

NY State Birders Conference and NYSOA Annual Meeting September 13-15 - Kingston

One of the highlights of the birding year in New York is the NY State Birders Conference and Annual Meeting of the New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA). This event moves around the state from year to year, hosted by a NYSOA member organization each fall. This year's conference will be in Kingston in the Hudson Valley, hosted by the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development.

The annual conference features field trips, workshops, a papers session, keynote speaker and social events. Scheduled for September 13-15 at the Best Western Conference Center, this year's gathering will focus on the Hudson Valley and the Catskills with field trips organized by the local John Burroughs Natural History Society. Fall songbird migration will be in full swing with warblers, thrushes, flycatchers and others winging their way south.

The keynote speaker at the Saturday banquet will be Nathan Pieplow, speaking on "The Language of Birds." Nathan unlocks the secrets of this language—listening in on the pillow talk of Red-winged Blackbirds, the signals that Cliff Swallows use when they have found food, and more. Nathan Pieplow is author of the *Peterson Guide to Bird Sounds*.

A chance to bird at the Ashokan Reservoir (built a hundred years ago by New York City), and a quiet walk along the streets of Historic Kingston are two of the Friday afternoon activities. A weekend highlight will be a Hudson River cruise scheduled for Friday evening. Participants will have a chance not only to observe river birds, but also to enjoy views of historic Hudson River lighthouses, waterfront mansions and other notable sites aboard the two-hour Rip Van Winkle cruise. There is an extra cost for the cruise, so be sure to sign up when you register for the conference.

Mark DeDea and the John Burroughs Natural History Society have compiled an impressive list of outings for both Saturday and Sunday mornings. Adventuresome souls please come with kayak/canoe attire. No telling how warm or cool it will be, and be aware - those hiking up Slide Mountain at 3am Sunday can possibly see snowflakes! For those who would rather not paddle or climb mountains, there are plenty of less strenuous yet high quality bird walks to choose from along the Hudson River and surrounding areas, as well as the Hawk Watch at the Mohonk Preserve.

Workshops will include sessions on the 2020 Breeding Bird Atlas and creating a bird-friendly garden. Add to this a bird trivia game, a papers session, vendors, book signings, and a raffle and this promises to be an entertaining and educational weekend.

The annual NYSOA Council of Delegates meeting will be held Saturday morning. Member organizations are encouraged to send their representatives to be filled in on NYSOA's activities over the past year and future plans, and to participate in discussions and elections.

Act now! Early **discounted registration is available until August 2**, and the **discounted hotel rate is available until July 13**. More information, including registration materials and lodging, is available at www.catskillcenter.org/details and www.nybirds.org.

Please join us for this special event and experience NY's beautiful Hudson Valley and Catskill Mountains.