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## A Special Thanks

*Robert Bate*

It has been a little more than a year now since President Emeritus, Peter Dorosh, turned over his singular duties to a host of Brooklyn Bird Club members. Clearly one person could not do all that Peter had been doing for so many years, so we all stepped up to fill Peter’s shoes. I accepted the position of President and am the public face of the club; this allows me to advocate for BBC interests and environmental issues in Brooklyn. It has been exciting to do so for the last year, and hopefully some of our efforts will make a real impact on the quality of habitat in the area.

Thanks go out to all who have pitched in to help the Brooklyn Bird Club thrive. First, a shout out to the Clapper Rail committee. They have taken on the duties of producing the thrice yearly newsletter of the BBC. Thanks to the team of Monica Berger, Ann Murray, Bobbi Manian and Tracy Meade, who solicit and write material for the newsletter and to Janet Zinn who then styles the CR and sends it out to the membership.

Jerry Layton, Dennis Hrehowsik and Donna Evans are producing the monthly speakers series for the club, which is flourishing and enjoying wide popularity and full houses at each event. Besides giving us all a chance to learn about new birding places and hear more about the world of birds, the talks are a great social event for the club, a chance to mingle with friends and share birding stories. Jerry, sadly, is stepping down from his responsibilities on the committee at the end of this season so – thank you Jerry for all your work and good luck and thank you to Dennis for his continuing work.

The Trips Committee, Peter Dorosh and Sandy Paci, continue to put together all of BBC’s popular birding trips throughout the year. This is a job requiring enormous diligence and advanced planning; it is “behind the scenes” work that often only gets noticed when things go wrong. Trips, with an experienced guide, are always one of the best ways to explore some of the regional

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### **The Brooklyn Bird Club**

**President:** Rob Bate

### **The Clapper Rail**

**Editorial:** Monica Berger, Bobbi Manian, Tracy Meade, Ann Murray

**Production:** Janet Zinn

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birding areas and are a great way to get to know each other during long car rides and over dinner. Thanks Peter and Sandy. And thanks to Mike Yuan, Nancy Tim, Rob Jett, Kier Randall, Bob Machover, Bobbi Manian, Sandy Paci, Lenore Swenson, Bob Washburn, Monica Berger, Steve Nanz, Heidi Steiner-Nanz, Paul Kiem, Peter Dorosh, Rusty Harold, Ed Crowne, Dennis Hrehowsik, Gil Shrank, Tom Stephenson, Tom Preston and JoAnne Preston for leading our wonderful trips and helping with the registration. Thanks also to Tom Stephenson, Ed Crowne, Peter Dorosh and Bobbi Manian for leading the regular Tuesday and Thursday migration walks each season. And thanks to Michele Dreger, Eni and Vinnie Falci, and Neal Frumpkin for leading the Audubon Center walks.

This year Tom Stephenson started a few educational outreach efforts before the publishing world started hogging all his time. One memorable outing was with a class of elementary school children studying birds. That outing, besides a great experience for the kids and Tom, resulted in a memorable portrait of Tom. Kathy Toomey also taught a class of future birdwatchers with great success, and we all hope the educational outreach will continue. All interested parties are welcome to contact Tom or me.

Bobbi Manian, besides her work with the Clapper Rail committee, has once again agreed to organize the Birdathon, set to take place on Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, International Migratory Bird Day. Last year's Birdathon was a great success, due to Bobbi's sustained efforts and diligence. Thanks Bobbi, and we hope this year's Birdathon is also a great success.

Thanks to Mary Eyster who stepped up to organize and help the BBC host the annual Christmas Count for Brooklyn. I understand the weather wasn't ideal but the Snowy Owls were! Thanks to Mary and all who chipped in.

The BBC organized two volunteer teams this last fall. Janet Zinn is heading up a team that is helping David, of the PPAlliance's Natural Resources Department, to take care of the weeding and other caretaking activities in Butterfly Meadow on Lookout Hill; this is where last year's Birdathon trees are starting to blossom and leaf out. The team - Janet, Heidi Steiner-Nanz, Jerry Layton, Isobel Conte, Nancy Tim, Eddie Greenfield, Richard Lefkowitz, and Elizabeth White--puts in a full morning

twice a month and have helped our beloved meadow enormously. Keep an eye out there for birds taking advantage of their work and thank you all. Bob O'Neil, Ed Crowne, Dennis Hrehowsik, Stanley Greenberg, myself and Bobbi Manian have staffed the "Mending Fences" team. We have been sanctioned by PPA and have been diligently mending bent and breached fences, especially those along the waterways. The secured fences, coupled with the new fishing rules' signage throughout the stream and lake shores, has helped preserve much of the delicate habitat so vital to the wildlife which depends on these refuges. Thank you all, our busy season is upon us.

Stanley Greenberg expressed an interest in and has subsequently taken over the duties as the Brooklyn Bird Club representative at the monthly CommComm (Community Committee) meetings hosted by the Prospect Park Alliance. Heather Walters had been our representative for years, though I have been attending most of the meetings allowing Heather to pursue her other passion - music - on those evenings. This position gives us a voice in the workings of Prospect Park and allows us to speak up for natural habitat, a resource often overlooked among all the competing interests advocating for usage of park facilities. Stanley is uniquely qualified for this position and has already started to have an impact at CommComm. Good luck and thank you Stanley!



Janet Zinn, besides her work on the Clapper Rail and the Butterfly Meadow team, continues as our intrepid webmaster. Heidi Steiner-Nanz keeps track of our finances as our Treasurer and Alan Baratz keeps tabs on our membership. It's vitally important to maintain our records, though this work may not be as exciting or glamorous as many of the other BBC activities. Thanks go to these three and thanks also to the entire board of the BBC who have stepped up to fill the enormous breach created by Peter's retirement. Thank you to all and let's continue our work together to maintain a strong and enduring Brooklyn Bird Club - 105 years old this year.

Rob Bate  
President



## Dogs, Dogs, Dogs

by Rob Bate

There is nothing that drives a Brooklyn birder to madness quicker than watching dog owners run their dogs through the sensitive woodland habitat of Prospect Park. Every one of us knows this frustration. Most of us have tried reasoning with these scofflaw dog owners, and we've watched our tempers rise and our blood begin to boil at the seemingly willful ignorance and sense of entitlement displayed by the worst of them.

Some of these rule breakers may seem to be unaware of the regulations, though most clearly do know the official rules but are aware there is little chance they will be ticketed. As they watch their fellow dog owners run their dogs throughout the woods with impunity, they have little incentive to obey park regulations. Who drives 55 when all around are driving 75?

Now is a good time to turn back the tide on this disregard of Park regulations and common courtesy. Even as this issue of the Clapper Rail goes to press, a New York Times article highlighting this problem has just been published: <http://tinyurl.com/dogsandbirds> The Prospect Park Alliance, NYPD and Park Enforcement Patrol are all gaining awareness of the problem, its extent and persistence, as well as an awareness of significant community outrage at the continuing problem.

