

The Broadwing



Publication of the Montclair Bird Club
February 2024

Montclair, NJ
Volume LXX, Number 5

Message from the Editor February 2024

Dear Members and Friends,

The Montclair Bird Club website has a brand-new look thanks to the professional expertise of club member Christy Morganstein.

Information and other content can now be found much more readily, and overall, the appearance enhances the site's readability. Let us know what you think about the new look and feel.

The 20th *Your Weekly Bird* was distributed this month. It would be nice to have more contributors. So please send me a picture or two and a couple of paragraphs about the bird or your experience with the bird.

Sandy

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Next club meeting: Wednesday, February 14, 2024
Virtual Bird Walk: Thursday, February 22, 2024

Study uncovers major hidden human-driven bird extinctions



An AI-generated image of what the unknown extinct birds might have looked like (© UKCEH)

Humans have wiped out around 1,400 bird species—twice as many as previously thought—with major implications for the ongoing biodiversity crisis, a new study has found.

Many of the world's islands were previously untouched paradises, but the arrival of people in places like Hawaii, Tonga, and the Azores led over time to far-reaching impacts including deforestation, overhunting, and the introduction of invasive species. Consequently, bird species were wiped out.

While the demise of many birds has been recorded since the 1500s, our knowledge of the fate of species before that depends on fossils, and those records are limited because birds' lightweight bones disintegrate over time. This conceals the true extent of global extinctions.

Researchers now believe that 1,430 bird species—almost 12%—have died out since the Late Pleistocene, around 130,000 years ago, with the vast majority of those extinctions directly or indirectly due to human activity.

The study, led by the UK Center for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH) and published in *Nature Communications*, used statistical modeling to estimate the number of undiscovered bird extinctions.

Rare Bird Alert: [Extinction](#)



american birding
association

Hudson-Delaware Region: Fall 2022

by Amy Davis

Fall 2022 was memorable for the number of state firsts discovered in the Hudson-Delaware region. Three new species were found in New York—**Bermuda Petrel**, **Limpkin**, and **Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher**—while New Jersey hosted an astounding *seven* firsts: **Broad-billed Hummingbird**, **Bermuda Petrel**, **Eurasian (Western) Marsh-Harrier**, **Tropical Kingbird**, **Hammond’s Flycatcher**, **Brewer’s Sparrow**, and **Kirtland’s Warbler**.

NJ’s first **Brewer’s Sparrow** was beautifully documented at Mill Creek Marsh, Hudson County, 6 Oct (Rick Wright, Sandy Sorkin). It was a first for the Hudson-Delaware region, although the species has appeared nearby in Connecticut’s Hammonasset Beach SP. This remarkably subtle



western *Spizella* rarely strays from its usual range, and other eastern records are from Québec, Nova Scotia, Maine, and Virginia. Although Brewer’s Sparrow can be abundant on sagebrush steppes, it is declining.

A Brewer’s Sparrow at Mill Creek Marsh, Hudson Co was one of seven firsts for New Jersey discovered in fall 2022. Photo © Sandy Sorkin.

Science

Birders and bird vocalizations: The Sound Approach research [survey](#)

The Yale Bird-friendly Building Initiative: [Yale](#)

NJ Spotlight News

Conservationists clash over plan to save a rare bird in a public forest

Two backyard bird species could disappear from nature—because of outdoor lights

Artificial light at night, commonly referred to as “light pollution,” has long been known to endanger migratory birds by disorienting them and causing collisions with buildings. North Carolina State University researchers, however, have found that this type of pollution is also affecting the survival of some backyard bird species around Washington, D.C.

Leaning on two decades of data collected by both experts and community scientists through the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center’s program, researchers discovered a connection between [increased light pollution](#) and decreased survival rates for the gray catbird and the house wren. The American robin, however, seemed to benefit, with its survival rates rising with increased artificial light.

[Full Article](#)

Dark wings supercharge seabird flight Coloration helps the animals fly faster and longer

[Full Article](#)

Migrant Trap
by Æneas Faber
XI

I hadn't had a full night's sleep for weeks; but the next morning, though I had promised Do that I would try to sleep in, I was up with the birds. It was May, after all, and I thought that a couple of hours afield might make the task of cataloguing Phoebe's library a bit less daunting. I wasn't really concerned about the appraisal itself: I knew almost every volume Phoebe owned, even those that hadn't been purchased from Faber and Co., and it would be a relatively simple matter to estimate their value. But still I was somehow uneasy, thinking about Phoebe's illness, about the significance of the appraisal to the club, about handling all at once books my father and old Mr. Miller had assembled over the decades. And so I went birding.

