

EST. 1947

The BIRD CALL

Fall 2023

Newsletter of the Bronx River-Sound Shore Audubon Society, Inc.

Bluebirds Concentrate in Hot Spots

By Sandy Morrissey

Our bluebird nesting attempts were on an upswing this year. We ended with 112 nest attempts, which is above our average of about 100, and nicely up from last year's 86 nests. And like the last few years, the bluebirds did seem to cluster in a few hot spots. In fact, 60% of nest attempts were in just 4 area locations.

This makes sense. Where more bluebirds gather there is a greater chance for individuals to find a mate and pair up.



Harlow takes measurements while Dad, Nathan Whitney, and brother Hayes assist.

While Rockefeller, Ossining and Old Oaks Country Club areas had a generous share of the nests, we got an additional "hot spot" when we added the Whip-poorwill Club.

This golf course already had 50 nestboxes when we arrived but welcomed us to help monitor and band their bluebirds. We only tackled the Back Nine, which had 24 boxes. Still, we ended up with a whopping 14 bluebird nests, all of which were successful, except for a sterile pair

that had 3 failed nest attempts.

In the "miscellaneous" category, i.e., locations with just one or two bluebird nests, there was a switch from last year. My course, Scarsdale Golf Club, and several other locations got one or two pairs, after having none last year. Kensico Cemetery, which was its own hot spot until last year when it inexplicably got zero, was back in business with one nesting pair.



Our Eastern Bluebird Project reaches a lot of people. Here is the Stone Barns crew including their summer interns.

Success/Fail Rate

A little worrisome was the success/failure rate. Generally, the best you can hope for is an 80% success rate of nest attempts. It's a "success" when at least one egg is laid and at least one nestling fledges. Last year we had a phenomenal 86% success rate. This year we dropped way back to 71% success rate. Since my banding project is to compare the success rate of

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My "Big Morning"

By Sandy Morrissey

Seasoned birders know about doing a "Big Year" where you try to break records on how many birds you can see in a year. There's even a more local Big Year, where you try to see a record number in your state or county. And, of course, there's the "Big Day," often a fundraiser.

I just experienced an unplanned "Big Morning." In the middle of swallowing my Cheerios, I noticed a colorful warbler in the yard. It disappeared before I could reach the binoculars. But soon came a Canada Warbler, and then in rapid succession a Chestnut-sided, Blue-winged, Northern Parula, American Redstart, Black-and-white and the crème de la crème – a Cape May warbler. I needed Merlin and top birder, Anne Swaim, to ID that one.

Obviously, my joy level reached the stratosphere. I didn't need a ride in a SpaceX. All this begs the question – and I ask this all the time – why doesn't everyone become a birder? There is almost no day that goes by when I don't get a lift from an unexpected bird sighting. And, believe me, we need a lift in spirits with what's happening in the world.

As you readers are Audubon members and most likely birders already, I'm preaching to the choir. But I just needed to share my extraordinary morning. Thanks for listening.



Can you ID the warblers? – all my pictures from this day. Answers on Page 6

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*Bronx River-Sound Shore Audubon Society, Inc.
is a chapter of the National Audubon Society
serving the communities of
Bronxville, Eastchester, Edgemont, Hartsdale,
Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Mount Vernon, New
Rochelle, Pelham, Scarsdale, and Tuckahoe*

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Board member Henry May attends first banding session, while Penelope and her mom Georgia Franklin are old hands at it.

golf course bluebirds vs. all others, this year showed a rare difference in the two rates. The non-golf bluebirds had a better success rate of 75%, while the golf course bluebirds succeeded only 65% of the time. This is the first time I've had this big difference. Usually there is no or only a slight difference. We did have 2 golf pairs that laid 3 clutches each of sterile eggs. This didn't help the numbers.

Bands and Recaptures

We banded 351 bluebirds (34 adults and 317 nestlings). That's a little above average and an increase

from 318 last year. I was happy with our 35 recaptures, up from 27 last year.

