VERMONT BOTANICAL AND BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2022

2022 Annual Meeting Announcement

The 127th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Botanical and Bird Club will be held on Thursday, June 2 – Sunday, June 5, 2022 at Upper Pass Lodge at Magic Mountain in Londonderry, Vermont.

This location will be a new one for the Club. Upper Pass Lodge is nicely arranged with rooms and The Red Slate Restaurant in a beautiful setting about a half mile up the access road to the ski area. Our Social Gatherings and Evening Programs will be in a Suite on the second floor (20 steps up). We look forward to exploring nearby botanizing and birding spots including Herrick's Cove, Lowell Lake and Gale Meadows.

126th Annual Meeting at Castleton University, Saturday, June 5, 2021 Old Railroad Path photo by Peter Hope

FRONT KNEELING (2) L to R: Barbara Smith, Grace Glynn (Scholarship); 1st ROW STANDING (9) L to R: Sara Hand, Sue Elliott, Sue Brown, Louanne Nielsen, Kate Kruesi, Ann Burcroff, Charlotte Hanna, Renee Warren, Lynne Arnold; 2nd ROW (7): Peter Hope, Marvin Elliott, Mike Chernesky, Everett Marshall, Denise Martin, Bryan Palfey, Bill Tig Arnold; 3rd ROW (8) L to R: Scott Bassage, Lindsay St. Pierre (Scholarship), Claire Scherf (Scholarship), Catherine Sells, Deb Parrella, Ivy Luke, Kathy Bruscia, Connie Youngstrom; 4th ROW (2) L to R: Phillip Ballou, Deborah Benjamin.

EVENING PROGRAMS
HOFF HALL BANQUET ROOM 7:00 PM

THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 2021:

"Wetland, Woodland, Wildland: A Tour of Vermont's Natural Communities" by Robert Zaino, State Lands Ecologist, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, Barre, Vermont.

Bob Zaino joined authors Liz Thompson and Eric Sorenson (W.W.W. - 1st edition) in the production of the second edition of: Wetland, Wildland, Wildland, A Guide to the Natural Communities of Vermont, which is illustrated by Libby Davidson, Betsy Brigham, and Darien McElwain and was published in 2019. This work added to the 80 natural communities of the first edition 17 new natural communities and 1 new biophysical region, thus greatly expanding our knowledge of Vermont for the purposes of conservation, understanding nature, and land management.

We define a natural community as an interacting assemblage of organisms, their physical environment, and the natural processes that affect that.

After publication of the new state geology map in 2011, it was acknowledged that Vermont has more calcium rich rock than was known before. It was time for a second edition. Calcium rich rocks support a wide species diversity. Two classic examples of such communities that has been long known are: Rich Northern Hardwood Forest and Limestone Bluff Cedar-Pine Forest.

Some new communities of the research that went into the second edition and that fall under the category of rich habitats include: Dry Oak-Maple Limestone Forest, with yellow oak, basswood, sugar maple, abundant Spring wildflowers, and carpets of bulblet bladder fern; Northern Hardwood Seepage Forest, with slow moving groundwater flowing through shallow soils, usually a closed canopy, and wildflowers such as foamflower, water Avens and bog candles; and Dry Red Oak-White Pine Forest, a more northern type of oak forest often on knobs with maple-leaved Viburnum, pink lady's-slippers and pine warblers.

The one new biophysical region is called Champlain Hills Biophysical Region and is located along I-89 at the edge of the Champlain Valley toward St. Albans; one can describe it as essentially the western foothills of the Green Mountains. The Champlain Hills have more rainfall and as one travels west to east increasingly colder temperatures. Several major meandering rivers cut through the Champlain Hills Biophysical Region – Missisquoi, Lamoille, and Winooski Rivers.

Some new natural communities came about from the splitting of former communities. For example, Red Maple Black Ash Swamp from edition one has been split into 2: Red Maple Black Ash-Seepage Swamp, and Red Maple-Sphagnum Basin Swamp. These distinctions help to further refine our understanding of how habitats grade into one another yet hold distinctive qualities that can be very useful in understanding the land. Similarly, Hemlock Swamp has been split into a Seepage Swamp and a Basin Swamp.

Bob listed some of his favorite natural communities including Boreal Calcareous Cliff; tiny Alpine Peatlands on Mount Mansfield; and the newly identified Boreal Floodplain Forest, such as found at Steam Mill Brook in Stannard and the banks of the Nulhegan River.

