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Pest-eating Birds Mean Money for Coffee Growers, Stanford Biologists Find

This is the first time scientists have assigned a monetary value to the pest-control benefits rainforest can provide to agriculture. Their study could provide the framework for pest management that helps both farmers and biodiversity.

By Bjorn Carey

In recent years, Stanford biologists have found that coffee growers in Costa Rica bolster bird biodiversity by leaving patches of their plantations as untouched rainforest.

The latest finding from these researchers suggests that the birds are returning the favor to farmers by eating an aggressive coffee bean pest, the borer beetle, thereby improving coffee bean yields by hundreds of dollars per hectare.

The study is the first to put a monetary value on the pest-control benefits rainforest can provide to agriculture, which the researchers hope can inform both farmers and conservationists.

"The benefits that we might get are huge," said [Daniel Karp](#), a graduate student in biology and lead author of the study. "There's lots of unrealized value in these small patches of rainforest. This looks like a sustainable, win-win opportunity for pest management."

The researchers hope that the work will improve conservation efforts in heavily farmed areas by illustrating to farmers the financial benefits of leaving some land in its natural state, while also guiding governments toward the best conservation methods.

Worldwide Scourge

By some accounts, coffee is the world's most economically profitable crop, and its harvest supports the livelihoods of some 100 million people globally. Coffee beans around the world, however, are threatened by the pervasive beetle.

The insect burrows into the beans and eats its way out, ruining the beans. It originated in Africa and has made its way into nearly every major coffee-producing country. It arrived in Hawaii two years ago, and coffee plantations there are already experiencing 50 to 75 percent less yield.

"It's the only insect that competes with us for coffee beans," Karp said. "It's the most damaging insect pest by far, causing some \$500 million in damage per year."

Stanford biologists have been studying the intersection of nature and agriculture in Costa Rica since the 1990s, in part because of the vast amounts of land in that country dedicated to coffee production. The borer beetle arrived in the past few years, and Karp's group began to investigate whether farms with protected forests, and thus a greater biodiversity of insect-eating birds, fared better under attack from the insects.

A 'Not-so-glamorous' Experiment

To quantify the benefit birds provide to plantations, the researchers first calculated coffee bean yield – the amount of healthy, beetle-free beans that could be harvested – of infected plants that were housed in bird-proof cages versus yield from infected plants in the open, where birds were eating the beetles.

Next, they needed to confirm which species of birds were eating the beetles, and whether the birds required forest to survive. This required a more unorthodox approach.

"We had the not-so-glamorous task of collecting the birds' poop, and then taking it back to Stanford and looking through the DNA within it to learn which birds were the pest preventers," Karp said.

Five species of birds contributed to cutting infestation rates in half, and these birds were more abundant on farms featuring more forests.

"Depending on the season, the birds provide \$75 to \$310 increases in yield per hectare of farmland," Karp said. The birds' activity could become even more valuable if the beetle infestation worsens.

The scientists found that the closer the forests were to the farms, the greater benefit the birds provided. Specifically, smaller stands of trees – roughly the size of a few football fields – situated throughout crop fields provided better levels of beetle protection than the much larger forest preserves set on the outskirts of farms.

By differentiating the financial gains of different conservation strategies – large but distant preserves versus small, local stands of trees – Karp thinks the study could provide a framework for introducing similar efforts in agricultural zones around the world.

"This work suggests that it might be economically advantageous to not farm in certain areas of a plantation," Karp said. "We're going to start trying to generalize these results so that farmers, conservationists, land managers and governments can use them anywhere to make simple estimates of what they might gain in pest protection by protecting certain patches of the landscape."

The [study](#) was published in the online edition of the peer-reviewed journal *Ecology Letters*. The work was co-authored by Stanford biology Professors Gretchen Daily, Paul Ehrlich and Elizabeth Hadly; biology graduate student Chase Mendenhall; Nicolas Chaumont, a software engineer at the Natural Capital Project; and Randi Figueroa Sandi, a field assistant in Copal de Agua Buena in Costa Rica.