The highlight was a 6-yr female at Rockefeller. She was banded as a nestling in 2018 in another Rockefeller box almost a mile away. She has been recaptured several times since 2020 in the same location where I found her this year. I will give extra effort next year to hopefully getting a 7-yr bird.

We had seven 4-yr birds, and interestingly, five of them were also in the Rockefeller area, including Rockwood Hall, Stone Barns and Historic Hudson Valley property. Obviously, a healthy neighborhood for bluebirds. Of the other 4-yr birds, one was at Baxter Preserve and the other at Old Oaks Country Club.

Tree Swallows get some jewelry

I had just enough lull after the first rush of bluebird nests that I had time to band some Tree Swallows (10 adults and 29 nestlings). I picked two locations that get only tree swallows (so far) and lots of them. I think we will have a good chance to get recaptures next year – *IF* indeed they return to the same location year after year, like bluebirds do. Since some go all the way to South America, it is awesome to think they make that journey and find their way back to Croton Point Park or Pelham Country Club.

Thanks to our Bluebird Team

As always, we could never help send over 300 bluebird nestlings into the world without the help and dedication of over 50 nestbox monitors, plus Girl Scouts who build the boxes, Mike Vaughn who makes the nestbox kits, and our wonderful BRSS Audubon board who supports our every effort.



New this year, banding Tree Swallows

The Grey Catbird

By Vern Schramm

More likely to be heard “meowing” from dense bushes than to be seen, the Grey Catbird loves low, thick cover. Catbirds stay near dense cover and even in flight, remain low to the ground as they travel from cover to cover. Both the common name of catbird and the genus name of *Dumetella* (after the Latin root ‘dumas’ for a thicket) perfectly describe the catbird’s characteristics. Grey Catbirds are heard on nearly every bird-watching hike but are seen on fewer. Not commonly attracted to backyard birdseed feeders, the Grey Catbird prefers to dine on seasonal fruits and berries with a healthy side-dish of protein-rich insects. An apple on a feeder not far from the thickets preferred by the catbird family guarantees you faithful visitors. With one exception. When the mulberry trees are in fruit the catbirds take the berries as their preferred meal and ignore other fruit sources. Small fruit, including grapes and cherries, will attract the catbirds out of the underbrush in leaner



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On the Wing: Mother-Daughter Birding in Costa Rica

By Leslie-Anne Brill
Photos by Violet Brill

What's the most memorable aspect of a first trip outside the United States? For a birder, it may be waking up to a new dawn chorus, making you want to leap up and greet the new day. This needed to be that trip for 19-year-old Violet and a milestone birthday present for me, with much birding but some time to chill.

Costa Rica is a top choice for non-US birding, boasting 945 species, 52 of hummingbirds alone. Dry/peak season (December-April) lets you see exactly what those warblers do all winter, but rainy/low season (May-November) offers lush greenery. Inspired by eBird friends (and one who travels for dental work—medical tourism is big), we eyed a package tour for June.

But friend Eric, a veteran Costa Rica birder, frowned on the itinerary and convinced us to plan it piecemeal. His Excel laid out route and expenses, including several days with a guide, Jorge Soto of Bijagua Birdwatching. That sounded extravagant—a guide needs lodging—but most days we'd be in his hometown. We'd fly through Liberia ("more manageable than San Jose"), rent a car (4-wheel drive unnecessary, automatic on request), and go to Mystica Lodge near Arenal Volcano; Santa Elena in Monteverde; San Gerardo field station; Heliconias Rainforest Lodge in Bijagua; and Playa Hermosa on the Pacific. Even off-season flights are pricey; we saved with a "hacker fare" and bone-crushing early departure from Newark. Approaching the volcanoes and coastline after a 5-hour flight, you are clearly "not in Kansas anymore." Those white things dotting the fields? Brahman cattle.

The air wrapped us in a blanket-like texture as we boarded the shuttle to Avis. There hadn't been a clue that they're not on-site at the airport (as are some others), but we were happy with them, our Nissan Kicks, and the WiFi-enabling phone.