He then read some closing remarks from the chapter 'Our Vision for the Future' (page 7). "Our vision of Vermont's future is of a place where humans and nature coexist, and both are healthy. One hundred years from now and beyond, we envision a Vermont with large areas of contiguous, unfragmented forest with its natural lakes, streams, wetlands, cliffs and ridgetops." And, "Key to realizing this vision is a renewed and strengthened human commitment to the natural world."

FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 2021:

"Historical Land Use Changes and their Influence on Wildlife" by Kim Royar, Furbearer Project Leader, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, Springfield, Vermont.

Furbearing mammals have long been sought after for the many uses that their meat, fat and skins can be put to use by humans throughout history. One species, the beaver, is a keystone species in its appropriate environment and not only creates its own habitat suited to its survival needs, but creates a whole landscape that other species use to secure food, shelter and breeding habitat.

Native American populations lived throughout the northeast region in close harmony with nature and made use of the many animals for food, clothing and shelter. They only used what they needed in their subsistence culture. By the time that Vermont was first settled by European ancestors, the beaver was extirpated from Europe and only accessible from outposts in Siberia and Scandinavia. In the New World, however, the beaver was seen as an inexhaustible resource to the early fur trappers who traded 'modern' items such as iron kettles, knives, blankets and guns with the Native Americans for furs to send back to Europe. Inexhaustible, however, was not to be the case. By the mid 1670's it is estimated that ¼ million beaver pelts had been removed from the entire Connecticut River Valley region. And continuous pressure through trapping further depleted their numbers.

In Vermont, the human population from European descent was 3,000 in 1760 and quickly grew to 85,000 by 1790 and reached 155,000 by 1800 a period of time known as "the Surge". And by 1850, Vermont's landscape of forest cover went from 90 – 95 % to 70 %. Through land clearing and unregulated hunting, the period of 1760 – 1850 saw the almost complete removal of all of the iconic furbearing mammals and game birds – turkeys, fisher, deer, bear, American marten.

Following the Civil War, Vermont farms were abandoned by people seeking a less harsh climate and topography by moving south and west. The forest were regrowing. Then slowly the tide was turned with the realization that wildlife was not unlimited in abundance:

- 1867 Era of Protection with legislation that established a fish commission to initiate practices to re-establish good fisheries
- 1937 Era of Conservation with federal legislation to collect money from the sale of hunting guns and licenses to put toward conservation efforts
- 1970's Era of Ecosystem and the first Earth Day to raise the awareness of the general public about the importance of conserving the land and water resources that wildlife and humans need for a healthy environment.

In Vermont, between 1921 and 1937, beaver were live trapped from New York and Maine and released to try to bring back this species. In 1941, the population of beaver was estimated to be 400; by 1944 – 800; by 1949 – 8,000; and by 1950 a limited trapping season took 1,100 beaver.

In 1878, white-tailed deer were re-introduced; in 1950, fisher were recovered to control the porcupine population; and in 1968, wild turkeys were re-introduced in appropriate habitat. In 1989 - 1991 the American (Pine) Marten released in southern Vermont with success.

One mammal, the bobcat, was not severely impacted by all the change going around. It is thought that its numbers are greater than in pre-settlement colder times. It is a resilient, adaptable species that can manage its nesting and feeding needs in the vicinity of people.

The lessons of conserving landscape, natural communities and species that is so important in Wetland, Woodland Wildland has been set into practice by the dedicated staff of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department and the Natural Heritage Program and we all are better for that.

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2021:

Annual Business Meeting 7:00 PM
Castleton University
Castleton, Vermont

1. Secretary's Report

Scott Bassage introduced the group to the Club's website www.vtbb.org and said that it has been largely on hold during the pandemic. He said that in the coming year, the Club would look at ways to update and improve the website. The Club will also look at its name tag situation and perhaps give it a revision and update.

2. Treasurer's Report

Charlotte Hanna passed out a handout of the Club's finances for the calendar year January 1 – December 31, 2020. The meeting of 2020 was a one-day event and gathered a total of $400.00 from conference attendees for the catered meal at Camp Ingall's. Income from the Green Century Funds was significant at $7,225.00. She said that the general lesson is that you invest your values and take what comes. Scholarship donations are noted separately in order to track that type of expense going forward. The total scholarship donations for 2020 are $583.00. So, total income of $8,610.00 minus total expenses of $1,976.00 gives a surplus going forward of $$6,634.00.

