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MUCKRACE MUSINGS

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2005 Muckrace #9

Over 70 birders competed in the ninth annual Montezuma Muckrace held Friday and Saturday September 9 & 10th in the Montezuma Wetlands Complex. The 16 teams from throughout New York including two youth teams, both first time competitors, together tallied 181 species during the 24-hour event, not quite matching 2004's total of 184.

Thanks to all the participants and sponsors who helped make the 2005 Muckrace the best ever with over $1650 raised for projects at the Wetlands Complex by birders. Last year's money will be combined with money from this year to go towards a shorebird habitat project within the Montezuma Wetlands Complex.

The weather was sunny and cool with no precipitation in sight and an excellent night flight followed by heavy morning fog. Several teams mentioned seeing the first migrant warbler flocks of the fall during the day.

Pterdromas, sponsored by CLO - Information Services Department won number nine with a record breaking 144 species. Second place (143) also broke the previous record and went to the Knotcatchers sponsored by the Cornell Birding Club. Third place (136) was a tie between long time competitor the Windbirders from Rochester and Vermont and another Cornell team the Macauley Muckracers sponsored by the CLO - Macaulay Library.

The youth category was won by the Cayuga Bird Club's Downy Chicks with 67 species. The eight year old birder of Team Hummer identified 49 species in 11 hours of birding. Birders participating in the Muckrace this year saw 17 species of waterfowl, 12 species of raptors, 19 species of shorebirds, and 24 species of warbler. Warblers were evident although not abundant and once more sandhill cranes made the count. All but two teams saw the American White Pelican that has been hanging around all summer just to get on the Muckrace species list - one of four new species seen this year.

Team Highlight of the Day

WARBLERS even at Esker Brook Trail at noon.
Black-crowned night-herons gathering at the tow path.
Big warbler flocks, hawk migration on Howland Island. Close up view of an American Bittern on the wildlife drive.
Not getting lost on Howland Island!
Merlin hunting the shorebirds at Benning Marsh.
Hearing the Sora.
Saw coyotes.
Spotting the Glossy Ibis.
Realizing we hit 100+ species.
We only got lost once.
First fall flock foraging for food.
Being shown a Merlin by another team.
Drive by shootings of other Cornell teams using a supersoaker.
Watching the American White pelican cruise in on a thermal and circle down to a landing.

Muckrace #10 in '06 Come Celebrate!

Montezuma Muckrace number ten will be held on Saturday September 9, 2006, the first Saturday after Labor Day. We are planning something special to commemorate this milestone and hope you will be there to help us celebrate.

Audubon New York and the Friends of the Montezuma Wetlands Complex will again host this all day birding event.

Thanks to everyone who competed this year. We hope to see you at Muckrace #10.

The Planning Committee

Do something for wildlife, join the

FRIENDS *of the* MONTEZUMA WETLANDS COMPLEX

Final Results

Team Name	Sponsor	Total
1. Pterdromas	CLO - Information Services Department	144
2. Knotcatchers	Cornell Birding Club	143
3. Wind Birders	Unaffiliated	136
3. Muckracers	CLO - Macaulay Library	136
5. Eagles	Ecology & Environment, Inc	132
6. Real White Rumps	NYS Ornithological Society	117
7. Buffleheads	Minetor & Company	109
8. Mudhens	Cayuga Bird Club	106
9. Kestrals	Onandaga Audubon Society	104
10. Plucky Mucksters	Rock Stream Studios	96

Youth teams

1. Downy Chicks	Cayuga Bird Club	67
2. Hummers	Wild Birds Unlimited	49

Recreational teams

1. Montezuma Migrants	Unaffiliated	104
2. Coop-shins	Darby Hill Bird Observatory	100
3. Bobolinks	Eaton Birding Society	79
4. Humming Bobolinks	Unaffiliated	16

Team Lowlight of the Day

Lack of key species.
We got lost once.
Being incredibly bored by the end of the wildlife drive.
Morning fog delaying the start of our birding plan.
Lots of Canada geese
Motorcycles on the wildlife drive.
Carr chumming for crane on Carncross.
Getting stones lobbed at our car by Tim Lenz after drive by #2.
The "Great Blue Ibis," no, wait, the "Black-crowned Blue Heron"
No grackles.
The olfactory experience resulting from the encounter between our Isuzu Rodeo and a black and white striped mammal.
Too much fog - not enough birds.
Early morning drippy low light due to fog.