First stop: Walmart for bottled water (tap is safe, with exceptions), paying with widely accepted US dollars, excited to get change in colones. Then, past towns, shacks, Great-Tailed Grackles on wires, dogs in the road, and wind turbines among mountains. Off the highway, many dirt and crumbled roads factor into drive time.

An hour later, we approached Lake Arenal and Mystica, known for yoga retreats and our favorite hotel of the trip. Our room had a hammock swing and panoramic view. On paths near banana and starfruit trees, we immediately identified Yellow-Faced Grassquits, Orange-Chinned Parakeets, and Keel-Billed Toucans! By a dipping pool, a Russet-Naped Wood Rail regarded us calmly. It was gone when we returned to swim, but its whooping startled us in the water. Later, Swallow-Tailed Kites cavorted not far from our door.

We were the only people at a dinner of salad with local cheese and thin-crust pizza (Costa Rica seems to have as many pizzerias as New York). Google Translate helped our fumbling Spanish. Not realizing most restaurants include a tip in the bill, I left my usual 20%.

Before we left, an immense Owl Butterfly—a species Violet had just seen at the American Museum of Natural History—flew in and perched on her hand as she moved it outside, where the evening rang with frogs and insects.

We woke to the melodic whistle of the national bird, the Clay-Colored Thrush. The time being 2 hours earlier is a birding advantage, and Violet returned having seen Rufous-Naped Wrens, a Brown Jay, White-Throated Magpie Jays, and a Masked Tityra while I, exhausted from the trip, lay listening to what felt like the opening number of *Lion King*. Ordinary outdoor precautions sufficed; mosquito-net hats went unpacked.



Brown Jay

After breakfasting on papaya, pineapple, tart Costa Rican guava, gallo pinto (savory rice and beans), eggs, homemade multigrain bread with preserves, and corn cakes, we drove an hour around the lake and volcano to Ecotermale Fortuna hot springs. Crested Caracaras crossed the road and Amazon Kingfishers perched on wires as we passed a German bakery, rice pudding stand, and signs for windsurfing lessons and nighttime sloth tours.

Howler monkeys stared down from trees in the parking lot, across from Bananaquits and Social Flycatchers. After getting lockers and towels, we walked to connected pools ranging from heavenly hot to refreshingly cool—some with waterfalls, others with submerged stone lounge chairs and black sand. The generous, tasty buffet lunch ended with a soothing coconut-chocolate atole (hot chocolate). Down an overgrown path, a pond revealed Scarlet-Rumped and Blue-Gray Tanagers, a male Muscovy Duck, and a Green Basilisk Lizard.

Driving back, we pulled over where some birders stood and were treated to our trip's only sloth! Their guide had it in the scope. "It's found a branch and has settled in"—rear end toward us, as it happened.

We returned in time to weather our first downpour, which came on suddenly and subsided before dinner. Our seats by the restaurant's fireplace couldn't have been more welcome.



Clay-colored Thrush

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That night, a bug that goes TAP TAP (like hammering a small nail) sheltered in our room and woke me out of a dream. One can't be fussy about a tiny dried bug on a quilt or ant on a wall; the parade of army ants outdoors is a sight to behold. But we had a gut sensation of being far from home—myself included, though I'd been to every continent before becoming a parent.

Next day we picked up Jorge outside Pali supermarket in Tilarán, bringing him a tablet he'd wanted (electronics being hard to obtain). Eric hadn't steered us wrong: he was reliable, kind, and a superb bird caller, with Merlin for nearby countries to supplement the Costa Rica download. At higher elevations near coffee plantations, we got out for eye-level views of Plain Chachalacas and a pair of Yellow-Throated Euphonias near the nest, a Gray-Breasted Wood Wren singing all the while.

