

The Preserve Observer



Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve Magazine Vol. XXV Spring 2011



Peony Festival Set For May 13 Has Special Meaning For Some Preserve Visitors By Herbert Hadad

Photo: Masato Fujihara



Haruka Fujihara among the peonies

Thousands of visitors to the Rockefeller State Park Preserve have marked their calendars for the blooming of the now-famous peony garden at the gateway to the park, but no one more enthusiastically than Masato Fujihara.

"I come to the Preserve three to five times a year, but especially when the peony will bloom," he said in an interview with The Preserve Observer. "I check the news and weather, the temperature, et cetera, to know the best time for seeing the peony flowers."

If Nature is a cooperative conspirator, the blooming of the exquisite plants will start in early May, and that will coincide with one of the most elegant and well-attended fund-raising events of the year, the Peony Festival at the Preserve on Friday, May 13, from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm.

The event is sponsored by the Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve and chaired by Janet Maslin

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A Year in the Life of a Migratory Bird

(Part One of a Two-Part Series)
By Richard Nelson, Preserve Naturalist

Introduction

Bird migration is one of the most dramatic events in the annual natural cycle in the Preserve. It is one that I have discussed a number of times in the pages of the Preserve Observer. This time it will be approached in a somewhat different manner. While mentioning general aspects of migration, here I will focus on the annual cycle of one species of migratory bird that occurs regularly in the Preserve, not only what that species does in the Preserve, but also what it does during the annual spring and autumn migrations, and also in its wintering grounds. The species I have selected is the Yellow Warbler.

I made this choice for several reasons. First of all, it is a confirmed regular breeder within the Preserve boundaries; in fact one can pretty well assume that it breeds here every year. Also, as its common name implies, it is a bright colored little bird with a distinctive song, one that is relatively easy to both see and hear. Probably many visitors to the Preserve have either seen or heard it, though they may not have been aware of its identity. Finally it is a long-distance migrant, one that winters primarily in the tropical regions of the Western Hemisphere. This enables one to talk about the many fascinating aspects of long-distance migration, such as how a bird weighing less than an ounce can fly

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Great News!!

By Clare M. Pierson

This past November Preserve Manager Alix Schnee, Friends Administrative Director Liz Meszaros and I put together a grant application to the Federal Highway Administration, administered by the State. We were thrilled to receive word this January that we had been recommended by the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for this grant!

What Alix envisioned as the architect of the grant is a complete restoration of the Swan Lake area carriage roads, which will bring that loop back to its original design as well as adding some much needed handicap access to Brother's Loop.

There are several things that are very exciting about this work; it will

(continued on page 3)

Great news! We have received a \$200,000 80/20 Grant from the Federal Highway Administration! Please help us raise our 20%!! Donate today.



Photo: Cole Schnee

Swan Lake



View of the peony garden

Photomontage of Friends Activities



Masato Jujihara, his wife Masako and their daughter Haruka at one of their favorite spots at the Preserve – on the banks of Swan Lake



Photo: Peter Humphrey

Happy Rockefeller and David Rockefeller



Elation and relaxation at the finish of the Pace



Sem and Pauwla Groenewoud, equestrian experts



Photo: Herbert Hadad

At the exhibit devoted to jazz paintings and music



Photo: Peter Humphrey

Board Members Herbert Hadad and Tommy Capossela with Margo Stever



Photo: Peter Humphrey

Carriage loaned by David Rockefeller



Photo: Peter Humphrey

Friends supporters at left join Friends President Clare Pierson, Friends Treasurer Carol Lyden and her husband John

Peonies (continued from page 1)

and Benjamin Cheever. The Peony Committee members are Rebeca and James Ford, Julia D'Amico and Stuart Rockefeller, Rachel and George Gumina, Frank Juliano, Carol and John Lyden, Lisa and John Manuele, Tara and Michael Rockefeller, Kimberly and Steven Rockefeller, Jr., Margo and Donald Stever and Twink and Jim Wood. Tickets are \$250, \$150 and \$100 each. For more information, please consult our web site, www.friendsrock.org.

Why Mr. Fujihara's excitement? From birth through high school, he grew up surrounded by the peonies of Shimane Prefecture, the source of the peonies at the Preserve.

"The quality of land is weak acidity and it is nice for plants and flowers," he said from his office in New York City. "And the weather, temperature in winter, humidity is very nice for the peony. After an enthusiastic breeding, there are more than 300 different types of peony today."

