

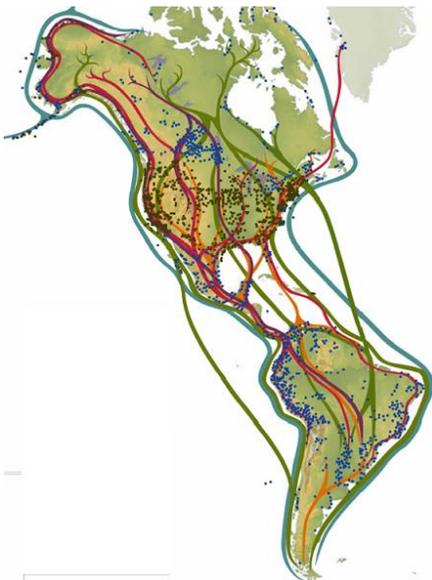
## Audubon in the Parks

*A unique partnership connecting people with nature to enhance bird conservation in New York State Parks*

*Audubon in the Parks* is an initiative with Audubon New York and the New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), its Regional Commissions, Audubon Chapters and Friends Groups. The goal of this public/private partnership is to advance bird conservation in State Parks, specifically targeting Bird Conservation Areas (BCAs) and Audubon Important Bird Areas (IBAs), while also connecting people to these unique sites and advocating for funds to ensure these places and the habitats they support are restored. At BCAs, activities focus on implementing specific bird conservation needs identified in the BCA Management Guidance Summaries.



### Bringing Audubon's Atlantic Flyway Priorities to our State Parks



In 2010, the National Audubon Society created a new Strategic Plan that has prioritized our conservation work across the four major flyways in the US - the migratory routes our birds embark on each spring and fall. In the Atlantic Flyway, Audubon New York has focused our conservation efforts on the highest priority ecosystems for birds, including Grasslands, Forests and Coastal habitats. We are currently working with State Parks staff to identify the Parks within these key habitat focus areas to guide our future Audubon in the Parks activities and ensure we are having the greatest impact as possible for the species of conservation concern in New York.

### Be a Good Egg, Long Island – Jones Beach State Park, Nassau County

For the Birds!, Audubon New York's statewide environmental education program, has been bringing students to local State Parks as part of its place based education curriculum. Students learn about birds in their communities and conduct projects to improve bird habitat locally. Through our "Be a Good Egg" share the beach stewardship program, students created signs for installation at Jones Beach on Earthday and volunteers went out during some of the busiest beach days of the season urging beach goers to share the beach with nesting shorebirds. Almost 1,000 people signed pledges committing to share the beach with birds and we plan to build on this success next season!



**Audubon Chapters and State Parks** have wonderful partnerships across New York, which result in initiatives such as invasive species removal by Audubon Society of the Capital Region at Schodack Island and Thacher State Parks, nest box installation projects by Rockland Audubon at Rockland Lake State Park, grassland bird surveys by Buffalo Audubon at Knox Farm State Park, and maintenance and monitoring of Chimney Swift towers at Clay Pit Pond, Gantry Plaza, East River, Roberto Clemente and Riverbank State Parks with help from New York City Audubon. Read on for more details on these partnerships.

**Connetquot River State Park Preserve and Gilgo State Park, Suffolk County** Great South Bay Audubon Society co-hosts birding and breakfast events with the Friends of Connetquot River State Park and maintains a bluebird trail at the park (right). The Chapter also works with OPRHP to remove invasive plants to benefit priority bird species, including Northern Bobwhite Quail, and planted native seeds on 2 acres as a food source for the reintroduction of this bird.



**Sunken Meadow and Nissequogue River State Parks, Suffolk County** Volunteers from Four Harbors Audubon Society are working with OPRHP environmental staff to install American Kestrel and Eastern Bluebird boxes, coordinate invasive species removal workdays with students, plant native habitat gardens (left), and reintroduce a native meadow. These demonstration sites not only help to improve bird habitat at the Parks, but inspire visitors to take similar steps to create bird habitat in their own backyards.

**Green Lakes State Park, Onondaga County** Onondaga Audubon and Audubon New York are working with Green Lakes staff to implement the grassland management plan adopted for the Park. Volunteers are coordinating bird and invasive species surveys, and installing kestrel nest boxes. Green Lakes is poised to be the largest intact grassland bird habitat in the State Park system.



**Joseph Davis State Park, Niagara County**

Audubon New York, OPRHP, and the Buffalo Audubon Society are evaluating and improving avian habitat and interpretation at Joe Davis. This project, supported by federal funding from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, is enhancing critical bird habitat along the upper Niagara River Corridor, attracting migratory bird populations, and improving public enjoyment of this important resource. A fall volunteer event (right) resulted in over 400 native shrubs being planted!



**Moreau Lake State Park, Saratoga County; Hempstead State Park, Nassau County**

Southern Adirondack Audubon Society constructed and installed 5 fishing line receptacles at boat launches and fishing areas within Moreau Park to help reduce threats to wildlife (left). This project was initiated after the rescue of a Common Loon that had been entangled in fishing line, and is serving as a model to other Audubon volunteers working with State Parks, including South Shore Audubon, who installed 4 receptacles at Hempstead Lake State Park. South Shore volunteers also participated in a volunteer "I Love My Park Day" clean-up event.

***Audubon partners are currently working in 19 state parks and are actively exploring work at 23 other sites. With 27 Audubon Chapters, Audubon New York staff and centers, and 213 State Parks and Historic Sites located across the state, this initiative is well positioned to have a strong impact on New York's priority birds and habitats.***

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*Golden-winged Warbler photo by Jeff Nadler, all others from Audubon chapter volunteers. Updated Fall 2013.*