In Santa Elena, as a Short-Tailed Hawk circled over the artists' cooperative, we heard the chime of the Three-Wattled Bellbird! Following it into the Bajo del Tigre near the Children's Eternal Rainforest—first encountering two Lesson's Motmots—we searched on and off the trail. Finally, outside the woods, Jorge got it in the scope. The bell-tone part of its call, struck from the heavens with a yawning motion and wattles jiggling, alternates with a sound like the one my computer makes when moving a file to the trash.



Lesson's Motmot

We sat out a torrent over lunch at Sabor Tico, a strip-mall restaurant with a Bellbird mural and view over the Continental Divide to the sunny Pacific. The traditional "casado" meal came with meltingly sweet skin-on roasted plantains. We discussed next morning's hike to the field station, which has no hot water but abuts the volcano—the rough trail was likely to be wet, and we'd be carrying all our needs.

Birding Monteverde Cloud Forest Biological Preserve not via the official entrance but roadside, we heard constant dripping rain. Cicadas roared. After scoring a Prong-Billed Barbet, we played the Resplendent Quetzal call like a lotto ticket, producing a Northern Emerald Toucanet, Silver-Throated Tanager, Costa Rican Warbler, and Golden-Olive Woodpecker. A muted sunset found us at a town overlook popular with teens on motorbikes, watching a Hoffmann's Woodpecker.

We'd settled in at Camino Verde B&B, which has a tremendous view and local Raw Botanicals toiletries. Too pooped to leave for dinner, we contentedly ate the bananas Mystica had supplied, and plantain chips and empanadas from the mini-mart next door. But lying awake that night, we decided to swap the field station for a second night there and revise our itinerary to a slower pace.

So we bummed around next morning among street art, souvenir shops, and supermarkets, buying sloth socks, coffee beans, watermelon seed jewelry, a medicinal plant book, organic chocolate. We spied an agouti at the Orchid Garden, attempted the Ficus Root Bridge, and lunched on avocado tempura and fish tacos at Taco Taco, prices like home.

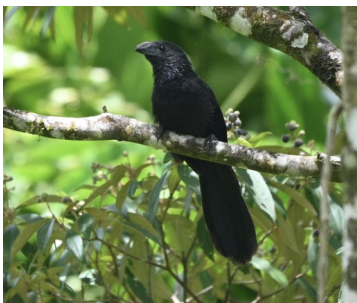
A Who's Who of species buzzed us at Monteverde Hummingbird Gallery: Purple-Throated Mountain Gem, Violet Sabrewing, Violet-Headed Hummingbird, Violet Lesserear, Brown Violetear, Green Hermit. Tearing ourselves away, we lingered over velvety coffee and vegetable empanadas at the cafe. On the way out, more lifers: Squirrel Cuckoo! Nightingale Thrush! Ornate Hawk-Eagle!

Overnight, a windstorm that would raise alarms at home raged, but morning was sunny and still dry.

Gas prices en route to Bijagua rivaled home but happily included windshield cleaning. Past mango and teak farms, termite-free "living fences," and Common Ground Doves, we ascended to Heliconias Rainforest Lodge, looking out to Nicaragua Lake. A Broad-Billed Motmot, Gartered Trogon, Red-Legged Honeycreeper, and Groove-Billed Ani were the afternoon's highlights at the Motmot House platform in the Tenorio Volcano foothills, where we saw our first coati.



Purple-Throated Mountain Gem



Groove-Billed Ani

Heliconias includes admission to the Hanging Bridges trails. A little dog started with us on the 2.1-mile loop, which crosses 3 slightly wobbly 100-foot-high bridges.

Through the unfathomable understory, Jorge found a Crested Owl. The Black-Eared Wood Quail his previous client had sought unsuccessfully for 3 days strutted by, and Tody Motmots perched trailside.

We dropped Jorge off near home and enjoyed "Tenorio" vegetarian pizza at Pizzeria El Barrigon while a dog snoozed by our table. But later, as the skyline darkened, we discovered that our otherwise comfortable room (our second, due to lock trouble) had no hot water. It rained fiercely that night. A cackling CHA CHA bug stayed near the window, corresponding with one outdoors.