Daniel Karp

My research centers on the intersection of biodiversity and ecosystem services in tropical countryside. More specifically, I'm interested in how agricultural intensification impacts bird communities and associated ecosystem services. Comparing bird communities across regions in Costa Rica yielded the key insight that beta diversity is retained in low-intensity land use but is lost rapidly with further intensification. Similarly, I found that community structure and stability of several functional guilds are resilient to low-intensity, but not high-intensity, land use.

These guilds provide landowners key ecosystem services. Coffee is the second most traded commodity after oil, and the coffee berry borer (*Hypothenemus hampei*) is its primary insect pest. In a replicated enclosure experiment, I discovered that both bats and birds consume the berry borer, conferring an economic benefit to coffee farmers. Future work will attempt to attribute pest-control services to individual species through DNA analysis of bird and bat feces. By marrying species-specific pest control with existing bird distribution models, I hope to create a spatially-explicit model for bird-mediated pest control services across tropical countryside.

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Puffins a Hit with Hog Island Camper

An Interview with Chris Healy by Caroline McDonald, RAS Board Member

Chris Healy, age 17, who has attended Rockland Audubon Society field trips and events for years with his grandfather, Tom Dow, was awarded a scholarship to attend Audubon's camp at Hog Island, Maine for five days in June 2013. Hog Island is part of the Todd Audubon Sanctuary. All programs on Hog Island and care of the mainland sanctuary are administered by the Seabird Restoration Program (Project Puffin) of the National Audubon Society. Chris spoke with *The Observer* about his experiences there.

Observer: What were your impressions of Maine and the Hog Island camp?

Chris Healy: I have vacationed in Maine during the summer since I was seven or eight, so I know about the state. The camp is great. The way it's set up and the way they run it is family style, very welcoming. I didn't get homesick at all, actually. I want to thank the Rockland Audubon Society for making it all happen. I really had an awesome time and it was an amazing experience.

Observer: Who else attended the camp when you were there?

CH: For the most part it was people in my age group. Like me, they got sponsored to go there by the Audubon Society. They had as much interest in birds, or more, than I did and their knowledge about birds was on par with mine. It was mostly high school-aged students, the youngest was 14. It was a great week. They were all there for one main bird, the Atlantic Puffin. I was surprised at that. A lot of people there were from down south. There were kids from Missouri, a few from Virginia, one from Massachusetts, two local people from Maine, one from New Jersey, one from Pennsylvania and one from Ohio. I was one of five from New York—New York had the most people.

Observer: Did you see any life birds?

CH: Yes, the puffin was one of them. There was also a Shearwater, a few diving ducks I'd never seen, a Laughing Gull and a Black-headed Gull.

Observer: Any surprises?

CH: I never knew that Red-bellied Woodpeckers were that far north. That was a shock to me. There were a lot more Red-breasted Nuthatches than white-breasted and there were a lot more Purple Finches than there were House Finches. And the weather was different. I woke up and it was about thirty degrees and by mid-day it was about 80 degrees.

What experiences stood out?

CH: I'd never made a special trip for one bird—the Puffin. It was incredible to go out to East Egg Rock to see that one bird and what all Audubon does. It was impressive to see all the time and effort they put in for this bird. We went on the island to go see the puffins and we had to be really careful where we were stepping. That was really special, I'd never done anything like that before. I took pictures of the puffins on the water and on land. They had a presentation every night, for everyone there, not just our group—there were about 100 there total. The first night was Dr. Steve Kress speaking about puffins and how they started out, originally by putting out decoys to get the puffins coming there again. He was great. I got to speak with him a few times. Transportation was easy. They provided transportation to the local airport and to Amtrak. I took Amtrak home, because I like traveling by train.



Atlantic Puffin © Chris Healy

About Project Puffin

Courtesy of the Audubon *Project Puffin* website

The National Audubon Society started Project Puffin in 1973 in an effort to restore puffins to historic nesting islands in the Gulf of Maine. The Project began with an attempt to restore puffins to Eastern Egg Rock in Muscongus Bay, about six miles east of Pemaquid Point. Puffins had nested there until the early 1880's when hunters took the last survivors of this once-flourishing colony. The restoration of puffins to Eastern Egg Rock is based on the fact that young puffins usually return to breed on the same island where they hatched.