Thanks to all!

Many people make a successful Muckrace in addition to the planning committee, the teams and their sponsors. Thanks go to:

- John Van Niel for MCing
- Laura VanNiel, Grace and David Strong for once again helping with the finish line tally
- Jessica Morgan & Jillian Liner for the wonderful cookies and brownies this year.
- Linda & Bill Gillette for filling the feeders and opening their property to birders.
- Cornell Lab of Ornithology for birding CD's
- Audubon New York for plush singing birds
- The Lodge at Montezuma for a painted Christmas ornament, Identiflier and cards and a clock radio
- Montezuma Winery for a case of wine
- Fred Bertram for the t-shirt artwork in honor of the Cerulean Warbler
- Andrew Mackie for the creative traveling golden boot awards
- Byrne Dairy for the cool refreshing ice cream sandwiches on a hot day
- Bodine Farms for a case of just picked Paula Red apples.
- Wild Birds Unlimited at the Lab of O for fanny packs, stool, Ivory-billed Woodpecker books
- Friends of Montezuma for chips, water, juice and pop.
- Gimme coffee! for a wide selection of fine coffees.
- Friends volunteer Carol Anderson for manning the store and visitor center during the race.
- Nice & Easy/Mamma Mia for pizza to feed the entire group at the tally.
- Graphic Connection for another great job on the event t-shirts
- Green Star Co-op for lemonade and organic bananas in the Fur House
- Ithaca Bakery for two huge bags of bagels and 3 lbs of cream cheese.
- Cash donations from Nucor Steel of Auburn and Proactive Productions of Ithaca.

Thank you!

Montezuma Muckrace 2005 Checklist

- ❒ Common Loon
- ✓ Pied-billed Grebe
- ✓ Double-creasted Cormorant
- ✓ American Bittern
- ✓ Least Bittern
- ✓ Great Blue Heron
- ✓ Great Egret
- ✓ Green Heron
- ✓ Black-crowned Night-Heron
- ✓ Glossy Ibis
- ✓ Mute Swan
- ✓ Snow Goose
- ✓ Canada Goose
- ✓ Wood Duck
- ✓ Green-winged Teal
- ✓ American Black Duck
- ✓ Mallard
- ✓ Northern Pintail
- ✓ Blue-winged Teal
- ✓ Northern Shoveler
- ✓ Gadwall
- ✓ American Wigeon
- ❒ Eurasian Wigeon
- ❒ Canvasback
- ✓ Redhead
- ✓ Ring-necked Duck
- ❒ Greater Scaup
- ✓ Lesser Scaup
- ❒ Common Goldeneye
- ✓ Hooded Merganser
- ❒ Common Merganser
- ❒ Red-breasted Merganser
- ✓ Ruddy Duck

- ✓ Turkey Vulture
- ✓ Osprey
- ✓ Bald Eagle
- ✓ Northern Harrier
- ✓ Sharp-shinned Hawk
- ✓ Cooper's Hawk
- ❒ Northern Goshawk
- ☑ Red-shouldered Hawk
- ✓ Broad-winged Hawk
- ✓ Red-tailed Hawk
- ✓ American Kestrel
- ✓ Merlin
- ✓ Peregrine Falcon

- ✓ Ring-necked Pheasant
- ✓ Ruffed Grouse
- ✓ Wild Turkey
- ✓ Virginia Rail
- ✓ Sora
- ✓ Common Moorhen
- ✓ American Coot
- ✓ Sandhill Crane