But breakfast was lovely. With Jorge, we dipped our arms into Rio Celeste at a free roadside entrance where people swim and buy barbeque and pastries (the most distinctive being triangular with smoky cheese). The water is a breathtaking aqua blue, courtesy of aluminosilicate.

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One disinfects one's shoes before entering Tapir Valley Nature Reserve, where the *Tlalocohyla celeste* frog was discovered last year. A hill near the entrance flickered with Rufous-Tailed, Green-Crowned, and Striped-Tailed Hummingbirds, and—most unique—the Snowcap (the Black-Crested Coquette played hard to get). A Rufous-Tailed Jacamar robbed the air of a butterfly. The trail sported tapir tracks and horse-like poop. Inches from us, a small pit viper hugged a tree.



Lesser Violetear

We turned back amid rumblings of thunder, but too late. Under a rain shelter with restroom and kitchen, Jorge brought us tea and snacks while we organized photos, did yoga, looked at a Red-Billed Pigeon. Back on the trail, a Morelet's Seedeater and Gray Hawk posed on raindrop-laden branches. We turned over every leaf at a pond to find one of the nocturnal Red-Eyed Tree Frogs that were usually everywhere, rudely waking him up, his eyes shutting instantly.

It was time to leave for Playa Hermosa. Pizza in hand, we drove in a rainstorm through a Bronx-like part of Liberia, trying to picture the beach. We schlepped up to our budget hotel room, took one look, and quickly found one room left at a boutique hotel for the same price online. We hadn't paid, so we said adiós and drove off hooting. At Villa del Sueño, dinner was in full swing, complete with band; our tiny room was off the pool.

In the sunny morning, after a choice of Costa Rican or continental breakfast, we drove the few blocks to our pretty but slightly seedy beach, where a Black Vulture pilfered a dumpster and someone hit us up for a fee. The quiet gray-blue water, with fine dark-gray sand that sticks like dust, held boats but no swimmers.

We'd aimed to explore Rincon de la Vieja or Santa Rosa National Park, but the actual drive would be hours. Closer-by Iguanita Wildlife Refuge involved 10 minutes of gravel and 10 more of a mud road straight downhill. A backhoe made way, but we were lucky to make a U-turn.

Instead, we investigated an eBird spot in Playas del Coco, winding downhill through modern construction (including the Waldorf Astoria) with jaw-dropping views. A beach where a homeless person slept rewarded us with a Brown Pelican, soaring Magnificent Frigatebird, and Neotropic Cormorant, bringing our total species to 152.

We swam in the pool outside our room, coconuts overhead, listening to cooing White-Winged Doves and people discussing a fishing trip. Finally, we were chilling.

At Aqua Sport, a Peruvian restaurant on a beach with gentle waves and a tree swing, a swimmer had his dog on a boogie board and howler monkeys climbed the trees. Persistent flies couldn't quite ruin ceviche in an abalone shell, Chinese-Peruvian fried rice, and Liberia-based Numu beer.

Next day we started home after our last dawn chorus—my heart already ached to miss it.

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times. Snatching a whole grape, Mr. and Mrs. Catbird quickly dive back into the bushes to share the feast with their family. Female and male are indistinguishable by appearance. But in the spring mating time, the male's almost dancing displays and his elaborate mimic thrush calls are intended to impress his potential mate. Unlike the king of the mimic thrushes, the Northern Mockingbird, the Grey Catbird sings each phrase only once, and can exhibit a remarkable range of sounds. Most are bird call mimics, but the catbird can also mimic human sounds. Like cats, Grey Catbirds are filled with curiosity. While gardening, it is not uncommon to look up and see a catbird watching the proceedings from under a bush.

A similar color but darker shade than an American Robin's blue-green eggs, Ms. Catbird has a special skill to prevent her becoming a foster mother to a Brown-headed Cowbird. She examines the first egg she lays and rejects any eggs added with a different appearance. On rare occasions, this can lead to a nest tragedy. If a Brown-headed Cowbird lays its brown-splotched, white egg in a newly completed nest before any catbird egg appears, Ms. Catbird can mistake it for her first egg and reject her own blue-green eggs. Thankfully, this is a rare occurrence, but one that teaches ornithologists about egg recognition skills.

