

PATAGONIA PICNIC IN MONTAUK

—or—

HOW WE ALL GO BIRDING

Compiled by Patricia J. Lindsay, with contributions from Seth Ausubel, Andy Baldelli, Vicki Bustamante, Doug Futuyama, Doug Gochfeld, Shai Mitra, Bryan Pfeiffer, Sean Sime, and Angus Wilson

The Patagonia Picnic Table Effect is a birding phenomenon named for a famous hotspot in southeast Arizona. As the Rose-throated Becards there drew more and more birders to the area, additional rarities and birds of interest continued to be discovered, attracting even more birders and resulting in even more discoveries. This same "Effect" played out in our own corner of the country this past fall and winter, in Montauk and surrounds, at the eastern tip of Long Island. The telling of how events unfolded is entertaining and instructive, and, perhaps most interesting, provides a glimpse into the motivations, expectations, and techniques of the many birders whose discoveries fill The Kingbird's Regional Reports each season. The narratives presented here are more than a chronicle of ornithological events; they are also the story of how many of us approach our hobby in these early years of the 21st Century.

13 October, West Lake Drive Patricia J. Lindsay, Bay Shore

Woven throughout last fall's run of rarities in Montauk were some longstanding personal relationships forged on the venerable Montauk Christmas Bird Count. When Andy Baldelli was cruising around Montauk on 13 October, he poked up West Lake Drive not only "to see if anything interesting is around," as he likes to say, but also out of longtime habit: this was his former CBC territory, and, although he had not covered it formally in years, he knew its hotspots intimately. His intuition paid off when he found a yellow-bellied kingbird flycatching from a fence line along the road, gave it a quick look, and drove off, happy to have found the *Tyrannus* he hoped for—even expected—at this date and place. But something tickled his brain, something didn't quite add up to Western Kingbird. This bird had an obviously deep gray breast and a contrasting white malar...and he hadn't seen white in the outer tail. He turned around and went back to study it more carefully. Realizing he had something really special, he got on the cell phone and dialed one of his former colleagues from the old Lake West CBC party, Shai Mitra.

Shai and I were at the Fire Island Hawkwatch, meanwhile, enjoying a fine morning of birding, when the phone rang. Andy's voice came through for a few seconds before the call was unceremoniously dropped. This happened a few more times, his voice vanishing abruptly into the ether, but not before we heard "...kingbird...not a Western...West Lake Drive." Despairing of Montauk's mysterious no-cell zone for the moment, we decided we'd better just get out there as fast as we could. We informed the birders at the watch, called the

regulars patrolling the beach, and took off. Eventually we got more details from Andy, who, while unsure of the exact identification at this point, knew that it was no Western Kingbird—and was therefore likely a bird never before recorded in New York.

That evening, as the three of us celebrated New York's first Cassin's Kingbird at a pub in Hampton Bays, Andy called Paul Buckley and Tony Lauro, whose company we had missed that day—long-time mentors of all three of us, and, perhaps not by coincidence, fellow alumni of the Lake West CBC party.

30 October, Rusty's Horse Farm Vicki Bustamante, Montauk

As it started out, October 30th was no different than any other typical 'squeeze in some birding before work' day for me. After my teenage sons left for school I hopped into my pick-up and headed out to check some of my usual birding haunts—Little Reed, Gin Beach, then out to the Montauk Lighthouse. Coming down the hill on my return from the lighthouse I could see below in Rusty's field, on the south side of Deep Hollow, a flock of about 250 Canada Geese. As I hadn't seen anything interesting that morning to slow me down, I still had some time, so I pulled off the highway and turned around in the well-worn dirt tracks on the roadside (presumably created by me and other birders, gulp!).