A number of community groups in Prospect Park, including FIDO, a dog dog walkers' organization, have expressed support for curbing the off-leash dog problem in the woodlands and other sensitive areas and restricting off-leash dogs to the approved times and locations in the park. A signage package, much like the "No Fishing Area" signs, is in the works to make it clear to all where and when dogs are allowed off-leash and where and when they must be leashed.

We are not enforcement, and I suggest that all BBC members refrain for potentially unpleasant exchanges with off-leash scofflaws. There is much that can be done. Write a letter or an email to the Prospect Park Alliance and/or the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation. Tell them your concerns and ask that they act decisively to return the park to an environment of respect for regulations and respect for others and the environment. Call 311 or enter a complaint online

regularly to help document the recurring off-leash problems. Write or call your Councilmember's office about your concern.

Once signage finally arrives, we may join with FIDO and WILD to help maintain the installations. My suspicion is that a number of highly motivated dog owners will be removing these signs as soon as they go up, and so it will be up to volunteers working in conjunction with the PPA to help maintain the presence of these signs. The police and other enforcement entities always prefer a strong and clear visual regulation presence to help them contain the rule breakers. Having signage present takes away the excuse "I didn't know officer!"

If we can get a continuous signage presence and a committed and sustained enforcement established in the park, the problem of off-leash dogs in the woodland and sensitive areas may abate more quickly than we imagined. Respecting borders between sanctioned human activity and natural habitat is an issue whether in the Amazon rainforest or Prospect Park and continued vigilance is our best tool.



## American Bittern

by Bobbi Manian

It all started with engine problems. My car developed an ominous knocking sound in the engine over the weekend. I dropped it at a shop on Coney Island Ave and walked to Prospect Park. Since I was entering the park from a different location, I decided to go counter-clockwise around the lake. About 9:30 am, approaching Three Sisters Islands along the cove shore, I saw a lump in the phrags on the western-most island. As I got closer to the shoreline I saw a heron standing a few feet up on the phrags, very erect with his chest forward and his head sideways.

I first thought "bittern!"—a bird I've never seen but very much wanted to—but then immediately remembered being fooled by green herons in the past. I studied it for a few minutes across the water, and it seemed buffier than a green heron and I thought I could see a dark malar. I couldn't be sure so I called Rob Bate. He quizzed me on size, color and behavior and agreed it was worth checking out more closely.

Despite having done the long haul to Lake Ontario and back to see the Willow Ptarmigan the previous day, he

came quickly from home. Meanwhile the bird hunched down and then I really thought it was just a green heron and that I had bothered Rob for nothing. When he got there his first reaction was “green heron.” We didn’t have anything nearby for size comparison, but then it stretched out again and started skulking thru the phrags, and he said that was classic bittern behavior!

quickly. As we waited for reinforcements, the bird started moving around a bit more, sometimes exposing part of its wing, enough so that Rob was fairly certain we were seeing the high contrast of a bittern. It continued moving about, now skulking well into the phrags, sometimes only observable if you had it in your bins all along. Moments later, Rob J arrived, the bird emerged enough for a good look and he confirmed, “that’s an American Bittern!”



© Rob Bate

Once we retweeted the positive ID, flash mobs began to form and the fun began. Rob and Clemens had their high-powered cameras and got amazing shots. A unknown birder came from home with a scope and got us really good looks at the bird. Kristin C abandoned prep for a photo shoot and hustled over. Keir R had just arrived at work in mid-town and turned around and came right back, texting me from the Manhattan Bridge to make sure it was still there. An agonizing hour and a half later, Dennis H was out the door of his studio at 12:00:001 and sprinted from the Ft Hamilton subway to Three Sisters in what I’m sure is a new park speed record. Manhattan birders were calling to ask what was the best subway to take. Isabel C called to get our exact location; her group was on the exact opposite side of the lake, a long trek either way she chose!

As the bird moved deeper into the phrags, some people went around to the front of Three Sisters where they reported the bittern was very viewable and much closer. Sometimes it was moving around and sometimes it was standing still and tall in classic bittern behavior. Even when we knew exactly where it was, if you took your bins down for a moment, it was hard to relocate. Unfortunately, it was also close to the nesting swans and the agitated male started swimming around and hissing and made the bittern nervous a few times. The group ebbed and flowed throughout the morning, but we kept the bird in sight as we awaited anyone who told us they were en-route.

We started getting excited and sent out a tweet for anyone nearby to come help us look. Just the suggestion of a bittern started phone calls and texts from people at work. “Should I leave now?” “Let me know as soon as you are sure.” We called Ed Crowne, who was over by Terrace Bridge, but he came by

As it turned out, the bird stayed all day and those who came after work in the evening reported success as well! As far as I know, the bird was not seen again the following day. But it was one of my most fun birding experiences to date. As for the car, well let’s just say this was my most expensive life-bird to date!

## A Rare Visit From The Clapper Rail's Namesake Bird

A Clapper Rail was found in and around the phragmites by the lake by Kathy Toomey on Saturday, May 3, 2014 and was still being seen on Sunday. This is only the 5th sighting of a Clapper Rail in Prospect Park; the previous most recent sighting was in October 1995. Prior to that, you have to go back to 1952, 1946 and 1939! In this same area last year, we were treated to a Virginia Rail (also found by Kathy) and two Soras.



© Janet Zinn

until they groaned, shuddered, and finally toppled with an impact that shook the ground. (Gallagher xiii)

If you are studied in the details and history of the Imperial Woodpecker, *Campephilus imperialis*, this might not be the book for you. However, if you've never heard of the imperial woodpecker—likely because you are a novice birder or a birder who knows U.S. birds but not those of Mexico—this book provides a good introduction to the bird.

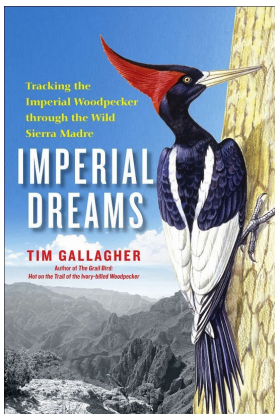
Gallagher tells us that the “scientific world first took note of the Imperial woodpecker in 1832 on August 14<sup>th</sup> ... when English ornithologist and bird artist John Gould brought some specimens of this previously undescribed bird ... to a meeting at the Zoological Society of London.”

We learn about the dentist from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, who is the only person to have filmed a lone female imperial woodpecker in 1956. We're shown a wonderful picture of a petroglyph, the “earliest known depiction of an imperial woodpecker,” believed to have been drawn 800 years ago. And we're introduced to ever many people who have some knowledge of the bird—or to someone they know who may have knowledge of the bird. Aldo Leopold. Carl Sofus Lumholtz. Benito Parra. Hyrum Albert Cluff. Martjan Lammertink. Ramiro Dominquez. Edward William Nelson. Genero Quintana. And others.