He will visit with his wife Masako and their four-year-old daughter Haruka. Joining them will be other Shimane Prefecture natives living and working in the New York metropolitan area. This group is called the New York Shimane Kenjin Kai.

Mr. Fujihara is president of Interesse International Inc., which is involved in human resources that include executive searches and placement and staffing for companies and job seekers "who are interested in the international and cross-cultural business between English and Japanese languages and the U.S. and Japan." His company has 14 offices in the United States and one in Tokyo.

Amusingly, during a recent call to his office, the musical interlude playing while one awaited connection was "Yellow Rose of Texas."

For readers relatively new to the Preserve, the background of the garden is actually tied to the tragic attacks of September 11, 2001. A town in Shimane Prefecture, Japan, wanted to express a gesture of healing and solidarity towards America. They reached the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in New York with an offer of 1,000 peonies. At the time, Evelyn Hadad, a member of the board of the Friends of the Preserve, was serving as director of external affairs for the Japanese Chamber. The placing of the Japanese flowers on American soil was meant to symbolize the blending of two cultures and two peoples.

It was arranged that 500 plants would be donated to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and 500 to the Rockefeller Preserve from Yatsuka Cho in the Shimane Prefecture. It is the signature flower of that area and is considered Japan's "most noble of flowers." Mr. Fujihara, a corporate member of the Japanese Chamber, added that the peony "was brought from China for medicinal use almost three hundred years ago."

A landscaping project was created around the Preserve gateway, with the remainder of the design calling for American wild flowers and native trees.

All did not go well. The peonies delayed on a ship during a shipping strike did not thrive well, and another 1,000 plants were donated. Yatsuka Cho then graciously sent over Japanese gardeners to plant the flowers and teach the Preserve staff and volunteers how to care for them.

The cost of the Gateway Preserve Project was originally projected at \$74,000 – mostly underwritten by the generosity of the Friends Board of Directors led by founding Friends President George Gumina, the Rockefeller Family members, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) and Japanese companies, as well as donors from surrounding communities. Costs ultimately increased, and a sprinkler system was added to accommodate the additional demand for water. It is today a serene gateway to the entire peaceful Preserve.

Mr. Fujihara said there was another lure to his visits to the Preserve, and it is a short stroll from the peony garden. "My family likes walking around the pond," he said, referring to Swan Lake, "we like it very much."



Great News (continued from page 1)

fill in some of the gaps that the state budget cuts have left open, it allows us to go beyond maintenance to improvement and restoration, and that improvement will be applied to the part of the Preserve most heavily trafficked by the public.

The handicap access elements include a station just off of the access trail leading to Swan Lake that includes parking spaces for two handicapped vans and a mounting block for handicapped equestrians. A handicapped viewing area just to the north will enable wheel chair-bound Park users to share in the lovely view of the lake already available to those who sit on the stone benches.

We had some wonderful support from our community that I want to mention. Letters came in from Kendal on Hudson, Phelps Memorial Hospital, ARC of Westchester and the Hudson Valley Greenway.

This grant is a matching grant; we have to raise 20% of the total in order to qualify for the other 80% and we know we can count on you to help us raise this money.

Please consider a donation to the Friends specifically for this grant.

Friends Welcome New Board Member Stella Medina



I was born and raised in Westchester, and for the past 25 years have lived in White Plains. I started visiting the Preserve in the early 90s. I'd heard about the Preserve from fellow runners, who said "You haven't been up there yet? It's a runner's paradise! But you've got to run hills." Sure enough, it was everything you could want for running—and so much more.

At the time I worked in New York City leading a Publishing Operations team for the LexisNexis group. It was a rewarding career on many levels—challenging, interesting, and fun. Still, as a deadline-driven business there was a fair share of stress. Going to Rocky's on the weekends helped alleviate stress and reconnect with nature. I usually parked in the main lot, and always admired the beauty starting with the courtyard's garden, and subsequently throughout the trails.

I graduated in 1985 from the State University of New York at Buffalo with a B.A., in English and a B.A. in Political Science. In 2005, I retired from legal publishing. I started volunteering at Rocky's in the garden with Keith Austin's team. I so enjoy the banter and companionship as we pull weeds, spread mulch and trim plants. There is nothing like working in the warm sun and with good friends in the garden.