It was one of those perfect spring migration mornings, the conditions just right: an early shower passing to leave a cool and bright sunrise, passerines appearing in the trees as the first light warmed the higher branches, their chips and lips gradually replaced by song as the sun climbed above the sharp horizon. Inevitably, I ran into Tuck and Bob Lenquist, anxiously ticking the new arrivals for their Lavinia County yearlists. What Tuck was running on, after literally weeks in the field with no more than three or four hours sleep, was beyond me; Phoebe was no doubt right about Tuck's skill as a physician, but just as I do every spring, watching his hands twitch with caffeine and sleep deprivation, I thanked heaven and the drones at my HMO that I was not one of his patients.

While Tuck was wearing his invariable, slightly grimy, March-to-Memorial-Day T-shirt, Bob's attire—as usual—was as impeccable as it was improbable: a stiff black suit, bow tie, and narrow black shoes that forced him into an unbecoming bird-like waddle along the muddy trails. Just as distinctive as Bob's apparel, and unmistakable at a mile, was the look on his face, framed by tufts of whitening hair at the temples and dominated (to put it mildly) by a long, slender, pointed beak of a nose. It was a look that went far beyond eager, far beyond excited; it was the look of a man driven, and everyone in Averno knew what drove Bob Lenquist.



"Seeing much, Bob?"

He didn't even look up—or rather down, as his eyes were resolutely fixed on the early morning treetops. "Sh, shh, Andy, Tuck claims he heard a bay-breasted warbler in there, and I still need that one for Lavinia County this year. Picked one up Sunday for Latium County, and I've already got it in fourteen--"

A thin, wiry lisp issued from a tall ash just down the trail, followed by a considerably louder whoop from the birder in black. "Got it, got it! Bay-breast! County tick number four thousand for the year! Ha, take that, Salter! You'll never catch me now."

To be continued



New Montclair Bird Club Members 2023

2023

January

Monica Cardoza Ridgewood, NJ
 Susan & Michael Monaghan Montclair, NJ
 Anil & Seema Nerurkar Wayne, NJ

September

October
 Jimma Byrd TX

February

Karen Nickeson Edgewater, NJ

November

Diane Holsinger VA
 Lauri Carlotti Belleville, NJ
 Lisa Kroop Berkely Heights, NJ

March

Grace Friend Montclair, NJ
 Camille Gutmore Nutley, NJ
 Christie Morganstein Randolph, NJ

December

Eva DeAngelis Franklin Lakes, NJ

April

Hillary Leonard Montclair, NJ
 Kathrine McCaffery Maplewood, NJ
 Kathy & Bob Wilson Newton, NJ

2024

January

May

Michael Yellin Montclair, NJ
 Amanda & A. J. Tobia Rockaway, NJ

June

Vicki Seabrook New York, NY

July

Michael Davenport Succasunna, NJ
 Eileen Diaz Upper Montclair, NJ
 Victor Go Bloomfield, NJ
 Liz Hillyer
 Marc Holzapfel
 John Smallwood Randolph, NJ

August

Eric Knies Clifton, NJ
 Diane Louie Madison, NJ
 Roland Straton Montclair, NJ
 Susan Sheldon Seattle, WA
 Peter Rosario Patterson, NJ
 Mary Conroy Montclair, NJ

This list includes new members,
 returning members, and
 additions from our Friends
 roster.

Field Trips

Eagles Along the Delaware

A Birder's Meet-up, Thursday, February 8, 2024 (weather date Friday, February 9)

Meet at 12 noon at the High Point State Park Office, on State Highway 23 in Sussex County, NJ (restrooms available in the park).

Contact Donna at 973-903-1664 for further information.

