

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 1

June-August 2007



Saturday, June 23rd, 2007
(Rain date, Sunday, June 24th, 2007)
Hudson River Ice Meadows
Time: 10:00 a.m.

Description: Join naturalist Evelyn Greene on a field trip to the "ice meadows" south of The Glen and north of Warrensburg. These seven miles of sloping, open cobble shoreline along the Hudson feature a fascinating mix of hardy plants, including several orchids, that can survive the frequent flooding and being covered by six or eight feet of frazil ice every winter with some of it often lasting late into the spring. We will meet in The Glen on The Loop, the side road just above the bridge over the Hudson and go down the west side first, drive south and through Warrensburg and then up the east side of the Hudson to the Warren Co. park next to the golf course, where we will eat lunch and then explore some more. **Bring:** Sturdy shoes (walking stick recommended); shorts not recommended—poison ivy; lunch, sunscreen, bug dope. **Directions:** Northway exit 25, go west on Rt. 8 7 miles to Weavertown; go south on Rt. 28 5 miles to The Glen; The Loop is just before the Hudson bridge on the left. **Registration:** Call John & Pat Thaxton at (518) 576-4232 for carpool possibilities.

Saturday, June 30, 2007
Low's Ridge-Upper Dam Trail
Piercefield, Time: 8:00 a.m.

This old, level dirt road trail travels along a spectacular fen for the first mile, and then along a vast marsh, mixed woodlands, and pond area before arriving at the Upper Dam on the Bog River. We will have lunch at the picnic area on scenic Hitchens Pond. There will be an optional climb up Low's Ridge after lunch. The spectacular views from the summit include the Bog River Valley and many High Peaks. The round trip distance is 5 miles on the level trail, and the optional climb adds just fewer than 2 more miles round trip with a 400' gain in elevation. Bring binoculars!

Leaders: Joan Collins & Tom Wheeler

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

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

Saturday, July 7, 2007
Hudson River to Opalescent River

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Directions: Meet at the parking lot for the Hanging Spear Falls approach to The Flowed Lands and Allen Mt—0.5 miles (on the right) before the end of the road at the Upper Works parking lot. Take Route 28N 5 miles east from the Town Hall in Newcomb to the access road to Tahawus; or from I-87 exit 29 take the Blue Ridge Road 18 miles west. Take the Tahawus Road 6 miles and bear left at the fork (sign for Mt. Marcy and the High Peaks); go 3 miles to the parking lot on the right.

Bring: Water, snacks/lunch, bug dope, sunscreen, appropriate attire for the weather,

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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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sturdy/waterproof hiking boots, binoculars.

Description: 7.4 miles round trip. The terrain varies from old logging roads to trails through the woods with easy to moderate changes in grade; we'll cross the Hudson River on a suspension bridge, Lake Jimmy on a long wooden bridge and circle Lake Sally before arriving at the Opalescent River. Last year on this trip at this time we saw many species of warbler including Mourning and Canada, Olive-sided flycatcher, a nesting loon and many other species.

Hike Leaders: John & Pat Thaxton

Register: Call 518.576.4232 or email JPThax5317@aol.com



Opalescent River

John Thaxton

Annual Meeting and Potluck Picnic

Saturday, July 28th, 2007

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Huntington Wildlife Forest

Route 28N, Newcomb NY

Spend a day with HPAS friends and their families on beautiful Catlin Lake in Newcomb, NY. This lake is located on the Huntington Wildlife Forest (HWF), a 15,000 acre research facility operated by the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. This property is not open to the general public, so take advantage of the opportunity to enjoy a quiet day on one of the prettiest lakes in the Adirondacks. Bring your swim trunks, your kayaks, canoes and rowboats (no motors please). There will be a few canoes and kayaks available on a first register, first serve basis. Spend the day sun bathing, swimming, paddling or fishing on the lake. After lunch there will also be a tour of HWF that will focus on the forestry and wildlife research that occurs on the property.

