



Death by Migration

Written by Carol Frank Friday, 22 October 2010 00:00

Every year millions of migrating birds hit glass windows in office buildings and homes and die. On Sunday, this reporter received an email alerting us to an array of dead birds at 111 Great Neck Road next to the entrance to the Citibank ATM. Upon arrival, the above photo is what we found. Someone had placed the dead birds at the entrance.

As we walked around the empty parking lot, we noticed other dead birds as well. We counted a total of 65 birds, mostly tiny warblers and one woodpecker. On Monday morning, the birds had been removed.



A collection of birds that died, probably over the weekend, at the office building at 111 Great Neck Road. This situation is not unique to this building, however. It is a common problem at office buildings and at homes with large plate glass windows. Photo by Carol Frank

The building has been recently purchased by Jones Lang LaSalle and the building manager is not authorized to speak with the press directly. However, tenants in the building told the Record that the building management has tried to do something about the spring and fall bird strikes. We noticed that the management had placed silhouettes of owls on top of the building in hopes of preventing these bird strikes.

When we returned to our car in the parking lot, we noticed 5 warblers on the ground in the lot. Two were alive, but stunned and we removed one to a grassy area so that it could perhaps revive. The other was able to fly away. One woman who works in the building said that school children come into the bank with their parents very upset to see so many dead and dying birds scattered about the grounds.

The National Audubon Society asks building management to turn off all unnecessary lights during the spring and fall migration seasons as it is believed that excessive lighting can cause disorientation. Buildings with large, reflective glass panels are particularly dangerous as the birds only see sky, clouds, and trees in the glass.

We will explore the topic further for next week's paper as there are ornithologists who study this phenomenon and have recommendations to alleviate the carnage of so many birds dying each migrating season.