In the winter, bald eagles often congregate along the Delaware River, offering excellent opportunities to see and photograph these magnificent birds. The Montclair Bird Club will meet up with Leaderless Walks for a meet-up to explore some of the many interesting spots along the Delaware River. Depending on the weather and recent reports, we will either stop at Rio Reservoir in New York (Plank Road to Eagle Institute Observation Blind) or work the Delaware River to the Roebling Bridge around Narrowsburg. Afterward, for anyone interested, we will return to Liberty Marsh/Walkkill River NWR in New Jersey to check for short-eared owls. If it is early enough, we can work the roads on the NY side of the refuge for horned larks, longspurs, and other winter birds of open habitats.

Directions to High Point State Park Office from Montclair area:

Take Route 46 West to State Highway 23 North into Sussex County. Continue on Route 23 North to High Point State Park; there are signs welcoming you to High Point State Park. The Visitor Center is directly on Route 23, at the top of the mountain, on the left side.

Woodcock Watch

Week of March 5-12, 2024 (specific date dependent on the woodcock's calendar)

Attendance is limited to 12 people. To register, email your contact information to MBCoutings@gmail.com. Meet at 5:00 pm; address provided on registration.

Each spring, male American woodcocks put on an amazing courtship display that we can witness here in NJ. At dawn and dusk, the males produce a loud peent call from the ground, then spring up into the air, flying in a wide spiral with their wings twittering. Once they reach 200 or 250 feet, they zigzag back to the ground, chirping as they go.

Club member Deb DeSalvo has generously offered to host a meet-up to view the woodcock courtship dance at her farm in Oldwick, NJ. Woodcock courtship usually starts sometime between March 5 and 12. When the woodcocks begin to display, Deb will give us a heads-up and the meet-up will be held in the next day or two. Once we arrive, we will walk around Deb's property for a short time, birding as we go. At sunset, which is around 6:00 pm, we will walk to a wetland area at the northern end of her property where we are likely to hear and, with luck, see the birds.

Clarks Pond
March 26, 2024 (corrected)
5:30 PM (not am)
with Rick Wright

The March time change brings us welcome longer evenings just as the earliest passerine migrants are beginning to arrive. We'll take a leisurely (and possibly muddy) walk through Bloomfield's best-known birding secret, the occasionally apostrophic Clarks Pond, in search of winter wrens, chipping sparrows, eastern phoebes, golden-crowned and ruby-crowned kinglets, and Louisiana waterthrushes, along with wood ducks and a smattering of other waterfowl on the lake itself. Meet at 5:30 pm in the parking lot at the end of Hobson Street in Bloomfield, off Broughton south of Watchung Avenue. Be prepared to walk a total distance of about a mile, and bring a snack, water, and a notebook and pencil. We will be finished before sunset, which is at 7:15 pm.



Monday, March 11, 2024 (weather date: Tuesday, March 12) (Corrected)

The North Shore

A birder's meet-up, in conjunction with Leaderless Walks

Meet at 10:30 a.m. at Lily Lake/Old Sam's Pond in Point Pleasant, NJ.

In birding parlance, the North Shore is the New Jersey coast from Point Pleasant to Long Branch. In addition to beaches, inlets, and the ocean itself, a trip to the North Shore includes visits to the numerous freshwater ponds that dot the area. In March, we can expect to see grebes and loons, a variety of ducks, gannets, and geese. Rarer species may include white-winged gulls, Great Cormorants, and alcids.

Dress warmly! Bring binoculars, a scope if you have one, snacks, a warm drink, and lunch.

Directions: Take the Garden State Parkway to Exit 98 (Route 34). Follow Route 34 South for about four miles until it merges with Route 35. Continue south on Route 35 about 3.7 miles through the center of Point Pleasant and Bay Head. After you pass a McDonalds (good rest stop opportunity), you will come to a traffic light on Ocean Avenue. Turn left and then take the first left to Lily Lake.

Monday, February 26, at 10:30 am

Barnegat Lighthouse State Park

A birder's meetup, in conjunction with Leaderless Walks

Barnegat Lighthouse State Park is located at the northernmost tip of Long Beach Island in Ocean County, New Jersey. We will walk the jetty and beach looking for wintering waterfowl such as brant, harlequin and long-tailed ducks, and common and king eiders, as well as the less common gulls, purple sandpipers, and ruddy turnstones. We will scan the water in search of grebes, loons, and, if we're lucky, an alcid or two. Among the passerines, we'll be on the lookout especially for Savannah sparrows and horned larks. Once we've gotten our fill of the jetty and beach, we can drive around the bay area to check some additional locations.