I parked alongside the north end of the field parallel to Old Montauk Highway. While setting up the scope I had this odd sense, and said to myself "there's a Barnacle Goose out there." I don't have any idea what made me think *Barnacle* of all the other geese I could have fancied. What made me think that random thought? Dismissing it as folly, I proceeded to methodically pan though the flock of Canada Geese. And then, slowly coming into the frame, it revealed itself. There it was, a Barnacle Goose!

"No way", I thought; I was seeing things—not so much because of the shock of seeing a Barnacle Goose, but because I had just predicted it! I had to take out the Sibley guide to be sure of what I was seeing. In Europe I've seen plenty of Barnacle Geese, but never in North America! Excitedly, I called Hugh McGuinness (interrupting him, no doubt, in class) and told him about my find and my strange prophecy.

Often at the outset of a day of birding with my friends, Karen and Barbara Rubinstein, just for fun I'll say something far-fetched like "Okay, let's go find a Painted Bunting!" It makes us giggle at the impossible challenge. But this was *different*, and I wonder if it has happened to other birders.

18 November, Deep Hollow Ranch Shai Mitra, Bay Shore

Active birders know from experience that extra scrutiny directed toward one rare bird often yields another, and that the process sometimes plays out in several iterations. Pat Lindsay's and my experiences on 18 November took this theme to a comical extreme. We actually mentioned "the Effect" early in the morning, when we found a Chat while twitching a previously reported Cattle Egret in Water Mill. Although a Chat is always very nice, I'm starting to wonder whether the egret was perhaps too obliging. Ditto for the Whistling Swans in East Hampton—but not for Vicki Bustamante's Barnacle Goose at Deep

Hollow, Montauk. This bird evaded our efforts to find it long enough to prompt a goose by goose examination of the entire neighborhood. During this search, my binoculars fell upon a Pink-footed Goose. This was of course very exciting, but the goose promptly disappeared from view, intensifying our excitement in a rather unpleasant way. While trying to relocate the Pink-foot, Pat found a Western-type kingbird, which also immediately disappeared. This engendered even more unpleasant excitement, as we were intensely aware that we needed to rule out Cassin's Kingbird, an example of which had been present recently just a couple of miles from where we were standing. A forced march to find additional vantages ensued. From the very most remote of these, I scoped the pasture and found an Ash-throated Flycatcher! Beyond anything resembling composure, I am reported to have said, "Pat, it would be very improbable to find an Ash-throat and a Western Kingbird at the same place and the same time." (For the record, she did not waver and ultimately was the first to re-find and positively identify the Western Kingbird.) It goes without saying that the Ash-throat quickly disappeared also, prompting a forced retreat back to our original vantages. Shocked, oxygen-deprived, and over-heated, I called in reinforcements. Gail Benson and Hugh McGuinness were relatively merciful in the sport they later made of these calls. It helped that all three birds cooperated. We eventually saw the Barnacle Goose, too, but it seems fortunate that we had such difficulty doing so at first.

22 November, Deep Hollow Ranch Sean Sime, Maplewood, NJ

Recalling my run for the Pink-footed Goose and other Montauk specialties is quite easy. Barring the Southern Nassau CBC it was the last time I went birding in 2007.

From an avian standpoint 2007 could not have been any more different than 2006 for me. A new home in NJ (no comment), an expecting wife and an extended stay at the in-laws during an extended period of home renovation decimated my roughly 100 trips in 2006 to a paltry six in '07. So, under the guise of, "It's a holiday and I can't disturb the new neighbors with power tools" I made my Thanksgiving plan.

First hurdle was getting out of the house at the in-laws. I wanted to be in Montauk at first light so at 3:30 I was packed and heading for the door. I quickly encountered problem number one. The alarm was on. This just as quickly brought up problem number one, subset A. I didn't know the code. So after waking up my pregnant wife (I know, I know, I'm a horrible person), I was on my way.