When the young gain their flight skills by the end of August, the family is likely to migrate to warmer climates for the winter. But the ever-increasing winter temperatures have led to a fraction of the catbirds wintering over along the Atlantic seaboard, a safer option than migration. Although the catbird can live as long as 16 years, migration always poses unknown dangers. Backyard birdwatchers fortunate enough to have a catbird family will likely see the same birds year after year, as even migrating Grey Catbirds are known to return to their old neighborhoods for another season of propagating the species and providing delight to their human hosts. *Photos courtesy of Robert D. Burk, taken in Central Park.*



Rufous-Tailed Jacamar





FIELD TRIPS



Please Contact Doug Bloom at (914) 834-5203 for info or to register. **LIMITED TO 20 PEOPLE.**

September 23, Saturday – Larchmont Reservoir

Meet at 8 AM at upper parking lot at reservoir. Looking for fall Migrants

October 7, Saturday - Lenoir park Hawk Watch

Meet at Lenoir at 8:30 AM. Looking for hawks in migration and other migrants.

November 5, Sunday - Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

Meet at Jamaica Bay parking lot at 8:30 AM. Looking for fall ducks and other migrants.

November 18, Saturday - Connecticut Coast

Meet at 8:30 AM location to be determined. Looking for late fall migrants.

December 23, Saturday Christmas Bird Count

Call Doug to participate.

January 1, Monday - Greenwich Point Hank Weber Memorial Bird Walk

Meet at 9:30 AM at Greenwich Point near bathrooms in main parking lot.

January 7, Sunday- Jones Beach

Meet at 8 AM Parking lot at Coast Guard Station West End. Looking for Alcids and other wintering birds possibly Snowy Owls.

January 27, Saturday - Shawangunk Grasslands

Meet at 2:30 PM. Looking for wintering birds including possible Short-eared Owls.

February 3, Saturday - Eagle Fest Details to Follow

February 10, Saturday - Eagle Walk

Meet at 8:30 AM at Croton Point Park parking lot.

March 3, Sunday Marshlands and Read Sanctuary

Meet at 8 AM at Read. Looking for wintering ducks and other migrants.

April 20, Saturday - Bashakill Wildlife Refuge, Wurtsboro, NY

Meet at 8 AM at Haven Rd. We will be looking for early migrants.

April 27, Saturday - Angle Fly Preserve

Meet at 8 AM at Angle Fly. Looking for early spring migrants.

May 5, Sunday - Central Park

Meet at 7:30 AM at 77th St. at statue across from Museum of Natural History. Will be looking for spring migrants such as warblers, orioles and others.

May 11, Saturday - Central Park/ North Woods

Meet at 7:30 AM at 103rd St. and Central Park West. Looking for spring migrants.

May 18, Saturday - Doodletown Road

Meet at 8 AM at Doodletown Road. Best place to see Cerulean Warblers nesting and other migrants.

May 25- Saturday - White Memorial Park

Meet at 8 AM in parking lot at Visitors Center lot. We will be looking for early migrants such as warblers and other songbirds.

Our Bird Seed Sale



Our bird seed order form is included in this newsletter. Our two seed sales are the only fundraisers we do. The money generated from the sale is used to produce this informative newsletter, continue the important work of our Bluebird Project, support local native plant gardens and butterfly gardens, programs in local schools, our free programs and field trips.

All the details of the sale are on the enclosed form. Please consider purchasing seed from us.

Answers to warbler identification from page 1: Row 1: Northern Parula, Black-and-white; Row 2: Blue-winged, Cape May, American Redstart; Row 3: Chestnut-sided, Canada.