Meet in the parking lot of the state park at 10:30 am. Dress warmly! Bring binoculars, a scope if you have one, snacks, a warm drink, and a lunch.

Directions: Take the Garden State Parkway south to Exit 63 and proceed east on Route 72 for 7 miles. After crossing the bridge to Long Beach Island, make a left onto Long Beach Blvd. Follow this road for about 8 miles to the state park at the end.

Contact mbcoutings@gmail.com for additional information.

Field Trip Reports

Chasing a Rare Bird

Beni Fishbein

Chasing rarities is not my thing. I prefer less goal-oriented birding—going to a location and looking for the birds that are there. Besides, chasing a vagrant is frustrating: 9 times out of 10, when I have chased a bird, I've come back empty-handed and disappointed.

But when the red-flanked bluetail showed up in Whiting, New Jersey, and when it was still there a week later, I couldn't resist. I had recovered enough from one of those interminable coughing viruses that are going around to give it a go. I wasn't too optimistic, but heck, this is a bird that breeds in northern Europe and Asia and winters in southern Japan and southeast Asia. When would I ever have another chance to see it?

Ric Cohn and I drove an hour and twenty minutes to the quiet neighborhood of one-story retirement homes where the bird was being seen. We parked where we were supposed to so as not to disturb the neighbors and walked to the designated spot. Sure enough, there was a crowd of twenty-five or thirty people, including our fellow MBC member Evan Cutler and friends Chris and Paula Williams, all hoping for a glimpse of this chickadee-sized rarity.

Luckily, Ric and Chris had been there before, and gave us a guided tour of the area and the various places the bird had been seen. That helped. As we waited, I tried to familiarize myself with all of the plants and structures in view. I figured it would help to know where the rhododendrons, the holly, the bird feeder, and the stack of bricks were, as those were the landmarks that people would probably use if the bird appeared. Standing around with other birders and exchanging birding stories was fun, with the feel of an impromptu party. And with the sun out and no wind, it was comfortable in spite of the cold.

Suddenly the little bird popped into view. A ripple of excitement ran through the crowd as everyone raised their binoculars, quietly calling out directions as we followed the bird from rhodo to bricks to ground to branches, out of sight and back again. For several minutes, we were enthralled as it accommodately showed off, the orangey flanks visible in side view, the white chin and eye ring in front view, and the blue tail in back view. What a performance!

After a few minutes, it flew off. High fives, hugs, and smiles all around. What a rush! Thank you, beautiful little traveler. I hope you stay safe, find plenty to eat, and make it comfortably through the winter. Now I get why people chase birds: when it works out, it's like winning the lottery.



Red-flanked bluetail. Photo Ric Cohn



Montclair Bird Club represented at the red-flanked bluetail stakeout. Photo Garry Wasco

Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge January 13, 2024

There is a song entitled “Four Seasons in One Day,” but I believe if we had six or seven seasons, this day’s weather would have hit all of them. During the hours we spent at Great Swamp NWR, we experienced everything except snow, but the wind and rain did their best to represent winter in the most traditional way. Thankfully, the rain lasted only about 30 minutes and was gentle—except for a brief shower when it came down cold, hard, and seemingly from every direction. The clouds were beautiful, ranging from puffy white to steely gray and everything in between. Warm bursts of sunshine were followed by blustery cold winds. Despite the changeable weather, it was a lovely day of birding with a fine group of birders.

We (Fred, Ric, Peter, Christy, Hillary, Diane, Beni, and Deb) met at the Helen Fenske Center and birded around the buildings for a bit, checking out the meadows and short trails. The usual geese and jays and a solitary mockingbird were there to greet us. We also spied a swamp sparrow, many song sparrows, and much to our delight, a pair of immature white-crowned sparrows. Other highlights included a young bald eagle enjoying the winds overhead, a pair of courting red-shouldered hawks, and a flock of eastern bluebirds.

One of the trails led us to a small brook, which was higher than normal after all the rain we had had in the days before. That same rain caused flooding and road closures throughout the area, and delayed Beni’s arrival at the refuge (but she did end up arriving in one piece).