Scheduled Activities:

- **9:00 a.m.** – Meet at the Adirondack Ecological Center (6312 State Route 28N) in Newcomb for a brief introduction to the property.
- **9:30 p.m.** – Drive to Catlin Lake (quick stop at an Old Growth Forest stand) and launch boats for a paddle around the lake.
- **12:30 p.m.** – Meet at Birch Point Lean-to on the lake for lunch, a quick HPAS meeting and raffle drawing for a two night stay for two in a Studio Cabin at the Lake Placid Lodge.
- **1:00 ish.** – Head back to shore and vehicles.
- **1:30 ish** – Tour of HWF. We will be making brief stops during our egress from HWF.

3:00 p.m. - depart from AEC.

Bring: lunch, snacks, beverages, binoculars and sunscreen.

Leave home: your pets...**Sorry, but no pets are allowed on the property.**

Cost: Free!

To register: Call Charlotte Demers at the Adirondack Ecological Center at 582-4551 extension 103.

Directions: The AEC is located 10 miles east of Long Lake or 26 miles west off of Northway (87) exit 28 (North Hudson).

Great Adirondack Birding Celebration

Plan to participate in the 5th annual Great Adirondack Birding Celebration, which will offer workshops, lectures, a social hour, a barbeque lunch and 16+ field trips. Headquartered at the Paul Smiths Visitor Interpretive Center, the festival runs from **Friday, June 1st through Sunday, June 3rd**. As it has since the festival's inception, HPAS members helped design and will lead field trips, which include such exciting destinations as Spring Pond Bog (Spruce grouse), Whiteface Mountain (Bicknell's thrush), the Osgood River by canoe (Black-backed woodpecker, Northern three-toed woodpecker) and Bloomingdale Bog. The featured speaker is Dr. Frank Gill, author of *Ornithology*, the definitive textbook in its field.. Dr. Gill served as Chairman of the Ornithology Department at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, Senior Vice President and Director of Science at National Audubon Society and President of American Ornithologist's Union.



Black-backed woodpecker

For more information visit the Great Adirondack Birding Celebration website at:

<http://www.northnet.org/adirondackvic/birdfest.html>

Adirondack Birding Festival

Inspired by the success of the Great Adirondack Birding Celebration, the Hamilton County Department of Tourism started its own Adirondack Birding Festival two years ago and hit a home run. HPAS members designed and led the field trips for the Hamilton County festival and will help lead them again for the 3rd annual festival, which runs for more than half a month, from **Saturday, June 2nd to Sunday, June 17th**. Activities include canoe/kayak trips on Woods Lake, Little Tupper Lake, Round Lake and the Bog and Sacandaga rivers, hikes up Blue Mountain, along the Northville/Lake Placid Trail and to Ferd's Bog, a Night Owl Hoot, lectures on Loons and small mammals and slide shows on birds and landscapes.

For more information visit the Adirondack Birding Festival website at:

<http://www.adirondackbirds.com>

The Wild Center

Wildfest '07

Wings Over The Adirondacks

July 4th, 2007, 10: a.m.--4:00 p.m.,

Rain or Shine (Free!)

The Wild Center will host it's second annual Wildfest, an all day Fourth of July Festival featuring live music on the main stage (including multiple Bluegrass Grammy winner Ralph Stanley), a children's activity tent and children's bird workshops, a bird tent housing all kinds of avian experts, the opening dedication ceremony for Wings over the Adirondacks (a skywalk with skytowers that runs right through the canopy of trees), free native plants to take home and plant, tours of the skywalk project, guided tours of the new Biobuilding (the greenest new building in the Adirondacks, food, demonstrations, raptor free flights, Birdland tours and more.

This is an excellent opportunity to explore the beautiful setting (a couple of viewing platforms overlook an ox-bowed section of the Raquette River), dramatic architecture and world-class exhibits at The Wild Center. Even the standard fare here is outstanding, and when you throw in a free, all day festival you simply can't go wrong.

HPAS will have an exhibit in the Bird Tent and several members will stand ready to lead bird walks.

Adirondack ATBI BioBlitz

July 20-21, 2007

The Adirondack All-Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) is holding a BioBlitz in the Paul Smiths area, including the VIC property, from 3 p.m. Friday, July 20 to 3 p.m. Saturday, July 21. Professional scientists and trained volunteers will be on hand to sample the wetland flora and fauna of this region. The Paul Smiths VIC will be having guided walks to the various collecting sites, and the scientists will give short on-site presentations about what they are finding. Visit and be amazed by their discoveries. Call for details (518)327-3000.

