet: At the main parking area for Indian Creek Nature Center

To Register: Call Joan at (315) 261-4246 or email jecol-lins@twcny.rr.com

Come enjoy a spring bird walk at Indian Creek Nature Center. Participants will view a wide variety of species on a hike through shrubland, marsh, wetland, and forest habitats along the Tower and Succession Trails. A spotting scope will be used to view birds on Lower Lake from the top of the observation tower. Bring binoculars!

This trip is jointly sponsored with Indian Creek Nature Center and the Laurentian Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club.

Sunday, May 18, 2008
Massawepie Mire, Colton

Massawepie Mire is the largest bog (actually a fen!) in New York State. We will walk the old, level railroad bed (now a dirt road) for ~ 4 miles round trip and visit the South Branch of the Grass River location near the trailhead. There will also be an optional 2 mile round-trip hike on the Mountaineer Trail along scenic Massawepie Lake in the afternoon. Boreal birds, bog plants, and scenic views will be our focus!

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Leaders: Joan Collins & Eileen Wheeler

Register: by calling Joan at (315) 261-4246 jecol-lins@twcny.rr.com or Eileen Wheeler (315) 386-2482 ei-wheeler@yahoo.com.

This trip is jointly sponsored with the Laurentian Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club.



Eastern bluebird Lloyd Spitalnik

Wednesday, May 21, 2008

Azure Mountain, Santa Clara

Azure Mountain's 2512' fire tower summit is reached by hiking a one mile trail with an elevation gain of 944'. There are many warbler species along the way, including Mourning Warblers and a few Blackpoll Warblers in a small area of spruce and fir on the summit. There are also several cliff-nesting species that participants may possibly observe. Indigo Buntings can also be heard singing along the trail.

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Leader: Joan Collins

Meet: At the Azure Mt. Trailhead on Blue Mountain Road

Register: by calling Joan at (315) 261-4246 jecol-lins@twcny.rr.com.

This trip is jointly sponsored with the Laurentian Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club.

Saturday, May 24, 2008

Vanderwhacker Mt. Trail Wetlands Minerva (Just Past Town of Newcomb)

Join us for a walk to the beaver-created wetlands along the trail to Vanderwhacker Mt. Many species will be observed along the way, including Olive-sided Flycatcher, Rusty Blackbird, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Canada Warbler. We will hike approximately three-quarters of a mile of the 2.5 mile-long trail. There will be little elevation change on this section of trail.

Time: 7 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Directions: Meet and park along Route 28N at "Moose Pond Way". "Moose Pond Way" is located on the west side of Route 28N just north of the Boreas River Bridge. This location is roughly 8.7 miles north of Minerva, and 5.7 miles south of the Route 28N-Tahawas Rd. intersection. We can car-pool in high-clearance vehicles for 2.7 miles down "Moose Pond Way" to the trailhead of Vanderwhacker Mt.

Leaders: Joan Collins and Amy Freiman

Register: By calling Joan at (315) 261-4246 jecol-lins@twcny.rr.com.

This trip is jointly sponsored with the Laurentian Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club.

Sunday, May 18, 2008

The Gulf 7:00 a.m.

A unique area, The Gulf is a parcel of NYS state land sandwiched between private, mostly hunting club properties in northern Clinton County. The 2.6 mile hike from the parking area to the Canadian border passes through different habitats, some of which have changed over the years due to beaver activity. Some of the birds seen in the spring and summer have been Canada and Mourning warbler, Scarlet Tanager and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Turkey Vultures fly over at eye level at the actual Gulf between the U.S. and Canada.

Time: 7:00 a.m.

Bring: Water, bug dope, lunch

Meet: Hannaford's parking lot in Plattsburgh

Leaders: Judy Heintz, John & Pat Thaxton

Register: Call John & Pat at 576-4232 or email: jpthax5317@aol.com.



Black-throated blue warbler Lloyd Spitalik

Sunday, May 25, 2008

Blue Mountain

Blue Mountain's 3750' fire tower summit is reached by hiking 2.2 miles with an elevation gain of 1550'. We will get an early start to ensure a good possibility of hearing Bicknell's Thrush singing near the summit. Participants will likely observe many other species including Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Boreal Chickadee, Blackpoll Warbler, Canada Warbler, Swainson's Thrush, and Winter Wren.

Time: 6 a.m.

Meet: At the Blue Mountain Trailhead on Route 28/30.

Leader: Joan Collins

Register: By calling Joan at (315) 261-4246 jecol-lins@twcny.rr.com before May 23; after May 23, call (518) 624-5528.