Gallagher's pertinacious effort to find the bird leads the reader to places she may not have imagined a book about a woodpecker would take her. We learn about the Sierra Madre Apaches, Pancho Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico in 1916, William Randolph Hearst's Hacienda Babicora, the arrival of the Mormons in Mexico in 1885, the devastating accounts of the extermination of the Mexican wolf, and the present day clearing of old growth habitat by the Zetas for use as drug plantations.

If you come to this book to focus on the topic of the bird, known sightings, its habitat and behaviors, some of the content will read like departures from the topic—even as I found these off-shoots to be generally interesting and at times fascinating.

Like any book about the destruction of habitat and a species, *Imperial Dreams* is a difficult book to read; when Gallagher finds an empty box of .22 rifle shells



### Do the Reading: *Imperial Dreams* by Tim Gallagher

Reviewed by Tracy Meade

When the very first sentence of the introduction of a book about the search for the Imperial Woodpecker uses the past-tense to refer to the bird, why read on?

In the high mountains of Mexico's rugged Sierra Madre Occidental there once lived a woodpecker unlike any other—a giant, largest of its clan in the world, whose pounding drumbeat echoed through the primeval forests as it bored into massive pines, hammering on them powerfully for weeks at a time

and writes that “Even in this most remote of places there was no sanctuary, no place for the pitoreales to avoid being shot or poisoned and having their habitat obliterated,” it is a deservedly stinging critique of human recklessness and the finality of its consequences.

Gallagher’s quest to determine whether the imperial woodpecker still exists is an important one, for he contributes new knowledge to the natural history of the imperial woodpecker. The bad roads, life-threatening travel, and the day-to-day deprivations the local people experience, and which the research team witnessed, did not prevent Tim Gallagher from documenting all he could learn about the woodpecker, and readers can be grateful for his effort—even as we know that he would have much preferred that this book turned out differently.

Note: A copy of *Imperial Dreams* will be available at the May 15, 2014, Brooklyn Bird Club program for circulation among club members.

### Sparks!

Ryan Green

I can trace my interest in birds back to an experience I had in 2005. I was on vacation with my wife in the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico, and we were walking through a forest to access a complex of Mayan ruins. Movement on the ground caught my eye. The forest floor itself appeared alive. It took a few moments to realize that the undulating substance consisted of ants. It felt odd to have stumbled on something so incredible. As we stood watching this strange ocean a few feet away, I noticed a small red bird perched nonchalantly a few feet off the ground apparently unimpressed.

A few minutes later, we were joined by a professor and two grad students. I found out that the red bird was an Ant Tanager. They follow these armies of ants and feed on the insects flushed by the ants. They also pointed out a Roadside Hawk perched in the understory about 15 feet away that I had been completely oblivious to. After this, seeing the Mayan ruins was something of an anticlimax.

For the rest of the trip I was now more interested in the birds I saw. But unlike the cooperative tanager and hawk at the ruins, the other birds we saw behaved as

expected: small, far away and skittish. I felt myself wishing I had a pair of binoculars and—since I didn’t run into the professor and his students again—a book with bird pictures and names.

Eventually I would get both. But it took a while. One of the downsides of my particular introduction to birding is that I associated it with exotic locations. It was four years later, when I was invited to a wedding in Costa Rica, that I had my next birding experience. That was where I made the connection that I could see many of these incredible birds at home in New York. It was also a few months after we got back that my son was born. My newfound interest has taken a back seat to parenting for a bit, but I’ve managed to get away on a few trips with the BBC and hope to do more.



### ID Tips: Greater and Lesser Scaup

by Dennis Hrehowsik

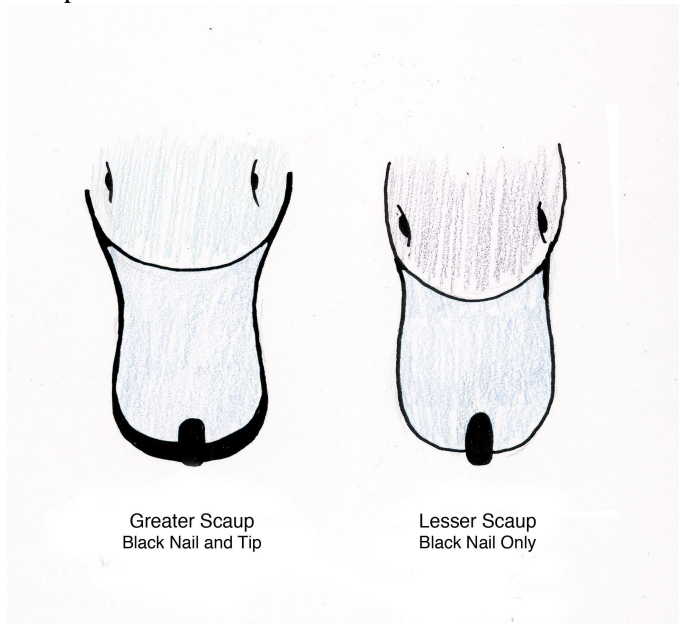
A bit about me. I’m no alpha birder. I’m not an expert nor do I claim to be. I make plenty of mistakes which I try to learn from. I’m simply someone who has made the decision to improve my birding skills, and I encourage you to do the same. When Monica asked me to contribute this piece she suggested scaup as the topic. An excellent choice! I love winter waterfowl and separating lesser from greater scaup presents a fun birding challenge.

The problem: two nearly identical species of waterfowl that appear in similar habitats. (Though lesser is more common on fresh water, it is often found on salt water here in Brooklyn.)

Most of us know the tried and true scaup field marks regarding the head shape. Greater is wider and rounder. (Suggesting a capital "G" for greater.) Lesser is narrower and with its small tuft more angular (Suggesting a capital "L" for lesser). But what about diving birds with wet plumage or a windswept flock of birds on a cold winter's day? This field mark is not always reliable. Luckily, there are other clues that can help us determine the bird's identity.

A lesser known but very helpful diagnostic field mark can be found on the bird's bill. Both scaup have a blue bill with a black nail. If we look carefully, however, we can observe the tip of the bill on the greater scaup

appears as if it has been dipped in black ink. On the lesser scaup only the nail itself is black. The black nail on the lesser is sharply defined from the blue bill which has no black at the tip. (Lesser scaup has less black on its bill.) This field mark works for male and female scaup.



right bird and a lot of fun when you are treated to a good look at this field mark.

Good places for scaup study:

Greater: Graves End, Dead Horse Bay.

Lesser: Coney Island Creek, Sheepshead Bay.