Young puffins from Great Island, Newfoundland (where about 160,000 pairs nest) were transplanted to Eastern Egg Rock when they were about 10 - 14 days old. The young puffins were then reared in artificial sod burrows for about one month. Audubon biologists placed handfuls of vitamin-fortified fish in their burrows each day and, in effect, took the place of parent puffins. As the young puffins reached fledging age (the time when birds leave the nest), they received leg bands so they could be recognized in the future.

After spending their first 2-3 years at sea, it was hoped they would return to establish a new colony at Eastern Egg Rock rather than Great Island. Because this was the first time an attempt had been made to restore a puffin colony, the outcome was unknown.

Between 1973 and 1986, 954 young puffins were transplanted from Great Island to Eastern Egg Rock and 914 of these successfully fledged. Transplanted puffins began returning to Eastern Egg Rock in June of 1977. To lure them ashore and encourage the birds to explore their home, wooden puffin decoys were positioned atop large boulders. These were readily visited by the curious young birds, which often sat with the models and pecked at their stiff wooden beaks. The number of young puffins slowly increased. In 1981, four pairs nested beneath boulders at the edge of the island and the colony has been growing ever since. As of 2013, there are now about 1,000 pairs of puffins nesting on five Maine islands.

For more information visit: <http://projectpuffin.audubon.org/>



Atlantic Puffin © Alan W. Wells

Carry In, Carry Out

By Vicki Beaumont, RAS Board Member

For a number of years, all state parks in New Jersey have had a “carry in, carry out” policy – meaning that you must take all your trash out of the parks with you and they no longer maintain any garbage receptacles. It has been suggested that New York State follow this example. While this is being considered, our county parks have apparently adopted this policy—a result, I suspect, of the great budget deficit we are experiencing. Frankly, I say “Hooray,” it’s about time!

It behooves us to keep our parks clean not only for the benefit of wildlife, but also to preserve these natural spaces for each other and generations to come.

There are signs now in the county parks that ask us to be more responsible by taking home our trash, where hopefully we dispose of it properly, recycling when possible. The theory is that this increases awareness of our impact on natural resources. The signs are a reminder that the parks belong to all of us.

The elimination of trash bins is an aesthetic plus – there will no longer be unpleasant smells associated with decomposing waste. In addition, no trash means no unnatural attractant for the wasps, rats, skunks, or birds, thereby improving their health by reducing their dependency on humans. Even birds that are scavengers will be better served finding natural food sources.

Anyone who has gone to Rockland Lake on a Monday morning knows there is so much garbage left in and around the many trash bins that a full-sized garbage truck is needed to pick it up. There is also more trash left in the parking lots, necessitating picking up by hand. This labor-intensive effort costs us all – in taxes that could be redirected with real savings realized and in these economic times savings are no small matter.

The *Journal News* recently ran an article about how early cave people re-used and recycled objects – out of necessity of course. Encouraging park users to take responsibility to keep their parks clean hopefully will encourage more of this kind of thinking.

We all need to believe it is our job to help maintain clean natural areas to conserve them for future generations—of people and birds.

Welcome New and Returning Members!

Roberta Aaronson, Sheila Abrams, Michael Almond, Norma Assante, Linda Barlow, Barbara Coleman, John Collids, Lynn Costa, William Crow, Derek Dervish, Alicia Edelberg, Constance T. Elkins, Rebecca Gmucs, Armando Gonzalez, Allan Goodman, Caroline Goodman, Frank Grandel, Joyce Greenwald, Nancy C. Gundersen, Renee Halperin, Allan Hentila, Howard Hilt, Debra Jakalow, Nancy & David Kaufer, Julie Kingsbury, Karen Keil, Arthur Landau, S. Lopez, Katrina Lupi, Shelagh Mayo, Lincoln Millman, Victoria Morkoe, Dorothy Morris, Lucille Nassery, Elaine Plenert, Joellen Putter, Wilsie Reese, Anne Reilley, George Renc, Harris B. Renfroe, Wolbert Roettgers, J. Rothchild, Lynn W. Saaby, Valerie Sangenito, Helen Scardino, Alice Schulman, Jane Stack, Linda Swanson, E. Tapley, Katherine Van Fossen, John Wallach, Thomas Wentland, Richard Whitton, Neelam A. Williams, Kay Winner

67th Christmas Bird Count

By Carol Weiss, RAS Member

On Sunday, Dec. 15, RAS members will be counting birds! From dawn to dusk, teams of counters will cover nine areas of Rockland County, enumerating the birds of each species that they see. This data is sent to National Audubon Society to be compiled and compared to other national and international counts. If you would like to participate in the CBC for the first time or if you were unable to count last year, please contact Carol Weiss at [845-358-3659](tel:845-358-3659) or cweiss1124@optonline.net. If you counted in 2012, you will be contacted.

