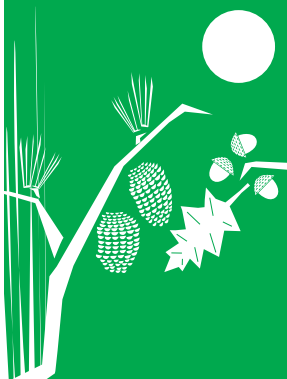


# PROTECTOR'S OF PINE OAK WOODS



STATEN ISLAND'S  
LAND CONSERVATION  
ORGANIZATION

## EVENTS SAMPLER

CONFERENCE HOUSE PARK	4/27
SPRING SEMI-ANNUAL MTG	5/5
BIG DAY BIRD COUNT	5/11
SPRING GREENBELT WALK	5/12
FOREST RESTORATION WORKSHOPS	4/20, 5/18, 6/15
BIRDING WALKS	4/24, 5/25, 6/15
MOUNT LORETTO WALK	6/8
NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AT MOUNT LORETTO	6/15, 6/29
ANNUAL BUTTERFLY COUNT	6/29

SEE MORE AT [SIPROTECTORS.ORG](https://www.siprotectors.org)

## PROTECTOR'S MISSION

Protectors of Pine Oak Woods is committed to increasing the stewardship of Staten Island's existing parkland, bluebelt corridors and nature preserves and to continuing the effort to preserve Staten Island's natural areas. Protectors advocates for protection and preservation by educating our members, the general public and elected officials at all levels of government through meetings, workshops, walks, articles, newsletters and sponsorship of environmental education.

49 YEARS KEEPING S.I. GREEN!  
1975-2024

SPRING 2024

SAVE THE DATE: SPRING MEETING, SUNDAY, MAY 5, AT BLUE HERON PARK

Protectors continues its decades' long mission with new leadership.

## PROTECTOR'S SEEKS TO PRESERVE, ENHANCE OPEN SPACE

OVER THE LAST TWELVE YEARS, Protectors of Pine Oak Woods has been led by Clifford Hagen, and we thank him for all of the excellent work he has done on behalf of our organization and Staten Island as a whole. As he transitions into a new role in our community, including being appointed to Staten Island's Community Board 3, we look forward to seeing what he accomplishes as a leader in our community.

As we look to the future of the organization and its place in Staten Island's environmental community, we see both hope and opportunity to engage in new partnerships, new projects and in new actions to bring about change in the Borough of Parks. As an organization, we will continue to push for preservation of greenspace on Staten Island, working with our members, the public, elected officials and agencies at multiple levels to ensure we receive our fair share.

In 2024, Protectors board members and members have continued to pursue projects focused on land preservation and conservation of species on Staten Island. Projects like the checklist of dragonflies of Staten Island are already underway, with results expected by the end of the year. With this project in particular, ecologist Seth Wollney and naturalist Dave Eib are using community-sourced data and their own data collected over the course of several decades to create the Dragonflies of Staten Island, a checklist of the dragonflies present on the Island throughout recorded history through the present. The checklist, like the lists of birds and butterflies published by Protectors over the last several years, is expected to be turned into a peer-reviewed publication. In our current era of human-induced climate and land-use change, inventories like the dragonfly checklist will provide a critical baseline for understanding how species are responding to these changes.

Work by our Land Preservation Committee continues to be focused on ensuring Staten Island gets a share of Environmental Bond Act funding and ensuring that environmental justice communities on the North Shore remain a priority.

As we move into spring, wildlife activity Island-wide is beginning to ramp up, with reports of river otters in their usual West Shore haunts from Anthony Ciancimino, and Bald Eagles nesting at their mid-Island and South Shore sites from numerous observers. Owl activity continues from the winter, with numerous pairs being documented Island-wide. Importantly, we urge caution in seeking out these nests, as these species are particularly sensitive to disturbance.

As always, we thank our members for their contributions and membership renewals. Obtaining membership in our organization provides our fully-volunteer board with critical funds to support environmental causes on Staten Island. For more information about membership, events, or on how you can be involved in Protectors, see our web site <https://www.siprotectors.org>.