Small Mammals and Home Development

Saturday, August 25th

Paul Smiths Visitor Interpretative Center

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: Elizabeth Dowling

ESF Graduate Student Elizabeth Dowling has been investigating the impact of residential development on the small mammal community in the Adirondacks for two summers. Forty percent of all mammal species in the Adirondacks are considered "small mammals" and their population density and diversity can be an indication of environmental conditions.

Elizabeth has been working with a research technique that uses *track tubes* to "capture" the footprints of small mammals as well as traditional live capture techniques. She has been comparing the occurrence of these small mammal captures at varying distances from houses and housing developments in forested environments. Her research indicates that small mammal species respond differently to and have a variety of "threshold" distances in response to housing developments.

2007 HPAS Raffle

As a member and supporter of High Peaks Audubon, you contribute to an organization dedicated to conserving and restoring wildlife and their habitats through advocacy and education. All of these programs are funded by donations from HPAS members and other generous supporters. Membership dues only cover approximately 50% of the operational costs of the organization. We need your help to continue to offer a variety of activities and take advantage of educational opportunities.

This year's fundraiser raffle has the extraordinary prize of a two-night stay for two at **The Lake Placid Lodge** (www.lakeplacidlodge.com). The winner and guest will be staying in one of the rustic and luxurious Studio Cabins, set right at the edge of Lake Placid. Each of these cabins has a king-size bed, a large stone fireplace and a two-person soaking tub with separate shower. Your prize also includes a full Adirondack breakfast served in the beautifully remodeled 2 bedroom cabin that sits right on the shore of Lake Placid. This prize is valued at over \$900. *Travel and Leisure* named the Lake Placid Lodge to their list of "Top Best Hotels in the World". In addition, the winner will receive two plush bathrobes donated by "The Point" (www.thepointresort.com), an exclusive resort on Saranac Lake as well as 2 lovely, full-color hardcover books describing these beautiful Garret Group accommodations.

You will be receiving in the mail a book of raffle tickets that are \$5.00 each or the book of six for \$25.00. Please help support HPAS by purchasing or selling tickets. Send your check or money order made out to "High Peaks Audubon" in the envelope provided. If you would like additional raffle tickets please contact Charlotte Demers at (518)582-4551 ext 103 or cdemers@esf.edu. The drawing for this fabulous prize will be at the HPAS Annual Meeting to be held **July 28th**. For more information on this event, visit the HPAS web site (www.highpeaksaudubon.org) and click on "events".

McKensie Cabin



Winning Essays for a Week at Camp

Why I Want To Go To Camp

Camp is one of the many pleasures of a kid's childhood. Singing around the campfire, smores, hiking, and sleeping in cabins is a lot of fun, or so I've heard. The truth is: I've never been to a summer camp before.

I'd really like to win the opportunity and have the joy of a camping adventure. I'd like to have the wind blowing through my hair, the cold frosty air biting my cheeks on top of a mountain, feeling the fresh lake water as I dive through it, and listening to the campfire crackle in the night. The campfire would feel so warm and cover me, the camper around it with a warm air; like a hot blanket.

Camping sounds like a lot of fun. I've tried swimming, hiking, rock climbing, story telling, and scavenger hunts with my class in fifth and sixth grade. Those two field trips were two of the best field trips I've had in a long time.

Another reason I'd like to go to camp is to meet new people. I'm naturally a shy person by heart, and an opportunity like this comes once in a lifetime. Camping would be so great!

If I win this essay contest, and go to camp for a week, I'd be really thankful! I can imagine it now: swimming, hiking, ghost stories, sleeping in the cabins, early morning mist, and cold cereal for breakfast! Oh well, I can only hope for the best and try not to get too disappointed if I don't win.

--Adela Bukva, Age 12

I would like to go to camp at Pack Forest because...

I love the outside and use my hands. I enjoy hunting, building, farming and cutting wood. In September 2006, I received a 1949 Ford 8N tractor. I like to work on it and use it around the house and at school. I would be able to improve on my shooting ability because I have taken a hunter safety course.