As we approached the wooded area and brook, we flushed a red-tailed hawk, which flew to a more distant branch and turned its back on us. And then, at the brook’s edge, in typical birdy fashion, we had a plethora of species descend on us all at once: yellow-rumped warblers, white-breasted nuthatches, American goldfinches, a large flock of white-throated sparrows, a very loud pair of Carolina wrens, and hairy, downy, and two red-bellied woodpeckers. On the way back to the parking lot, we saw a beautiful field sparrow. A second visit to the feeders by the main building added house finches and juncos to our growing checklist.

We packed up and headed over to the boardwalk on Long Hill Road, where Diane said goodbye. The weather began to turn a bit more predictably wintry; even the wooded areas didn’t provide the kind of protection and cover we would have hoped for. But we ventured on.

One of the highlights here, besides the heated restrooms, was a brown creeper that Fred lured out with the help of a recording. Just as the creeper appeared, three American goldfinches flew into a sweetgum above us. At the first blind, we were treated to a beautiful view of a northern harrier, a female or immature, hunting the tall grasses. Back on the boardwalk, we encountered a fellow birder who told us about a winter wren he had seen on his walk. We were able to lure it out and get brief glimpses of it in the lichen-covered branches beneath the boardwalk, just where he said it would be.

At that point, Beni said goodbye, and we were now a group of six. Walking on to the next lookout point in the wildlife observation area, we saw our first ducks of the day: 20 American black ducks and four northern pintails. And, of course, many Canada geese. As we stood there, two adult bald eagles flew over, both with nesting material, and landed in their nest, far beyond the deck, behind trees, entirely out of view of silly human observers. One of the pair had a stick that must have been four or five feet long. The photographers in our group captured photos of the spectacle.

All in all, it was a delightful day. Each time I participate in these meet-ups, I am thankful for the community that is the Montclair Bird Club. Here's to good birding, whatever the weather, with wonderful fellow enthusiasts.

- Deb DeSalvo, with photos (mostly) by Ric Cohn

38 species seen or heard

Canada goose	White-breasted nuthatch
American black duck	Brown creeper
Northern pintail	Winter wren
Mourning dove	Carolina wren
Black vulture	European starling
Turkey vulture	Northern mockingbird
Bald eagle	Eastern bluebird
Northern harrier	American robin
Red-shouldered hawk	House finch
Red-tailed hawk	American goldfinch
Red-bellied woodpecker	Field sparrow
Downy woodpecker	Dark-eyed junco
Hairy woodpecker	White-crowned sparrow
Northern flicker	White-throated sparrow
Blue jay	Song sparrow
American crow	Swamp sparrow
Common raven	Common grackle
Black-capped chickadee	Yellow-rumped warbler
Tufted titmouse	Northern cardinal

Photos, from top to bottom: song sparrow posing with a field sparrow, northern harrier, ambitious bald eagle carrying nesting material, bird walk participants, dramatic skies over field at Great Swamp NWR (photo by Deb DeSalvo), Helen Fenske Visitor Center beneath ominous clouds.







Before Linnaeus: The Snow Bunting Rick Wright



Photo by Rick Wright.

Snow buntings are familiar birds to many of us in the northern portions of North America, a cheering sight on the coldest winter days. But not just here: at one season or another, these sweet-faced calcariids can be found almost anywhere in the northern hemisphere north of about 40°.

Despite its abundance over so vast a range, it took European science some time to come to terms with this species. Linnaeus adopted the species name *nivalis* in 1758, an epithet first published in 1675 by the German explorer Friedrich Martens. It is to Martens, too, that we owe the first published illustration of the bird, “drawn [none too well] from life” on his 1671 voyage to Svalbard.



Friedrich Martens, *Spitzbergische oder Groenlandische Reise Beschreibung* (1675), pl. K, fig. b.

Martens and his crew came to know these birds quite well:

As we sailed along the edge of the ice near Jan Mayen Island, they often flew onto our ship, and were so tame that one could catch them by hand. They ran about on the ice, which is the only place I saw them, not on the land, which is why they are called snowbirds. They stayed around our ship until we caught our first whale, after which the other birds chased them off. We fed them hulled grain, which they lived on while they were on the ship. Afterwards, when they had eaten their fill, they could no longer be captured. We kept some in a cage in the ship's cabin, but they died. Some of those were eaten; the flavor was not unpleasant, but the birds were very thin.