—José Ramirez-Garofalo

## THESE ARE THE NATURAL AREAS WE ARE WORKING TO SAVE

THE 2022 ENVIRONMENTAL BOND Act to allocate \$4.2 billion for environmental projects in New York State, including but not limited to land conservation, passed easily statewide and received especially strong support from New York City voters. Land acquisition projects on Staten Island listed in the State's Open Space Conservation Plan are eligible for funding through this act. However, there is a great deal of competition for these funds from other boroughs and from municipalities and counties in other parts of the State.

Protectors of Pine Oak Woods (through founding member Ellen O'Flaherty Pratt) has played a very active role in nominating parcels for inclusion in the State's updates of the Open Space Conservation Plan for several decades now, working closely with the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the NY State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

PRESIDENT'S  
LETTER

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Recent 990s are available at [Guidestar.org](http://Guidestar.org)

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## Balancing environmental preservation with development

The population of Staten Island (and the City as a whole) is expected to grow in future years. And unprecedented development pressures will have a profound effect on the amount and quality of open space, parkland and historic preservation resources within the City.

Given these pressures, there is increased concern that, due to the rising costs of securing waterfront land, wetlands, woodlands, inner city parklands, hillsides and historic buildings for public use, potential high-priority conservation properties will be lost to development at an ever-accelerating pace. So balancing environmental protection, natural resources management and development pressures is an especially complex and delicate challenge on Staten Island and throughout New York City.

### A multi-pronged effort

Elected officials, planners and agency heads on Staten Island have all made recommendations to protect land that may be prone to damage from climate change effects such as hurricanes, floods and storm surge, as well as land that may buffer or protect other lands from these risks.

The City, through the Department of Parks and Recreation (NYCDPR) and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), has its own land acquisition program that often overlaps with and complements the State’s efforts. Staten Island’s Bluebelt projects, guided by the DEP, are especially notable.

### Land conservation principles

Funding and policy recommendations for open space conservation in the City are centered around the following eleven principles:

- Providing sufficient funding and dedicated staff positions for the management of public open spaces.
- Conserving precious natural resources, with attention to how stormwater management should affect the design, acquisition and conservation of open space.
- Developing flexible cooperative models with local nonprofit land conservation groups to manage smaller parcels, where mutually beneficial.
- Ensuring equitable distribution of open space so that denser and poorer neighborhoods are not underparked and are not vulnerable to urban heat islands.
- Connecting and augmenting already existing larger urban parks.

- Protecting historic and cultural resources.
- Facilitating land transfers from State, City and federal agencies whose purpose does not relate to land conservation.
- Sequestering carbon – our fragile shorelands sequester seven times more carbon than woodlands and eleven times more carbon than grasslands.
- Preserving and expanding the City’s tree canopy.
- Responding to climate change in a myriad of ways.
- Providing ecosystem services.

### Connecting to larger parks

Several of Staten Island’s high-priority conservation properties connect and augment existing parks. These include:

- **Arden Heights Woods**, where three mixed wetland and woodland parcels totaling about 32 acres are wedged between the City-owned portion of Arden Heights Woods and the State-owned portion of Arden Heights Woods, and could be added to the existing 183-acre nature preserve.
- **North Bloomingdale Wetlands Corridor**, where seven wetland and streambed parcels totaling over eleven acres are adjacent to the 138-acre City-owned Bloomingdale Park and could be incorporated into Bloomingdale Park.
- **Tennyson Drive**, where a 4.08-acre parcel in a coastal flood zone along Nelson Avenue and Tennyson Drive could become an expansion of Seaside Wildlife Nature Park.
- **Tappen’s Creek Bluebelt**, including eight adjacent parcels along Tappen Creek, which flows out of Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve. Some of these parcels are adjacent to DEC lands and are located on the Kill van Kull. They are located in and around Sharrotts Shorelands. These parcels total 53+ acres. They could be incorporated into Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve (a 265-acre nature preserve) or set aside as Sharrotts Shorelands. A conservation easement could be placed on part of another parcel to protect Tappen’s Creek.

### Supporting underparked neighborhoods

Some 35 to 40 percent of the funds from the Environmental Bond Act will be allocated to projects in Environmental Justice Neighborhoods. While such formally designated neighborhoods are found in most areas of New York City, those classified by the State on Staten Island are only near the North Shore. In general, these are densely



# ARE YOU A MEMBER? HAVE YOU RENEWED?

YES, I WANT TO HELP STATEN ISLAND'S FINEST REMAINING NATURAL AREAS AND SEE THE GREENBELT PROTECTED.