It would be a good experience as President of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) at Brushton-Moira Central School. Ideas from camp would help me learn ways to care for and preserve trails on school property used by the cross-country team and the FFA. Since the FFA will be planting Christmas trees this spring, it would be beneficial to learn how to identify and care for them. We will also be starting maple sugaring in the spring of 2008 because we received a grant to buy all the sugaring equipment. Perhaps I might learn something that would be helpful in the production of maple syrup.

There is a focus towards teamwork at the camp. I could improve on my cooperation, communication and interaction with others. It would help me to improve teamwork in FFA and in the work place. Sending me to camp would help the FFA to see that it is a good experience for education and maybe sponsor 1 or 2 kids in the future.

It is also going to help me decide what I want to pursue in college. I am looking at the Environmental Science and Forestry School at Syracuse for bioprocessing engineering or forest products engineering.

In conclusion I would welcome the opportunity to go to Pack Forest for a week. Thank you for taking the time to read this essay.

—David Gregory, Age 17

Destinations: Madawaska Flow

A birder/backpacker who's taken many trips to the Adirondacks, I thought it would be cool to write up a destination that combines the best of both pursuits.

Madawaska Flow, now officially known as the "Santa Clara Tract," showed up on New York birders' radar when Susan Roney Drennan described its riches in *Where to Find Birds in New York*. At the time of publication, however, the area combined a mix of private and public holdings that made access difficult. When New York State acquired the property from Champion Paper it became open to everyone. As locations go it surely ranks among the more out-of-the-way places in the park.

The area had many hunting cabins, some of which are still active but many of which the DEC removed, creating in the process some great tent sites. Accessing the tent sites requires only a relatively short walk from the gate on a good dirt road suitable for a portage, even a wheeled one. The extensive logging road system at Madawaska makes it easy to set up a base camp and hike or paddle to other locations easily. The DEC has not yet installed privies or designated campsites.

Madawaska is a classic example of the low altitude boreal-type habitat found in great abundance in this part of the park. On the trail/access road just to the north of Madawaska Pond there's a very large bog complex through which Onion Brook meanders. Several eskers snake through the area, which has pockets of northern hardwoods and, on the western edge of Madawaska Pond, a quaking bog. Other sections of the pond, in particular Quebec Brook, feature extensive stretches of freshwater marsh. This smorgasbord of habitats attracts all manner of birds.

Behind our campsite (beyond the gate the second one in to the right) the terrain sloped away, spilling towards the bog complex just to the north. In the transitional zone where black spruce began in earnest, a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher vocalized rather frantically and seemed to call in two disheveled looking adult Gray Jays. The Jay's would follow me back to camp, I suspect for their having become used to the hunters and their comestibles. On both days of our trip we saw a marauding Northern Harrier gliding effortlessly over the bog, at times dropping suddenly and not reappearing, we suspected either because of a nest or a successful capture of prey and its subsequent consumption.

On a lazy canoe trip down Onion Brook we came to a stop at some blow-down in the water, a fortuitous interruption as two Rusty Blackbirds flew immediately in, one with a food-laden bill. At this point they appeared rather agitated, so we quickly retreated back upstream.

Other birding highlights included Northern parula, Blackburnian warbler, Pine warbler, Alder flycatcher, Lincoln's sparrow, Spotted sandpiper, Osprey, Evening grosbeak, Olive-sided flycatcher, Scarlet tanager and Blacked-backed woodpecker.

On the trip out we spotted a female Black Bear followed closely by two bouncing cubs.