Linnaeus also believed that an unidentified bird sent to the Swiss polymath Conrad Gessner in 1565 by his colleague Christopher Pepinus was a snow bunting; Gessner's illustration and description of the bird, however, clearly pertain to the white-winged snowfinch, an Old World sparrow only distantly related to the snow bunting.



Conrad Gessner, *De avium natura* (2nd ed., 1585), 798.

Linnaeus was on firmer ground in his identification of a bird painted in 1735 by Eleazar Albin under the name of the lesser pied mountain finch.



Eleazar Albin, *A Natural History of Birds*, vol. 3 (1738), pl. 71.

The Swedish taxonomer erred, however, in assigning another of Albin's birds, the pied chaffinch, to the same species.



Eleazar Albin, *A Natural History of Birds*, vol. 2 (1734), pl. 54.

Linnaeus was obviously, understandably struck by the large expanses of white in wing and tail. But both Albin's name and the details he provides—the bird was collected in April in a garden just outside of London, where it had been coming to a feeder for some time—suggest the correct identification as a melanin-deficient (probably leucistic) common chaffinch. Color aberrations in chaffinches was widely known by Linnaeus's day; Ulisse Aldrovandi, for example, could write at the end of the sixteenth century that one of his sources had reported

a fringilla (=common chaffinch) seen at one time that was white on the whole body. And I too once purchased a fringilla from local birdcatchers with an entirely whitish body, though somewhat yellowish, especially on the back, and

the neck and breast a little rusty, the belly rather grayish. . . . The bird whose picture I provide below was, if I remember correctly, brought to me two years ago by our birdcatchers as an unusual curiosity.



Ulisse Aldrovandi, *De avibus historiae*, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (1637), p. 817.

Nevertheless, Linnaeus classified this bird, too, as a snow bunting. But in another case, he correctly resolved significant confusion in another of his sources.

When Francis Willughby died at the age of 36 in 1672, his teacher, friend, and colleague John Ray undertook to complete Willughby's ornithological materials and see the resulting book through the press. Naturally, errors crept in, and Ray corrected as many as he could in his editorial preface. Among them, he said, was the treatment of Willughby's *Montifringilla major* and his *Fringilla spuria cum calcaribus Alaudae* as two distinct species: they were the same, wrote Ray, and "this mistake was committed by meer accident, and forgetfulness."

But it wasn't a mistake. As Linnaeus would recognize three quarters of a century later, the two were not in fact identical: the *Montifringilla* was the brambling (known today as *Fringilla montifringilla*), and the *Fringilla spuria*, with its long "lark spurs," was the snow bunting. Ray himself came around in his own Latin work, restoring the distinction based largely on the long hind claw, "which character is enough by itself to distinguish

the two.” Regrettably, Ray continued to use the confusing English name brambling for both (“brandling” on the plate illustrating the snow bunting).



John Ray, ed., *The Ornithology of Francis Willughby* (1678), pl. 77.

A significant step forward in the depictions of the snow finch was taken in 1734, when the German naturalist Johann Leonhard Frisch published an important and attractive set of bird portraits, including the figures of two snow buntings.



Johann Leonhard Frisch, *Vorstellung der Vögel in Teutschland*, vol. 2 (1734), pl. 6, figs. 1, 2.

Frisch's engraving would be unsurpassed until 1750, when George Edwards published his own of the bird he called the snow-bird.



George Edwards, *A Natural History of Birds*, vol. 3 (1750), pl. 126.

Unlike his predecessors, Edwards had access to a specimen taken on the breeding grounds, brought back to England from Hudson Bay by James Isham. Edwards and Isham were the first to establish that the snow bunting occurred in both the New World and the Old; from the Canadian breeding range, Isham reported that

it is one of the first small Birds that appear in the Spring, while the Earth is yet cover'd with Snow, which has given it the Name of Snow-Bird.

Edwards had his own experience with the living bird. When “about the latter end of September”

there were some Snow-Birds brought alive from Hudson's-Bay, I went on board a Ship to see them.

The birds were in their winter aspect, “brown and yellowish Colour, with some White.” His inspection convinced him that these North American birds were not identical to the birds Catesby had called the snow-bird, which, of course, were slate-colored juncos.