This trip is jointly sponsored with the Laurentian Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club.

Memorial Day Weekend (Date TBD)

Fort Drum, Great Bend

Join Jeff Bolsinger for a field trip at Fort Drum over the Memorial Day weekend. For more information, and to register, please call Jeff at (315) 386-2565 or email at jsbolsinger@yahoo.com. Please also note that space is limited, and Jeff will accept people on a first come first serve basis.

All participants will need to get Fort Drum passes well in advance. Anybody that does not know how to get a pass, but wants to come on the trip, should contact Jeff as early as possible.

Black & white warbler Lloyd Spitalik



The Joseph and Joan Cullman Conservation Foundation

I feel both humbled and proud to announce that the Joseph and Joan Cullman Conservation Foundation not only gave HPAS a grant for the second year in a row but also increased it by 50%, from \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00 along with a mandate to continue our work in Adirondack conservation, education and research. This refunding represents a major vote of confidence in HPAS's ability and willingness to identify crucial conservation initiatives at the grass roots level, where we interact and partner with organizations as diverse as the Adirondack Visitor Interpretive Centers in Paul Smiths and Newcomb, The Wildlife Conservation Society, The Wild Center, The Adirondack Loon Project, The Nature Conservancy, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Saranac Middle School and Elizabethtown/Lewis Central School.

As I write the HPAS grant committee continues to evaluate initiatives we sponsored last year as well as other critical Adirondack conservation projects. HPAS shares with The Joseph and Joan Cullman Conservation Foundation an ardent desire to preserve, promote and protect the Adirondacks through on the ground, real time, conservation, education and research.

I wish that in the pages of this newsletter I could thank the officers of The Joseph and Joan Cullman Conservation Foundation with the joyous shriek with which a few of our grant recipients thanked me.

—John Thaxton

Pine warbler Lloyd Spitalnik

The Adirondack-Champlain Region 7 portion of the 2008 NYS Waterfowl Count

The count was conducted between 12-13 January. This ground count survey is sponsored by the NYS Ornithological Association, and statewide results from all ten regions will appear in *The Kingbird*; the separate aerial survey by the NYS DEC was discontinued in 1997.

Canada Goose 24; American Black Duck 41; Mallard 775; Northern Pintail 1; Ring-necked Duck 1; Greater Scaup 11; scaup (sp.) 1; Long-tailed Duck 3; Bufflehead 88; Common Goldeneye 4,163; Hooded Merganser 34; Common Merganser 723; Red-breasted Merganser 1; Ruddy Duck 1; Common Loon 7; Horned Grebe 67; Red-necked Grebe 1.

TOTAL: 16 species; about 5,942 individuals.

A total of 17 Bald Eagles and 29 Great Black-backed Gulls were counted, the eagles reported to the DEC Endangered Species Unit for inclusion with NYS results in the national mid-winter Bald Eagle Survey.

OBSERVERS: Tom Armstrong, Peter Galvani, Judith Heintz, Bill Krueger, Dayna LaLonde, Linda LaPan, Gary Lee, Melanie McCormack, Nancy Olsen, Dan Peters, John Peterson, Fred Raymon, Dana Rohleder, David Rutkowski, Laura Smith, Hollis White.

--John M.C. Peterson
Elizabethtown & Montréal



Poetry Corner

from Sunday Morning

She says, "I am content when wakened birds,
Before they fly, test the reality
O misty fields, by their sweet questionings;
But when the birds are gone, and their warm fields
Return no more, where, then, is paradise?"
There is not any haunt of prophecy,
Nor any old chimera of the grave,
Nether the golden underground, nor isle
Melodious, where spirits gat them home,
Nor visionary south, nor cloudy palm
Remote on heaven's hill, that has endured
As April's green endures; or will endure
Like her remembrance of awakened birds,
Or her desire for June and evenings, tipped
By the consummation of the swallow's wings.

--Wallace Stevens

Ferrisburgh Christmas Bird Count 2007

Saturday December 15th dawned cold and cloudy as a fog rose off Lake Champlain for the 48th Ferrisburgh Christmas Bird Count. Thirty-eight people broke into 13 teams and spent 145 combined hours in the field covering 656 miles. This effort was supplemented by 7.5 hours of owling coverage over 113.5 miles and four feeder watchers.