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- \$ 15.00...Senior Citizen
- \$ 20.00...Individual
- \$ 25.00...Family
- \$ 50.00...Contributor
- \$ 75.00...Donor
- \$100.00...Organization
- \$125.00...Supporter
- \$275.00...Patron
- \$500.00...Life Member

Check here and we will e-mail our newsletter to you as a PDF. (You'll still receive the print copy.)

Please provide your e-mail address below.

**Already a member?** Please use this form to continue to generously support Protectors' SI Natural Areas Fund, DEC Teen Camp Scholarship or other projects.

Enclosed is an additional donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Protectors' SI Natural Areas Defense Fund

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Protectors' DEC Teen Camp Scholarship

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

CAN YOUR EMPLOYER OFFER MATCHING GRANTS?

- YES, PLEASE CONTACT ME  NO

NAME (Mr./Mrs./Ms.) \_\_\_\_\_

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TELEPHONE ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone me. I want to volunteer my help: \_\_\_\_\_

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Mail to: Membership Secretary, P.O. Box 140747, Staten Island, NY 10314-0661

Questions? E-mail [membership@siprotectors.org](mailto:membership@siprotectors.org) • To join/renew/donate by PayPal, visit [siprotectors.org](http://siprotectors.org)

populated, lower income neighborhoods, often with large minority populations.

Two of our top conservation requests are located in environmental justice neighborhoods. These include:

- **Serpentine Ridge**, where numerous ecologically valuable parcels are located along the heavily wooded, steeply sloping ridge (and where many of these are clustered around the Serpentine Art and Nature Commons preserve).
- **Glossy Ibis Waterfront Park**, a 1.9-acre peninsula north of the intersection of Housman Street and Richmond Terrace, jutting into the Kill van Kull.

### Facilitating land transfers

Although the acquisition of privately held lands for the purpose of open space conservation remains critical, successes can be achieved through other means, including land transfers between public agencies and annexing new properties to already established public open space.

Many properties that are already publicly owned through federal, state and city agencies could be formally and permanently repurposed for recreational use. The relatively high-cost of land in the City makes this kind of land transfer from pub-

lic agencies an especially important mechanism for open space conservation – often entailing little or no cost for many acres.

Potential examples of this include:

- **A lot on Serpentine Ridge**, a 6.06-acre wooded, hillside parcel owned by NYC DCAS (the NYC Dept of Citywide Administrative Services) near the Serpentine Art and Nature Commons, and
- **Screech Owl Woodlands**, a 17.6-acre parcel owned by NYC Department of Sanitation, between NYS Rt. 440, Arden Avenue and Arthur Kill Road. This parcel is unused and is not adjacent to other Sanitation Department properties.

### Preserving bluebelt and shorelands

Far more buildings around the City will be considered at high risk of flooding as the Federal Emergency Management Agency updates its base flood elevation maps. New inundation and surge maps have already been initiated, changing land use discussions as the City responds to future climate change effects. As recognized by the Governor's NYS 2100 Commission, open space conservation can play an important role in mitigating these hazards and protecting people and property.

Protecting Bluebelts, wetlands and other open spaces along shorelines can be instrumental in mitigating hazards in the coastal zone. Properly designed, these public spaces can absorb floodwaters and wave impacts, can protect homes, and can reduce exposure for residents, upland property and emergency service providers. Such Bluebelts can reduce erosion while sustaining fisheries and other important ecological benefits into the future.

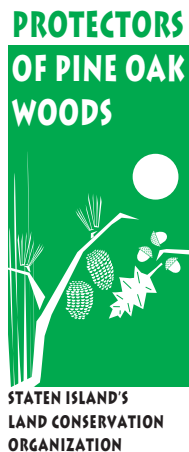
Acquisition of properties along Staten Island's rivers, harbors and coastal areas can help to mitigate the impact of storm surge and sea level rise. Therefore, three very important Bluebelt and coastal properties have been nominated for inclusion in the Open Space Conservation Plan. These are:

- **Tappen's Creek Bluebelt** (a potential expansion of Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve and Sharrotts Shorelands) where Tappen's Creek (which empties into the Arthur Kill) needs to be protected, so that it can minimize damage from storms.
- **Tennyson Drive**, the four-acre wetland buffer zone parcel next to Seaside Wildlife Nature Park, where two Staten Island residents drowned during Hurricane Sandy due to flooding, sea level

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rise and insufficient building setbacks from the shoreline.

