



The Library Branch

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Lunchtime Screening of *Pale Male*



Photo by Lincoln Karim

Pale Male, whose story of perseverance and survival is the subject of both print and film

The Parks Library, in cooperation with the **New York City Audubon Society**, invites you to join us for a free screening of **Frederic Lilien's** 2002 documentary about the beloved hawk who reigns over Central Park from a lavish perch at 74th Street and Fifth Avenue.

Shortly after his arrival in New York City from neighboring New Jersey, Pale Male (a red-tail hawk with particularly light-colored chest plumage) had drawn an ever-growing fan club. Day after day, bird lovers flocked to observe this stranger-in-a-strange-land who, against all odds, succeeded in making a life for himself in the heart of Manhattan.

Pale Male quickly earned as much celebrity as the human co-inhabitants of the luxury apartment building on which he built his nest. Coming armed with binoculars, cameras and even telescopes, the birdwatchers monitored Pale Male's migration patterns, dietary choices, and mating habits. In 1998 the fascination manifested in the form of Marie's Winn's book entitled *Red-Tails in Love*.

By that time, Frederic Lilien was already in the process of collecting digital video footage for his documentary. The video debuted in 2002 and won acclaim in several documentary forums. On the heels of that success, accomplished screenwriter Nora Ephron tapped Lilien to take new footage of the bird for her upcoming feature film that will center on the life of Pale Male.

E.J. McAdams, Executive Director of the New York City Audubon Society, will introduce the 54-minute film and be on hand afterwards to answer questions. The New York City Audubon Society works to protect and conserve wildlife and wildlife habitats in New York City. Mr. McAdams was formerly one of Parks & Recreation's own Park Rangers.

Thursday, February 13, at 1:00 p.m., in the Arsenal Gallery

Please call 212-360-8240 or e-mail Library@parks.nyc.gov

to reserve your seat.

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor

Adrian Benepe, Commissioner

John S. Mattera, Librarian

www.nyc.gov/parks

GOT BOOKS ?

Parks Library book swap

Last May this newsletter carried the announcement of the Library's first book search. We asked you to look around your attic, closet or basement for books, pamphlets and periodicals you wished to donate that related to New York City and Parks. Although this project met with some success, there are still books we seek to acquire.

The financial limitations that forced us to start the **Got Books** campaign last year persist. Therefore we have developed a new method to acquire books from you. In addition to accepting donations, we will begin **swapping books**.

Anyone who has visited the Library surely noticed that we have many books which do not relate to Parks, New York City history, horticulture or even urban planning. They do not contribute to the main thrust of the Parks Library collection. Nonetheless, these novels, histories, computer manuals etc. are interesting and valuable books. In order to increase the number of books we have on topics central to our purpose and make space for primary documents now held off-site, we will give away certain titles in exchange for those we need.

It's simple. Donate a book from a list prepared by the librarian, and in exchange get a non-parks-related book of equal value.

For more information, please call 212-360-8240 or e-mail library@parks.nyc.gov.

THIS MONTH IN PARKS

1897 February: National Skating Amateur Championship Races held on Silver Lake in Staten Island. Three years later residents appealed to the State Assembly Committee on Cities to appropriate funds to establish Silver Lake Park. During the 19th century, a casino and saloon existed on the lakeshore, and several companies harvested ice from the lake.

1907 February 13: City acquired the second parcel (65 acres) of Kissena Park. Having already acquired horticulturist Samuel Bowne Parsons' adjacent historic tree grove (from which he provided Olmsted and Vaux some of the trees for Central Park) after his death in 1906, the City added this second section, which at the time was mostly swampland.

1934 February 28: Last Sheep removed from Sheep Meadow. The sheep, in the opinion of Olmsted and Vaux, who had placed them there in 1864, enhanced the Romantic English quality of the park. Furthermore, they provided automatic mowing and fertilization service. The sheepfold house built in 1871, west of the drive, sheltered the flock and the shepherd for 64 years, until Robert Moses pulled the wool over the public eye and converted the elaborate stable into Tavern on the Green.



New York City Parks Photo Archive

Central Park Sheep Meadow, ca. 1902

1952 February 17: *The New York Times* carries a story about the Department of Transportation's proposal to turn the small road bisecting Washington Square Park into a major two-way artery, one component of the larger Lower Manhattan improvement project.

1954 February 16: Robert Moses writes a letter to the Board of Estimate. At first glance, this seems unremarkable. Ah, but this isn't just any letter. This particular letter was about the acquisition of parkland in Brooklyn, land the Borough Present had been trying to acquire for five years. In contrast, Moses wrote in on February 16 and by March 11th ... voila.... 56th Street Park, which we know today as Rainbow Park.

1966 February 9: Parks Commissioner Thomas Hoving announced the appointment of 30 year-old Henry J. Stern as Parks' Executive Director. He returned to work for the agency on two subsequent occasions, in 1983 and 1994.

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