In 2009, after years of recreational and competitive running I attended the USA Track and Field (USATF) coaching course in Boulder, Colorado, and am now a USATF Level 1 Certified Coach. I've helped Coach Mike Barnow of the Westchester Track Club coach middle school children, and also coached beginning women runners at the free clinics

offered by the Westchester Road Runner (a great deal for women interested in starting an exercise program!). It's such a thrill to help people develop and attain their goals—to go from walking to running a 5K (3.1 miles) in a few months, and to see their new confidence and determination.

I'm the Race Director for the Rocky's 5K. In 2008 we held the first race at Rocky's to raise funds for the trails. The race has steadily grown and we're looking to further increase participation. One of the great things about this race, aside from the funds we raise, is the community spirit. So many people give their time and energy to make this race a success that every year I am simply bowled over by everyone's kindness and generosity.

I'm a jazz lover and help out at WBGO (88.3 FM) in Newark, New Jersey. I train for and compete in masters division (50+) track races, both the mile and 1500 meters. I also compete in shorter road races and the summer biathlon when I have a chance. This competition is styled after the winter sport of biathlon; in the summer version you run a 5K with two shooting stops at mile 1 and mile 2. Using a .22LR (long rifle) against metal targets roughly the size of a quarter at 50 meters, you must run penalty loops for every shot missed, so accuracy is as important as running speed!

Finally, I enjoy wine, especially at family dinners with my husband of 26 years Rob Grubin, and my wonderful parents Antonio and Hortencia Medina. I also enjoy cycling and travel, although in all my travels, Rocky's always stands out as a beautiful place to walk, jog, or simply enjoy the tranquility of nature. I'm very happy to join the Friends Board, and look forward to working with the volunteers and Board members to help the Preserve that we all love and cherish.



ROCKY'S RAMBLE 10K

SATURDAY
June 25, 2011

Race Master: *Laureen Fitzgerald*

ROCKY'S 5K

SATURDAY
October 29, 2011

Race Master: *Stella Medina*



From the Friends President

By Clare M. Pierson

As I write this we are having a hint of spring; the snow bells are out and we had some rain, so the snow has receded. The grasp that winter had on the land this year seemed epic, even though we probably all lived through many such winters as children. I am sure we will have another blast, but for now, I am happy to see the land again, watch the squirrels dash about and even smell the occasional skunk.

This has been an exciting season for the Friends. Last November we celebrated the opening of "Carriages, Horses and Hounds," an exhibit ably put together by Sem Groenewoud, Preserve Manager Alix Schnee, and Preserve Gallery Curator Audrey Leeds. In December at our annual volunteer dinner we celebrated the many volunteers whose helping hands do paper work, keep computer lists up to date, manage the glorious gardens at the Visitor Center, stand by on the trails for the Autumn Pace and more. We are grateful for each and every one of you.

This year we look forward to our Peony Celebration in May, and a Wine Tasting to be scheduled for June. The Peony is a fun, community based champagne celebration; if you haven't attended, you should join us just to see the

amazing Peony Garden in bloom. For the Wine Tasting our Board member John Manuele will be organizing and it will be a lovely event for wine lovers and Park lovers alike.

Our Rocky's Ramble 10K, formerly called the Centaur, is scheduled for June 25th and we are pleased to announce that Lauren Fitzgerald has agreed to be Race Master. The Rocky's 5K will be run again by our own Stella Medina on October 29th.

This year is also the 10th anniversary of the Autumn Pace, and we will be adding some fun things to celebrate it. For Equestrians, Park lovers and anyone who likes a hearty lunch in a beautiful spot, Rockwood Hall above the Hudson, fills the bill. I hope you can join us October 16th for that event.

I saved the best for last; the Friends have been awarded a \$200,000 grant by the Federal Highway Administration. We are thrilled and look forward to your support to raise our match, which is 20%. More on page 1.

Happy Spring, see you on the roads of our magnificent Preserve!

Board of Directors

Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve

Clare M. Pierson, President

Kimberly K. Rockefeller, Vice President

John Nonna, Secretary

Carol M. Lyden, Treasurer

Thomas A. Capossela

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Herbert Hadad

M. Evelyn Hadad

Patricia Jones

John N. Manuele

Joseph Marra

Stella Medina

Sharon Pickett

John Settembrino

Donald W. Stever

Administrative Director: Liz Meszaros



Spring Gallery Schedule at a Glance

May 13 – June 26

"FLORAL FANTASY"

Reception: May 13 (timed with Peony Celebration)