If you can't spend the entire day out-of-doors, volunteer to watch your bird feeders on Count Day, Dec. 15. Feeder watchers should submit the highest number of individuals seen *at one time*. For example, if five titmice are seen at 9:00 a.m. and three at 10:00 a.m., the number reported should be five, not eight. Feeder counts are very important as sometimes a species is seen only at someone's feeder on Count Day. The form to compile and report your feeder watch data is below.

The day-long bird count ends with a potluck dinner and a countdown of the day's sightings. Della and Alan Wells of Tomkins Cove will host the supper, and both field participants and feeder watchers are invited. Call Alan or Della Wells at [845-942-5751](tel:845-942-5751) to let them know what you will bring to the pot luck: main dish, salad, dessert, appetizer or drinks. Driving directions will be sent or emailed to participants.

Rockland Audubon Feeder Count
Sunday, Dec. 15, 2013

- _____ Wild Turkey
- _____ Sharp-shinned Hawk
- _____ Red-tailed Hawk
- _____ Rock Pigeon
- _____ Mourning Dove
- _____ Eastern Screech-Owl
- _____ Red-bellied Woodpecker
- _____ Downy Woodpecker
- _____ Hairy Woodpecker
- _____ Northern Flicker
- _____ Pileated Woodpecker
- _____ Blue Jay
- _____ American Crow
- _____ Black-capped Chickadee
- _____ Tufted Titmouse
- _____ Red-breasted Nuthatch
- _____ White-breasted Nuthatch
- _____ American Robin
- _____ Gray Catbird
- _____ Northern Mockingbird
- _____ Brown Thrasher
- _____ European Starling
- _____ Eastern Towhee (Rufous-sided)
- _____ American Tree Sparrow
- _____ Field Sparrow
- _____ Fox Sparrow
- _____ Song Sparrow
- _____ White-throated Sparrow
- _____ White-crowned Sparrow
- _____ Dark-eyed Junco
- _____ Northern Cardinal
- _____ Red-winged Blackbird
- _____ Common Grackle
- _____ Brown-headed Cowbird
- _____ Purple Finch
- _____ House Finch
- _____ Common Redpoll
- _____ Pine Siskin
- _____ American Goldfinch
- _____ Evening Grosbeak
- _____ House Sparrow
- _____ Other - please specify _____
- _____ Other - please specify _____
- _____ Other - please specify _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: _____
E-mail: _____

Ways to report your feeder count (within one (1) week of the count, please!):

1. Come to the Countdown Potluck Dinner
 2. E-mail your numbers: awells@bestweb.net
 3. Mail to Alan Wells, 9 Dunderberg Rd., Tomkins Cove, NY 10986-1003
 4. Phone in your results: 845-942-5751
-

President's Message

Where are the Birds?

Although she is in her eighties, my mother's skills as a cook have not diminished one bit. For this, and many other reasons I make frequent appearances at her house at mealtime. As I am not the most talkative person, there is plenty of room in our conversations for inevitable questions like: "When are you going to get a haircut?" or "Why don't you throw out that shirt?" While questions of this type can be answered, my answers are not always satisfactory.

On several occasions during the course of the year, Mom will look out at her feeders on the deck and ask, "Where are my birds?" This begs at least two questions: First, do you think that being president of RAS—as vast as my powers are—allows me one iota of control over the coming and going of our avian friends? I mean really, I think they go out of their way to leave droppings on my car. Secondly, if they're "your" birds, why don't you know where they are?