- ✓ Black-bellied Plover
- ✓ American Golden-Plover
- ✓ Semipalmated Plover
- ✓ Killdeer
- ✓ Greater Yellowlegs
- ✓ Lesser Yellowlegs
- ✓ Solitary Sandpiper
- ❒ Willet
- ✓ Spotted Sandpiper
- ❒ Hudsonian Godwit
- ❒ Ruddy Turnstone
- ✓ Sanderling
- ✓ Semipalmated Sandpiper
- ❒ Western Sandpiper
- ✓ Least Sandpiper
- ✓ White-rumped Sandpiper
- ✓ Baird's Sandpiper
- ✓ Pectoral Sandpiper
- ❒ Dunlin
- ✓ Stilt Sandpiper
- ❒ Buff-breasted Sandpiper
- ✓ Short-billed Dowitcher
- ☑ Long-billed Dowitcher
- ✓ Wilson's Snipe
- ✓ American Woodcock
- ❒ Wilson's Phalarope

- ❒ Bonaparte's Gull
- ✓ Ring-billed Gull
- ✓ Herring Gull
- ❒ Lesser Black-backed Gull
- ✓ Great Black-backed Gull
- ✓ Caspian Tern
- ✓ Common Tern
- ❒ Black Tern
- ✓ Rock Pigeon
- ✓ Mourning Dove
- ✓ Black-billed Cuckoo
- ✓ Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- ✓ Eastern Screech-Owl
- ✓ Great Horned Owl
- ✓ Barred Owl
- ❒ Long-eared Owl
- ❒ Common Nighthawk
- ❒ Whip-poor-will
- ✓ Chimney Swift
- ✓ Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- ✓ Belted Kingfisher

- ❒ Red-headed Woodpecker
- ✓ Red-bellied Woodpecker
- ☑ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
- ✓ Downy Woodpecker
- ✓ Hairy Woodpecker
- ✓ Northern Flicker
- ✓ Pileated Woodpecker

- ❒ Olive-sided Flycatcher
- ✓ Eastern Wood-Pewee
- ❒ Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
- ✓ Alder Flycatcher
- ❒ Willow Flycatcher
- ✓ Least Flycatcher
- ✓ Eastern Phoebe
- ✓ Great-creasted Flycatcher
- ☑ Eastern Kingbird

- ✓ Horned Lark
- ✓ Purple Martin
- ✓ Tree Swallow
- ✓ No. Rough-winged Swallow
- ✓ Bank Swallow
- ✓ Cliff Swallow
- ✓ Barn Swallow

- ✓ Blue Jay
- ✓ American Crow
- ✓ Black-capped Chickadee
- ✓ Tufted Titmouse
- ✓ Red-breasted Nuthatch
- ✓ White-breasted Nuthatch
- ✓ Brown Creeper

- ✓ Carolina Wren
- ✓ House Wren
- ✓ Winter Wren
- ❒ Sedge Wren
- ✓ Marsh Wren
- ☑ Golden-crowned Kinglet
- ✓ Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- ✓ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

- ✓ Eastern Bluebird
- ✓ Veery
- ✓ Gray-cheeked Thrush
- ✓ Swainson's Thrush
- ✓ Hermit Thrush
- ✓ Wood Thrush
- ✓ American Robin

- ✓ Gray Catbird
- ❒ Northern Mockingbird
- ✓ Brown Thrasher
- ☑ American Pipit
- ✓ Cedar Waxwing
- ✓ European Starling

- ✓ Blue-headedVireo
- ✓ Yellow-throated Vireo
- ✓ Warbling Vireo
- ✓ Philadelphia Vireo
- ✓ Red-eyed Vireo

- ✓ Blue-winged Warbler
- ❒ Golden-winged Warbler
- ✓ Orange-crowned Warbler
- ✓ Tennessee Warbler
- ✓ Nashville Warbler
- ✓ Northern Parula
- ✓ Yellow Warbler
- ✓ Chestnut-sided Warbler
- ✓ Magnolia Warbler
- ❒ Cape May Warbler
- ✓ Black-throated Blue Warbler
- ✓ Yellow-rumped Warbler
- ✓ Black-throated Green Warbler
- ✓ Blackburnian Warbler
- ✓ Pine Warbler
- ❒ Prairie Warbler
- ✓ Palm Warbler
- ✓ Bay-breasted Warbler
- ✓ Blackpoll Warbler
- ❒ Cerulean Warbler
- ✓ Black-and-white Warbler
- ✓ American Redstart
- ✓ Ovenbird
- ☑ Northern Waterthrush
- ☑ Mourning Warbler
- ✓ Common Yellowthroat
- ❒ Hooded Warbler
- ✓ Wilson's Warbler
- ☑ Canada Warbler
- ❒ Yellow-breasted Chat