- **Glossy Ibis Waterfront Park** along the Kill van Kull.

### **Preserving wetlands**

Three very high priority wetland properties have also been nominated for inclusion into the Open Space Conservation Plan. These are:

- **Arden Heights Woods Annex** – Three parcels totaling 32 acres would connect the State-owned portion of Arden Height Woods with the larger City-owned portion of Arden Heights Woods (a 183-acre wildlife sanctuary). These parcels are adjacent to both State (DEC) and City lands. This forested hardwood swamp is the largest wetlands that the DEC has classified anywhere in the New York metropolitan area. It contains several kettle ponds which are connected by an intricate network of streams and creeks. These wetlands provide natural flood control for the area, eliminating the need for a complicated and expensive storm water project.
- **Outerbridge Ponds** – Also known as Page Avenue Woodlands, this property consists of pine-oak barrens and sedge ponds, which are rare ecosystems in

New York City. Three wetland parcels here total about 22 acres. These parcels originally flowed naturally into Mill Creek Bluebelt and Estuary, and now flow into Mill Creek via a culvert. These wetlands are surrounded by very heavy commercial development. Development of these parcels would lead to the creation of an urban heat island and to the loss of valuable wildlife habitat, making preservation essential here.

- **North Bloomingdale Wetlands Corridor** – These seven lush wetland and streambed parcels near Sharrotts Road and Clay Pit Road connect to the 138-acre Bloomingdale Park.

### **Preserving wildlife habitat**

The Open Space Conservation Plan is also concerned with conservation of endangered, threatened and declining species. Preserving their habitat through land conservation is an essential tool in saving these species.

Endangered and threatened species in NY State that benefit from preservation of wetlands, shorelands, grasslands and woodlands include mussels, snails, butterflies, moths, frogs, turtles, sea turtles, salaman-

ders, grouse, peregrine falcons, bald eagles, piping plovers, terns, owls and bats.

Likewise there are many NY State species of special concern that could benefit from preservation of ecologically valuable parcels. These include osprey, dragonflies, southern leopard frogs, spotted turtles, wood turtles, loons, several hawk species, whip-poor-wills, red-headed woodpeckers, warblers, seaside sparrows and grasshopper sparrows.

We are optimistic that many (perhaps all) of the properties discussed above will be brought into conservation status through the new availability of funds from the Environmental Bond Act and through advocacy by our elected officials on Staten Island.

—Mark Latour,

*Land Preservation Committee Chair*

### **IT'S MEMBERSHIP DUES TIME!**

It's membership renewal time! Please take a moment to send in a check or go online to [siprotectors.org](http://siprotectors.org) and renew your memberships for 2024. The money from your membership forms the bulk of funding for the work we do and we rely on your generosity. A convenient reply envelope is enclosed. Thank you!

**SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 10:00 A.M. TO 12:00 NOON**

**Forest Restoration Workshop in the Egbertville Ravine** – We'll meet at the entrance to the White Trail at the intersection of Rockland and Meisner Road. We will follow the trail south halfway to Nevada Avenue, where we will pull, and if necessary, bag for later collection, invasive Garlic-mustard. We will also search for and remove invasive, twining vines from the trees in that area. Protectors will supply gloves, bags, and refreshments. Please register through Eventbrite.com (search for Protectors of Pine Oak Woods and select Forest Restoration Workshop from the list). For more information, call Brian Smith at (917) 842-6585 or Don Recklies at (718) 768-9036. (*Service credit is available.*)

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 8:00 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M.**

**Wolfe's Pond Park Bird Walk** – Enjoy birds from a mix of habitats at Wolfe's Pond Park during the early spring season. Anthony Ciancimino will share information on Staten Island's typical spring birds, and will discuss the different habitats that they can be found in during this time of year. Walking will take place both inside of forested areas and on the beach, so please dress appropriately, and be aware of ticks. Meet at the main parking lot by the bathrooms. For more information contact Anthony Ciancimino at [sibirdwatcher@yahoo.com](mailto:sibirdwatcher@yahoo.com).