July 1 – August 7

TREE SUBJECT

Visitor Snapshots of the Preserve

Reception: July 10, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

From the Preserve Manager

By *Alix Schnee*

The snow was on the ground into March, and the animals in the Preserve felt it. The remains of coyotes' meals—king fisher skull and vertebrae and deer bones—were found in the middle of Brother's Path. A hungry juvenile Sharp Shinned Hawk sat on a bush eyeing our bird feeders. Horses were skittish in the deep snow. A possum made a habit of visiting the ledge of an office window, covered with bird seed in mid-afternoon, thereby assuring an early dinner. I am reminded of how the loss of a beloved dog can make a person lazy and stay in when it's cold instead of braving the icy trails. However, spring is coming. This morning walking into the office I was happy to hear birds singing overhead. The Fly Fishing classes are scheduled, schools are making arrangements to release classroom trout, and we're getting ready for our Volunteer Breakfast.

Over the winter our staff changed. Tony Prokopowicz and Laura Buonanno moved on but will remain with us as volunteers. Tony will continue to assist with SNAP, Family Fishing Day, and our annual hunting season. Laura will be on hand on weekends, when needed. We've been most fortunate to have two seasoned park employees as their replacements. Stephen Sciamie comes to us from the Old Croton Aqueduct State Historic Park. He's an Eagle Scout and a passionate environmental educator with an interest in predator birds. He is also going for his Masters in Park and Recreation Administration at Lehman College, which keeps us current with accessibility concerns. Beyond his responsibilities as the Preserve's safety officer and general maintenance, he will also perform routine maintenance of Swan Lake Dam ensuring the embankment and spillway are kept clear of vegetation; he will also work with schools requesting environmental education.

Jen Sylvestri grew up around horses, helping to take care of them. She transferred from FDR State Park where she was Assistant Office Manager. She recently completed her BA in Anthropology from Hunter College with a focus on biologi-

cal anthropology (i.e. human evolution and primatology) and archaeology. She looks forward to a career in parks where she can utilize her diversified interests in the flora, fauna, and cultural remains of the natural landscape of NYS parks. Jen will also oversee Volunteers and work on mapping the culverts this summer.

Swan Lake Dam and the surrounding Brother's Path will be a focus of activity in the coming months. The Friends have received a \$200,000 grant that will enable us to increase handicapped accessibility to Swan Lake. We will be adding two accessible parking spaces, an accessible mounting ramp, and accessible lakeside viewing spaces. The project will include vegetative clearing on the lake access trail, as well as the removal of invasives from the stonework and stone pediments surrounding the lake. The dam surrounds, in particular, will be kept clear of overgrown vegetation. Additionally engineers will work on creating a plan to dredge the southern part of the Lake. Our hope is to bring the Swan Lake environment back to a more pristine setting as was intended in its original design.

Our volunteers were extremely busy this winter. The Care of Trees provided pro bono work in removing two enormous trees from the southern tip of the lake. Westover Landscape removed the invasive weed *Ailanthus* from the terraced area of Rockwood Hall. They will be planting a flowering bush along the fence, which should greatly enhance the environment and help to keep the invasives at bay. Lou Accurso and Lori Towle have revised the volunteer power point presentation, updated the equestrian and fishing permits, printed and mailed out art opening invitations, and assisted with snow removal, among other things. Their regular presence at the office has been of extraordinary assistance and a boost to morale as we sustain continued budget cuts. Keith Austin and Barry Feathers have continued their work on a new lake access trail gate. Mike Miernik has been helping with data bases on Sunday.

Two months later...our volunteers are the BEST! 40 attended our volunteer breakfast on April 2, so we're off to a great start. It is so heartening to have such strong support from our community. Every user group helps—equestrians, runners, walkers, and dog walkers, gardeners—all patrol, working together to keep our carriage roads safe.

If you haven't seen it, don't miss this year's SNAP exhibition, definitely the best yet. The Preserve is full of talent with a keen eye on its beauty. The photographs are up until May 1st.

Rockefeller State Park Preserve Staff

Alix Schnee, Preserve Manager
Laurence Gill, Preserve Office Manager
Richard Nelson, Preserve Naturalist
Steve Sciamie, Park Aide 6
Jen Sylvestri, Park Aide 5

Contact Station Personnel:
Tony Corda
Frederick Von Pisel



The Annual Autumn Pace Event: A Great Day and Great Turnout

By Liz Meszaros

The Friends 9th Annual Autumn Country Pace & Luncheon Fundraiser October 17, 2010, could very well go down in history as one of our best ever! The first team headed out in unusually balmy weather under clear blue skies at 8:30 a.m. The riders were excited with the length of the course and its many challenging jumps. Afterwards, more than 240 guests enjoyed a scrumptious meal under the tent at Rockwood Hall prepared by Turco's of Yorktown and served by Ms. Margaret Monteforte.

