

**Volunteer Vibes** - *Volunteers play many crucial roles at the Preserve. They maintain trails, welcome visitors, conduct research, educate youth groups, support special events, beautify our gardens, capture breathtaking photography, and much more, contributing their time, talents, and thousands of volunteer hours annually. We will be regularly featuring our volunteers in Talus Talk so that we can all learn who they are and why they do what they do for the Preserve. Let's meet our volunteers!*

## Tom Sarro

### *Where did you grow up?*

I grew up in Valley Stream, Long Island, N.Y.

### *What is your volunteer role(s) here at Mohonk Preserve?*

As a volunteer at the Preserve, I have served in several roles:

- breeding Raven studies
- early wooly adelgid studies
- Peregrine Falcon Watch and Hawk Watch programs as a participant, workshop presenter, and coordinator
- Christmas Bird Counts
- Numerous breeding bird censuses
- Fall evening deer censuses
- As a Research Associate, I conducted several vegetation analyses along with Dr. Les Lynn

### *Why did you decide to volunteer your time and talents at Mohonk Preserve?*

The Preserve provided the perfect combination of allowing me to learn and experience more about nature. I find it a pleasure to meet like-minded people who have similar goals centered on making the natural world sustainable and available for all to enjoy.

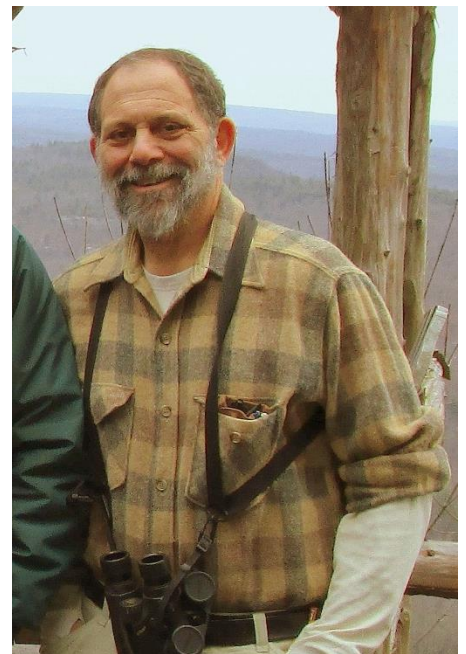
### *What is a volunteer accomplishment you are really proud of?*

During my two sabbaticals from teaching, I conducted the fall hawk count almost every day throughout the season. We sent the data to the Hawk Migration Association of America. Here at the Preserve, we were able to use the data to observe trends over time.

### *Where is your favorite place/trail on the Preserve and why is it your favorite?*

I can't pick one favorite place for different reasons. My favorite places are:

- Rhodendron Swamp – we conducted our first vegetation analysis here. The diversity of plants and birds made it a very special place to be. It is my understanding that it was also a favorite of Dan Smiley.
- Coxing Kill – the stand of hemlocks here gives me a sense of the forest primeval. Early morning breeding bird census conducted here never disappointed. I brought a group of inner-city eighth graders to the Coxing and I think they got a real sense of the natural world.
- Duck Pond – we were fortunate to camp overnight during a breeding bird census. Waking early in the morning to mist floating above the water and the early morning chorus will be something I will never forget.
- Sleepy Hollow – having participated in several breeding bird censuses here I still marvel at the diversity of plants and birds in a relatively small area.
- Of course, the Hawk Watch, even on those days when very few birds were flying, sitting there, overlooking the Catskills, gave me a sense of place. It was here on those quiet days that I had time to reflect and put in perspective what it means to be a visitor on this planet for the short time we are here.



*Tom Sarro at a Christmas Bird Count; photo by Joe Bridges*