—Bill Lenhart

For directions and more information visit:

<http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dlf/publands/adk/santa.html>

Huntington Lecture Series Summer 2007

Thursdays, 7:00 PM

Adirondack Park Agency Visitor Interpretive Center
5922 Route 28N, Newcomb NY

July 5 - Surveying the Adirondacks before Colvin: "We got this far before the rum ran out" Thomas Nesbitt - Surveyor, Ticonderoga NY

July 12 - Fish, Flies, and Forests of Adirondack Headwaters Tim Mihuc - Coordinator, Lake Champlain Research Institute, SUNY Plattsburgh

July 19 - Gathering Moss: Lessons from the Small and Green Robin Kimmerer - Ecologist, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

July 26 - Weaving the Threads of History: The Dynamic Story of Huntington Wildlife Forest

Paul B. Hai - Program Coordinator, Adirondack Ecological Center, Newcomb NY

August 2 - Big Impacts on Small Mammals: Adirondack Wildlife and Residential Development Elizabeth Dowling - Graduate Student, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

August 9 - Brook Trout and Round Whitefish Restoration in Adirondack Park Bill Schoch - Regional Fisheries Manager, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

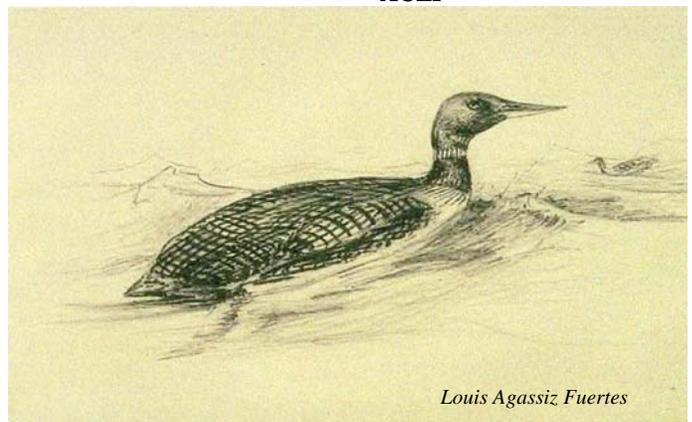
August 16 - The Weasels of New York State: Fishers and Marten and Mink, Oh My! Paul Jensen - Furbearer Biologist, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

August 23 - Genes from the Past: Searching for "Fossil" DNA in Adirondack Lakes Lee Ann Sporn - Professor, Paul Smiths College

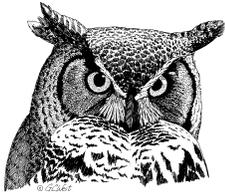
Like to Watch Loons? Join in the ACLP's Annual Loon Census on Saturday, July 21st from 8-9a.m.

Help the Adirondack Loon Conservation Program look for loons! Join in the ACLP's Annual Loon Census on Saturday, July 21st, 2007, from 8-9a.m. For more information or to choose a lake to conduct your observations, please contact the ACLP Program Manager at asauer@wcs.org or at 518-891-8836. To learn more about the ACLP's Annual Loon Census, visit www.adkscience.org/loons.

—ACLP



Louis Agassiz Fuertes



Message from the President

This is my last “Message from the President”. I’ve tremendously enjoyed serving, meeting and working with so many of you during my term as President. HPAS has a core of energetic and inspired members who have been working very hard to move this organization to new heights. I feel confident that the new officers and directors will continue this direction. And, of course, I look forward to remaining on the board and being very active in HPAS, as usual. Thank you all for your dedication and support.

Gone birding...

—Pat Thaxton.



Boreal Chickadee

Nominating Committee Report

The nominating committee is pleased to present the following slate for the officers and Board of Directors. How could we possibly thank our two departing board members, Margot Ernst and Ellen Rathbone, enough? They both had an enormous impact on HPAS and the Adirondack Park and, a little bird told us, will continue to do so in the future.

We will vote for the slate at the HPAS booth at the Paul Smiths VIC on June 2, 2007 at 2 p.m

Officers

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Gray Jay Trouble

One of the more remarkable things concerning nature is the myriad ways that flora and fauna have evolved so they're best suited for whatever environment they inhabit. In the avian world, birds like the American Crow have found the strategy that works best for them is completely adaptability, whether that means eking out a tough life along the fringes of some vast woodland or living at large somewhere in the vicinity of a Shop-Rite parking lot. Given the on-going and seemingly never-ending suburbanization in this country, the American Crow has well chosen its number in the evolutionary roulette wheel. But while some birds have picked a “one-size-fits-all” approach, there are others whose strategy is to find a particular niche and specialize in such a way that it gives them a competitive edge. This specialization can and does take many forms. One example is the bill of the White-winged or Red Crossbill; particularly suited for seed extraction from the cones of conifers. Another would be the long, graceful wings of the Albatross designed for extended periods at sea. The beauty and elegance of these particular types of adaptations are illustrated by the harmony reached between organism and its particular niche. However, what happens when that balance gets thrown askew, when a significant component of that evolutionary niche becomes compromised? Trouble. And according to some researchers, it appears that trouble may have found a remarkable denizen of North American boreal haunts—the Gray Jay.

