

The Broadwing



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Sandy Hook

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President's Message May 2021

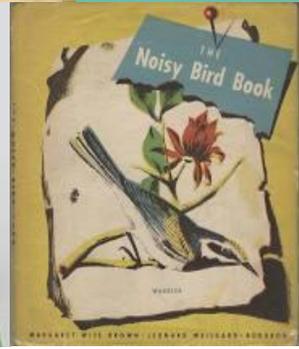
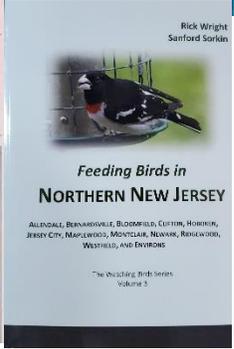
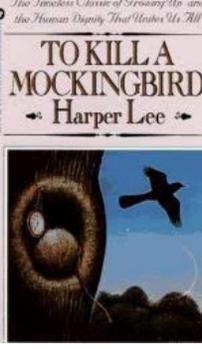
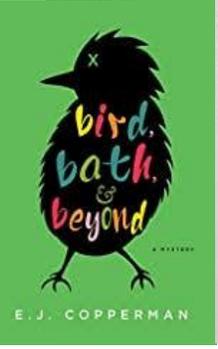
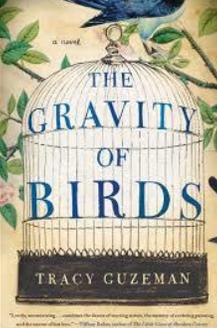
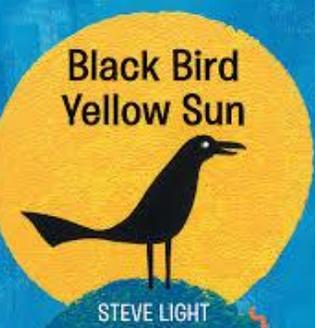
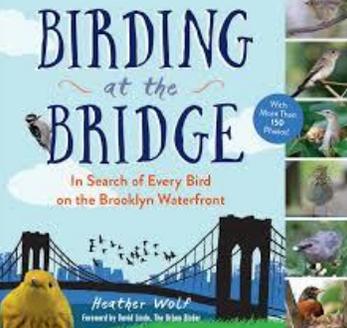
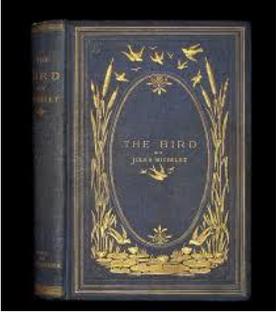
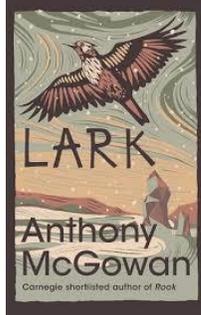
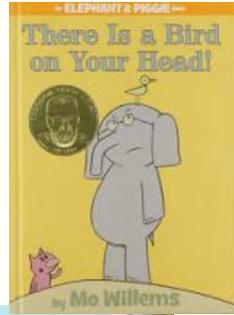
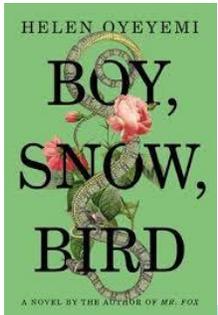
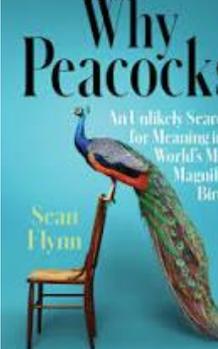
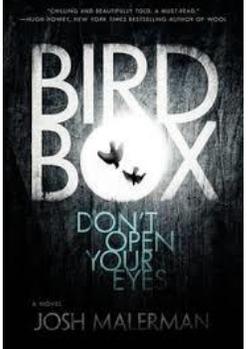
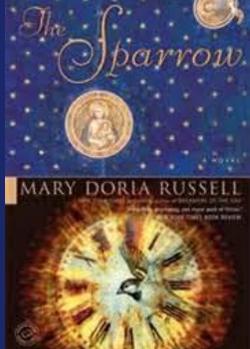
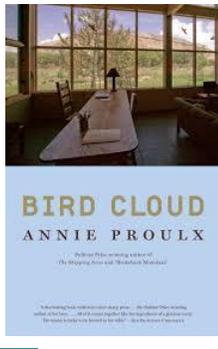
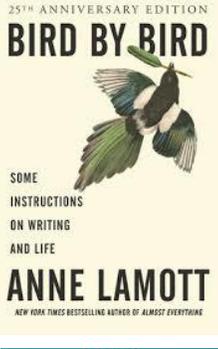
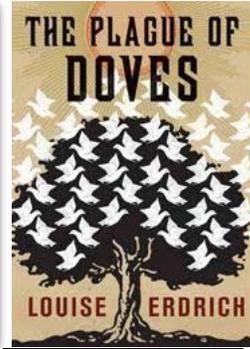
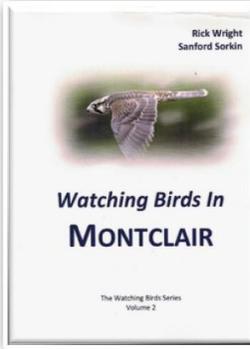
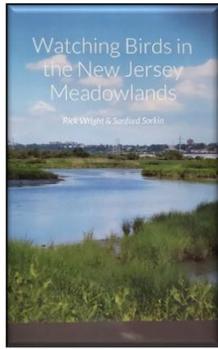
There is optimism in the air along with arriving birds. Almost all the participants at club meetings and virtual bird walks are fully vaccinated, and we are resuming field trips. It is time to retrieve your binoculars and scopes, put on your hiking boots, and join Wednesday warbler walks at Garret Mountain beginning on April 28. A trip to South Amboy and Conaskonk is scheduled for May 14. All the details can be found on the club website. Registration will be required, and you should read the field trip guidelines on the website also.