2007 will be remembered as the year of the winter irruptives. The count set record highs for snow buntings (2,584) and common redpolls (2,515). Counters found the most pine grosbeaks (109) since 1968. Waxwings were in abundance with the second highest totals for both Bohemian (982) and cedar (1,140). Yet with all the winter birds around we had only one purple finch and no pine siskins or evening grosbeaks.

Four blackbird species were found with the first rusty blackbirds since 1980.

Six woodpecker species was a remarkable total. In addition to the four usual suspects (downy, hairy, flicker, and pileated) red-bellieds have become common. They have now appeared on five consecutive counts and this year six groups spotted eight birds. The stand-out woodpecker was a yellow-bellied sapsucker in Vergennes, the first in the history of the count.

An Iceland gull off of Thompson Point was also a first for the count.

Waterfowl numbers were mixed. Fewer Canada geese (93) were seen than ever before and only one snow goose made an appearance. On the other hand, 3,009 common goldeneye set a count record. Unusual ducks included a wood duck at the falls in Vergennes, five lesser scaup off Thompson Point, and a gadwall from the New York side of the circle.

For the second year in a row and only the second time since 1966 American kestrel was missed. However, four merlins were the most ever seen on the count. A northern goshawk also made an appearance in the Charlotte territory.

Among the more common birds, tufted titmouse continued to increase dramatically. This year, for the first time ever, there were more titmice than white-breasted nuthatch.

Thank you to all field participants and feeder watchers for another successful count. We look forward to seeing you again on Saturday December 20, 2008 for the 49th annual count.

—Mike Winslow

Plattsburgh Christmas Bird Count 2007

2007 Christmas Bird Count Summary for the Plattsburgh, NY/ VT (NYPL)circle 44o39' N 73o29'W, as described in 1986 with the center at the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base. The 2007 CBC for this area was held on Sunday, December 16 from 07:00 to 16:30 with temperatures ranging from 7oF to 14oF under constant snow or snow flurries. The variable south, then northeast 0-20 mph winds with gusts to 39mph. Visibility was never more than 1.7 miles. The 19 field observers logged 42.8 party hours and 181 total miles of which 28.5 hours and 163 miles were in cars, 5.75 hours, 10 miles on foot, 5.5 hours, 5 miles on skis and 3 hours, 3 miles on snowshoes. The 34 feeder watchers spent 116 hours at feeders. There were 57 species recorded and 5818 individuals counted. An additional 11 species were found during the count week.

Snow Goose 1, Canada Goose 111, American Black Duck 11, Mallard 513, Lesser Scaup 1, Bufflehead 1, Common Goldeneye 89, Hooded Merganser 5, Common Merganser 201, Ring-necked Pheasant 2, Ruffed Grouse 1, Wild Turkey 50, Common Loon 1, Sharp-shinned Hawk 2, Cooper's Hawk 3, Red-tailed Hawk 1, Ring-billed Gull 107, Herring Gull 8, Great Black-backed Gull 71, Rock Pigeon 337, Mourning Dove 406, Downy Woodpecker 48, Hairy Woodpecker 46, Northern Flicker 2, Pileated Woodpecker 3, Blue Jay 175, American Crow 425, Common Raven 1, Horned Lark 26, Black-capped Chickadee 523, Tufted Titmouse 20, Red-breasted Nuthatch 12, White-breasted Nuthatch 42, Brown Creeper 2, Carolina Wren 2, Eastern Bluebird 3, American Robin 6, European Starling 374, Bohemian Waxwing 575, American Tree Sparrow 93, Song Sparrow 1, White-throated Sparrow 3, Dark-eyed Junco 301, Snow Bunting 65, Northern Cardinal 129, Red-winged Blackbird 2, Rusty Blackbird 1, Common Grackle 17, Brown-headed Cowbird 11, Pine Grosbeak 108, Purple Finch 4, House Finch 130, Common Redpoll 258, Pine Siskin 33, American Goldfinch 242, Evening Grosbeak 11, House Sparrow 204. Also seen during count week were Greater Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Ruddy Duck, Horned Grebe, Bald Eagle, Rough-legged hawk, Northern Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Cedar Waxwing, Lapland Longspur, and Eastern Meadowlark.