According to a report appearing in the Toronto Star (and subsequently the Environmental News Network and Natural History magazine) Gray Jays have been on a long, marked, decline in Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada. Starting from 1980, earmarked Gray Jay breeding territories had become devoid of breeding Gray Jay pairs. Currently, more than half of those territories show no evidence of Gray Jay breeding. These observations (as part of a twenty-five year study of the birds) became an integral addition to a published paper now available via the **Royal Society B: Biological Sciences**. The paper's thesis statement pretty much spells out its take on the cause of the Gray Jay's disappearing act: “Climate change and the demographic demise of a hoarding bird living on the edge”

The papers authors, Thomas A. Waite (Department of Evolution, Ecology and Organismal Biology, Ohio State University) and Dan Strickland (former Chief Park Naturalist of Algonquin Provincial Park, now retired) both opine the Gray Jay's unique adaptive behavior is being rendered useless due to global warming implications. For the un-initiated; the Gray Jay spends most of its waking summer and fall days storing literally *thousands* of food stuffs (as caches) that will later act as virtual “iceboxes” allowing it the means to survive harsh boreal winters – as well as augmenting food supplies for young Gray Jays come nesting time in late February, early March. According to Thomas Waite, “The hoards are turning into a bad investment because the food is rotting. The birds are getting less food and they may also suffer from food poisoning from eating rotten food” (Reuters).

As a further indication of how the Gray Jay's unique adaptation served it so well for so long, both researchers' data indicated that more Gray Jay's fledged in years after a cold autumn than a warm one, and that they did better in warm

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autumns only where food supplies could be augmented by artificial means (feeders) as opposed to birds living in remote woods.

It bears mentioning here the Algonquin Jay's have long been under the microscope. In 1969, then chief park naturalist (the late Russell J. Rutter) published an extensive report about the bird including its ecology. The mantle was then picked up by Mr. Rutter's protégé, Dan Strickland. Mr. Strickland continued his intense study of the bird from the late 60's right up till the present and published a study of how and why dominant Gray Jay brood members expel their siblings from the natal area. This man voicing alarm should all make us take pause.

Given all this, it appears Gray Jays in the more northerly reaches of their habitat aren't in any current danger of disappearing. Mr. Waite's and Mr. Strickland's immediate concerns dealt with Gray Jays living on the margins. And when you say that, you're now addressing things closer to home: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York.

Shortly after this story appeared, I wrote to Professor William Bernard (Professor of Biology, Norwich University, VT) who has researched (via color-banding and radio telemetry) Gray Jays in the Victory Basin Wildlife Management Area of Vermont for the past 14 years. My presumption was simple: Gray Jays (being in marginal Vermont habitat) should be disappearing; are they? Mr. Bernard responded as follows:

"I am not sure what to tell you about my experience at Victory. I will share the last year and the year before, I perceived a decline in the number of Gray Jays that I was seeing. All that I am telling you is without real data, just feelings. I began to worry that West Nile Virus was present but it did not seem to be. Whereas in years past I might have about 12 family groups that I would see on a regular basis, it seemed I was down to 7 or 8. Again, no hard facts but now that Waite and Strickland's paper came out, I am now wondering if I am seeing the same thing."