In this issue, you will see a flyer with details about the BioBlitz planned for June. We have club volunteers but can always use more.

Sandy

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 12
Virtual Bird Walk: Thursday, May 27

A Bird in the Title



May Virtual Bird Walk

The theme of the May Virtual Bird Walk is *Big Birds*. That includes just about any bird that you don't feel is small. **While size may count, it is also relative.**

Participants will be able to share their screens or email their pictures for inclusion in a group PowerPoint. Emails should be sent at least three days in advance of the meeting to MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com.

Breeding Shorebird Atlas

I'm seeking your help with the latest citizen science program of the Shorebird Conservation Society. The Breeding Shorebird Atlas is a new and very ambitious new program that was launched earlier this year. We ask you to help us to map our breeding shorebirds wherever you are located. Whether there is a breeding colony of avocets or a single nesting Killdeer, we'd love to hear about them. The program runs for 7 years and volunteers survey 1x1 km UTM squares (grids or tetrads if you like) and register the number of breeding pairs of any shorebird species. The surveyor decides when to do the survey and also how many 1x1 km grids to cover during the 7 years. Note that this is a global program!

Please register if you are happy to help,

<https://www.shorebirdconservation.org/shorebird-atlas>

and if you already have confirmed nesting shorebird records from this year, please submit them.

Gyorgy Szimuly

Shorebird Conservation Society

<https://www.shorebirdconservation.org>

Beware the Jabberwock, My Son, and the Ravens as Well.



(NEWSER) – Some Alaska Costco shoppers say they've had their groceries stolen by ravens in the store parking lot, the AP reports. Matt Lewallen said he was packing his groceries into his car in the parking lot of an Anchorage Costco when ravens swooped in to steal short ribs from his cart, the Anchorage Daily News reported Friday. "I literally took ten steps away and turned around, two ravens came down and instantly grabbed one out of the package, ripped it off and flew off with it," Lewallen said. Lewallen said the piece of meat was about four by seven inches (10-by-18

centimeters)—a sizable meal for a sizable bird. "They know what they're doing; it's not their first time," Lewallen said. Additional raven thief sightings have emerged on social media. "My parents were minding their business after a shop and made it home with one less steak!" Kimberly Waller wrote on Facebook. "The bird snatched it right out of the pack in the parking lot."