It was still dark as I was pulling into Montauk so I parked in the overlook just past the ranch and waited for the sun to come up. In the many birding trips I've begun in the predawn hours, I always wonder aloud what the first bird of the day will be. Guessing Mourning Dove is like betting red or black in craps. My dormant intuition had me playing it safe. I laughed to myself when the first bird of the day was a Woodcock slowly lumbering over my car silhouetted against the gray sky. Next were a pair of Woodcock chasing each other over the parking

lot. Over the next half hour four additional sightings of single birds flying from north to south had me completely puzzled as to how many Woodcock there really were.

The sun hadn't broken the horizon yet, but the increase in activity and my coffee (which resembled a five gallon pail more than a cup) had me ready to move. First to the fields south of the highway. No geese. Next, I walked the trail on the eastern edge of the horse farm. No geese. I'm not saying no rare geese, I mean not a single goose. I ran down the paranoia checklist; What were the winds last night? Was it hunting season in Montauk? Were the stable hands running dogs like golf courses? Did I just suck?

I was temporarily distracted by a Clay-colored Sparrow I found in the small corral at the head of the trail. My find had me hiking up into Teddy Roosevelt Park with renewed vigor. Alas, twelve Canada Geese! No Barnacle, no Pink-footed, no Western Kingbird, no Ash-throated Flycatcher. A distant group of finches, which had me brazenly expecting the recently reported Red Crossbills (first found by Ken and Sue Feustel 19 November), flew in and landed on the wires above me, showing their true House Finch colors. As an aside, I never thought of the House Finch song to have a "mocking" quality. I could have sworn in between all the bubbly ramblings that morning there was a distinct "Hah hah!"

Back I went to hike the trail once more. Bad feelings aside, it was still only 7:30 in the morning. The trail was bit brighter but the results were the same. On my way back towards the car for a coffee cure-all, the wind began to pick up. I kept on thinking I was hearing geese behind me, only to turn around and hear nothing but wind. This went on for a hundred yards or so until I was convinced I was having auditory hallucinations. I continued on, refusing to turn around again until the noise was growing so loud I couldn't resist.

I don't know if it was the 100-to-6 trip swing I mentioned earlier or if the next moments were actually as great as they seemed. I was in a low section of the trail looking north up a large hill. There were still no geese, but the sounds were growing louder and louder. I kept thinking, I should see them by now, it's so loud, until finally the first group of geese crested the hill. A few dozen were quickly followed by dozens more, then even more. The cavalry had arrived! I scanned the flying birds as quickly as I could without luck, but distinctly remember such a feeling of possibility. They COULD be in there. It's the same feeling I had when I was twelve and learned Wood Ducks can be found in wintering groups of Mallards and found my first one in a small creek near my house. I guess "possibility" is the core of why we search. It's comforting to know that 23 years later it still feels as good.

The majority of the geese flew south across Montauk highway so I hustled out to scan. Some more cars had shown up and I got a few people on the Clay-colored while I "coffee'd up." I estimated about 250-300 geese in the south field. Two scope scans produced nothing. On the third the Barnacle Goose was front and center. Patience paid off. Another umpteen scans didn't turn up the Pink-footed. Patience is overrated. Back to the car.

I ran into Seth Ausabel, Isaac Grant and another fellow whose name escapes me (but whose disdain for rarity sightings being kept quiet I can still hear today). I remember him being terribly upset more people didn't get to see an Anna's Hummingbird frequenting a private residence upstate.

Did I mention listing is a cancer?

We decided to play the odds, exchange cell numbers and split up. Seth and the others were going to check an area nearby and I would stay put. I cringe thinking back to the days when a sighting was only learned about at the end of the day when somebody called you on the land line. What seemed like moments later the phone rang. "We got the bird!" Off I went. The Pink-footed Goose was feeding with maybe 75 geese within a private community, but visible from a public road outside the gate. The views were distant, but good. Not five minutes later the geese looked up at the sky, craned their necks in unison, froze, then took off towards the north end of the ranch.