The total cash on hand as of December 31, 2020 is $39,325.00 in general funds plus $14,851.00 for a total of $54,176.00.

3. Scholarship Report

Scott reminded members of the three scholarship students of this year's meeting: Grace Glynn, Claire Scherf, and Lindsay St. Pierre who we all enjoyed spending time together in the field. And special welcome was given to previous scholarship student Ivy Luke who attended the meeting with her grandmother, Kathy Bruscia.

4. Nominating Committee

Deb Parrella, Chair of the Nominating Committee gave a creative reading of the Slate of nominees for office.

Deborah Benjamin – President
Everett Marshall – Vice President Plants
Susan Elliott and Connie Youngstrom * - co-Vice-Presidents Birds
Charlotte Hanna – Treasurer
Scott Bassage – Secretary

*Susan Elliott will prepare the Master Bird List and high-lights write-up. Connie Youngstrom will organize the Morning Bird Walks and cover scouting.

Charlotte Hanna moved and Scott Bassage seconded that Slate be approved. The Ayes were unanimous. Debbie said that we will do our best to carry out our mission and serve you with grace and good humor.

5a. Field Trip Report – Plants

Everett Marshall asked for highlights from the field trips. Ivy enjoyed the ferns at the Cobble and the refresher with Peter Hope – her trip leader and long time teacher at St. Michael's. Sara like the Mermaid Weed and Tufted Loosestrife at West Rutland Marsh. Fringed Polygala in full bloom in the cold air talus at Austin Hill was a hit; the Gaywings were in bloom elsewhere nearly 3 – 4 weeks earlier. Peter seconded the Mermaid Weed and also the Nodding Trillium. Phillip was astonished at how much the leaf of Rattlesnake Hawkweed looked like an ordinary beet leaf. Scott enjoyed seeing the Sugar and Black Maples at the Cobble and learning their distinguishing features. Ann is going to move her Christmas Fern and Braun's Holly Fern closer together and sprinkle their spores together to try to get the Potter's Fern (hybrid). Deb liked the *Rhodobryum ontariense*, Rose Moss at the Bicentennial Cobble. Connie liked the Squaw Root at Green Dump Hills.

5b. Field Trip Report – Birds

Sue Elliott noted that the bird song was a little muted this year. Highlights included Bittern at the Marsh and Louisiana Waterthrush. Black-throated Blue Warbler at the Cobble was delightful. Prairie Warblers were seen and heard at the Pleasant Street Powerline site. Two Yellow-throated Vireos (territorial males ?) were encountered on the way back from the Galick Cemetery; and Chimney Swifts (or flying cigars) were fun to watch high in the sky. On to encounters withnon-birds were: milk snake at Green Dump Hills; a skunk, a porcupine and 3 garter snakes at the Austin Hill talus seen by Grace when she ascended the slope; a female snapping turtle on the Doig Road to Poultney Bridge Road; several dragonflies; and a Giant Swallowtail butterfly.

6. 2022 Annual Meeting

Suggestions on the list of places to hold the next meeting included: Manchester, Vermont; Wilburton Inn; St. Michael's College; and Greensboro – Highland Lodge under totally new management.

7. Other Business

Scott said that he would be collecting name tags.

8. Adjourn

Lynne Arnold moved and Everett Marshall seconded that the Annual Business Meeting by adjourned. The vote was all in favor. The meeting started at 7:20 PM and ended at 8:25 PM.

Slides by Members Show

Marvin Elliott led the way with a bird quiz. We had to name the bird as he showed a series of nice pictures: Hooded Mergansers (observed more in Winter months); a Kestrel that drew "ooh's and ah's". A Peregrine Falcon sat for a spectacular photo after Sue and Marv had completed a Bald Eagle survey in Addison County. Marv commented "You get these chances once in a while". Snow Buntings and upside down Red Crossbill visited the feeder this Winter. A Screech Owl at Buckner Preserve that Marv heard about from Roy Pilcher earlier in the year drew a comment from Scott: "Why would you see it? There's nothing to see !"