\*These field marks can be read about further in *Field Guide to Advanced Birding* by Kenn Kaufman.

Illustrations prepared by Dennis.

*NB: This article was previously published in the Clapper Rail in 2009, but since its so useful, we decided it was worth publishing again; especially as we have many new members who might not have seen it before.*



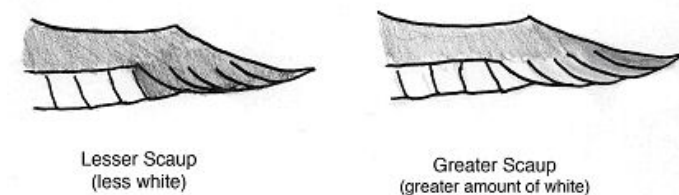
## HOW TO HELP OTHERS FIND A BIRD

by Tom Stephenson

Another good clue to the scaup's identity can be found on the wing. Both birds have white secondaries and grey primaries. On the lesser scaup, there is a sharp contrast where the bright white secondaries end abruptly and the grey primaries begin. On the greater scaup, a few of the primaries are white and there is a gentle gradation from the bright white secondaries to the dull grey primaries at the tips of the wings, with no sharp division between the two. (Lesser scaup has less white on its wing.) This field mark can be particularly helpful on flying or preening birds and works for male or female. Take care when looking for this mark as direct sun light can make the plumage appear artificially bright.

"We're sorry sir, your plane just left..." Those few words strike fear and panic in the heart of any traveler.

For birders, the same effect can be caused by this sentence: "Don't you see it; it's over there, right in that tree....oops, it just flew." In fact, statements like this, especially when involving potential life birds, have undoubtedly broken up friendships, caused nice, friendly people to turn into maniacs and no doubt even precipitated a divorce or two. In the old days, it wasn't such a big deal. You just shot the bird and passed it around. But today things are different.



Why is it that some people just can't seem to get you "on" a bird no matter how hard they try, and others can magically help a whole group instantly find an otherwise invisible avian treasure? This article offers answers to this question, along with some basic tips on how to help your fellow birders find a bird as quickly as possible...and keep your friendships and marriages intact!

Finally, let's talk about the iridescent sheen of the plumage on the drake's head. The greater scaup has a cool green sheen. The lesser has a warmer purple sheen. This can often be difficult to see, but I find it to be very rewarding when you get the right light on the

First of all, let's start with a short list of what NOT to do when trying to help someone find a bird you have spotted.

At the top of the list is this suggestion: don't repeatedly state: "Can't you see it, it's over there!" This is like shouting to your birding mates: "Are you blind, or just idiots?" It's a bit like throwing gasoline on a fire. Trust me, it never produces any positive results.

Avoid phrases like: "It's right in the *Eustacia eruditia*, behind the *Rosacea pontificum*." Unless you are traveling with the chief gardener of the Queen's estates, don't assume anyone knows the scientific or even common names of the trees and shrubs of the local area. Find some other way to enhance your reputation. Showing others you know what the names of the local plants are won't keep you from getting tossed off the cliff if they can't find the bird!

Don't hog the "window." If you are looking at a thrush or a warbler through a small gap in the foliage, you may have to relinquish your spot so others can see the bird. And no directions, no matter how accurate, will help them see it if they are blocked from the only good viewpoint.

Don't scrutinize a possibly rare species for a long time, check your book, and call the local bird club president from your cell phone just to be sure you won't be embarrassed when you call out a bird. If it has even the most remote possibility of being a good species, let everybody know. They will forgive you if it's only a European Starling, but could easily tie you up and leave you in the woods for the ants if it turns out to be a really good bird and you waited too long to tell everybody.

Don't assume that just because you have seen a bird many times others in your group have also seen it. Saying, after the fact, "Let's head on over there where the Sage Sparrow was sitting" might be just as inflammatory as any of the other scenarios above if Sage Sparrow is a special bird to one of your travel mates.

Don't say: "It's flying over there, above the Turkey Vulture." This won't do any good unless everybody else knows where the TV was last seen.

Don't flap your arms, scream mightily, or throw things in the general direction of the bird. You are trying to

find the bird for your friend, not reveal your friend to the bird. Frustration on your part because someone else can't find a bird is like blaming your car for running out of gas. You know where the bird is. The other people don't. It's up to you to figure out how to show it to them. They are already frustrated, and adding your frustration to the mess will only add to the pain and waste time and energy.

If a bird is flying, don't say "In the clouds." Unless there is only one tiny cloud in the sky, saying it is in the clouds is about as good as saying "It's in the trees."

Don't use feet, meters, yards or other standard units of measure unless the distances are very small and will be clear to everyone. Unless everybody in your group is a surveyor, saying a hawk is perched 300 meters away is next to useless. One person's meter is another person's foot. And that foot might be coming in your direction. Trust me...

So what can you do to really help people get on a bird quickly? Here are several tips that, when used properly, should really help you become that "magic" person who can quickly help other birders find a bird.

Tip number one: Begin your directions with a point everybody can definitely locate. It must be something so obvious and unique that there can be no confusion at all about what the starting point is for your directions. Whereas this might seem obvious, this is very important step is probably the most neglected when helping someone else find a bird.

For example, let's assume you are looking at a rare sparrow perched in the middle of a group of yellow flowers. It might be tempting to say: "Right there in the middle of that group of yellow flowers." However, if there are several other groups of yellow flowers around, and you might not even see them if you are just focusing on the bird, then others may not find the right spot.

It will be much more effective for you to say: "The group of yellow flowers just above the stop sign." Now there is no chance for confusion.





In fact, it is often best to start with something ridiculously close to the viewers and work out from there. This is particularly true if there are members of your party who really have a tough time finding birds. Once someone is looking for the bird in the wrong group of yellow flowers, they will never find the bird.

If you can start from an object that is very obvious to them, and then work your way out to the bird using objects equally clear, you will almost always have success.

Tip number two: Let people know right away if the bird is flying or perched. Although obvious to you, it might not be so obvious to others. A hawk or a hummingbird could easily be either perched or moving around. And especially for a seasoned birder, the techniques and instincts for finding a perched bird are quite different than those for finding a flying bird.

Tip number three: Clock analogies can be useful if employed carefully. Of course on a pelagic trip, using the “hands” of a clock to indicate which part of the boat to look out from is very natural. There is no mistaking 3:00. It’s midship on the starboard side, right off the beam.

But saying a bird is 3:00 in a wooded setting can be confusing unless everybody knows where the center of the clock is. If you are looking at a single, large oak tree, for example, 3:00 might make sense. But if there are several trees around, you must first be sure that everyone is looking at the same tree. And of course let everybody know if the bird is on the circumference of the clock or in from the edge. Those clock hands can seem mighty long or short, depending on the individual’s perspective.