The four of us decided to try our luck from Teddy Roosevelt again. We found a vantage point which allowed views of a second feeding station and pond. The Pink-footed was leisurely strolling about, albeit 200 yards away. I quickly noticed a bird flycatching near the geese. It was briefly out of view, but then came up on a fencepost. My binocular view suggested Western Kingbird. Seth's scope view confirmed it. While Seth was calling others on his phone I noticed a second flycatcher as Isaac was simultaneously commenting he was hearing crossbills.

I'm thinking clean sweep at this point. Ahh the possibilities! Only problem was the second flycatcher looked like another Western Kingbird. Only one had been reported from the area, but once again Seth's scope confirmed what my binoculars suggested. I can't remember who visually confirmed the Red Crossbills, but at this point we were all hearing them and eventually enjoyed scope views of many birds to our north.

Euphoria eased into contentment and as the caffeine wore off contentment came to rest as a big sigh of relief.

I spent the drive back to New Jersey in horrible traffic. The only time I smiled was when I wondered how miserable I would have been if I didn't see any of the rarities. Alas, after a long, great day of looking at birds there really is nothing like eating one. I trudged through the door at the in-laws to a beautiful turkey waiting for me.

I have many things to be thankful for; a healthy baby girl (are there age restrictions for NYSARC reports?), a loving family, not to mention a wonderful network of birding friends, but on that Thanksgiving I was most thankful for one thing. I didn't miss it.

23 November, Montauk to Mecox Doug Gochfeld, Brooklyn

After seeing the Barnacle Goose in Rusty's field and the Clay-colored Sparrow on the path at the Deep Hollow Ranch, Shane Blodgett and Doug Gochfeld

connected with the Pink-footed Goose, 45-50 Red Crossbills, 46 American Pipits, and several Horned Larks at Teddy Roosevelt County Park. Then it was on to Montauk Point, where there were more surprises in store.

As soon as we pulled into the parking lot at the Point we ran into a couple of birders looking at, of all things, an Ovenbird, one of the most unexpected birds of the day, in the same shrubs as an immature White-crowned Sparrow. Satisfied, we went to scope the point. There was a single Brant, most notable as our fourth goose species of the day. Shawn and Mike were already there and they had a first cycle Iceland Gull, already ID'd, sitting on the rocks right in front of the concession stand. They also called a flyby Common Redpoll that we may have overlooked without their help. Satisfied we went back to the Ranch where it was round three in our quest for the Ash-throated. It had been seen ten minutes before we got there, but round three would turn out just as the other two tries, and Ash-throated would be our only disappointing miss of the day. We then worked back to the west making three stops before we ran out of steam (a.k.a. light).

At Hook Pond, we found the two previously reported Tundra Swans. Scoping Sagaponack Pond, with the wind whipping directly in our faces, we managed to find some Bonaparte's Gulls, and Shane picked out a very late Lesser Yellowlegs. Then as we scoped the ocean (picking up the usuals), I noticed two passerines whiz by east-to-west, but was sluggish in calling them out until they were already past us and zipping to the west. I called out swallows, but they were gone very fast, and Shane was never able to get on them. Disappointed at missing good looks at two potential Cave Swallows, we packed it in and headed over to Mecox Bay, hoping for a good gull or maybe some more swallows.

Within two minutes of scoping directly east down the beach for swallows (and while I had briefly turned to the northwest to survey the pond itself) Shane yelled that there were swallows right there. Four swallows buzzed me, almost hitting me, but again neither of us got any definitive looks at them, except that they reminded us of Tree Swallows, if anything.

We redoubled our vigilance, and were very soon rewarded with a distant swallow coming towards us from the east. We ID'd it as a Cave Swallow, and as it drew adjacent to us it got blown directly out to the south, so far out over the ocean that we lost sight of it, before I yelled "it's right here!" It wasn't the same bird of course, but it sure was a Cave Swallow. I got excellent looks as the bird appeared right in front of us to the east, but instead of continuing it went back over the dunes to the east where it zipped back and forth a couple of times, almost landing, before continuing east where it glanced off the window of a house on the dunes and we lost sight of it. I got exceptional looks at this life bird, and couldn't have been happier with every single field mark.