Our Pace committee, chaired by Clare Pierson, President of the Friends, worked closely with the Preserve staff to make this event possible. Special thanks to Alix Schnee, Preserve Manager, and Tommy Capossela of Greenrock, Inc., who ensured a challenging and safe course for the riders. Lou Accurso and Laurie Towle did a remarkable job overseeing the entire recruitment and organization of our 35 plus volunteers. I registered the riders and coordinated the luncheon, trophies and ribbon and raffle celebration. Preserve staff members Richard Nelson, Tony Corda, and Laura Bounanno held down the fort while Chris Davies, another dedicated park volunteer, had the arduous task of calculating the pace results.

As always, Marlene and John Schrader of Beech Hill Farm did an incredible job designing and setting up beautiful and challenging jumps with help from Westchester Horse Council members Cliff Harris and Viola Powrie. A special thanks to Rosedale Nurseries for donating cornstalks to decorate the jumps! Preserve staff members Laurence Gill and Tony Prokopowitz also spent many hours marking the course with arrows to ensure a safe ride.

Sincere thanks go out to the dedicated trail volunteers, runners, friends at the registration desk and start and finish lines, parking attendants, and those who helped set up and clean up. Thanks also to Tina Thomas, Eva Tarano and Friends Board members: Evelyn Hadad, Pat Jones, Clare Pierson and Sharon Pickett manned the Friends table for the day selling raffle tickets and t-shirts sales. Supreme Wines generously donated two cases of wine for the event, served by Board member John Manuele. Board member Herbert Hadad took some outstanding pictures. The Sleepy Hollow Volunteer Ambulance Corp and New York State Park Police were also on site to ensure the safest possible event. Philippe

Manor Hall was kind enough to lend us their PA system for the day and we are indebted to our neighbors at New York Life Insurance Company, who once again allowed us the use of their parking lots for this special event. Lastly, Kleen Sweep came up and swept the New York Life parking lot after the last horse trailer pulled out.

A raffle was another exciting part of the day. The Friends would like to thank Alta Buden for sharing her talent by donating a custom portrait of a favorite animal companion as the first prize raffle item, Blue Hill at Stone Barns for donating a dinner for four gift certificate, the New Sheraton Hotel in Tarrytown, for donating an overnight weekend stay with breakfast for two, the Jacob Burns Film Center for its annual dual membership, Historic Hudson Valley for a classic tour of Kykuit, a beautiful floral container from Westover Landscape Design, Beech Hill Farm for two free private riding lessons, and a basket of fine wine from Riverview Wine and Spirits. Gift certificates were also donated by Eclipse Salon of Tarrytown, the Lollipop Shop of Tarrytown, and Edible Arrangements. The Tarrytown Music Hall shared two tickets to Cherish the Ladies – a Celtic Christmas, and four tickets to the Dave Brubeck Quartet concert, which was part of special Night Out on the Town raffle package that included an overnight stay at the Marriott Hotel and dinner for two at the New Sweetgrass Grill in Tarrytown.

In addition, we also would like to thank our Friends and local merchants who supported our Journal as follows:

Allan Block Insurance Agency
 Blume Electric of Briarcliff Manor
 The Care of Trees, Elmsford
 Corbett Excavating, Inc.
 Grape Expectations of Tarrytown
 The Hudson Independent
 The Hudson Valley Writer's Center
 The Hudson Valley Horse Source
 Kendal on Hudson, Sleepy Hollow
 Manuele Management Group, Inc.
 John Settembrino, Financial Consultant
 Mid Hudson Veterinary Practice
 Phelps Memorial Hospital, Sleepy Hollow
 Que Chula Es Puebla - Authentic Mexican Food
 of Sleepy Hollow



Photo: Herbert Hadad

A well-earned chew and a chat after the Pace.