Seriously though, my long suffering mom is not the only one puzzled by an unexplained disappearance of birds at the feeder. Usually the answer to the question of "where are my birds?" falls into the realm of speculation. One of the great advantages of flight is the ability of birds to range far and wide to fill their nutritional needs. As easy a meal as it is, the seed offerings at your feeder may not be what the birds need nutritionally at a particular time. Or perhaps your seed has gone stale. Birds can tell, and will ignore seed that has been lying around for too long. Maybe the arrival of a Sharp-shinned Hawk or a cat has caused them to temporarily leave the neighborhood. One thing that is sure, patience will reward you. They will be back.

Jim Previdi

Notes and Sightings: June – August 2013

Compiled by Carol Weiss

What should you report? Which sightings should you send in? If you check Bob Deed's book, "Birds of Rockland County and the Hudson Highlands, 1844-1976," you'll see that Bob surveyed the historical literature and then listed in taxonomic order all species that have been reported in our county. For migrants he included the earliest date in spring, the latest date in fall, unusual reports like a winter sighting of a bird that's expected to migrate south, and the highest number of a species seen in one location on a single date. Anything that falls into one of these categories should be reported: a higher number, an earlier or later date, or a bird never before seen in the county. Since this report is read primarily by our members, include your own highlights such as a life bird, a first-time birding experience or even the location of a nest. Include a unique sighting from a field trip. Out-of-season sightings, like brant or mergansers in July, are important. Deed's book is found in many of the Rockland County libraries but most will not let it be checked out. Ask for it in Reference. Better still, you can download a free copy through the RAS website.

June 11: I spotted a White Pelican at Piermont Pier at 3:05 p.m. The bird was sitting on the rocks on the north side about three-quarters to the end. Peter Johnson

June 15: My husband and I were at the pier late this morning and noticed a small duck with a group of geese. I couldn't really tell what it was. I've attached some photos of rather poor quality, but I'm hoping you can make something of them. After looking through Sibley's I settled on two possibilities, both of which seem rather unlikely: female Long-tailed Duck or female or first winter male Bufflehead. I would love to know what you think. Linda Pistolesi
Compiler's notes: I sent the image to several birders. Most agreed this was a Long-tailed Duck. In Bob Deed's records there are two from June 15, 1973 and June 16, 1974. Both records are of females at the Pier and both were sightings by Tony Amos.

Editor's Note: Other reports of Long-tailed Duck sightings as listed on RAS website: one at Piermont Pier on Nov. 17, 2003 by Mike Dolan; single female off Grassy Point on Dec. 25, 2008 by Alan Wells; and, a single female off Nyack Beach State Park on Feb. 28, 2009 by Paul Dubuc.

July 2: This morning on Tweed Blvd. above Nyack College, I was birding by ear while out for exercise and had left my binoculars in the car. I was hearing good stuff; jays and nuthatch, robins and pewees, pileated and downy. Just as I crested the hill I heard the call of a rooster very loud and close by. I know the sound, I'm sure I'm right, but I am not quite believing my ears. I'm trying to think of something else it might be, but I come up short. I needed to stop my walk and have a look and sure enough, down in the ditch that falls off to the river, I saw a rooster strutting his stuff. Strange! Peter Johnson

July 10: Harriman State Park, 8:30 p.m.: On our way home from an evening kayak paddle around Lake Kanawauke, my brother and I, each in our own cars were driving along Route 106 near Lake Welch Dr. My brother had a bear cross the road just in front of him. The bear passed between our cars so being out front, I did not see it, but Gerard got a good look. He said it seemed to be a "Teenager," perhaps this being his second summer. Peter Johnson

July 14: At Piermont Pier, I saw a Caspian Tern and Willet. Drew Ciganek

July 15: At Piermont Pier, I saw a Caspian Tern and a Laughing Gull. Carol Weiss

July 20: I was in Harriman yesterday exploring some areas off of Seven Lakes Drive, where I eventually came to an abandoned and highly overgrown parking lot. There was high amount of bird activity, including some grassland birds—Savannah Sparrows and Field Sparrows. After waiting a while, a lone Black-billed Cuckoo emerged from some brush close by and flew low to other small trees and bushes in the lot. I got some excellent views of it—a bird I have only seen once several years ago. Other birds present at the lot were: many Eastern Wood-Pewees, Eastern Phoebe, Scarlet Tanager, Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Yellow Warbler, American Goldfinch and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. I also saw a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Kennedy Dells last week (about a quarter mile into the trail starting at Zucker Park). Kevin Quill