**SATURDAY, APRIL 27, NOON TO 2:00 P.M.**

**Conference House Park** – Enjoy a springtime birding tour of Staten Island's southernmost woodland at Ward's Point. Ray Matarazzo will share bird songs and behaviors used for identifying a gathering of migrating birds which rest and replenish in the trees, shrubs and grasses of Conference House Park. Participants will meet at the Conference House Park Visitors Center at 7455 Hylan Boulevard. For more information contact Ray Matarazzo at (718) 317-7666.

**SUNDAY, MAY 5, 1:00 P.M. TO 4:00 P.M.**

**Spring Semi-annual Meeting at Blue Heron Pond Park** – Visit with members of Protectors of Pine Oak Woods to hear updates on recent activities. Additional speakers are planned, and more information will be posted on our Facebook page and web site prior to the meeting. More information will be available at <https://www.siprotectors.org/calendar-of-events>. Blue Heron Park Nature Center is located at 222 Poillon Avenue.

**SATURDAY, MAY 11, 12:01 A.M. TO 11:59 P.M.**

**Annual Big Day Bird Count** – For more than 50 years local birding enthusiasts have spread out across Staten Island in an effort to identify each and every species of bird migrating across the borough during World Migration Day. Couples, pairs and small teams strategize to cover a variety of habitats in search of a variety of wetlands, grasslands and woodlands species of birds nesting, feeding and resting as they press northward to their summer breeding grounds. Anyone with a willingness to spend time afield observing birds is welcome to participate. For more information or to join the Big Day Bird Count call Cliff Hagen at (718) 313-8591 or e-mail [chagen72@gmail.com](mailto:chagen72@gmail.com).

**SATURDAY, MAY 11, NOON TO 2:00 P.M.**

**High Rock Park with Wildflower NYC** – Join with Ray Matarazzo and the Staten Island Museum as they search High Rock Park for Staten Island's official wildflower, pinxter azalea, a local species of rhododendron. This family friendly, botanical walk offers participants an opportunity to learn about Staten Island's native wildflowers and to visit some less traveled portions of the park. All are welcome. Join us in the main lot of High Rock Park, 200 Nevada Avenue. For more information contact Ray Matarazzo at (718) 317-7666.

**SUNDAY, MAY 12, 9:15 A.M. TO 3:45 P.M.**

**Richard Buegler Spring Greenbelt Walk** – Join with Protectors of Pine Oak Woods for a hike through the spring woods of the Greenbelt. Beginning at the Greenbelt Nature Center on the corner of Rockland and Brielle Avenues (address: 700 Rockland Ave., Staten Island, NY 10314), participants will traverse the Greenbelt, walking along the Meisner Avenue Pond, Loosestrife Swamp, Heyerdahl Hill and more. We will check to see what's blooming, especially our native pinxter azalea. Bring water and lunch, wear sturdy shoes, and dress appropriately for the weather. Be sure to confirm that the walk is not canceled due to forecasted storms. To confirm a day prior please call Dominick Durso at (917) 478-7607.

**SATURDAY, MAY 18, 10:00 A.M. TO 12:00 NOON**

**Forest Restoration Workshop on the Todt Hill Blue Trail** – On "It's My Park Day" we will join with volunteers from the Parks Department to improve our park. We'll meet in the St. Francis Woodlands parking lot at the end of Helena Road (off of Todt Hill Road). From there we will follow the Blue Trail southwest to the ruined foundations where we will cut and uproot alien Devil's Walking Stick. If we can

**Important Disclaimer:** Our walks and events are suitable for adults and children accompanied by an adult. While we strive for safety, the activities of Protectors of Pine Oak Woods ("Protectors") have certain uncontrollable hazards which each participant undertakes and for which each participant is responsible. Protectors and its event leaders or substitute leaders are not responsible in any way whatsoever for any of these hazards. All participants assume the responsibility and risks of hiking and participating in Protectors events, and release Protectors, its leaders or substitute leaders, from any liability whatsoever for any loss, damage to personal property, or injury, however caused, of any kind, nature, and description. Protectors is not responsible for typographical errors or last-minute changes in the walk schedule.