Tip number four: Set up landmarks in advance if you are going to be birding in one spot for a while. Everybody who has manned a hawk watch knows the tried and true method for referring to any incoming bird by the names of familiar landmarks. By the way, if you are at a hawk watch or using this tip, be sure everybody knows where “bent towers” or “Gumpy’s Meadow” are located. Otherwise those not in the know may be too embarrassed to ask and will undoubtedly miss some birds.

If you are setting up to look at birds in a group of flowering trees, it might be very useful to quickly set some reference points so that as people find birds they can refer to them by these predetermined locations. The same is true for shorebird watching or other forms of stationary birding. Identify portions of the shore by houses opposite, pieces of driftwood, or other very obvious markers. This can really help later as you find interesting birds.

If you are looking for a skulker, like a Swainson’s warbler, it’s important not to make any noise. Try using your fingers to indicate three or four pre-determined locations to get people on a bird. Holding up one or two fingers can be done very discretely, without flushing the bird when speaking is not possible.

Tip number five: If you are sure you can find the bird again, put your binocs down before you try to tell someone where it is. You will have a better perspective on how to describe its location, and you can avoid the problem that occurs when people start looking in the wrong place, which can be hard to “undo.” It also helps you see if the other person is blocked from view.

Tip number six: If you are afraid you won’t be able to find the bird again, then use the “bobbing” binocs technique for finding a landmark to help others locate it. Here’s how: Move your binocs one field down, and then back to the bird, making sure that you can find it again. Then do this movement of one binoc field up, down, right and left. You may find a landmark you can describe without having to put your binocs down. You can expand to two or three fields if necessary and you’re fast.

Tip number seven: Watch out for obstructions that might keep another person from seeing the bird you can see from your position. If a person is blocked from view of the bird, no amount of description will get them on the bird. See tip eight.

Tip number eight: If you are working with only one or two people, bring them right in front of you. It actually can be a very effective way to get them on the bird. (And you might even be able to use your finger to point the bird out!)



Tip number nine: You will need special care to help others find a flying bird. The sky is a very amorphous space! As mentioned before, first of all let everybody know the bird is flying. "I think I might have a Swainson's Hawk" is too vague. Swainson's Hawks very often hang out on the ground, so it would be reasonable to start searching the field for this bird. Let everybody know that the bird is flying.

Also, be sure to mention which direction it is moving. "Flying right to left" can be very helpful, as your friends can move their binocs to the far left and then scan back to the right, hopefully running into the bird. Try pinpointing some obvious landmark that is below it. Bobbing your binoculars can help with this, as mentioned above. With a flying bird you may have to "bob" your binoculars a field or two before you find a good landmark. If you do it quickly this can be a very effective technique. Also, if the bird is flying fairly quickly, then "bob" ahead of the bird. If you find a boat or building, then you can tell everybody that it is approaching that object. You can also use the horizon as one coordinate, letting everyone know if it is below or above the tree line or ocean.

You can use the size of your binocular field as a rough gauge of distance. One field of your binoculars is the distance covered by the whole visible area you see in your binocs. So if you were looking at a distant yardstick, and could see the numbers 1-6 in your binoculars, then lowering the binocs so that you could see 7-12 would put them exactly one field down. "Mississippi kite, flying left to right, one field over the red barn" can help get someone on a flying bird very quickly.

And finally, it is possible to use various optical devices to help others find a bird. Small hand mirrors can be used to reflect light so a beam falls in the location of a sought after bird. Likewise, especially in dark locations such as deep forests, a laser pointer can be quite useful, as long as its beam isn't blocked by leaves. New 50 milliwatt green lasers are very powerful. And even if they can't reach the bird you can use them to define your reference point and then use other methods to find the bird. Just be careful, because shining a laser right in front of a bird can scare it!

In summary, developing your ability to help others locate a good bird can make your group birding experiences much more fun. And those skills will

ensure that everybody returns home with marriages and friendships intact!



## Winter Birds

by Peter Colen



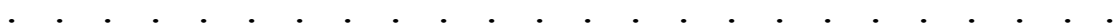
On one of the last days of November 2012, I was birding in Prospect Park and looking for the Yellow-breasted Chat and the two

species of crossbills that had been recently seen in the park. The Red Crossbills and White-winged Crossbills are rare this far south, making appearances in Prospect Park in only seven other recorded years. Yellow-breasted Chats, while not as uncommon, are known as "skulkers" and are not often seen. I had seen a White-winged Crossbill the evening before, and I wanted to get a closer look with my camera. I saw a few in the same place—in a Sweet Gum Tree at the Upper Pool, still too high to get quality pictures, so I headed on to the Vale of Cashmere which is another place crossbills had been seen.

I was unable to locate the crossbills at the Vale, but I began watching a Red-bellied Woodpecker flying back and forth. He would leave and come back with a nut in his long bill. As the bird was hanging upside-down gripping the branch, I could not see what he was doing exactly. I thought perhaps he was going into a hole. I came a little closer with my camera when he was away and took some pictures of what I could see. Much of what he was doing was in shadows and I could not see without interrupting the woodpecker.

When I left the area, the woodpecker flew nearby and attached himself to a tree and seemed to give me a scolding. Perhaps: A. I was inside the parameters of his territory, which is also probably his breeding territory that he protects all year. B. I was watching him cache his winter food and was this not a threat to the food reserves? C. I was just a pain in the neck with my camera and he didn't like the attention from a human while he was working. I was not able to decipher his language, but I was glad he flew over to talk.

A day or so later I came back because I was curious to see what the red-belly had been doing under the branch. The woodpecker was not active here on this day. I was wrong about the possibility of the woodpecker having a hole that he was able to enter.



The bird had worked hard at this site. A look under the branch revealed hundreds of nuts of some kind tapped into the wood.

I decided to go back to the Upper Pool to see if the crossbills were still around and possibly lower to the ground or even bathing. They were in the same two trees they had been in on earlier sightings, and soon after I arrived, they began to come down lower. There were approximately 30 White-winged Crossbills coming and going! They were consuming the sweet gum fruits in those trees quickly. Finally, some of them came down to bathe in the stream below and I got pictures. They are unusual visually. Somehow their bills and bright colors remind me of parrots. I saw three different colors. The females were yellow. The males were red and the young males were a stunning orange.

After spending time photographing and watching the crossbills, I went to look for the Yellow-breasted Chat that had been reported in the park. The chat's headquarters that fall were across the road from the feeders and down the little path that leads to the lake. From under a pile of sticks and debris I detected some movement and out came a yellow blur. It flew across the path and down the hill into more debris near the lake. It was the brightest yellow a yellow blur can be. I looked around for a while, but did not see the chat again on that day. The bird lived up to its reputation as a "skulker," never letting me get a great look. Later on that month I got better looks at the chat as well as some photos, but it was always a bird looking for cover.

