

Putnam Highlands Audubon Society Newsletter

Volume 118, No. 3 Summer 2018

Putnam Highlands Audubon Society

P.O. Box 292, Cold Spring, NY 10516

www.putnamhighlandsaudubon.org



BIRDATHON DONORS

PHAS is deeply grateful to the following individuals for their generous donations to the 2018 Birdathon (team and grand totals appear at the end of the list):

Robins

Kathy Barnes

Aileen M. Cohen

Philip Dobrovich

Elizabeth Doty

Joanne P. Dyroff

Anne B. Endler

Joseph Fitzgerald

Frances Galati

Nicole Gallo

David & Margaret Gordon

Mark Graser

*PUTNAM HIGHLANDS AUDUBON
SOCIETY: CONNECTING PEOPLE
WITH NATURE*

The mission of the Putnam Highlands Audubon Society (PHAS) is to preserve and maintain the lands and waters that have been entrusted to its stewardship; to inform and educate the public on issues involving birds, wildlife, and the environment; and to encourage membership in the chapter and participation in its activities.

JoAnn Haughey

Robert & Victoria Jauernig

Edward Kaplan

Susan Landstreet

Catherine Lim

Dawn Osselmann

Amy & Eric Richter
 Elaine Sanders
 C. & T. Scozzafava
 Adele & Henry Stern

Doves

Ryan & Jillian Bass
 Jane Wilson Carhcart
 John & Maureen Clancy
 Robert Cutler
 Pierre De Rham
 Myra T. Endler
 Carol Marquand & Stanley Freilich
 Louis Hebner
 Jennifer Howse
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 Anne Ives & Stephen Symmes
 Perry Pitt
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 Peter Salmansohn
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 John & Mary Lou Sussmeier
 Barbara Taggart

Bluebirds

John & Tamara Benjamin
 Anne Impellizzeri

Lars Kulleseid
 Bryan and Alison McNeary
 Ralph Odell
 Anne Osborn
 Margaret O'Sullivan
 Nathaniel & Anita Prentice
 Wylie & Sally Sypher
 Ellyn Varela-Burstein
 Suzanne & Tyrell Jones Willis
 Nancy & James Witt

Swans

Connie & Robert Bakall
 Nancy Durr
 Pascale Hulz
 Richard & Joanne Mrstik
 Patricia Schories

Eagles

Friedrike Merck
 Elmer Sprague

Total species seen by...
 Garrison Gumshoes: 108
 Putnam Valley Bogtrotters: 112
 Beakin' Beginners: 58
 Wappingers Creekers: 100
Grand total: 159

*Look deep into nature, and
then you will understand
everything better.*

--Albert Einstein



***PHAS's "THIRD SATURDAYS,"
SUMMER 2018***

July 21, 8:30 – 10:00 A.M.: Duck Pond Walk at Taconic Outdoor Education Center (TOEC). Enjoy a pleasant 1-mile hike around the Duck Pond. Target bird species include Baltimore oriole, warbling vireo, and wood duck. This is a special experience, as the TOEC is a restricted-access site. Due to the nature of the special permit granted to Putnam Highlands Audubon Society, this event is limited to twenty participants. Advance registration is therefore required. (Look for the pre-registration link at

www.putnamhighlandsaudubon.org.)

Meet trip leader Ryan Bass at the TOEC lodge at the end of Mountain Laurel Rd. The walk will begin promptly at 8:30.

August 18, 8:30 – 10:00 A.M.: West

Point Foundry Cove Preserve:

Discover the bird life of Cold Spring in this tranquil waterfront preserve with scenic views of Storm King Mountain. Target bird species include green heron, double-crested cormorant, and spotted sandpiper.

Universally accessible walking path. Meet in the parking area at the end of Kemble Ave in Cold Spring. Birders of all experience levels are welcome to join. All walks are free and supported by donations to PHAS.

Donations are accepted at

www.putnamhighlandsaudubon.org.



CY, THE BIRD GUY

To send questions to Cy, the Bird Guy, go to www.putnamhighlandsaudubon.org and enter "Cy, the Bird Guy" in the Contact Us box.

Dear Cy,

I wonder if you can help me. With the nice weather, I have started letting my not-quite-a-year old cat outside for a few hours each day. She is neutered, has all her shots, and is really a good girl, who comes back after an hour or two of exploring around, especially if I call her in for dinner.

My problem started earlier this week, when she came in with something in her mouth. Much to my surprise, when she went over to her food dish and put down the item, I found it was a bird. I am pretty sure it was a sparrow of some kind.

*But the story gets worse! Today, after she came inside I noticed something on the back porch, and it was a **BABY BUNNY HEAD!***

Before you start thinking terrible things about my little kitty, let me tell you she is actually one of the sweetest cats I have ever met, and I can't believe that she is killing all these animals.

My question to you is, What can I do about it? I feed her plenty of food, but can she still be hungry? Can I put a bell around her neck to stop her from sneaking up on these other animals? I am really upset, but I am at a loss. Please help!

At a Loss in Fishkill

Cy, the Bird Guy, says:

Dear At a Loss,

I understand your problem. As a cat lover myself, I have dealt with the same issues in the past. In fact, many years ago I tried putting a bell on my own outdoor cat, but that only worked for about three weeks, as I recall. I had to admire him, as my cat apparently figured out how to hunt with the bell on, because after a few weeks he was right back to catching

birds, field mice, and other little critters (and yes, including little rabbits).