get them, we will also sow some woodland aster seeds or plant seedlings. After the work session we'll return to the parking lot by way of the St. Francis Woodlands boardwalk. Protectors will supply tools, gloves, and refreshments. Please register through Eventbrite.com (search for Protectors of Pine Oak Woods and select Forest Restoration Workshop from the list). For more information call Brian Smith (917) 842-6585 or Don Recklies (718) 768-9036. (*Service Credit is available.*)

#### **SATURDAY, MAY 25, 8:00 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M.**

**Great Kills Park Bird Walk** – Enjoy the peak of shorebird migration at Great Kills Park, one of the premiere destinations for birding on Staten Island. Join Anthony Ciancimino and Protectors of Pine Oak Woods for a walk and discussion on shorebird identification, the importance of salt marshes and open beach habitats, and the history of Great Kills Park in relation to beach-nesting birds like Piping Plovers. Meet at the parking lot at the entrance of the park (Hylan Blvd. and Buffalo St.). For more information contact Anthony Ciancimino at [sibirdwatcher@yahoo.com](mailto:sibirdwatcher@yahoo.com).

#### **SATURDAY, JUNE 8, NOON TO 2:00 P.M.**

**Mount Loretto Unique Area: The Fields, Bluffs and Bay** – Few locations on Staten Island can compete with the beauty of Mount Loretto. Participants will walk the trails throughout the property exploring the meadow, wetlands systems and shoreline with naturalist Ray Matarazzo. Participants will meet in the Hylan Boulevard parking lot across from the CYO community center. For more information contact Ray Matarazzo at (718) 317-7666.

#### **SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 10:00 A.M. TO NOON**

**Forest Restoration Workshop at Blue Heron Park** – We'll meet in the Blue Heron Nature Center parking lot, 222 Poillon Avenue, then cross the street to the Meadow Loop Red Trail to Blue Heron Pond where we will pull up and pile Mile-a-minute vine that is invading the park. A plus for us, this early in the year bagging what we pull won't be necessary. We began this Mile-a-minute project in 2021, and there's enough work there for a decade (maybe more!). Protectors will supply gloves, bags, and refreshments. Please register through Eventbrite.com (search for Protectors of Pine Oak Woods and select Forest Restoration Workshop from the list). For more information call Brian Smith at (917) 842-6585, or Don Recklies at (718) 768-9036. (*Service credit is available.*)

#### **SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 8:00 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M.**

**Brookfield Park Bird Walk** – Join Anthony Ciancimino and Protectors of Pine Oak Woods for a bird walk through the grasslands and marshes of Brookfield Park. Formerly a landfill, Brookfield is now a safe, exciting, and expansive park. Expect to see and hear marsh species like Marsh Wrens and Clapper Rails, which breed along Richmond Creek. Meet in the main parking lot. For more information contact Anthony Ciancimino at [sibirdwatcher@yahoo.com](mailto:sibirdwatcher@yahoo.com).

#### **SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 9:00 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M.**

**Mount Loretto Unique Area** – If you are interested in the diminutive aspects of the natural world, if you like to delve into the rarely seen world of another spatial and temporal dimension right under our noses—than the world of macro photography—then this walk might be for you. Participants will wander about the fields and beaches of Mount Loretto with Dana Barbato looking for tiny critters and flowers to photograph while sharing photography tips. Meet in the parking lot along Hylan Boulevard across from the CYO Community Center. For more information call Dana Barbato at (718) 909-8863.

#### **SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 8:00 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M.**

**Annual Fourth of July Butterfly Count** – For nearly three decades folks from Staten Island have gathered to survey and document the populations of Staten Island butterflies. Each year data is consistently collected along a well-established route on the last Saturday of June. From Snug Harbor to Conference House, butterflies are sought and identified with totals being shared with the North American Butterfly Association. For more information or to join the count call Cliff Hagen at (718) 313-8591 or e-mail [chagen72@gmail.com](mailto:chagen72@gmail.com).

#### **SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 9:00 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M.**

**Mount Loretto Unique Area** – If you are interested in the diminutive aspects of the natural world, if you like to delve into the rarely seen world of another spatial and temporal dimension right under our noses—than the world of macro photography—then this walk might be for you. Participants will wander about the fields and beaches of Mount Loretto with Dana Barbato looking for tiny critters and flowers to photograph while sharing photography tips. Meet in the parking lot along Hylan Boulevard across from the CYO Community Center. For more information call Dana Barbato at (718) 909-8863.