We ended up with five views of Cave Swallow, which constituted four or five different birds. Hugh McGuinness showed up for a brief time, and got a

look at the fourth bird, before it too disappeared out of sight over the ocean.

An amazing (and exhausting) day out east!

**23 November, Hither Hills State Park & 24 November, Montauk Dump
Angus Wilson, New York City and Springs, East Hampton**

While most visiting birders were content with the avian riches in the Deep Hollow valley, Rita's horse farm and Montauk Point, I couldn't help thinking that additional rarities might lurk in the other areas of good habitat on the eastern tip of the South Fork. Here are two brief vignettes from one weekend that bring home this point.

Throughout the season, I'd been popping into the parking lot above the campgrounds at Hither Hills State Park just west of Montauk, a raised vantage point that offers good views along the beach towards Napeague, the sandy isthmus that separates Montauk from the rest of Long Island. This accessible area has scattered vegetation that often holds migrant landbirds. On the morning of 23 November I was greeted by clear blue skies and a steady northwest wind that had been pushing throughout the night. Ideal conditions, I thought, to sweep migrants across the Sound onto the eastern end of Long Island. Some newly arrived American Tree Sparrows and Snow Buntings were scratching around the abandoned camp sites and a huge congregation of Northern Gannets and Laughing Gulls were feeding over schooling fish.

As I walked over the narrow dune onto the beach to watch the frenzy, I noticed a small bird flitting towards me down the beach. After a moment of puzzlement, I realized this was a tiny swallow and immediately snapped my binoculars onto it. I could see that the throat was brick red as was the forehead, with a dark band separating the two like a miniature mask of Zorro. As the swallow sped past, I also noted the dark back, square rump patch of a similar color to the throat and the short, squared tail - CAVE SWALLOW! As the bird headed west down the dunes, I dialed Hugh McGuinness who picked up almost instantly. "OK, what have you got?" he asked knowingly. It was gratifying to learn that later that day, he and others were to see several Cave Swallows at Mecox, 18.5 miles to the southwest. No doubt these were part of the same incursion but unfortunately, disappeared as quickly as they had arrived.

The next day, I repeated my tour of potential migrant traps en route to Deep Hollow, this time checking the former Montauk town dump. The landfill has been capped and is covered by waist high grass, but it offers a magnificent view across Block Island Sound and has a rich history as a vagrant trap. After only a few minutes walking through the grass, I heard an unfamiliar "Widit" call and looked up to see a Western Kingbird fly over my head and perch briefly on the boundary fence. Ah ha! Vindication! With two in Deep Hollow and a third I had spotted hawking insects in the yard of the Ranger Housing at Montauk Point, it seemed reasonable to count this as a remarkable fourth Western Kingbird in Montauk.

24 November, Rita's Horse Farm Seth Ausubel, Queens

2007 was an amazing year for New York State birders, and the long Thanksgiving weekend was quite a time at Montauk. On Thanksgiving Day, I saw most of the rarities at Deep Hollow Ranch, including the Pink-footed Goose, Barnacle Goose, two Western Kingbirds, Clay-colored Sparrow, and 30 Red Crossbills. But the Ash-throated Flycatcher had eluded me. On Saturday 24 November, I was urged east again by my friend Gene Herskovics.

Despite a cold north wind that morning, the geese and crossbills were most obliging at Deep Hollow. But the Ash-throated Flycatcher was not to be seen. Late in the morning, the wind was still blowing strong, but the sun's warmth was noticeable. I was inspired to try the next corral to the west, Rita's Stables. This spot, about a mile from Deep Hollow Ranch, has all the right qualities for those western rarities on a windy November day: a large corral sheltered by thick brush and with a southern exposure, a long fence line, and a pond. The livestock provides great fodder for insects, and thus flycatchers.