Sue Elliott followed Hermit Thrush and Cedar Waxwing and Bohemian Waxwing in Rutland County in April. Canada Jay, Boreal Chickadee and Red-breasted Nuthatch – residents of Brighton State Park – did not disappoint. A bittern at the Marsh thought he was disguised, but was in full view by River Road. A short video of Pine Grosbeak showed the bird going for the seeds. A Barred Owl at Half Moon State Park dined on a bird while manipulating it with its foot. A White-breasted Nuthatch did his "dracula" act of aggressive display.

Debbie Benjamin showed a video of Barred Owl perched on a snow-covered branch of an ash tree and rocked slowly with the breeze while it napped.

Peter Hope showed Bohemian Waxwing at Technology Park that was about to swallow a huge berry. He commented that the waxwings don't look like they actual feathers they are so smooth; and that the Bohemian has a lightning bolt pattern when seen from the back. Skunk Cabbage, Red Maple flowers and Leatherwood were seen in great detail. He studied Wild Ginger with the desire to understand the male and female parts and the blooming sequence and concluded that the plant is protogynous in which the female parts are receptive first. With Yellow-Lady's-Slipper Peter said that there is nothing "inferior" about the ovary except of course for its position. He showed the Officers camping and kayaking retreat at Connecticut Lakes, NH. And lastly, a beautiful Fall day at Green River Reservoir on September 26, 2020. "I got there earlier and went to the reddest part I could see. Debbie got there and looked for the reddest part and found me."

Bill Tig Arnold showed his collection of plants from the meeting as he says “everything that’s blooming” as members had fun guessing the names of each one. From Mermaid Weed to Tufted Loosestrife; from Birdseye Speedwell to Bird’s Foot Trefoil; from Hawkweed to Gaywings; the colors and shapes and playful names were all on display. Long-leaved Bluets, Four-leaved Milkweed, Rattlesnake Plaintain and Venus’ Looking Glass from Green Dump Hills supported the rich diversity of plants seen this year.

FIELD TRIPS for 2021 from the Agenda

I. EAST TRIP: West Rutland Marsh Important Birding Area and Pleasant Street Powerline, West Rutland; Bicentennial Cobble, Clarendon; RT 4 Rest Area

Friday and Saturday Leader: Peter Hope, Instructor Emeritus St. Michael's College; Assistant: Scott Bassage

1) West Rutland Marsh IBA and 2) Pleasant Street Powerline, West Rutland

The Marsh was formed as a result of the Vermont marble industry which discarded large quantities of sand along the Castleton River eventually slowing its flow. Cattails, sedges and grasses grew in the newly formed substrate and created one of the largest cattail marshes in Vermont - perfect habitat for marsh birds, including: Virginia Rail, Sora Rail, Common Moorhen, American Bittern and the very rare Least Bittern. A boardwalk allows a visitor to get a nice view of the marsh and its inhabitants against a backdrop of rounded green hills. The Rutland County Audubon Society conducts frequent walks at the Marsh. The Powerline is a dry walk in perfect open shrubby habitat for Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers (and hybrids), Prairie Warbler and Eastern Towhee.

3) Bicentennial Cobble, Clarendon

This Dunham dolomite limestone cobble, with its rich talus slope, supports 33 species of native ferns, including *Dryopteris goldiana*, Goldie's wood fern, and *Diplazium pycnocarpon*, narrow-leaved glade fern. There is a small swamp and the remains of a limestone kiln on the property. The Nature Conservancy conserved Bicentennial Cobble in 1976 with some financial assistance from the Vermont Botanical and Bird Club. It is managed by Castleton State College, which uses it as a botanical study site. We will walk on moss covered talus and woods floor at lower and middle elevations.

II. WEST TRIP: Helen W. Buckner Memorial Nature Preserve, West Haven; Green Dump Hills, Bomoseen

Friday and Saturday Leader: Everett Marshall, Natural Heritage Information Manager, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department
Assistant: Deborah Benjamin

1) Helen W. Buckner Preserve Memorial Preserve, West Haven

At 3,827 acres, the Helen W. Buckner Memorial Preserve at Bald Mountain is the largest and most ecologically diverse nature preserve that The Nature Conservancy owns in Vermont. The peninsula is bounded by the Poultney River and the southern end of Lake Champlain. The dominant bedrock that forms Bald Mountain and Austin Hill is Precambrian gneiss and quartzite, the same rock that forms the Adirondack Mountains to the west. The preserve is known to have 27 mapped ecological habitats. We will walk along Tim's Trail that follows a level course along the base of a cliff and steep talus slope. There are good lookouts over Ward Marsh. The preserve holds the largest population of “winged warblers” (i.e. Blue-winged and Golden-winged and hybrids) in New England. We will stop at a few places along the Galick Road for views of the Poultney River, including a good view of an

active Bald Eagle nest. We will see the original farmstead buildings at the Galick farmstead which abuts agricultural fields.