The light was falling off and I started home. I headed west of the feeders to the Lullwater. There I encountered a Blue Jay with a peanut. I started taking pictures. It had landed on a dead tree limb and put the peanut in a hole. I took a few more pictures and headed for home. While photographing the jay I thought that it stuffed the peanut in a hole to cache it. When I looked at the photographs I realized that the jay was putting the peanut in the hole to steady it so it could break open the peanut. The Blue Jay had turned that limb into a tool. Was it that familiar with peanuts to learn how to do that? What other kind of nut or type of food would that method apply to? Did it use that hole exclusively or are others around? Looking at those photos of the Blue Jay breaking the peanut in that hole brought up so many questions. I looked up Blue Jays and tool usage and found that only in captivity has tool use been observed.

The four species of birds that I observed on that November day, Yellow-breasted Chat, Red-bellied Woodpecker, White-winged Crossbill and the Blue Jay are from distinctly different avian families. They have distinct characteristics within their own families. They are each exotic and fascinating birds in their own way. I became interested to learn more about them and how they survive the winter.

**Blue Jay: *Cyanocitta cristata***

Blue Jays eat a variety of things: Arthropods, acorns, nuts, seeds, soft fruits, and small vertebrates. They feed from trees, shrubs, the ground and the air. Each individual adult harvests and eats or caches several thousand acorns, beechnuts, hazelnuts, hickory nuts, or other hard mast, depending on availability each autumn (Darley-Hill and Johnson 1981, Johnson and Adkisson 1985). Blue Jays have been credited for the spread of oak trees with their burying of acorns since the last Glacial period. They store so many nuts and acorns but do not remember where they have hidden them all and so some of those acorns and seeds sprout.



Although much of their winter diet consists of acorns, individuals cannot subsist on them. They cannot maintain their body mass (Johnson et al. 1993). They will fly up to 4 km to harvest nuts, but return to their breeding site to cache nuts (C.S. Adkisson pers. Comm., KAT).

**Red-bellied Woodpecker: *Melanerpes carolinus***

The main foods of red-bellies are arthropods, acorns and nuts, fruits, seeds, sap. The bird is known as an opportunistic feeder. They do not usually excavate into wood for insects as some woodpeckers do.

Red-bellied Woodpeckers may store throughout year, but are most active storing in fall. Small items are stored whole, but the birds will break larger items into pieces before storing them. Red-bellied Woodpeckers generally use storage sites that are already available and require no major excavation, such as vines on the trunks of trees, or existing cracks or crevices in trees, like the bird I saw that November day. Items are stored deep in crevices to protect them from other animals. This bird may have several locations of food storage and will remember each location. They do not defend food stores. (Kilham 1963).

**Yellow-breasted Chat: *Icteria virens***

Of the four birds I am writing about, the Yellow-breasted Chat is the only one that normally will not overwinter in cold climates. A chat's diet is beetles, weevils, bugs, ants, bees, wasps, mayflies, various caterpillars and wild fruits (Howell 1907, 1932; Sprut 1954; Oberholser 1974). Their diet is one of the reasons that the Yellow-breasted Chat does not stay in colder climates during the winter. The Prospect Park bird stayed longer than expected because of the warmer temperatures that fall and the continued food sources. They are not known to store food.

**White-winged Crossbill: *loxia leucoptera***

The White-winged Crossbill has a diet that consists of seeds of spruce and much less frequently fir (*Abies spp*; Benkman 1987). Resins in fir seed coats inhibit protein digestion. When seeds are scarce, alternative foods are eaten, especially insects, like the larvae of spruce budworm and coneworm. Ants and spiders are also consumed. Other occasional foods are the buds of various trees. During irruptions south of the boreal forests, their diets include the fruit of the Sweetgum tree. This species is rarely reported foraging on foods other than conifer seeds for extended periods outside of summer. Non-conifer seed food



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sources are much less efficient for such a specialized beak (Benkman 1988a).

**Birds surviving winter**

Part of why I became interested in the birds I observed that November day was a curiosity about how birds survived the winter and how the different species had developed different methods. Birds' feathers are its main line of defense against cold. Birds bury their bills into their shoulder feathers and many birds tuck one leg up under the down to decrease exposure and to help stay warm. Birds also have a network of blood vessels in their feet and legs that minimizes heat loss. Chilled venous blood returning upward from the feet to the body passes through a system of arteries that carries warm blood to the limbs. The warmer arterial blood reheats the cooler venous blood as it returns to the body. This is how ducks and water birds are able to spend time in cold water and standing on ice. Sleeping quarters also protect birds from the elements. Blue Jays and finches retire to dense thickets of vegetation, while Red-Bellied Woodpeckers retreat to tree cavities in particularly nasty weather.

Conifers, ivy-covered walls and fences provide greater protection. Dense evergreen vegetation protects roosting birds from wind, rain, and snow. Ring-necked Pheasants, Ruffed Grouse, American Robins, and House Finches are a few species of birds that roost in evergreen sanctuaries. Screech-owls, woodpeckers, and nuthatches sleep in cavities much like their nests. Some birds, such as bluebirds and chickadees, use cavities only during very cold weather. Sometimes up to a dozen bluebirds cram into a nest box or cavity and sometimes this suffocates birds on the bottom of the box.

Birds produce 25-30 percent more feathers in the winter. They shiver in cold to generate heat. Birds in cold climates waterproof their feathers with body oils so feathers stay dry to insulate their bodies. Some cold weather birds can put themselves into a state of hypothermia. The heartbeat is slowed and the body temperature drops. The bird goes into an unconscious state and is able to endure extremely cold temperatures. Some birds also huddle together for warmth.

One would think that on the coldest days, the biggest danger to birds is the cold. Actually the biggest danger is dehydration. It is important that running water is available to birds when normal sources of water freeze.

The second problem is snow and ice, which covers the food that ground feeders such as sparrows eat. Third is cold. Many birds depend on backyard bird feeders, but they usually get about 25% of their food from feeders and find a variety of food on their own. It would be a dangerous precedent to depend only on feeders. A bird is an intelligent animal.

The birds I observed that November day used these and other methods to survive the eventual cold of the Brooklyn winter. They also got me interested in

continuing my observations and learning more about them. While the Yellow-breasted Chat was sure to move along down south as the weather got colder (and presumably, it did), the other birds were going to use their own methods and exploit the local food sources (including the feeders) to survive the winter in Brooklyn. We really should thank them for that; their intelligence and instincts served them well, and served to keep the Brooklyn birders engaged and out in the park all winter long.

### **Brooklyn Bird Club, Spring 2014 Thursday Evening Programs**

BBC Programs are held at Litchfield Villa in Prospect Park, unless otherwise noted. For directions, go to the BBC website: <http://www.brooklynbirdclub.org/meetings.htm>

All programs start at 6:30 pm with club social time; speakers begin at 7:00 pm.