So now this begs the million dollar question: How is the Adirondack Gray Jay faring? And the answer: No one really knows. The Breeding Bird Survey is a poor indicator (concerning abundance) of a bird that doesn't really sing – let alone one that nests in winter! The New York Breeding Bird Atlas (due to its methodology) is certainly a much better vehicle for assessing Gray Jay occurrences in New York State. On that note (and per a rough count) Gray Jays in the 00 – 05 atlas had 122 incidents of breeding versus 95 in the previous atlas. However there are all sorts of factors that can skew the data (more observers, better educated observers, better habitat access, etc.) but most importantly; the atlas (by design) is more suited for illustrating changes to a bird's distribution as opposed to changes in its abundance. As far as I'm aware, the only programs currently involving intensive focus and field work (point counts, recovery teams, habitat modeling, etc) for New York boreal birds are those for the Bicknell's Thrush and Spruce Grouse. Of course, both of those birds (in New York State) exist in very tenuous circumstances and need all the help they can get.

A friend once asked me what happens to those Gray

Jays that venture south of their Adirondack haunts (which does happen on occasions). While I said I didn't know, I ventured a guess that it probably wasn't good. In that moment I couldn't help noting the irony of that premise—that this bird's particular DNA declined an abundant environment filled with man-made "contributions" where its Blue Jay cousin thrives and adapted instead to a bitterly cold and snowy realm where life itself can seem frozen in place. Nonetheless, it's what worked and had served this bird well down through the ages. Only time will tell if new visitors such as the Red-bellied Woodpecker and the Carolina Wren – and the circumstances that brought them to the cold places – are portends that will upend what had been, until now, a very elegant evolutionary niche for Gray Jay.

—Bill Lenhart

Gray Jay



Poetry Corner

LEDA AND THE SWAN

A sudden blow: the great wings beating still
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed
By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How can those terrified vague fingers push
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs?
And how can body, laid in that white rush,
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?

A shudder in the loins engenders there
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower
And Agamemnon dead.
Being so caught up,

So mastered by the brute blood of the air
Did she put on his knowledge with his power
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?

—William Butler Yeats

Editor's Note

March roared in like a lion and kept roaring right into April, and as I sit now in mid-May looking out at a pale wash of tiny orange maple leaves drifting like smoke through a filigree of gray branches, and at cherry blossoms only the slightest bit whiter than bauble clusters of tiny, emerging aspen leaves it occurs to me I'll need to start another fire tonight. Before I started worrying about global warming I worried about running out of firewood, and I have a sneaking suspicion that the rosemary, basil, parsley and thyme I brought inside last night for fear of a hard frost consider me silly for fretting about the temperature (it only got down to 33 last night).

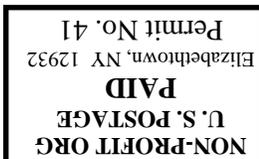
HPAS will roar out of spring with a major presence at the Paul Smiths *Great Adirondack Birding Celebration* and Hamilton County's and Audubon New York's *Adirondack Birding Festival*—members will lead more than twenty field trips, by car, on foot and in canoes, looking for Adirondack specialty birds as well as the usual suspects. Two days after summer begins our first field trip/program will feature naturalist Evelyn Greene leading us to the Hudson River Ice Meadows. The week after that Joan Collins and Tom Wheeler will lead the popular field trip to Low's Ridge-Upper Dam Trail, and the week after that Pat and I will lead our trip from the Hudson to the Opalescent River (I put a photo inside taken as I sat and ate lunch last year).

For our annual meeting President-elect Charlotte Demers arranged for a paddle/hike/picnic on beautiful Catlin Lake, located in the private Huntington Wildlife Forest, a 15,000 acre research facility operated by the SUNY College of Environments Science; and HPAS donor Eileen Roan arranged our 2007 HPAS Raffle prize: **A weekend in one of the Lake Placid Lodge's luxurious Studio Cabins.**

Although it happened too close to the deadline to do it justice in this one, the next issue of the newsletter will describe the Joseph and Joan Cullman Conservation Foundation's \$10,000 grant to HPAS. A significant conservation-oriented philanthropic organization, the Cullman Foundation's range of support includes, among many others, the Joseph F. Cullman 3rd Library for rare books and manuscripts at the Smithsonian and an endowed chair for a professor of wildlife and ecology at Yale.

The board felt deeply honored to receive the grant, and deeply committed to using it in the spirit of the Joseph and Joan Cullman Conservation Foundation's commitment to the Adirondacks.

—John Thaxton



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