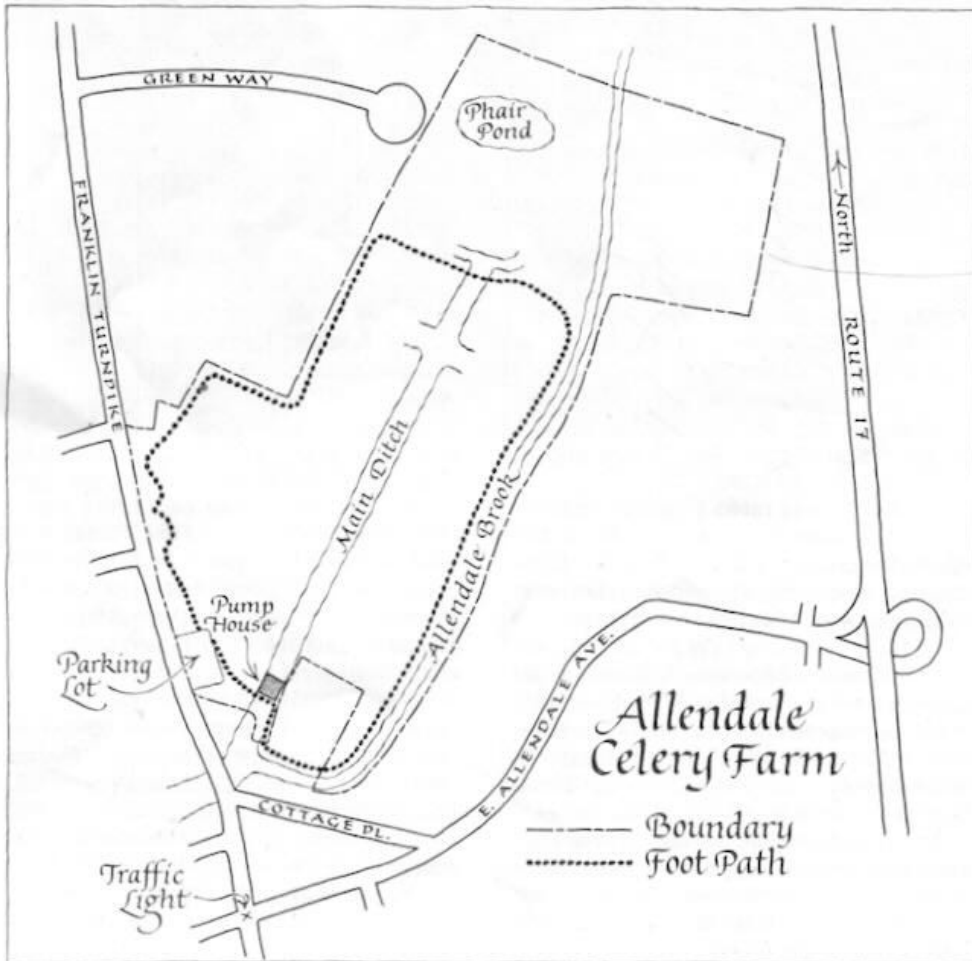
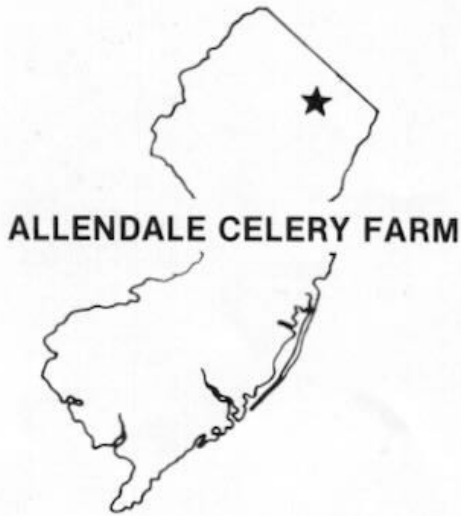


THE BIRDFINDER'S GUIDE



New Jersey Audubon Society members have been birding at the Celery Farm in Allendale (Bergen County) since 1953. During that time, almost 200 bird species have been observed there. Although an occasional rarity is seen, the main attraction for the birder, in addition to the beautiful setting, is the profusion and variety of bird life to be found. The Celery Farm, a 78-acre holding, was acquired by the Borough of Allendale in 1981 and set aside as a wildlife preserve. The New Jersey Conservation Foundation assisted in its acquisition. The most attractive section of the sanctuary, to the birds and to those who watch them, is a 48-acre cat-tail and *phragmites* marsh. The Fyke Nature Association has installed a two-mile nature path on the perimeter of this part. The area is referred to as the Celery Farm because Celery was once the principal crop grown there. Since 1951, the land has lain fallow, and celery has been replaced by grasses and water plants. The Celery Farm is a veritable wildlife oasis among housing and industrial developments.

Willow Flycatcher has been breeding at the Celery Farm for many years as has **Mallard**, **Wood Duck** and **Canada Goose**. Both **Virginia Rail** and **Sora** nest there as does **Long-billed Marsh Wren**. **American Bittern** is uncommon in spring and summer. **Common Snipe** is just that, especially in early spring. **Bobolinks** are heard, if not seen, in May, September and October. **Sparrows** are most numerous in the fields on the western and northern parts of the preserve. **Song Sparrows** and **Swamp Sparrows** nest in goodly numbers, and **Field**, **White-Throated**, **Tree** and **Savannah Sparrows** are present in migration. **White-crowned Sparrow** is more likely to be encountered in autumn, and **Lincoln's Sparrow** may be found in fall by diligent searching. Beginning in September, some one or



Celery Farm habitat. Photos by Ruth Skovron.



two thousand ducks and geese fly into the Celery Farm at dusk to spend the night feeding. This lasts until freeze-over, and has offered entertainment to duck watchers for some years now. In the fall of 1981, up to a million **Grackles** and **Starlings** and other blackbirds established a nighttime roost at the Celery Farm.

Yellow Warbler is a common breeder at the Celery Farm, and **Common Yellowthroat** is indeed common during the nesting season. **Northern Waterthrush** may be found nesting on the western border. Some of the rare birds observed at the Celery Farm over the years are: **Glossy Ibis**, **Goshawk**, **Upland Sandpiper**, **Wilson's Phalarope**, **Long-eared Owl**, **Short-billed Marsh Wren**, **Water Pipit**, **Orchard Oriole**.

The Celery Farm is easy to find. Take the Allendale exit from Route 17 and travel west exactly one mile on East Allendale Avenue to its intersection with Franklin Turnpike. Turn right (north) on Franklin Turnpike and drive about two-tenths of a mile to the small Borough parking lot on the right (east) side of the road. Park here and enter the trailway just after crossing a wooden bridge. Arrows on the bridge point the way. The area can be covered in about two hours. A part of the southern end of the trail is on private property, so it is suggested that large groups not make the complete circuit.

Stiles Thomas