#### **May 15: Ecuador: East Slope/West Slope Presenter: Sandra Paci**

The avifauna of the small South American country of Ecuador is largely defined by the mighty Andes Mountains, which run like a spine down the center of the country, sloping in the East down to the Amazon Basin and in the West to the Pacific Ocean. BBC member Sandra Paci will discuss the bird life of this fascinating, easily accessible Neotropical region and present photography from two recent visits. Sandy is an enthusiast of Latin American art and culture and has traveled there regularly since the mid-1980s—long before she knew a Tanager from an Antpitta.

#### **June 5: The Birds and Beasts of Tanzania Presenter: Janet Zinn**

Come on safari with photographer Janet Zinn as she presents images from her recent birding and wildlife expedition to northern Tanzania. Experience the thrill of Africa's predators and the beauty of its avian inhabitants while picking up some useful tips for planning your own trip of a lifetime. Janet picked up her first camera at age 8 and has never looked back. Her work has appeared in National Geographic's *Global Birding*, in print and web advertising, and in literature for non-profit organizations such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, International Rivers, Audubon, and the Sierra Club. To see her work, visit her website at <http://www.jczinn.com/>

Check the Brooklyn Bird Club web site in late summer for the fall schedule.

<http://www.brooklynbirdclub.org/meetings.htm>

## Spring-Fall 2014 Schedule

### Information and Registration

No registration is required for Prospect Park or Green-Wood Cemetery trips. For all other trips, advance registration is required; exact location and time of meeting will be provided at time of registration. Car pool fees are required for some trips and should be paid directly to your driver.

In noting the need to make trip registrations more manageable and fair, the BBC council has imposed these guidelines:

- • With the exception of Prospect Park and Green-wood Cemetery trips, a TWO-WEEK registration period will precede all trips.
- Club members will be given first-priority for all trips except Prospect and Green-wood Cemetery. Nonmembers and guests are welcome on BBC trips but only if there is available space at the end of the registration period. Drivers, whether members or not, will normally have priority over non-drivers. Full weekend (overnight) trips are reserved for members only.
- **NEW** Children 14 years of age or younger are welcome on trips but must be accompanied by an adult guardian.
- Some trips have limited enrollment, at the discretion of the trip leader. So register early! In addition, most car trips require lunch, water, appropriate clothes for seasonal weather, and all the essentials you require for day trips.
- Please call registrars as early as possible within the registration period, and before 9 p.m. **Please be sure to leave your phone number(s) so that we may contact you in the event of a schedule change.**
- **NEW** Status changes of a trip due to inclement weather will be posted on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BrooklynBirdClub> and also on Peter Dorosh's blog: <http://prospect sightings.blogspot.com/> Please check before leaving for the trip if the weather looks questionable.

We hope these guidelines will facilitate the registration process in the fairest possible way.

The registrar and information source for each trip is listed at the end of the trip description.

**Prospect Park Bird 2-hour Sunday Walks:** In addition to the trips listed below, the first Sunday of every month the Brooklyn Bird Club participates in the Prospect Park Audubon Center's "First Sunday" two-hour walks. All walks leave from the Prospect Park Audubon Center at the Boathouse at 8 a.m. (10 a.m. in January and February; check <http://www.prospectpark.org/calendar> to confirm times.)



**Tuesday and Thursday Seasonal Prospect Park Walks**

No registration is required for these weekly walks in Prospect Park during migration season. (**Note:** due to possible scheduling conflicts, leader substitutions may be made for some dates.)

**TUESDAYS: April 8th, April 15th, April 22nd, April 29th, May 6th, May 13th, May 20th**

**September 17th, 24th; October 1st, 8th, 15th.**

Leader: Rob Bate. Meet at Bartel Pritchard Square park entrance at **7:30** a.m.

**THURSDAYS: April 17th, April, 24th, May 1st, May 8th, May 15th, and May 22nd**

**August 21st, 28th, September 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th**


Leader: Tom Stephenson. Meet at the Stranahan Statue, Grand Army Plaza, at **7:15** a.m.

 **Sunday, May 11th Prospect Park "Big Sit" in Butterfly Meadow**

**Meet:** No registration necessary. Meet 7:30 am at Lookout Hill's Butterfly Meadow, <http://tinyurl.com/BigSitMay11PP>

**Leader:** Dennis Hrehowsik

**Note:** In case of inclement weather, call or text leader at 1-347-981-5361

 **Saturday, May 17th Ridgewood Reservoir, Brooklyn/Queens Border**

**Leader:** Peter Dorosh

**Focus:** peak of migratory birds

**Car Fee:** \$10.00

**Registrar:** Peter Dorosh, email (preferred) [prosbird@aol.com](mailto:prosbird@aol.com) or text message to 1-347-622-3559

**Registration Period:** May 6th-May 15th

 **Sunday, May 18th Greenwood Cemetery**


**NOTE NEW MEETING SPOT:** 8 am at the east GWC entrance at 20th Street & Prospect Park West Ave (formerly 9th Ave) <http://tinyurl.com/GWCBBCmay18>

**Leader:** Ed Crowne

**Focus:** peak of migratory birds

**Directions:** Nearest train is F or G lines to 15th St/Prospect Park stop. Walk west 4 blocks on

Prospect Park West. <http://www.greenwood.com>

 **Saturday, May 24th Doodletown & Sterling Forest**

**Leader:** Tom Preston

**Focus:** migration peak and early breeding birds

**Car Fee:** \$35.00

**Registrar:** JoAnn Preston, email (preferred) [jocrochet@verizon.net](mailto:jocrochet@verizon.net) or call 1-718-344-8420 before 9PM

**Registration Period:** May 13th - May 22nd

**Note:** group limited to 16 participants

 **Sunday, June 1st, Jamaica Bay & the Rockaways**

**Leader:** Mike Yuan

**Focus:** coastal breeding birds, late migrants, shorebirds

**Car fee:** \$12.00

**Registrar:** Dennis Hrehowsik, email [deepseagangster@gmail.com](mailto:deepseagangster@gmail.com)

**Registration Period:** May 20th - May 29th Mar 4 - Mar 13

 **June 7th-8th, Overnight Weekend:**

Watercourses, fields, meadows, and pine barrens of Central New Jersey

**Leader:** Peter Dorosh  
**Focus:** Breeding birds of various habitats  
**Car fee:** \$100.00  
**Registrar:** Peter Dorosh, email (preferred) prosbird@aol.com or text message to 1-347-622-3559  
**Registration period:** May 15th to June 1st  
(This trip may extend into Monday for a three day birding weekend. Please notify the leader/registrar if interested. Otherwise participants may leave Sunday afternoon  
Source: <http://www.njwildlifetrails.org/>

