

**GARDINER LIBRARY**  
**BIRDING WALKS**

2021 • A SUMMARY THROUGH PHOTOS AND WORDS



GARDINER LIBRARY & MINNEWASKA STATE PARK PRESERVE

# WELCOME



Hello Gardiner Library Participants,

Thank you all for participating in the first ever full season of birding at the Gardiner Library!

With the blessing of the Gardiner Library and Minnewaska State Park Preserve, this program was able to be expanded from a one month program to seven months.

By walking through the same habitat week to week, we learned a lot about the land we wandered through: which habitat certain bird species preferred, where birds were nesting, what wild animals lived nearby, where the wildflowers were, which insects filled the air with their music, and more.

While the bird species summary – on the following page – gives a snapshot of the bird activity through the seasons, consider this a visual overview of the program. Find on the following pages a few words and photographs that some of the participants have shared.

I want to thank each and every participant that came – whether it was just once or came routinely. A special thanks to Alexandra, Carla, and Charlie for making so many walks. This program couldn't have been continually offered without interest and support. While I have birded for about eight years, I had a number of brand new experiences with you all.

Thank you all!

Nicholas Martin  
Park Educator  
Minnewaska State Park Preserve

## INDEX

BIRD SPECIES • APRIL • MAY • JUNE • JULY • AUGUST • SEPTEMBER • OCTOBER • MEMORIES



# SPECIES SUMMARY

*Bird species observed – through visual or auditory means – within or flying over the Gardiner Library, Wallkill Valley Rail Trail, and Majestic Park:*

Canada Goose	Eastern Kingbird	American Goldfinch
Wild Turkey	Blue-headed Vireo	Chipping Sparrow
Mourning Dove	Warbling Vireo	Field Sparrow
Chimney Swift	Red-eyed Vireo	Dark-eyed Junco
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Blue Jay	White-throated Sparrow
Great Blue Heron	American Crow	Song Sparrow
Great Egret	Fish Crow	Swamp Sparrow
Green Heron	Black-capped Chickadee	Eastern Towhee
Black Vulture	Tufted Titmouse	Baltimore Oriole
Turkey Vulture	Tree Swallow	Red-winged Blackbird
Osprey	Barn Swallow	Brown-headed Cowbird
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Common Grackle
Cooper's Hawk	White-breasted Nuthatch	Black-and-white Warbler
Bald Eagle	House Wren	Common Yellowthroat
Red-shouldered Hawk	Carolina Wren	American Redstart
Red-tailed Hawk	European Starling	Yellow Warbler
Belted Kingfisher	Gray Catbird	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Brown Thrasher	Palm Warbler
Downy Woodpecker	Northern Mockingbird	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Hairy Woodpecker	Eastern Bluebird	Black-throated Green Warbler
Pileated Woodpecker	Hermit Thrush	Canada Warbler
Northern Flicker	American Robin	Scarlet Tanager
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Cedar Waxwing	Northern Cardinal
Eastern Phoebe	House Sparrow	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Great Crested Flycatcher	House Finch	



The first Painted Turtle sighting (top) of the season. The “apartments” or “condos” – bird nests found within the pavilion at Majestic Park (bottom).  
*Photos: Nicholas Martin*





Checking out the murals in Majestic Park: the Gardiner mural (top) and the social justice mural (bottom) – the latter created by New Paltz students.  
*Photos: Nicholas Martin*



# APRIL

---



The view of Majestic Park, the red barn, and the Shawangunk Mountains from the entrance off of the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail during April.

*Photos: Nicholas Martin*





Pileated Woodpecker sighting! (top) It is the black dot near the crown of the tallest tree. Reviewing bird details in Sibley's Guide to Birds (bottom).  
*Photos: Laura Davis Kennedy*