July 20: At Piermont Pier, many Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers; one White-rumped Sandpiper. Carol Weiss

Aug. 12: I was on Mt. Nebo above Piermont with a little time to spare so I thought to do some quick birding at Nike park. I had a delightful couple of minutes watching a male Northern Cardinal, which had discovered my car's rear view mirror. The bird, enthralled with his own likeness, seemed to be having quite a time getting to know himself. When I approached my car he flew over to another car and started the viewing all over again. Peter Johnson

Aug. 28: On my way home from West Point, I went up Perkins Drive for a quick look to see if there were any raptors above Bear Mountain. As I pulled into the parking area a Red-tailed Hawk flew right across my windshield and down, swung back up and landed on a nearby telephone pole. As I got out of the car the same flight happened again leading me to think this bird lives in the area. Nice little show. Peter Johnson

Aug. 30: Two botanists (Max and Brian) picked up a swimming bird in a channel in the Iona Island marsh. They did not recognize the bird but did take pictures: it was an immature Sora. Three days later, members of the Mearns Club saw an adult Sora and an adult Virginia Rail in the reeds near the road on Iona Island. A Sora is a rare bird in Rockland! Carol Weiss

In Stony Point, I counted the following Common Nighthawks this season:

Date	Sightings
Aug. 22	3
Aug. 25	2
Aug. 30	12
Aug. 31	35

Unlike past years they were not feeding but moving through, therefore the counts above are accurate. Doris Metraux



Common Nighthawk © Alan W. Wells

Please send your sightings for October, November and December to cweiss1124@optonline.net or call [845-358-3659](tel:845-358-3659).

Upcoming Nature Programs

These programs are made possible through generous donations from our members and friends! Thank you!

Unless otherwise noted, **Nature Programs** are held on the first Friday of each month, September through June, at the **Community Center, Congers Lake Memorial Park**, located at 6 Gilcrest Road, Congers, N.Y., 10920. Meet at 7:00pm for refreshments and conversation, with a one-hour nature program following, beginning at 7:30 p.m. There is plenty of parking near the building, and it is handicap accessible. All RAS programs are open to the public and donations are greatly appreciated to help cover costs. If you would like to contribute a sweet or savory treat for the refreshments table, please add your name to the sign-up sheet at the meeting!

Nov. 1, 2013

Northern Tanzania: An EcoAdventure



Cheetah © Alan W. Wells

Speakers: Alan & Della Wells

The Southern Cross sits low on the horizon while the glow of the Milky Way silhouettes the flat-top acacia trees. From inside our tent we can hear the roar of a nearby lion and the distant “whoop” “whoop” of spotted hyenas. As day breaks, Kilimanjaro stands in the distance and the heat shimmer builds, eventually blurring our view of the seemingly infinite line of migrating wildebeest. Northern Tanzania offers one of the greatest wildlife spectacles on earth. Join Alan and Della in a vicarious adventure as they explore the fauna, flora, ecology, and culture of the region’s mountains, savannahs, and shores.

Dec. 6, 2013

"Lost Bird Project" Film Screening



Great Auk sculpture © Lost Bird Project

The Lost Bird Project, directed by Deborah Dickson and produced by Muffie Meyer, is a film about public art, extinction and memory. It is an elegy to five extinct North American birds and a thoughtful, moving, sometimes humorous look at the artist and his mission.

Gone and nearly forgotten, the Labrador Duck, Great Auk, Heath Hen, Carolina Parakeet and Passenger Pigeon have left a hole in the American landscape and in our collective memory. Moved by their stories, sculptor Todd McGrain set out to bring their vanished forms back into the world by permanently placing his elegant, evocative bronze memorials at the location of each bird's demise. "These birds are not commonly known and they ought to be, because forgetting is another kind of extinction," McGrain said. "It's such a thorough erasing."