2) Green Dump Hills (at Edward Kehoe Fishing Access), Bomoseen

Directly across from Edward Kehoe Boating Access on the west shore of Lake Bomoseen is an abandoned slate quarry with a host of ferns on the quarry face and wildflowers and ferns on a natural hill to the side and above the quarry under a dry oak-hickory-hophornbeam forest. There is *Carya glabra*, pignut hickory, here as well as more common *Carya ovata*, shagbark hickory. There are many *Asclepias quadrifolia*, four-leaved milkweed and *Hieracium venosum*, rattlesnake hawkweed. A short walk to the west is the old slate quarry pool with sheer side walls. Heading north on level ground, we will explore the base of a cliff face and then work our way around to the east side and up a hill. We can then traverse the upper slope and return down the opposite side.

PLANT LIST 2021 – Contributors: Peter Hope, Kate Kruesi, Everett Marshall; Compiled by Everett Marshall

Green Dump Hills	
Amelanchier humilis	low shadbush
Anemone virginiana	thimbleweed
Antennaria plantaginifolia	plantain-leaved pussy-toes
Aquilegia canadensis	wild columbine
Asclepias quadrifolia	four-leaved milkweed
Asplenium platyneuron	ebony spleenwort
Borodinia laevigata	smooth rock cress
Borodinia missouriensis	green rock cress
Campanula rotundifolia	harebell
Cardamine parviflora	small-flowered bitter cress
Carex pensylvanica	Pennsylvania sedge
Carya glabra	pignut hickory
Carya ovata	shagbark hickory
Ceanothus americanus	New Jersey tea
Cerastium arvense ssp. strictum	common field chickweed
Comandra umbellata	comandra
Conopholis americana	oak-drops
Cornus rugosa	round-leaved dogwood
Deschampsia flexuosa	common hairgrass
Desmodium paniculatum	panicled tick-trefoil
Drymocallis arguta	tall cinquefoil
Dryopteris marginalis	marginal woodfern
Elymus hystrix	bottlebrush grass
Fragaria virginiana ssp. virginiana	common wild strawberry
Galium circaezans var. circaezans	wild licorice
Geum fragarioides	barren strawberry
Hedeoma pulegioides	American pennyroyal
Helianthus divaricatus	rough sunflower
Hieracium venosum	rattlesnake hawkweed
Houstonia longifolia	long-leaved bluets
Hypericum perforatum	common St. John’s-wort
Juniperus communis var. depressa	common juniper
Lespedeza violacea	wand bush-clover
Lonicera dioica	glaucous honeysuckle
Maianthemum racemosum	false Solomon’s-seal
Micranthes virginiensis	early saxifrage
Panicum	
Penstemon hirsutus	hairy beard-tongue
Pinus strobus	white pine
Poa compressa	Canada bluegrass
Polygonatum pubescens	common Solomon’s-seal
Prunus virginiana	choke cherry
Quercus alba	white oak
Rosa carolina ssp. carolina	pasture rose
Sabulina michauxii	rock sandwort
Solidago caesia	blue-stemmed goldenrod
Solidago juncea	early goldenrod
Stellaria graminea	common stitchwort
Symphyotrichum undulatum	wavy-leaved aster
Toxicodendron rydbergii	creeping poison-ivy
Triodanis perfoliata	Venus’s looking-glass
Vaccinium angustifolium	low sweet blueberry
Vaccinium pallidum	hillside blueberry
Viburnum rafinesquianum var. rafinesquianum	downy arrow-wood