It's a short walk to the corral area, and within a minute, I spotted a flycatcher along the western fence line. Before I could get my binoculars up, it flew across the corral to the north and disappeared into the brush. Gene noticed it too, and we both shouted "Ash-throated!?" But we had to get a better look to eliminate Eastern Phoebe and other *Myiarchus* species (yeah, right).

The local stallion had the afternoon out of the barn. As we noticed him, it was clear that he had already noticed us. He seemed a bit proud and ornery. We walked around the back of the corral, outside the fence. The fence was flimsy, indeed. I wondered aloud whether the thin wires along the top were live. Bravely, we pushed on.

Suddenly, the stallion whinnied. He snorted and stomped! His nostrils flared! He charged toward us at full gallop! His eyes glared, seeming to be on fire! At about 20 yards, he suddenly stopped. I looked into his black eye. He snorted again. Then he turned around, and started munching contentedly on some hay. I'm sure our excellent birder etiquette saved us.

Anyway, we quickly located and got good looks at the Ash-throated Flycatcher. The bird stayed for a week or more. We got out of there before the stallion finished his hay.

3 December, Startop Estates Douglas J. Futuyma, Stony Brook

Fellow Long Island birder Doug Futuyma had been following these events vicariously while birding in southern Chile. Reading his email, he wondered at first if some of the subject lines were meant specifically for him as he birded the original Patagonia! When he finally got back and made his way out to Montauk, he added a chapter of his own to the legacy of "the Effect."

On the pleasantly overcast, mild morning of December 3, 2007, a Monday, I arrived at Deep Hollow Ranch at 8:30 in search of the rarities that had been reported, especially the Pink-footed Goose, a species I had not seen in New York. I soon located the Barnacle Goose grazing with Canada geese on the privately owned hillside at Startop Ranch, but despite hours of searching, could

not find my main quarry. At about 1:30, as the arrival of a front brought strong, cold winds from the northwest, I encountered Jimmy Woodward and Nealand Hill, visiting from Oklahoma City, at Third House in Teddy Roosevelt County Park. They had seen the Pink-footed that morning to the north of Third House, but were desperately searching for the Barnacle Goose. I told them where I had seen it hours before, and they, in turn, accompanied me to a rise from which we could see an obscured dark-headed goose close to where they had seen the Pink-footed. I guessed that it might be better visible from the hilltop in Startop Estates (it was not, in the event), so I drove there and followed a trail of trodden grass uphill, in what I thought was public (or at least not signed) property.

There I found the Barnacle Goose still in place, even as the Oklahomans arrived below, so I waved them up to join me. As they (visually) devoured the goose, a bird alighted on a railing about 70 yards away. I was astonished to see in my telescope a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, apparently an immature with an only moderately long tail. It was all I could do to turn the visitors' attention from the Barnacle Goose to a bird they can see daily in season at home, but I wanted other observers to corroborate this sighting, should the bird not be seen again. Almost as soon as they got on the bird and confirmed it, the owner of the property drove in and vehemently let us know that we were trespassing, so we reluctantly descended to the road and had a distressingly brief study of the now considerably more distant flycatcher before it disappeared behind a hedgerow (just where we had been standing!). Moments later, Vicki Bustamante, whom I had called, arrived from her nearby home, but the bird did not reappear in the next 20 minutes while we waited together from this lower vantage point. I departed with mixed feelings of elation at having spotted a notable bird (my first Scissor-tailed Flycatcher for the state) and anxiety that it might not be seen by other New York birders. Happily, Hugh McGuinness saw the flycatcher early the next morning, as did many other people through 14 December.

15 Dec, Amagansett Bryan Pfeiffer, Plainfield, Vermont

Minutes before finding a Least Flycatcher on the Mountauk Christmas Count, I was thinking about The Pig. A landmark on the count, The Pig lived in a pen near the Amagansett train station. Over the years we would often find decent birds near The Pig: Brown Thrasher, Yellow-breasted Chat, Chipping Sparrow, for example.