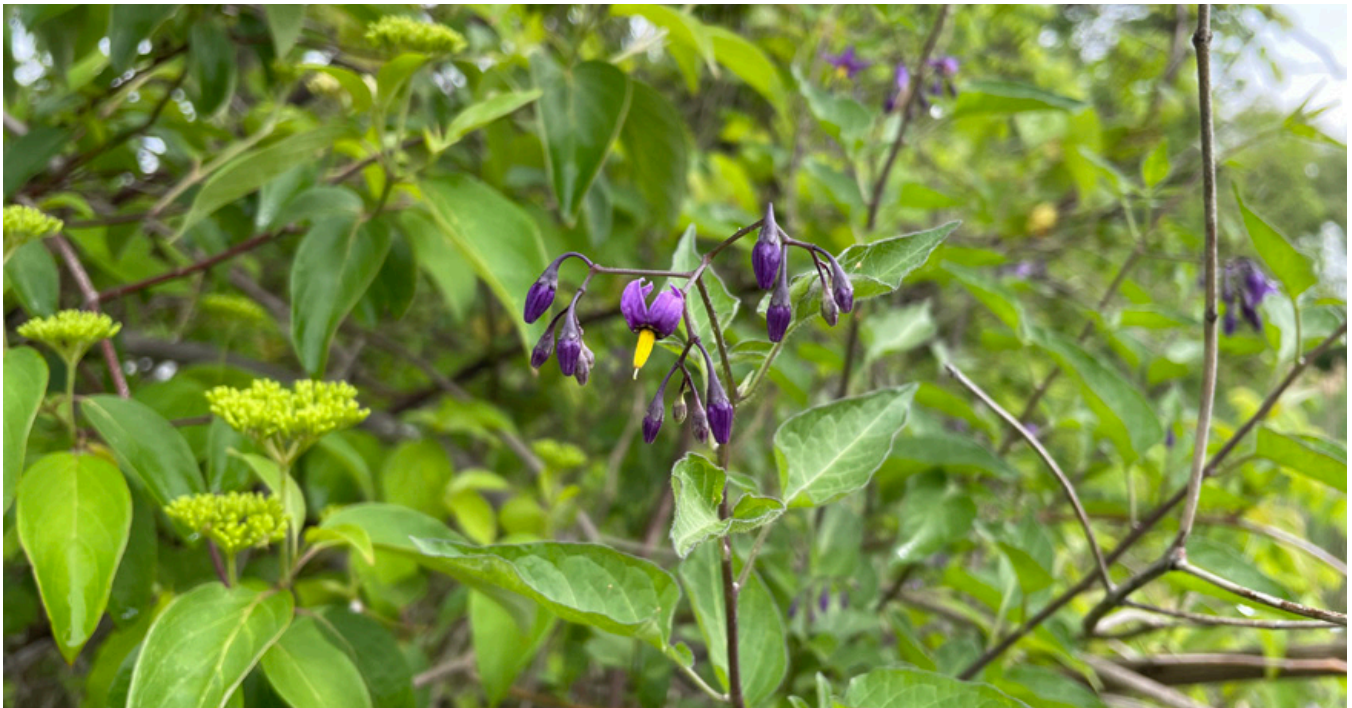
We were on wildflower patrol – Ragged-Robin (top). Parachuters were a common sight – the tiny dot on the upper left of this flowering Tulip Tree.  
*Photos: Nicholas Martin*



---

# JUNE

---



Observing a group of Canada Geese flying over Majestic Park (top). The eye-catching purple flowers of Bittersweet Nightshade (bottom).

*Photos: Alexandra Lotero Vanderkam*





---

## Turtle I

Wet and still, shell shines  
in harsh morning sun. Wetlands' edge,  
half-dappled shade: home!