Vitis aestivalis	summer grape
Vitis labrusca	fox-grape
Woodsia ilvensis	rusty woodsia
Austin Hill including Galick Cemetery	
Acer saccharinum	silver maple
Acer saccharum	sugar maple
Amorpha fruticosa	indigo bush
Anemonastrum canadense	Canada anemone
Aquilegia canadensis	wild columbine
Arctium lappa	great burdock
Asarum canadense	wild ginger
Asplenium trichomanes ssp. trichomanes	maidenhair spleenwort
Carex davisii	Davis' sedge
Carex blanda	woodland sedge
Carex rosea	rosy sedge
Carya cordiformis	bitternut hickory
Carya ovata	shagbark hickory
Celtis occidentalis	hackberry
Cornus alternifolia	alternate-leaved dogwood
Cornus racemosa	gray dogwood
Cornus rugosa	round-leaved dogwood
Cystopteris bulbifera	bulblet bladder fern
Cystopteris fragilis	fragile fern
Cystopteris tenuis	slender fragile fern
Diervilla lonicera	dwarf bush-honeysuckle
Dryopteris marginalis	marginal woodfern
Equisetum arvense	field horsetail
Erechtites hieraciifolius	pilewort
Geranium robertianum	herb robert
Gymnocarpium dryopteris	oak fern
Hesperis matronalis	dame's-rocket
Houstonia caerulea	bluets
Hydrocharis morsus-ranae	frog's-bit
Iris versicolor	blue flag
Juglans nigra	black walnut
Juniperus virginiana	eastern red cedar
Lemna minor	duckweed
Maianthemum racemosum	false Solomon's-seal
Micranthes virginiensis	early saxifrage
Mitella diphylla	twinleaf miterwort

Nuphar variegata	common yellow pond-lily
Onoclea sensibilis	sensitive fern
Parthenocissus vitacea	Virginia creeper
Pastinaca sativa	parsnip
Penstemon calycosus	eastern smooth beard-tongue
Penstemon hirsutus	hairy beard-tongue
Pinus strobus	white pine
Polygonatum pubescens	common Solomon's-seal
Potentilla simplex	old-field cinquefoil
Quercus alba	white oak
Quercus muehlenbergii	yellow chestnut oak
Quercus rubra	red oak
Rhamnus cathartica	buckthorn
Ricciocarpos sp.	Liverwort
Solidago arguta	cut-leaved goldenrod
Solidago flexicaulis	zig-zag goldenrod
Symphyotrichum lanceolatum (var. lanceolatum, interior & latifolium)	lance-leaved aster
Symphyotrichum puniceum	red-stemmed aster
Tiarella cordifolia	foam flower
Viburnum acerifolium	maple-leaved viburnum
Viburnum dentatum var. lucidum	arrow-wood
Woodsia ilvensis	rusty woodsia
Zanthoxylum americanum	prickly ash
Bicentennial Cobble (Henry's Cobble)	
Acer nigrum	black maple
Acer spicatum	mountain maple
Adiantum pedatum	northern maidenhair
Athyrium filix-femina var. angustum	lady fern
Carya cordiformis	bitternut hickory
Caulophyllum thalictroides	blue cohosh
Cryptotaenia canadensis	honewort
Cystopteris bulbifera	bulblet bladder fern
Cystopteris tenuis	slender fragile fern
Deparia acrostichoides	silvery glade fern
Dryopteris goldiana	Goldie's fern
Fraxinus americana	white ash
Galium aparine	cleavers
Homalosorus pycnocarpos	glade fern

Patis racemosa	black-seeded rice-grass
Solidago flexicaulis	zig-zag goldenrod
Viola canadensis	Canada violet
West Rutland Marsh	
Carex lacustris	lake sedge
Cicuta bulbifera	bulbiferous water-hemlock
Cornus sericea	red-osier dogwood
Lysimachia thyrsiflora	tufted loosestrife
Myosotis scorpioides	common forget-me-not
Proserpinaca palustris	northern water-mermaid
Rumex verticillatus	swamp dock
Salix eriocephala	wand willow
Salix sericea	silky willow
Viburnum lentago	nannyberry
Zizia aurea	golden Alexanders
Powerline at Pleasant Street	
Lonicera dioica	glaucous honeysuckle
Smilax herbacea	carrion-flower
Trillium cernuum	nodding trillium
Viburnum dentatum var. lucidum	arrow-wood
Morning Bird walk along the RR Bed	
Packera aurea	golden ragwort
Quercus macrocarpa	bur oak
Tilia americana	basswood

BIRD REPORT AND LIST 2021 – Susan Elliott

A good representation of the birds to be found in Rutland County in June was seen during the 126th meeting of the Vermont Botanical & Bird Club. The highest number were observed during the morning bird walks when birds and birders are at their best. Fortunately, botanist-birders have developed good ears for bird song and calls as they travel with their eyes to the ground in search of interesting plants so additional species were picked up at our field trip destinations.