(continued next page)

Pace (continued from page 7)

Rockefeller Brothers Fund
 Teo Siguenza, Architect, P.L.L.C.
 SPCA of Westchester
 The Stone Barns, Pocantico Hills
 Westchester Generator, Briarcliff Manor
 The Westchester Horse Council, Inc.
 Westchester Generator of Briarcliff Manor
 The Williams Family

Trophies and Ribbons were awarded to all of the winners. First Place winners were: *Pleasure Division* – Nicki Esdorn & Kristina Howell, *Hunter Division* – Susan Judge & Marguerite Starr, *Western Division* – Stephanie Lennon & Terry Lennon, and *Junior Division* – Shannon Reichart, Sara Lurie & Zoe Farrell

Many thanks to all who have joined us to support the park and its beautiful trails and especially to all of our volunteers who made this day extra special! We could not do it without you! Catch you on the trails and hope to see you again this year for our 10th Annual Autumn Country Pace on Sunday, October 16, 2011!



The finish of the Pace

Photo: Herbert Hadad

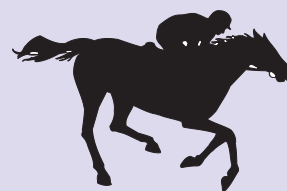
Preserve Greets Newest Specie

Oscar, the formerly very shy and highly reclusive RSPP office cat, has recently become quite the office extrovert and now delights in frequent public displays of purring and meowing. Favorite activities include having his nose

touched, his head scratched and consuming large quantities of both wet and dry food. His one hope is that you will soon bring him a poached salmon and cat-nip scones! When asked recently what he planned to do the evening he was photographed he replied, "I will be watching the Oscars of course!"



Photo: Lou Accurso



SAVE THE DATE

FRIENDS 10TH ANNUAL
 AUTUMN COUNTRY PACE
 & LUNCHEON
 SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2011
 at Rockwood Hall
 Overlooking the Magnificent
 Hudson River!

Rain or Shine!

Trophies & Ribbons for all divisions. Divisions include Pleasure, Hunt, Western and Junior. Advanced registration and payment is required. Registration forms will be made available at www.friendsrock.org beginning September. Rider entries close October 12th, or when Pace is full.

Non-riders are welcome, too!

Enjoy a spectacular day at Rockwood Hall overlooking the Hudson River with friends and great food!

Equestrian Permits are available at the Park Offices. Call (914) 631-1470.

All proceeds from this event underwrite carriage road maintenance.



Westchester Horse Council
 e-mail: zyzgy80@aol.com
www.westchesterhorsecouncil.org

Rose Harvey Takes State Parks Helm



Governor Cuomo's appointment of Rose Harvey as the new Commissioner of the State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation has received accolades from the environmental community including leaders from the National Resources Defense Fund, the Open Space Institute and Scenic Hudson.

She brings to the job decades of experience in creating parks and thousands of acres of open space for New Yorkers. Harvey was a senior fellow at the Jonathan Rose Companies, where she acted as an advisor and researcher on parks and open space issues; she also launched a nonprofit organization to fund, design and develop safe, well-managed parks in urban neighborhoods. Recently she was also a McCluskey Fellow and Lecturer at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

For 27 years Harvey held multiple leadership positions with The Trust for Public Lands, most recently as senior vice president and national director of Urban Programs. There, she oversaw all real estate acquisitions, urban park design and developments, managed the finances of a \$20 million annual operating budget, and closed between \$50 and \$75 million worth of land and parks transactions each year across eight states—a total of nearly \$1 billion and more than 1,000 new and enhanced parks, gardens and playgrounds in underserved neighborhoods in New York City, Newark and Baltimore. She has also established large landscape woodlands and natural areas throughout New York State and the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Harvey began her tenure in the parks and open space arena as Assistant Director for Conservation Easement at the Maryland Environmental Trust, where she negotiated protections of private lands holding environmental significance.

Ms. Harvey received her B.A. from Colorado College in 1977 and M.E.S. at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies in 1984. She currently serves on the Board of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and the Yale Leadership Advisory Council. In the past she has served on many conservation organizations, including the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Hudson River Institute and Walsh Park Low Income Housing. In addition to state and national awards for her environmental stewardship and advocacy for open space and parks, Ms. Harvey has written articles and op-eds for numerous national media outlets and industry trade journals.

Reaching the Friends

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The Preserve Observer

Editors: Evelyn Hadad, Herbert Hadad
Letters and submissions are invited.
Please contact us c/o the Friends.

State Park Use up Over 600,000 in Hudson Valley

HUDSON VALLEY – Over 610,000 more people visited state parks in the Hudson Valley in 2010 than did in 2009.

The increased usage is indicative of the beauty of the region, said Susan Hawvermale, spokeswoman for Hudson Valley Tourism and director of the Orange County Tourism Bureau.