Winter/Spring 2023/2024 Audubon Programs

October 11 2023 at 7 PM: Protecting the Flamingos of the South American Altiplano - Felicity Arengo

Three of the world's six flamingo species are found in the wetlands of the high Andean plateau or altiplano, a unique ecoregion that extends through Peru, Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile. Within the arid desert, wetlands provide essential resources for human activity, and habitat for biodiversity highly adapted to extreme temperatures, altitudes, and salinity gradients. In a region where water is scarce, the unique biodiversity and lifeways are now confronted with an unprecedented level of development from lithium mining for rechargeable batteries. The world's most abundant lithium reserves coincide with the areas of highest abundance of the altiplano's iconic flamingos. While the landscape changes at a rapid pace, researchers are working to understand the social and environmental impacts of mining. In this program we'll discuss how flamingos are an ideal flagship for conservation because of the landscape scale at which they use wetlands, and the tradeoffs of transitioning to renewable energy sources that rely on mining unexploited mineral reserves in sensitive, unique areas.

Dr. Felicity Arengo is a conservation biologist with experience in applied scientific research, outreach and communications, and site-based and regional conservation planning. She has thirty years of field research and project management experience and is currently the Americas coordinator of the IUCN Flamingo Specialist Group. She obtained her graduate degrees from the SUNY-College of Environmental Science and Forestry conducting research on flamingos in coastal wetlands in Mexico. In South America, she is working with partners monitoring flamingo populations and wetland habitats to develop and implement a long-term regional conservation strategy that will promote conservation of these systems. Until recently, Dr. Arengo was the Associate Director of the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation at the American Museum of Natural History. She was also the Assistant Director of Latin America and the Caribbean at the Wildlife Conservation Society. She is an Adjunct Research Scientist at Columbia University where she teaches in the Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology department.

Register at <http://brssaudubon.org/programs>

November 8 at 7 PM: Saving Hawaii's Birds - Saul Scheinbach, PHD

The Hawaiian Island chain fascinates vulcanologists and evolutionary biologists alike. Famous for its frequently erupting volcanoes, it is also home to a unique group of birds known as honeycreepers. Beginning with one ancestral type that made it to this isolated archipelago about six million years ago, these birds hopped from island to island founding dozens of species as they adapted to newly forming habitats and ecological niches. But they began disappearing once humans arrived about 1,000 years ago. Now they face an existential threat that we can avert.

Saul Scheinbach, Vice-President of Hudson River Audubon, has been writing their newsletter science column, Science Watch, for over 25 years. He will talk about Hawaii, its eruptions and evolution, and how we can save these remarkable birds.

Register at <http://brssaudubon.org/programs>

January 24 at 7 PM: The Secret Lives of Wild Bees - Nick Dorian

You've probably heard "Save The Bees!" but do you know which bees need saving? Over 4000 species of bees inhabit North America, and most don't live in hives or make honey. These wild bees come in every size, shape, and color you can imagine, and they live all around us, hiding in plain sight. In this lecture, PhD student and bee expert Nick Dorian will introduce you to the wild bees of the northeast. Together, we'll examine their varied lifestyles, habitat needs, and intricate relationships they have with flowering plants and other insects. You'll come away charmed by these tiny pollinators and with clear action items for how to support them in your backyard.

Nick Dorian is an ecologist, an educator, and a naturalist. He is a PhD student at Tufts University where he studies the population ecology of solitary bees and runs the Tufts Pollinator Initiative (sites.tufts.edu/pollinators), an urban pollinator conservation and community outreach group. He co-wrote and photographed an online field guide to wild bees www.watchingbees.com.

Register at <http://brssaudubon.org/programs>

February 7 at 7 PM: Bird Photography - Tom Warren

Tom, a former photojournalist who now lives in Dobbs Ferry is an avid bird photographer who has had his photos featured in Audubon's "Top 100" five times. Tom will not only share some of his most-recent photography but will talk about how the latest photo technology has both simplified but even, in a way, complicated the art of capturing photos of birds in their Westchester County habitats. He will also provide tips to help make your bird photography a little less daunting than it may seem.

Register at <http://brssaudubon.org/programs>



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