**🦅 Saturday, June 14th, Nickerson Beach & Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area**  
**Leader:** Steve Nanz  
**Focus:** Breeding Terns and Shorebirds. Emphasis on photography and extended observation  
**Car fee:** \$15.00  
**Registrar:** Heidi Steiner-Nanz, email heidi.steiner@verizon.net  
**Registration Period:** June 3rd-June 12th  
Leader's Note: Pre-dawn start to get to Nickerson Beach at dawn. Mar 4 - Mar 13

**🦅 Saturday, June 21st, Birds & Butterflies of Sparta Mountain WMA & Canal Road**  
**Leader:** Peter Dorosh  
**Focus:** breeding birds and butterflies  
**Car fee:** \$25.00  
**Registrar:** Peter Dorosh, email (preferred) prosbird@aol.com or text message to 1-347-622-3559  
**Registration period:** June 10th - June 19th  
**Note:** This is the first visit to Sparta Mountain WMA by the BBC; Canal Road is a renown butterfly site south of the Wawayanda Plateau

**🦅 Saturday, August 9th Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Queens**  
**Leader:** Mike Yuan  
**Focus:** waterbirds, shorebirds, early passerines  
**Car fee:** \$10.00  
**Registrar:** Dennis Hrehowsik, email deepseagangster@gmail.com  
**Registration period:** July 29th - August 7th

**🦅 Saturday, August 30th, Prospect Park**  
**Meet:** 7:30 am at Bartel Pritchard Square park entrance  
**Leader:** Ed Crowne

**🦅 Saturday, September 6th, Prospect Park**  
**Meet:** 7:30 am at Grand Army Plaza Stranahan Statue park entrance  
**Leader:** Sean Zimmer

**🦅 Sunday, September 7th World Shorebird Day at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge**  
**Leader:** Steve Nanz  
**Focus:** waterbirds, shorebirds, early passerines  
**Car fee:** \$10.00  
**Registrar:** Heidi Steiner-Nanz, email heidi.steiner@verizon.net  
**Registration period:** August 26th - Sept 4th

**🦅 Saturday, September 13th, Prospect Park**  
Meet 7:00 am at Grand Army Plaza Stranahan Statue park entrance  
**Leader:** Paul Keim

**🦅 September 12th-14th, Three day Weekend: Wissahickon Valley Preserve and the Upper Delaware Watershed**  
**Leader:** Peter Dorosh  
**Focus:** Diversity of passerine fall migrants  
**Car fee:** \$125.00  
**Registrar:** Peter Dorosh, email (preferred) prosbird@aol.com  
Registration period: August 15th- September 1st  
**Site profile:** <http://www.fow.org>

**🦅 Sunday, September 21st Staten Island Greenbelt Mt. Moses**  
**Leader:** Mike Shanley & Isaac Grant  
**Focus:** Hawk watching. Passerines in flight and woodlands  
**Registrar:** Mike Shanley, email falecore@yahoo.com  
**Registration period:** Sept 9th- Sept 18th  
**Leaders note:** Join Mike Shanley and Isaac Grant as we make our way to the top of Moses Mountain and scan the skies in search of raptors and other migrating birds. We will also target Neotropical migrants as we make our way through the woodlands that lead to the top of the mountain.  
**Site profile:** "In the early 1960s Robert Moses, the notorious New York City planner and Parks Commissioner attempted to construct the Richmond Parkway over Todt Hill cutting through what is today's Greenbelt. Earth and rock blasted away for the highway was hauled to a remote area eventually forming a 260-foot-high mound ironically nicknamed "Moses Mountain." The



name stuck but the Parkway did not. Intrepid citizen-activists vigorously protested the highway and won their battle. Today, a steep hike up a much greener Moses' Mountain rewards visitors with a panoramic view of the Greenbelt and New Jersey's Atlantic Highlands, 15-miles in the distance."

**🦋 Saturday, September 27th, Brooklyn "Wildcard"**

**Leader:** Keir Randall  
**Focus:** Best birding activity cluster or rare birds will be determined by the week's listserve reports for Brooklyn area  
**Car fee:** TBA by leader  
**Registrar:** Dennis Hrehowsik, email deepseagangster@gmail.com  
**Registration period:** Sept 16th - Sept 25th

**🦋 Saturday, October 4th "Leader's Choice"**

**Leader:** Steve Nanz  
**Focus:** Best birding activity cluster or rare birds will be determined by the week's listserve reports for Brooklyn area  
**Car fee:** TBA by leader  
**Registrar:** Heidi Steiner-Nanz, email heidi.steiner@verizon.net  
**Registration period:** Sept 23rd - Oct 2nd

**🦋 Saturday, October 11th Marine Park's "Brooklyn" Sparrows**

**Meet:** Grand Army Plaza #2/3 train stop at 7:00AM  
**Leader:** Dennis Hrehowsik, email deepseagangster@gmail.com

**🦋 Saturday, October 18th, Greenwood Cemetery**

**Meet:** 8 AM at main entrance 25th St. & 5th Ave.  
**Leader:** Tom Preston  
**Note:** nearest train line is "R" to 25th Street stop.

**🦋 Saturday, October 25th Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn**

**Leader:** Rob Jett  
**Focus:** migration peak sparrows, raptors and grassland species  
**Car fee:** \$10.00

**Registrar:** Sandy Paci, email sandypaci@earthlink.net  
**Registration period:** Oct 14th - Oct 23rd

**🦋 Friday, October 31st, Halloween walk in Prospect Park**

**Meet:** 1:00 PM at the picnic tables on Well Drive near the Lake northwest shore (access Vanderbilt St park entrance)  
**Leader:** Bobbi Manian  
**Note:** Closest subway is F line to Ft Hamilton Parkway, back entrance ; or #68 bus

**🦋 Saturday, November 1st, Birding on Brooklyn's Terminal Moraine ridge: Sunset Park hawk watch and Greenwood Cemetery**

**Meet** 8 am at Greenwood Cemetery entrance at 4th Avenue  
**Leader:** Peter Dorosh, 1-347-622-3559 (text message only) in case of wet weather  
**Focus:** Hawk watching in this first ever BBC visit to Sunset Park at approximately 11:00 after Greenwood Cemetery early birding; migrants will be early winter species  
**Note:** bring a small chair.  
**Nearest train:** "R" ,"D", or "N" line to 36th St, walk east www.hopstop.com

**Reminders!**

- Check out our Brooklyn Bird Club shop on CafePress for great gifts for your Brooklyn birding pals. <http://www.cafepress.com/brooklynbird>
- Have an interesting story related to birding? We are always looking for contributions for *The Clapper Rail*. Trip reports, book reviews, essays, ID tips—we'd love to hear what you have to say. Please send submissions to [newsletter@brooklynbirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@brooklynbirdclub.org)