- ✓ Scarlet Tanager
- ✓ Northern Cardinal
- ✓ Rose-breasted Grosbeak
- ✓ Indigo Bunting
- ☑ Eastern Towhee
- ✓ Chipping Sparrow
- ☑ Field Sparrow
- ✓ Vesper Sparrow
- ✓ Savannah Sparrow
- ❒ Grasshopper Sparrow
- ✓ Fox Sparrow
- ❒ Nelson's S-t Sparrow
- ✓ Song Sparrow
- ✓ Lincoln Sparrow
- ✓ Swamp Sparrow
- ✓ White-throated Sparrow
- ✓ Dark-eyed Junco
- ✓ Bobolink
- ✓ Red-winged Blackbird
- ❒ Eastern Meadowlark
- ❒ Rusty Blackbird
- ✓ Common Grackle
- ✓ Brown-headed Cowbird
- ☑ Baltimore Oriole
- ✓ Purple Finch
- ✓ House Finch
- ✓ American Goldfinch
- ✓ House Sparrow

✓ species seen by two or more teams (167)

☑ species seen by single team (14)

Total Species:

____181___

10 Competitive 4 Recreational 2 Youth

New species to the list in 2005

- ☑ __Dickcissel_____
- ☑ __Am White Pelican____
- ☑ __Orchard Oriole____
- ☑ __Upland Sandpiper____

Thank you for participating in the Muckrace.

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Montezuma Winery
Wild Birds Unlimited @ CLO
Fred Bertram (artist)
Friends of Montezuma
Audubon New York
NYS Dept of Env. Cons.
US Fish & Wildlife Svcs

Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Proactive productions
Gimmee Coffee, Ithaca
Greenstar Coop, Ithaca
Ithaca Bakery
Bodine Farms, Seneca Falls
Nucor Steel, Auburn
Gillette Farms, Savannah

Planning Committee

Jillian Liner - Audubon New York
Jessica Morgan & Catherine Sandell - Friends of the Montezuma Wetlands Complex

2005 Results, Year 9

Date:	***9-10 September***
# teams entered:	***16***
# species seen:	***181***
# species for winning team:	***144***
Amount money raised:	***$1670***
Project supported:	***Shorebird habitat restoration***
Winning team:	***Pterdroma, CLO - Information Services Department***
Winning youth team:	***Downy Chicks, Cayuga Bird Club***
Most memoable team bird:	***American White Pelican***
	Lincoln Sparrow
	Yellow-billed Cuckoo
	Glossy Ibis
	American Bittern
	Caspian Tern
	Philadelphia Vireo
	Upland Sandpiper
	Ruffed Grouse trio
	Palm Warbler
	Black & White Warbler
	American Kestral migation
	Merlin hunting shorebirds
	the many warblers!
#species seen only in 2005:	***4***
# hours birded:	***6 to 24***
# warbler species recorded:	***24***

News & Notes

Earn Money for Your Group

The planning committee is considering offering Muckrace teams the opportunity to earn money for their respective sponsoring organizations. Details need to be worked out over the winter but look for more information in the spring.

New Shorebird Area

The new shorebird area at the beginning of the wildlife drive at the Montezuma refuge was filled recently and the shorebirds have responded quickly. With the drawdown of May's Pt this year and Benning Marsh the next two years, this may be the best accessible place for shorebirds.

According to refuge manager, Tom Jasikoff, a viewing area is in the works for this new area. Until then, birders need to remain in their vehicle.

There are also plans to disc May's Pt so that it should return to good shorebird habitat in 2006.