The D&H Rail Trail and the Castleton University Trails were the sites of our morning bird walks, nearby and easy walking so there was plenty of time for birding, chatting and, yes, even some botanizing snuck in before breakfast. Bobolinks were along the rail trail along with three vireo species, Yellow-throated, Red-eyed and Warbling.

Several warbler species, always a birder favorite, were seen and/or heard, 13 in all plus a Golden-winged Warbler x Blue-winged Warbler (hybrid). American Redstarts caused the greatest confusion due to their variations in vocalizations. Fortunately, we were able to spot them and confidently ID them. They are especially prevalent along the D & H Rail Trail.

The high number of Gypsy Moth caterpillars was reflected in the number of cuckoos heard, both Black-billed and Yellow-billed. The cuckoos were heard at several of our field locations including the Pleasant Street power line. Many of us returned with caterpillars clinging to our clothing and backpacks. We hope the cuckoos stick to their task of clearing the trees of the caterpillars, but it looks as if the Gypsy Moths may win this year.

Although no rails were seen at West Rutland Marsh, the Friday trip members were treated to an American Bittern in flight. Marsh Wrens, Swamp Sparrows, Yellow Warblers and Common Yellowthroats were very vocal as were the Red-winged Blackbirds.

The Buckner Preserve and the West Rutland Power Line with similar brushy habitats were the sites for the winged warblers (a ‘pure’ Blue-winged was seen) along with Field Sparrows, Eastern Towhees, Prairie Warblers and Indigo Buntings.

Some trip members were treated to the sight of nesting Bald Eagles across the Poultney River from the Buckner Preserve.

At mid-afternoon Bicentennial Cobble was quiet, but a Blue-winged Warbler was singing for the Friday group.

A couple B&Bers heard the Louisiana Waterthrush that sings along the stream behind Castleton University each year. An early riser heard a Common Nighthawk over the athletic fields behind our dorm. An American Kestrel was heard by one participant enroute to the field trips and a Common Merganser with young was spotted by another participant.

Common Merganser
Mourning Dove
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Black-billed Cuckoo
Common Nighthawk
Chimney Swift
American Bittern
Great Blue Heron
Turkey Vulture
Osprey
Bald Eagle
Broad-winged Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
Belted Kingfisher
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Pileated Woodpecker
American Kestrel
Merlin
Eastern Wood-Pewee
Alder Flycatcher
Willow Flycatcher
Least Flycatcher
Eastern Phoebe
Great Crested Flycatcher
Eastern Kingbird
Yellow-throated Vireo
Blue-headed Vireo
Warbling Vireo
Red-eyed Vireo
Blue Jay
American Crow
Common Raven
Black-capped Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Barn Swallow
White-breasted Nuthatch
House Wren
Winter Wren
Marsh Wren
Carolina Wren
European Starling
Gray Catbird
Brown Thrasher
Eastern Bluebird
Veery
American Robin
Cedar Waxwing
House Sparrow
House Finch
American Goldfinch
Chipping Sparrow
Field Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Swamp Sparrow
Eastern Towhee
Bobolink
Baltimore Oriole
Red-winged Blackbird
Brown-headed Cowbird
Common Grackle
Ovenbird
Louisiana Waterthrush
Blue-winged Warbler
Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warbler
Black-and-white Warbler
Common Yellowthroat
American Redstart
Yellow Warbler
Chestnut-sided Warbler
Black-throated Blue Warbler
Pine Warbler
Prairie Warbler
Black-throated Warbler
Green Warbler
Northern Cardinal
Indigo Bunting

Members Memorable Moments

… So great to be here with people – a lot of zoom squares
… The boxes are ours, not Nature's
… I don't want to know why this Moose is following me
… We argued a lot about commas
… I take you back to when Jesus walked the streets of Palestine
… Kind of makes a fellow feel good
… like a Sugar Maple with the edges sanded smoother
… The Canada Jays were the polite ones
… Why would you see it ? There's nothing to see
… a Baltimore Oriole with a sore throat