The participants were Derek Allan, Tom Armstrong, Helen Booth, Robert Booth, Kit Booth, Robin Brown, Gwen Cateenwalla, James Cayea, Joy Cayea, Joan Clark, Betty Conway, Regina Coryea, Walter Coryea, Uma Creedon-Carey, Paul Dame, Julie Dumas, Bob Ellsworth, Holland Fitts, Liz Fitts, Cornelia Forrence, Jan Forsman, Bob Fuller, Judith Heintz, Candy Hess, John Hess, Suzy Johnson, Euclid Jones, Gail Kemp, Ellsworth King, Harold G. Klein, William Krueger, Dayna Lalonde, Julie Lattrell, Julie Liberty, Melanie McCormack, Janet Mihuc, Charlie Mitchell, Karen Moffa, Bill Morgan, Jim Nolan, Nancy Olsen, Helle Parker, Sonal Patel, Geri Reichert, Ingeborg Sapp, Michele Snyder, Tim Snyder, Gary Sturgis, Irma Teittinen, Lynn Valenti, Dan Vogt, Katie White and Ann Wilke.

These intrepid birders contributed to a successful count despite the bad weather, gusty winds and very poor visibility.

Helen and Bob Booth and Robin Brown, separately, watched Cooper's Hawks have their meals. The hawk at the Booth's house stayed proximal to the feeder eating its Mourning Dove, while other birds continued to flock the feeder. The hawk even returned after being frightened off with a snow blower to dig the remains from a snow bank and finish the meal. Robin watched another Cooper's take a Rock Pigeon and land very close to her while eating his meal.

—Judy Heintz

Saranac Lake 52nd Christmas Bird Count 2007

Saranac Lake, N.Y. - 44°19'0"N 74°04'23"W, mostly as described 1976, but center 1.2 miles NNE of e. jct. Rt. 86 & Old Ray Brook Rd., Ray Brook and adjusted very slightly (a few seconds) in 2007 to be more precise (using Google Earth). Dec. 30, 2007; 7:00 am to 4:30 pm. Temp. 25° to 30°F. Wind WSW 0-5. Snow depth 12-30 in. Still water frozen. Moving water open. A.M.: cloudy, snow flurries. P.M.: cloudy. Observers: 36 in field in 17-19 parties (non-owling), plus 11 at feeders. Time and Distance: 15 hours at feeders; 6 hours and 53 miles owling. Total party-hours 108 and party-miles 437: 46.5 hours and 46 miles on foot, 52 hours and 375.5 miles by car, 3.5 hours and 4 miles by skis, 3 hours and 3 miles by snowshoes, 3 hours and 8.5 miles by kayak.

Canada Goose 1; Am. Black Duck 6; Mallard 280; Hooded Merganser 25; Common Merganser 5; Ruffed Grouse 5; Wild Turkey 6; Bald Eagle 1; Cooper's Hawk 1; Red-tailed Hawk 1; **Rough-legged Hawk cw**; Rock Pigeon 216; Mourning Dove 129; Barred Owl 3; Downy Woodpecker 57; Hairy Woodpecker 60; Black-backed Woodpecker 2; Pileated Woodpecker 10; N. Shrike 3; Gray Jay 18; Blue Jay 94; Am.

(continued from previous page)

Crow 168; Com. Raven **59**; Black-capped Chickadee 1186; Boreal Chickadee 7; Tufted Titmouse 1; Red-breasted Nuthatch 95; White-breasted Nuthatch **61**; Brown Creeper 6; Golden-crowned Kinglet 7; Eur. Starling 170; Bohemian Waxwing 2; Cedar Waxwing 1; Song Sparrow 1; White-throated Sparrow 1; Dark-eyed (Slate-col.) Junco 32; Snow Bunting cw; N. Cardinal 17; Common Grackle 2; Brown-headed Cowbird 14; Pine Grosbeak **172**; White-winged Crossbill cw; Common Redpoll 975; Hoary Redpoll 1; Pine Siskin 1; Am. Goldfinch 4; Evening Grosbeak 170; House Sparrow 2. **Total:** 45 species; 4078 individuals.

Participants: Tom Armstrong, Jeff Bolsinger, John Brown, Nan Brown, Kris Casler, Joan Collins, Sally Conyne, Tom Dudones, Frank Gill, Ed Grant, Audrey Hyson, Penny Jaques, Ed and Debbie Kanze, Dayna LaLonde, Linda LaPan, Fuat Latif, Brian McAllister, Melanie McCormick, John Marshall, Larry Master (compiler), Matt Medler, Susan Moss, Sean O'Brien, Mary O'Dell, Peter O'Shea, Carol Pinney, Sheila and Lew Rosenberg, Nina Schoch, Ann Spencer, Janet Stein, Mary Beth Warburton, Eileen and Tom Wheeler, Uta Wister.

