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## New Volunteers Join

### For The Birds!

Staff Report

Thanks to the dedicated recruitment efforts of Lynn Tiede, Regan Clover, the New York City Audubon Society and last year's continuing volunteers—Virginia Carter, Erin Gray, Wendy Paulson, and Virginia K. Stowe—at least a half a dozen new volunteers will be joining Audubon New York's innovative urban education program as it expands to new schools. A warm welcome and heartfelt "thank you" to Margaret Ballester, Sally Brooks, Sybil Costello, Trish Doherty, Dale Gregory, Wendy Harrison, Eileen Newman, Arleen O'Brien, and Yael Seligman; without whom, *For The Birds!* could not succeed.

# Audubon New York Welcomes New Educator and Assistant Warden

By Staff Report

Audubon New York welcomes Larry Federman as assistant warden educator for Rheinstrom Hill, Buttercup Farm, and RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuaries. Federman comes to Audubon New York with many years as a volunteer with the Northern Catskills Audubon chapter where he served as president, newsletter editor, program chair, field trip coordinator and leader, Audubon Adventures trip leader, and Audubon Council representative. Federman has strong ties to his community, serving on various committees and working closely with the Catskill Central School District. He has worked as a substitute teacher and as a PTA president. As a professional musician he traveled extensively which afforded him opportunities to view and appreciate nature across the country, yet he always returned to the Hudson Valley, his home for over 25 years.

Working closely with Dave Wheeler, the Sanctuaries' warden, Federman's responsibilities also include maintenance and upkeep at the three sanctuaries. Environmental education is one of the most important keys to maintaining and furthering an appreciation of birds, wildlife, and their habitats, and in instilling a commitment to conservation, declares Federman. In partnership with Audubon New York's education department and sister Audubon Centers, Federman will develop and implement education programs specific to all three Audubon sanctuaries.



Larry Federman

## Central Park Ramble with David Sibley

By Arleen O'Brien

On a lovely spring day, twenty birders not only experienced the pleasure of ambling through the park, but we did so under the tutelage of master birder and avian artist, David Allen Sibley. Before he began what would be a delightful exploration of The Ramble, a section of New York's Central Park, we enjoyed the tranquil setting below Belvedere Castle. We certainly couldn't have dreamed of a finer morning. A warm, golden light bathed the Great Lawn and painted Turtle Pond luminescent, and a Great Egret stalked the reedy edges while parent mallards swam to the pier with their six ducklings in tow.

No formal speech signaled the start but instead it was initiated with a quiet lifting of binoculars and Sibley pointing to a darling male Common Yellowthroat in a tree rising past the castle wall. After a few moments of closely observing the masked bandit, he turned to admire three Chimney Swifts twittering high above Turtle Pond. With that promising start, we gladly followed him and descended into the woods.

It didn't matter that Sibley doesn't have an intimate knowledge of the park's layout. With such



KIMBERLY L. RAM

Renowned author and illustrator,  
David Allen Sibley

gifted ears, he doesn't have to. He simply followed the springtime songs that rang through the woods. No sooner had we entered The Ramble, did we hear the flutelike aria of a Wood Thrush. While we searched for the elusive singer, we found another surprise, a handsome Veery half hidden behind young, green shoots. Just past the thrush, we raised our binoculars in great anticipation when Sibley noted the distant buzzy songs of Northern Parulas, one to our left, the other to our right. Then quickening our pulses, Black-Throated Green and Black-Throated Blue Warblers and American Redstarts added their songs to the mix. For some, the songs were new. For others, the sounds were endearingly familiar, but that didn't make it any easier to find them. "Warbler neck" quickly became a hot topic as we tried to first spot the birds then follow them as they flitted amidst the treetops. Many of us were successful while a few sighed, but not too sadly, as they said the woods were so pretty in the early morning light.

I think most of the participants would agree that the morning's highlights occurred along a stream that

crosses beneath a small wooden bridge. Splish-splashing in the water were White-Throated Sparrows, Yellow-Rumped Warblers, and a stunningly bright American Redstart. Across the way, a darling Ovenbird and another Veery scuttled in the leaf litter. A Black-and-White Warbler twirled its way down the trunk of a tree. And overhead, a Chestnut-Sided Warbler delighted us as he kept telling Sibley he was so "pleased, pleased to meet 'cha."

It was at this location too where we saw our first eastern "Napkin Robin." Yes, you read that correctly. At one point, Sibley smiled and pointed to an American Robin with a napkin in his beak. The way the long, clean napkin hung along its body, the robin looked more like a fastidious diner than a bird in pursuit of nesting material. I quipped that it was a subspecies, an eastern form, while another told Sibley it would make a great illustration for his next book.

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Arlene O'Brien,  
volunteer  
teacher in  
*For The Birds!*  
program.