The film tells the story of how these birds came to meet their fates and the journey that leads McGrain from the swamps of Florida, the final roosting ground of the Carolina Parakeet, to a tiny island off the coast of Newfoundland, where some of the last Great Auks made their nests and where the local towns-people still mourn their absence 150 years later. The Montreal Mirror called the film, "a stunning and evocative work about art, nature and our imperiled planet," while The Montreal Gazette described it as "entertaining, whimsical ... and certainly very moving." The Martha's Vineyard Times spoke of the emotion, "Watching it ... I was crying." The film is an elegy to the five birds and a thoughtful and sometimes humorous look at the artist and his mission. The Lost Bird Project is a "buddy movie" about public art, extinction and memory.

Jan. 3, 2014

Bald Eagles: A New Dynamic

Consequences of Population Recovery in the Chesapeake Bay



Bald Eagle pair © Alan W. Wells

Speaker: Courtney Turrin

Since the 1972 ban on DDT and other organochlorine pesticides, the Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) population in the lower Chesapeake Bay has been growing at an exponential rate. As the population approaches estimated carrying capacity, competition among bald eagles for food, mates, and nesting territory is increasing. This research focuses on examining behaviors associated with territorial interactions among bald eagles and quantifying pressure on breeding pairs. The effect of territorial interactions on reproductive success may contribute to the stabilization of population size as bald eagles approach saturation in the lower Chesapeake Bay.

After graduating from Bucknell University in 2011, Courtney Turrin interned at the Acopian Center for Conservation Learning at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, where she conducted research on dispersal behavior in American kestrels and co-authored an educational book, titled *Kestrels of the World*. Courtney went on to earn her Masters degree from the College of William and Mary, where she worked with Dr. Bryan Watts and the Center for Conservation Biology. The program she will present is part of her Masters research on population dynamics and behavioral interactions among Bald Eagles.

Upcoming Field Trips

Note: Please call the trip leader 24 hours ahead if you plan to join the group at the field trip site, rather than the designated meeting place! **Please check** <http://www.rocklandaudubon.org/> for updates!

Nov. 2-3 (Sat and Sun) Fall Migration at Brigantine and Cape May

All-day trip (Sat.) to Brigantine Unit of Edwin B. Forsythe NWR, N.J. Meet Jim Previdi at 6:30am at the Commuter Parking Lot, Route 303 North, in West Nyack. If desired, continue on to Cape May for an overnight stay and then bird on Sunday with Alan and Della Wells. 914-656-2509 or 845-942-5751

Nov. 10 (Sun) Second Sunday Walk in Kakiat County Park

Meet Carol Weiss at 8:00am in the Kakiat parking lot, Route 202 in the Village of Montebello. Park entrance is directly opposite the drive to Viola School. Stroll through the park, looking for resident and migrating bird species. 845-358-3659

Nov. 29 (Fri) Leader's Choice Field Trip

Contact Jim Previdi a few days in advance to find out details of the day-after-Thanksgiving field trip. 914-656-2509

Dec. 1 (Sun) First Sunday Walk in Kakiat County Park

Meet Peter Johnson at 8:00am in the Kakiat parking lot, Route 202 in the Village of Montebello. Park entrance is directly opposite the drive to Viola School. Stroll through the park, looking for resident and migrating bird species. 914-261-2895

Dec. 15 (Sun) Annual All-day Christmas Bird Count & Potluck Dinner

Join a team for our 67th Christmas Bird Count. Check www.rocklandaudubon.org or call Carol Weiss. 845-358-3659

Jan. 1, 2014 (Wed) Birding at Jones Beach, N.Y. (Audubon in the Parks)

Meet Della and Alan Wells at the Commuter Parking Lot, Route 303 North, West Nyack, at 5:45am. See the first sunrise of 2014 and start your new "year list." 845-942-5751

Jan. 5 (Sun) First Sunday in Kakiat County Park

Meet Peter Johnson at 8:00 a.m. in the Kakiat parking lot, Route 202 in the Village of Montebello. Park entrance is directly opposite the drive to Viola School. Stroll through the park looking for resident and migrating bird species. This trip will run 2 to 2.5 hours. 914-261-2895