The largest ever turnout of field observers led, at least in part, to record numbers for a number of permanent resident species on the Saranac Lake (includes Lake Placid and Bloomingdale) CBC.

—Larry Master

An HPAS/SLAA By Any Other Name...

The ongoing merger of HPAS/SLAA will take some time before it officially comes to pass, at which point the entire membership will need to vote on a new set of bylaws and a new name, preferably one that makes everybody happy.

Someone suggested *Adirondack Audubon*, someone else *Adirondack Northern New York Audubon*. I think we should chose a shortish, bold name that will show up first on search engines when someone googles *Adirondacks Audubon*. The ball's in your court.

Please feel free to write or email me your suggestions for a name for the new Audubon Chapter, which now covers just about the entire Adirondack region as well as the Lake Champlain, Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River Lowlands.

jpthax5317@aol.com

—JT

Blackburnian warbler Lloyd Spitalnik



Bicknell's thrush Lloyd Spitalnik



Great Adirondack Birding Celebration June 6-8, 2008

If you'd like to volunteer for, exhibit at or simply find out about the 6th annual Great Adirondack Birding Celebration centered at the Paul Smiths Visitor Interpretive Center, check out their web site at: www.adkvic.org/birdcelebration.html.

Adirondack Birding Festival June 20-22, 2008

The Hamilton County web site (www.hamiltoncounty.com) has a link to information about the 5th annual Adirondack Birding Festival. They would like to hear from potential volunteer trip leaders as soon as possible.

Next HPAS Board of Directors Meeting Sunday, March 16, 2008, 1:00 p.m.

Paul Smiths Visitor Interpretive Center

HPAS board of director meetings are open to the entire membership; they are an excellent forum for exchanging ideas about our increasingly dynamic Audubon Chapter. The board appreciates the input of any and all members.

Editor's Note

For the second time in a little more than as many years I find myself inheriting the editorial excellence of the indefatigable Joan Collins, who edited *The Harrier*, the Saint Lawrence-Adirondack Audubon Society's newsletter, from 2005 until last month, when she sent the last issue off to the printer. *The Harrier* is alive and well and living in the temporarily monikered HPAS/SLAA newsletter. After the National Audubon Society officially merges the two chapters the entire membership will vote on a new set of bylaws and a new name, one that, one hopes, will sound a little catchier than HPAS/SLAA. In the meantime expect similar infelicities as I try to adjust the newsletter to various changes the merger will perform generate.

As you will note immediately we have significantly more field trips on the agenda than either individual chapter had in the past, and they take place in locations as far afield as The Gulf on the Clinton County/Canada border to Massawepie Mire to a birdy road in Keene Valley. This diversity of field trip opportunities in itself justifies the merger of our two chapters, which will represent essentially the entire Adirondack Region as well as the Lake Champlain, Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River lowlands. A much larger territory to represent implies, of course, a concomitantly larger responsibility to stay on top of things and to get up to speed on developing scenarios that threaten the integrity of our environment. The generation of electricity by wind turbines, hundreds of them in a single location, for example, represents a major challenge to our chapters, right now, as business interests pursue rapid agreements to begin construction before the DEC even issues guidelines or requires an environmental impact statement. One wind power company looking for a permit in St. Lawrence County sends representatives to local bars, where they buy people drinks and talk them into signing a petition in favor of putting a wind farm in their town.

You'll find reports on three Christmas Bird Counts inside (Elizabethtown results will appear in a future newsletter or on our web site) and should bear in mind that the Plattsburgh CBC took place in a blizzard that dropped fifteen inches of snow, despite which observers on skis and snowshoes and I wonder what else came up with fifty-seven species, including a Lapland longspur and an Eastern meadowlark. I imagine a meadowlark flying through a ticker-tape parade.

It thrills me to announce that the Joseph and Joan Cullman Conservation Foundation not only gave HPAS a grant for the second year in a row but also increased it by fifty percent to \$15,000.00. We took the responsibility of the first grant extremely seriously; we will take the second grant even more seriously. We will make a significant difference in Adirondack conservation, education and research. I feel certain I speak for the entire membership when I express to the officers of the Cullman Foundation my profoundest gratitude.

The third in an occasional series of newsletters that features the work of a single artist, this issue showcases the images of Lloyd Spitalnik, the incredibly gifted wildlife photographer based in Manhattan. You can see more of Lloyd's work at: www.lloydspitalnikphotos.com. The singing Bicknell's thrush? Central Park...

—**John Thaxton**