So as much as it pains me to say it, I do not have a good answer for you. Domestic cats are estimated to be responsible for MILLIONS of songbird deaths in the United States each year. And that does not include small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians that are too tempting for cats to resist. Songbirds migrate long distances to come to the Hudson Valley and places to the north, as they need the long daylight hours to build nests and raise and feed their young. Many fledglings spend their first few days out of the nest, on the ground, where the parents still feed them before taking flight.

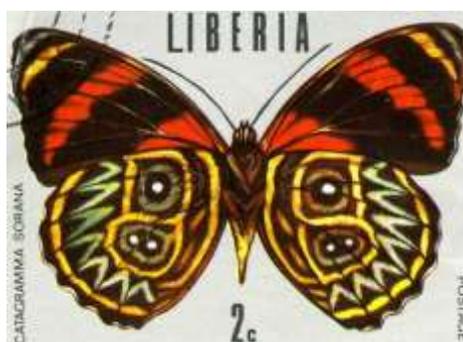
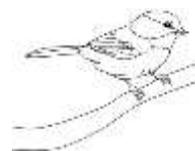
This makes them easy targets for cats. The National Audubon Society estimates that domestic cats are one of the primary threats to songbirds in the United States, and they can be devastating to other wildlife as well.

And it's a terrible shame, because I know that cats love being outside (at least in places that do not have coyotes or other predators around). As I said,

bells on collars really do not work, and I do not recommend declawing cats in any event. It is also not a matter of their being hungry. Their instincts for hunting and (I'm afraid) killing, are just too strong – it's not a habit you can train out of them.

So in closing, I will share with you the same conclusion I reached years ago. The best place for domestic cats is indoors. It is probably safer for them, and it is definitely safer for the birds and bunnies around your home!

Cy (the bird guy)



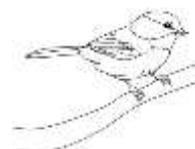
PHAS members Perry Pitt and Ralph Odell work to clean up the garden behind Hubbard Lodge on RiverSweep Cleanup Day (Saturday, May 5).



All members of PHAS are welcome to attend meetings of the Board of Governors. Board meetings are held at Hubbard Lodge (or at the Red Line Diner in Fishkill on snow days). They're a good way to learn about what PHAS is doing, the problems we face, and the interesting wildlife in our region. The next board meeting will be held on

Friday, July 13, at 6 P.M.

For more information, e-mail Connie Mayer-Bakall at board@putnamhighlandsaudubon.org





Can you identify this bird?
(answer on p. 9)

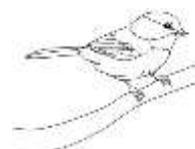
DID YOU KNOW?

- In an experiment begun in Russia in 1959, a group of urban foxes were selectively bred. Within twenty years they had lost all fear of humans, wagged their tails, and developed floppy ears and black and white fur; they had become dogs.

- Because no one ever saw a migratory goose mate or lay an egg, for centuries it was thought that they hatched from the barnacles washed ashore on driftwood at the same time of year as they arrived from the Arctic.
- House mice can be found wherever there are settled human populations; they live on all the continents, at altitudes as high as 15,600 feet, as far north as the Bering Sea, and as far south as the sub-Antarctic islands.

Study nature, love nature. It will never fail you.

Frank Lloyd Wright





interested in nature. For details, go to www.putnamhighlandsaudubon.org/scholarships.

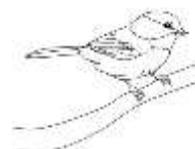


Photo by Ryan J. Bass

Ryan Bass spotted this painted turtle on Indian Brook Road while walking his dog George. He stood vigil until it had safely crossed the road.

Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson



Editor's note: This issue of the PHAS Newsletter would ordinarily be published on July 1, but is coming out late because I was on vacation during the last few days of June. Thank you for your understanding.

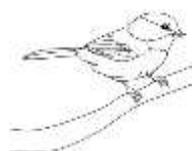
THE MARTY MCGUIRE AUDUBON SCHOLARSHIP

The Marty McGuire Audubon Scholarship is available to college students from the PHAS area who are

Thistles

Thirty thirsty thistles
 Thicketed and green
 Growing in a grassy swamp
 Purple-topped and lean
 Prickly and thistley
 Topped by tufts of thorns
 Green mean little leaves on them
 And tiny purple horns
 Briary and brambly
 A spiky, spiney bunch of them.
 A troop of bright-red birds came by
 And had a lovely lunch of them.

Karla Kuskin



***The bird pictured on page 7 is a
 Canada warbler.***

PHAS BOARD OF GOVERNORS

President: Connie Mayer-Bakall

Vice-President: Perry Pitt

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Ryan J. Bass

Max Garfinkle

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Lisa Mechaley

Tom Mullane

Jerome Rubino

Pete Salmansohn

Rebecca Schultz

Scott C. Silver

Adele Stern

PHAS COMMITTEES

President: Connie Mayer-Bakall

Newsletter: Carolyn Doggett-Smith

Website: Pete Conway

Events and programs: Adele Stern

Birdseed sale: Paul Kuznia

Birdathon: Ian Kingsley and Ryan J. Bass

Birdwalks/hikes: Ryan J. Bass

Science/research: Scott Silver and Max Garfinkle

Sanctuaries: Perry Pitt and Max Garfinkle

Conservation: Connie Mayer-Bakall

Education: Pete Salmansohn

Nominating: Connie Mayer-Bakall, Adele Stern, and Paul Kuznia

Marty McGuire Scholarship Fund: Ralph Odell

For additional information about PHAS, send e-mail to

info@putnamhoghlandsaudubon.org.