Jan. 12 (Sun) Winter at Congers Memorial Park

Meet Matt Beckerle at 10:00 a.m. at the main parking lot of Congers Memorial Park (6 Gilchrist Rd.). Check out the variety of trees and birds along the eastern edge of Congers Lake and more. Path is wheelchair-accessible, flat and paved. 845-735-5411

Jan. 18 (Sat) Pelham Bay Park

Meet Jim Previdi at 8:00 a.m. at the Commuter Parking Lot, Route 303 North, West Nyack, for carpooling. Search for owls and waterfowl in this wild(er) corner of the Bronx. Dress warmly, bring snack & hot drink. Return by early afternoon. 914-656-2509

Jan. 31-Feb. 2 (Fri-Sun)

Winter Overnight to Cape Cod

A weekend trip to view birds in beautiful Cape Cod. Contact Jim Previdi for details. 914-656-2509

Chapter Financial Report for FY'13

2013 CHAPTER FINANCIAL REPORT
 National Audubon Society
 Chapter Name: Rockland Audubon Society, Inc.
 Chapter Code: R06

Balance Sheet and Statement of Revenues and Expenses
 for the 12-Month Period from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013

REVENUES

Audubon Society Net Payment	2,281.75
Additional Membership Revenues	260.00
Bequests	
Collaborative Funding	750.00
Contributions	355.00
Educational Events	675.00
Field Trips	30.00
Fundraising Events	907.00
Grants	
Interest and Investments	
Program Meetings	708.09
Sales, Store, Videos	
Other, Miscellaneous	40.00
Total Income	\$6,006.84

EXPENDITURES

Administration	1,308.39
Newsletter/Postage/Mailing	707.09
Educational Events	1,825.00
Fundraising	90.34
Regional/State Offices/State Council	1,490.00
Grants Contributions to Others	100.00
Collaborative Funding Project	494.95
Memberships	
Other	830.69
Total Expenditures	\$6,846.46

NET INCOME (OR DEFICIT) IN OPERATING FUNDS

(839.62)

BEGINNING BALANCE

\$12,609.86

ENDING BALANCE

\$11,770.24

ASSETS

Cash and Equivalents (Checking Account, etc.)	11,568.37
Miscellaneous, Petty Cash	18.67
Accounts Receivable (Owed to Chapter)	
Other (Videos, Store Goods)	183.20
Net Fixed Assets (furniture, equipment, not including value of land or buildings)	
Total Assets	\$11,770.24

LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES

Liabilities

Liabilities	
Accounts Payable (owed by chapter)	
Unearned Income (not credited in this fiscal year)	
Other	
Total Liabilities	0

Funds

Restricted (Endowments, Scholarships, etc.)	
Reserved (Committed to Special Programs)	
Unreserved (Not Committed)	
Total Fund Balances	\$11,770.24

Mission of Rockland Audubon Society

An all-volunteer chapter of the National Audubon Society, Rockland Audubon Society's mission is to promote environmental conservation and foster an appreciation of birds and nature through education programs and activities.

Board of Directors* and Committee Members

President	Jim Previdi	Secretary	Della Wells*
Vice President	Karen D'Alessandri*	Treasurer	Veronika Krause*
Conservation	Vicki Beaumont*	Fundraising	Karen D'Alessandri*
	Joanna Galdone*		Veronika Krause*
Education & Outreach	Joanna Galdone*	Hospitality	Peter Johnson*
	Lorrie Pallant*	Hotline Phone	Ron Conzo*
	Jim Previdi*	Membership	Della Wells*
	Julia Warger*	Publicity	Caroline McDonald*
E-contacts	Della Wells*	Programs	Julia Warger*
Field Trips	Jim Previdi*	Webmaster	Alan Wells

Membership

To join, send a \$20 check payable to **National Audubon Society** to:

Della Wells, RAS Membership Chairperson
9 Dunderberg Road
Tomkins Cove, NY 10986-1003

Allow 4 to 8 weeks for delivery of *Audubon Magazine* and *The Observer*.

The Observer

Editing	Caroline McDonald
Layout	Della Wells
Copyediting	Alan Wells
	Della Wells

Newsletter submissions welcome!

Please send your contributions for *The Observer* to Caroline McDonald at carolinem38a@gmail.com. The editor reserves the right to edit any copy for clarity, accuracy and space requirements.

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