The Pig was gone in 2007. But a nice bird was there nevertheless: Least Flycatcher. At first only an *Empidonax* species, a better find had fluttered in my imagination. Its short primary projection was obvious. Its bill, at first glance, seemed small and narrow. Satisfied that the bird itself was satisfied, actively feeding along a hedgerow and unlikely to go anywhere, I called Hugh McGuinness and told him to stop at the car and haul along my camera gear.

Yet even before Hugh and other birders arrived, my visions of Dusky Flycatcher or a "Western" Flycatcher had faded. A better look at the bill, eye-ring, throat and other plumage made it clear this individual was a Least Flycatcher. Not a huge discovery, but I was happy nonetheless to have

contributed to the avalanche of Tyrannidae on the 2007 Montauk count. I like to think The Pig would have approved.

15 Dec, Rita's Stables Bobby Berlingeri, Elmont

Having worked the "Lake West" section of the Montauk CBC for the past few years, we've learned how to carefully manage our time and plan an itinerary to maximize productivity. Hugh McGuinness, the count compiler, mentioned to Rich Kelly, our area leader, that a relative newcomer to the area named Rich Kaskin was hoping to participate. Janice Berlingeri and I were happy to have him along for the day.

Starting at the Harbor as we always do, I was immediately impressed with Rich's seawatching ability, which equally carried over in our search for land birds. Knowing that an Ash-throated Flycatcher had been seen at Rita's Stables earlier in the season, our hope was that this bird had survived and was still lingering in the area. Certainly a long shot, but within reason with the several species of flycatchers being seen by many in Montauk this fall.

I chose to cover Rita's during the afternoon hours, knowing that the sun angle and sunny areas would then be most conducive for activity, and they were. We started where Old West Lake Drive meets with Route 27 and worked west along a path leading toward the Horse Farm. When got up to the end of the path, where one has an over-view of the farm, we all heard a soft call note coming from the hedge to our right. Rich, having lived in Texas for a time immediately recognized the call as that of an Ash-throat. It only took us seconds before we all had clear views of the bird, within about 20 feet for about 30 seconds. The bird moved north to some private residences over the next few minutes, remaining out of sight, though occasionally calling, for the next 15 minutes or so. During this period, I called both Rich Kelly and Hugh McGuinness to tell of the discovery. Hugh commented: "You just found the fifth flycatcher species of the day!" This proved to be a slight overstatement, because a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher which had been present at Deep Hollow through the previous day failed to show up on the day of the count. Still, four count-day flycatchers plus another count-week species added up to quite an accomplishment for this most memorable CBC day which many of us will never forget!

15 Dec, Deep Hollow Patricia Lindsay, Bay Shore

This year's Montauk CBC was poignant for me, because my traditional Lake East territory encompasses Deep Hollow, adding an extra personal layer to the task of seeking several of the birds described above for the records of this venerable CBC. Also, for the first time ever, Shai Mitra, my constant companion, was joining me at Lake East, after several years' absence following his years with the rival Lake West group. Over the course of a beautiful day we dutifully recorded the Pink-footed and Barnacle geese, one of the Western Kingbirds was tallied in Point South's portion of the Hollow, and other amazing finds were made, as described above. But we could not find the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher. In searching for it we found or re-found an Osprey, an Eastern Phoebe, Orange-crowned and Palm warblers, Rusty Blackbird, Red Crossbills,

and more. The compilation was rivetting as news of the day's successes and failures (mostly successes), as well as the perennial cloak and dagger intrigues of inter-party poachings, were revealed, and this unique season was concluded with an impressive tally of 135 species. Also striking was this season's sense of collective enterprise, which although always a central merit of the CBCs, was unusually rich this year—something I hope these interwoven narratives express.