“Obviously the word has gotten out that the Hudson Valley parks are places to go to do things, to have a wonderful outdoor experience, and that’s why those numbers have increased,” she said. “They have something to do with the economy, the fact that it’s very cost effective to go to a park, but still when you are traveling from New York City or New Jersey, to come up here to the Hudson Valley for parks, that shows you that we really have some great destination parks.”

A total of 8.4 million people visited Hudson Valley parks last year compared to 7.8 million the year before.

Birds (continued from page 1)

in some cases non-stop over hundreds of miles of open sea successfully. I will for purposes of comparison mention other migrant species.

Before describing the annual cycle of this bird, I will discuss some general aspects of migration, including why birds migrate, how they navigate, and how they manage to survive these long flights. I will also talk about people study migration, and how they determine where birds migrate and what routes they follow.

Migration

First of all, people have been aware of bird migration for a very long time, centuries in fact. Aristotle mentions it in the fourth century B.C. Why do birds migrate? In terms certainly of the fall migration this would seem to be rather self evident perhaps. After the breeding season ends, with the approach of autumn, days are getting shorter, a very important element; vital food sources, especially insects, are decreasing and birds seek warmer climates where food remains abundant, birds leaving in the fall do so before hunger becomes a real problem. But what about the spring migration, especially for birds that have spent the winter in tropical region, where food would seem to be abundant (or so it is assumed)? There are several things involved here. First of all late spring and summer days are actually longer in temperate zone areas than in the tropics, thus giving birds more time for foraging for their young. Along with this comes an increase in insect populations, giving birds more food to feed to their fledglings, since of course it is for the breeding season that these birds fly northward to North America. In addition, tropical forest areas with their greater diversity of bird life offer more competition for available food sources. Undoubtedly other factors may also be involved.

There are different kinds and degrees of migration and different strategies and problems are involved. First of all not all birds migrate. Some birds don't migrate at all under most circumstances and are more or less year round residents. In the Preserve such birds would include Crows, Chickadees, Titmice, Nuthatches and many Woodpeckers, among others. There are partial migrants with some individuals in a population of a species migrating while others stay put. In this area, such birds as Eastern Bluebirds and Red-tailed Hawks would fall into that category. Bluebirds are found in the Preserve throughout the year and nest here regularly. It is not clear whether Bluebirds found here in winter are the same individuals that nested here in the spring and summer. Short distance migrants are those which generally spend the winter in North America; often there is overlap between their breeding and wintering areas.

American Robins are one such species. There are long-distance migrants, sometimes called Neotropical migrants because they spend the winter in tropical regions of the Western Hemisphere: Central or South America or the Caribbean.

These include some birds of prey such as Ospreys and Broad-Winged Hawks, Hummingbirds, Swifts, Swallows, most Spotted Thrushes, Vireos, most Warbler species, Orioles, Tanagers, Grosbeaks and Buntings, among others. In the Preserve, very many birds which either breed here or pass through on migration fall within this category. There are birds which breed further north but regularly spend the winter in this area; these include primarily Dark-Eyed Juncos and White-Throated Sparrows.



Wood Thrush

Finally there are northern breeders which generally stay up north and only come down in some years under certain circumstances; generally due to food shortages in their northern homes. These irregular appearances are referred to as irruptions. Two irruptive species which have been recorded more than once in the Preserve are Pine Siskins and Common Redpolls. The year 2009 was a major irruptive year for Pine Siskins, not only in the Preserve but in many parts of North America, as indicated by numerous reports from various sources. In addition, birds that breed in the South Temperate Zone, such as southern South America, migrate northward to the tropics during the austral (southern) winter, roughly June through August or September. There are also some birds living entirely within the tropics that make annual, short distance, vertical migrations up and down mountain slopes during certain seasons of the year.

One may ask how one studies migration, particularly as regards route and destination? One method that has been used for decades is bird banding, something that in the United States requires a federal permit, at least for banding migratory birds. After a bird has been caught in a mist net somewhere, its vital statistics are recorded along with the date and location of capture and banding. A tiny metal band having a particular serial number is put around the bird's leg. Each band also contains information referring to the date of banding, and the agency or organization by whom this banding was done and an address to which that band or the information on it should be sent, should that bird be recaptured. This can provide data on that bird's movements subsequent to the date of attaching the band. Thousands of birds have been banded over the years in the United States alone, not to mention large numbers banded in other countries. Some years ago, a bird that had been captured and banded in February in Belize, Central America, in its wintering grounds was subsequently recaptured several years later in June in Pennsylvania, presumably in its breeding

(continued next page)

Birds (continued from previous page)

grounds. While relatively few banded birds are recaptured, the data recovered is of great value.