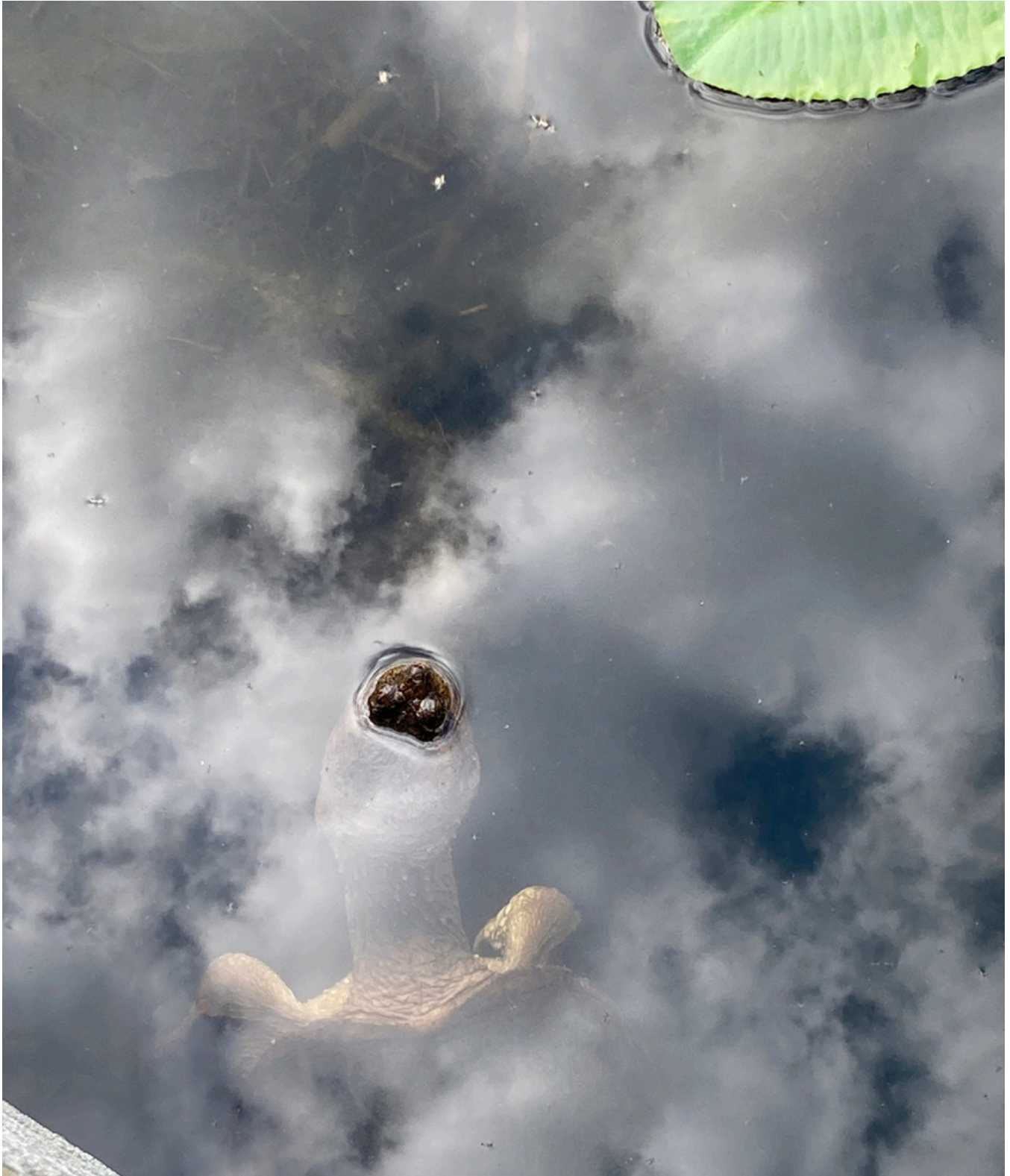
Iris Marie Bloom



As temperatures warmed, we saw Painted Turtles sunning themselves (top).  
We discovered this Snapping Turtle the following week (bottom).

*Photos: Nicholas Martin*





The Snapping Turtle did not seem to mind our quiet presence and allowed us to capture many photos of it, while we were in awe of it.

*Photo: Nicholas Martin*



---

# JUNE

---



We were excited to find this berme covered with Common Milkweed in Majestic Park (top). A closer look at the sweetly-scented flowers (bottom).  
*Photos: Alexandra Lotero Vanderkam (top), Nicholas Martin (bottom)*



# JULY



The view into Majestic Park (top). Recently fledged Barn Swallows on the barn light (bottom right) and an adult coming in to feed them (bottom left).  
*Photos: Nicholas Martin (top & bottom right), Alexandra Lotero Vanderkam (bottom left)*





---

## Wetlands

Heron rises. Slow  
blue wingbeats carry his low,  
ancient call. We hush.

Iris Marie Bloom

One of the many times we observed a Great Blue Heron. This is the first time we observed one of them, this was an immature bird, perched on a fence.

*Photo: Nicholas Martin*



---

# AUGUST

---



The view into Majestic Park, with species of knapweed blooming in the foreground (top). A surprise sighting of a Northern Watersnake (bottom).  
*Photos: Alexandra Lotero Vanderkam*





---

## Our Flock

Goldfinch dives and flits  
while we flock, dew-wet boots soaked,  
entranced: autumn joy.

## Robin Momma

“She’s got nestlings!” One  
by one, binoculars point:  
“Oh! hungry babies!”

Iris Marie Bloom

The palette of Majestic Park changes throughout the season and as late summer started to approach, the fields became golden with Goldenrod.  
*Photo: Nicholas Martin*





We'd stop by the milkweed patch occasionally – a Large Milkweed Bug on a milkweed leaf (top). A puffball mushroom we found (bottom).