Edwards, [as I have shown elsewhere](#), was Linnaeus’s most important ornithological correspondent in England. But Linnaeus had had his own encounters with the snow bunting years before, on his voyage to Lapland as a student in 1732. Eight years later, in the *Handlingar* of the new Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences, he published his own account of this bird of the frozen north.

I have never seen this bird described or depicted by anyone else. But in order that the rest of the world might see what sort of remarkable things are produced in our north, I acquired three such birds, which I raised in my home so that I might observe their habits and provide a more detailed description.

Linnaeus found that the sexes differed so greatly in plumage that anyone not having seen the pair together could easily believe that they belonged to two different species.

And as to the plumage, it should be noted that this bird, like the ptarmigan, the hare, and other animals resident in cold climates, changes its appearance. The male in winter is entirely snowy white on the head, breast, and neck, whiter than anything else one could imagine; there is no trace of any brownish yellow, apart from a very small bit on the head. In July and August, though, all of this bright white is veiled with a fine light clay color, and the back, which in winter is entirely black, is scaled yellow, though never as strongly as in the female.

The careful reader will note that Linnaeus, or his birds, had it exactly backward: the starkly contrasting black and white is seen in spring and summer, while it is in winter that the birds are marked with buffy orange.

But the birds that I kept in my room, which was heated every day all winter, never became white on the head, neck, or breast, but held their summer plumage through the entire winter.

The conditions of their captivity were no doubt less than ideal, with the apparent result that the birds never molted, retaining their winter aspect—what Linnaeus had mistaken for their “summer” plumage—all year.



Carl Bergquist in Carl Linnaeus, "Beskrifning på Snö Sparfwen" (1740), pl. 1, fig. 9.

The secrets of the snow bunting's plumage would not be fully revealed for some time. But thanks to Linnaeus and, above all, his great predecessors, by the middle of the eighteenth century this delightful bird had attained a firm place in the ornithological traditions of the Old World.



Photo by Rick Wright.

Virtual Bird Walks

2020

July	1	Local Birding
August	2	Backyards and a Marsh
September	3	Backyards and Trips
October	4	Member Birding
November	5	Member Birding
December	6	Member Birding

2021

January	7	International Birding and New York City
February	8	International Birding
March	9	Member Birding
April	10	Shore Birds
May	11	Local Birding
June	12	Member Birding
July	13	Birding Costa Rica
August	14	Identify a Bird by Its Eyes
September	15	Birds and Water
October	16	Birds with Masks
November	17	Winter Birds

2022

January	18	Personal Choice
February	19	Color
March	20	Signs of Spring
April	21	Birds Eating or Black & White Birds
May	22	Local Birds
September	23	My Summer
November	24	Bird Pairs
December	25	A Trip

2023

January	26	Winter
February	27	A Month in a Birder's Life
March	28	Egrets, Herons, and Wading Birds
April	29	Woodpeckers
May	30	Small Birds
June		Members Meeting, no Virtual Bird Walk
September	31	What I Did on My Summer Vacation
October	32	Black & Orange

2024

January	33	Cold
February	34	Water

Upcoming VENT Tours

VentBird.com

Nebraska	Sandhill Cranes and Prairie Chickens	March 15–22, 2024; March 17–24, 2025
Texas	Totally Texas Solar Eclipse	April 5–11, 2024
Alabama	The Gulf Coast and Dauphin Island	April 15–21, 2024; April 14–20, 2025
Scotland	Wild Scotland	May 26 – June 7, 2024
Colorado	A Summer Stay in Estes Park	June 17–23, 2024; June 15–21, 2025
Colorado	Northeast Colorado	June 23–26, 2024; June 21–24, 2025
Spain	Birds and Art in Asturias	August 28 – September 6, 2024
France	Birds and Art in Provence	May 1–9, 2025
Scotland	Scotland in Style	May 10–19 2025
Germany	Birds and Art in Berlin and Brandenburg	September 19–28, 2025
France	Brittany in Fall	October 1–9, 2025



Montclair Bird Club Meeting History

2020

May	An Online Quiz, with Rick Wright.
June	A Walk on Pipeline Road, by Sandy Sorkin.
July	The Real James Bond, by Jim Wright.
August	An Online Quiz, with Rick Wright.
September	Manakins and Microbes, by Jennifer Houtz.
October	Bizarre Breeding Behaviors of Tropical Cuckoos, by Christine Riehl.
November	Dispersal in Young Peregrine Falcons, by Elise Morton.
December	An MBC Story Slam, by Pamela Olsen.