More recently radio tracking, by means of a tiny transmitter attached to the bird has also been employed. Nowadays transmitters can send data directly to orbiting satellites from which they can be retrieved by researchers on the ground. In addition direct observation of birds on migration has been done, for example, from locations on land or from oil drilling platforms offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. On clear nights during the season, it is possible to count the numbers of birds passing in front of the moon in the right direction. In addition, large flocks of birds can be picked up on radar creating distinctive images on the screen, especially with the newer Doppler radar systems. These images are often referred to as angels in radar operator's terminology. Special experiments carried out at least in part under controlled conditions have been used to investigate the navigation and orientation techniques used by birds in the course of migration (of which more will be described below).

How do birds navigate, orient themselves and survive long non-stop passages?

Questions frequently asked about bird migration include how do small birds manage to fly such long distances, and how do they find their way and know where to go. Regarding the first question, it appears that birds change their diet prior to migration and increase the fat load of their body. For example prior to the fall migration, many migrants switch from an insect-centered diet to one relying on fruit, which provide the extra fat to generate the energy needed for long flights. During the trip many birds stop at places along the route, rest and stoke up on fruit.

As far as navigation and orientation are concerned, this is a fascinating, though only partially understood, topic. It does appear, however, that birds have several different internal compasses to rely upon involving: earth's magnetic field, solar light including polarized light and stars. Experiments involving nocturnal migrants had the birds placed within a cone of blotting paper, while a small planetarium-like device projected star patterns above them. These experiments rely in part at least upon the fact that birds kept in captivity during the appropriate season and time of day (usually evening) become very restless. Experiments relying upon this phenomenon use a device called an Emlen funnel, after the scientist who first devised it. It consists of a funnel of blotting paper with an ink pad at the bottom. The top is covered by an open grid that either leaves the bird exposed to the night sky or to a small planetarium-like mechanism imitating the night sky. Birds tended to move in the appropriate direction relative to the stars, especially certain constellations, and left ink streaks on the paper in those directions.

By the use of a small planetarium to delete or shift some stars, it was shown that birds later let loose during migration tended to follow these erroneous directions. Other research demonstrated use of magnetic and solar compasses as well. It has even been suggested that birds can somehow see the lines of magnetic force. Birds can apparently also home in on precise locations, such as places where they have nested in previous years. The homing abilities of some birds, such as Pigeons, have been known to humans since ancient times. In addition, birds' behavior is also involved. An especially intriguing aspect of these migratory behaviors is that they are partly genetic and partly learned. Young, hatching-year birds that have never made a migratory journey are apparently somewhat more likely to go astray during migration, even though they have inherited some of these internal mechanisms.

Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*)

The Yellow Warbler is a small (roughly 5–5½ inch long) bird that with a vast breeding range in North America, stretching from western Alaska and northern Canada southward. While a few individuals may spend the winter in Florida or the Gulf Coast, for the most part they winter in tropical regions as far south as northern South America. There are also closely related subspecies that are more or less resident in tropical areas of the Americas. Adults of the subspecies prevalent in North America are yellowish-green above and yellow below. Males are a bright yellow below with reddish-brown streaks on the breast. Females are somewhat duller below and the reddish-brown streaks are either absent or only barely present. The distinctive song of males, often transcribed as sweet- sweet-I'm so sweet, is one of the common sounds of spring time in the Preserve. In some ways Yellow Warblers have much in common with other long-distance migrants; in other ways they do not.

Yellow Warblers nest in areas of low thickets especially near water; these can include areas of disturbed vegetation beginning to regenerate. At least some individuals make the spring migration directly across the Gulf of Mexico, a distance of about 600 miles from Yucatan to the Gulf Coast of Louisiana or Alabama, as they have been observed doing so. Yellow Warblers are one of the earlier long-distance migrants to arrive in the Preserve.



Yellow Warbler

The Preserve Observer

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For additional information or to purchase tickets, please e-mail the Friends at friends@friendsrock.org or visit us at www.friendsrock.org



The Friends are planning a
**9/11 memorial
and fund-raising event**
in September to provide relief
to the people of Japan who were
so kind to us following 9/11.

Details will be posted at our
web site www.friendsrock.org

Don't Forget:
Family Fishing Day
May 15th