*Photos: Nicholas Martin*





Nicholas wandering into Majestic Park and a daytime moon (top). Can you find the Painted Turtle head poking above the water surface (bottom)?  
*Photos: Alexandra Lotero Vanderkam (top), Nicholas Martin (bottom)*





On dewy mornings, the spider webs and funnels (top) became visible to our human eyes. The beautiful fall-blooming New England Aster (bottom).

*Photos: Nicholas Martin*





Some dreary mornings brought some of our memorable outings. On this morning, a Northern Mockingbird came in close and gave us a great view.

*Photo: Nicholas Martin*





As fall continued to march on, we were serenaded with the sound of Fall Field Crickets (top) and chipmunks filled their cheeks (bottom).

*Photos: Nicholas Martin*





Charlie admiring the view and foliage in Majestic Park and beyond (top).  
Fall also brought us lots of Yellow-rumped Warblers (bottom)!

*Photos: Nicholas Martin*





“I thought this was a costume party!” (top) One of many American Robins foraging on the crabapples near the Library entrance (bottom).  
*Photos: Alexandra Lotero Vanderkam (top), Nicholas Martin (bottom)*





An American Robin in the morning sunlight (top). A Cedar Waxwing perched and fanning its tail (bottom), which looks like it is dipped in paint.  
*Photos: Nicholas Martin*





The view into Majestic Park and towards the Shawangunk Mountains, with our long shadows in the foreground, on a beautiful October morning.  
*Photo: Nicholas Martin*





The Gardiner Library was also dressed for the occasion, dressed up and celebrating Halloween as the Haunted Library.

*Photo: Nicholas Martin*



# MEMORIES & REFLECTIONS

---



While most the participants were adults, a few children attended. Lucy was the youngest participant and has shared this art inspired by the walks.  
*Artwork: Lucy*



# MEMORIES & REFLECTIONS

---

Walking through the field up to the lake, and seeing a shorebird. I asked, “Nick what is that shorebird?” To which he excitedly replied, “That’s a Green Heron!”

Seeing a Palm Warbler during spring migration in a corner between the pond and woods that became the “magic corner.”

Going down to the stream to catch a glimpse of a Scarlet Tanager.

Discovering nests (Eastern Wood-Pewee, Warbling Vireo, American Robin, Red-Winged Blackbird.)

Watching fledglings get fed, especially when we saw the Barn Swallows on the lamp above the barn door getting fed, and then saw one swoop down to meet its parent and get fed in midair about 5 feet away from us at eye level... wow!

Learning the sounds of the birds.. the “pew pew” of the Northern Flicker, the “sweet sweet” of the Yellow Warbler, the “witchity wichity” of the Common Yellowthroat... and so much more!

Seeing Cedar Waxwings pass berries to each other near the pond, and during fall migration seeing about 40 Cedar Waxwings along the Rail Trail.

## Alex

Spotting the Warbling Vireo nest.

Seeing the Green Heron

All those Cedar Waxwings above the Rail Trail.

How happy Alex always was coming home from the bird walk!

## Dan

Finding a Canada Warbler singing right outside of the Library’s front door before everyone arrived one spring morning.

Dan finding the nest of the Warbling Vireo and checking back on her status on following outings.

Watching how fiercely the Warbling Vireo would guard her nest – despite her diminutive size – from birds, like a Common Grackle, just flying by.

Finding the nest of the Eastern Wood-Pewee. Prior to this series, I don’t know if I had ever seen a Pewee and I definitely had not seen a Pewee nest!

Seeing Field Sparrows a few times in late summer and early fall, after hearing them singing for months.

Seeing a Brown Thrasher so often!

Observing a small warbler fallout on the Rail Trail, very close to the library, with many species of warblers. This included an American Redstart that gave us a flash of its tail.

Seeing so many Yellow-rumped Warblers (“butterbutts”) during fall migration.

Seeing a Great Blue Heron perched on the top of a tree – from a distance it looked like a bare branch.

Discovering what wildflowers bloom in the little patch that we routinely walked through, such as Wild Bergemot and Swamp Milkweed.

## Nicholas

I appreciate the comradery of inquisitive and kind people scheduled at least once a week from May-October.

## Joan





The red barn and view from Majestic Park, through the seasons: early April, late April, July, September, and October.

*Photos: Nicholas Martin*