2021

January	Modern-Day Exploration in the Tropics, by Dan Lane.
February	Winter Raptors, by Giselle Smisko.
March	Damselflies and Dragonflies: The Other White Meat, by George Nixon.
April	Wolf Natural History and Tourism in Yellowstone, by Paul Brown.
May	Sandhills and Saw-whets, by Matthew Schuler.
June	Magnificent Namibia, by Linda Woodbury.
September	Raptors, by Wayne Greenstone.
October	Watershed, by Hazel England.
November	Build-a-Bird, with Rick Wright.

2022

January	A Tale of Many Penguins, by Ardith Bondi.
February	Oh! Canada, by Chris Sturm.
March	Tracking the Migration of New Jersey Birds Using the Motus Network, by Cailin O'Connor.
April	Spotlighting Voices in Bird Conservation, by Mardi Dickinson.
May	101 Great Birds from Around the World, by Mark Garland.
June	Members Meeting.
September	Exploring the Big Bend in Southwest Texas, by Donna Traylor.
October	Build-a-Bird II, with Rick Wright.
November	On Safari: Botswana and South Africa, by Ric Cohn.

2023

January	America's Iconic Birdman: Frank Chapman, by James Huffstodt.
February	A Bird Club in San Diego, by Rick Wright.
March	The Peregrine Project, by Wayne Quinto Greenstone.
April	Piping Plovers on the Rockaway Peninsula, by Chris Allieri.
May	Basic Ornithology, by Phil Echo.
June	Members Meeting.
September	Build-a-Bird III, with Rick Wright.
October	Finding W. H. Hudson, The Writer Who Came to Britain to Save the Birds, by Conor Mark Jameson
November	Attracting Screech Owls, by Jim Wright
November	Birding and Conservation in Italy, by Marcos Valtriani

2024

January	Panama, by Rick Wright
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- Page 3: Bay-breasted warbler (SS)
- Page 6: Scarlet tanager (SS)

2023–2024 Officers and Executive Board

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Vice President	Evan Cutler
Secretary	Pat Sanders
Treasurer	Sandy Sorkin

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Ric Cohn
Wayne Greenstone
Don Traylor
Rick Wright

From the Editor's Desk

Please feel free to email any items you would like included in future issues of *The Broadwing*. Please include pictures and any other news that will entertain or educate our members.

Sandy

MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com



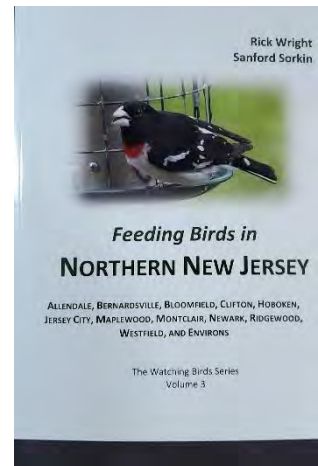
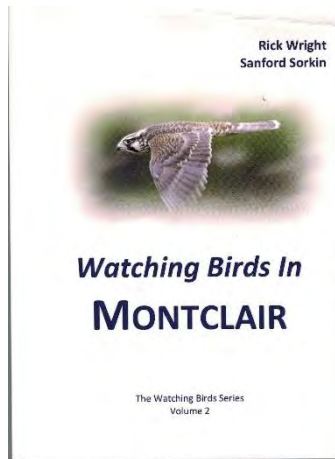
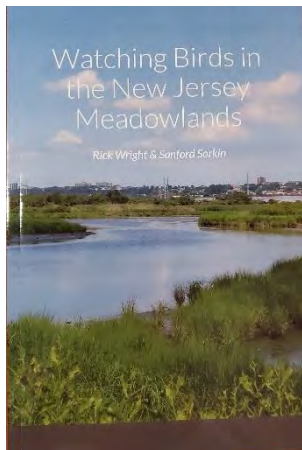
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The MBC Bulletin Bird

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and Photographer Sandy Sorkin**

THE BROADWING

**The *Broadwing* is published ten times a year:
We vacation during July and August.**

**Send photos, field notes, or articles to Sandy at
MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com.**

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