Anchorage resident Tamara Josey replied to Waller's post and referred to the ravens as "calculating." She said ravens hovered over her in an attempt to steal her groceries. "I had two ravens, one that was on the car next to me and he kept squawking really loud," Josey said. "He would sit on the car and stare at me, then hop next to the bed of the truck on the other side, and he kept going back and forth. The other raven was on the ground. He kept trying to pull—I had those little mini-melons you have in the mesh baggies—he kept trying to grab the netting and pull my melons off the cart." Rick Sinnott, a former wildlife biologist, said hundreds of ravens fly to Anchorage in the winter for food. "For years, decades, they've watched people in parking lots of grocery stores with all this food," Sinnott said. "They know what a piece of fruit looks like in a grocery cart because they've seen it on the ground or seen it in a garbage can."

Global Big Day: May 8, 2021

On May 8, will you join birders from more than 175 countries and be a part of Global Big Day? You don't have to commit to birding for 24 hours—even 5 or 10 minutes of watching birds at home makes you part of the team. Last year, Global Big Day brought more birders together virtually than ever before. Help us break last year's records and make this year's Global Big Day bigger than ever before!

[Learn about Global Big Day 2021](#)

Birding Hawaii: Oahu in March

Michael Sheldon



The birds of Hawaii offer beauty, variety, novelty—and challenges for watchers at every level of skill and motivation.

You can start your day on the lanai with a cup of coffee and observe the mynas (introduced from India) colonizing your palm tree, tiny warbling white-eyes (Japan) foraging for nectar, red-crested cardinals (Brazil) and red-whiskered and red-vented bulbuls (Asia) popping in

when the mynas aren't around, and house sparrows (Germany and England) pestering you for table scraps.

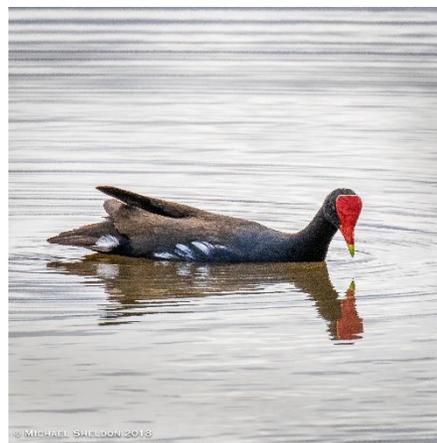
On an easy walk to a local park, you could pick up saffron finches (South America), chestnut munias (Southeast Asia), yellow-fronted canaries (Mozambique), common waxbills (Africa), and java sparrows (Indonesia).



Or you could head to one of any number of wildlife refuges or botanical gardens,

where you might see some of Hawaii's 71 endemic species and subspecies. These include the Hawaiian stilt, Hawaiian moorhen, and Hawaiian coot—birds that are identical (to my eye) to the black-necked stilt, common gallinule, and American coot, respectively. All of the birds will count on your North American ABA life list.

To find the truly rare, and, and in too many cases endangered, Hawaiian birds, you need to make your way deep into the forests, often at high elevations and down miles of treacherously rutted and muddy roads. Going with a guide is a good idea—if not essential. The native honeycreepers—the elepaio, the anianiau, the amakihi, and the apapane—are mainly forest birds. This means listening for the songs, then bushwhacking (quietly if possible) through thick tropical vegetation to



get a look. And you can repeat the process on Oahu, Kauai, and the big island of Hawaii, as the elepaio and amakihi there, for example, are considered separate species.

*

Time spent birding was *moderate* on a family vacation to Oahu this past March. A full-day outing with a local guide Mandy Talpas allowed me to see and photograph many of the species on my most-wanted list. We started on Mount Tantalus, a forested area in Honolulu, where we soon found the Oahu amakihi.



The next stop was downtown, where white terns have colonized one block of a tree-lined boulevard. “Fairy terns,” as they are sometimes known, don’t bother with nests. They lay their eggs directly on tree branches or the ledges of buildings.



Driving East of Honolulu, the highway winds along the cliffs below Koko Head. A pullout known as Lana’i Lookout put us at eye level with red-tailed tropicbirds, brown and red-footed boobies, and sooty terns. The tropicbirds were visiting their nests in the cliff face below us. As they soared by, it was easy to distinguish the two red tail feathers that differentiate them from the white tropicbird.

I’m going to skip over the drive north along the windward coast, even though that’s where I first encountered many of the songbirds I mentioned earlier.

At the northernmost point of Oahu, near the town of Kahuku is a rustic public golf course adjacent to a no-public-access wildlife refuge. It’s here that bristle-thighed curlews come to rest after the long flight from Alaska. On our visit, there was also a group of five Laysan albatrosses that preferred this sheltered site to the more exposed conditions at the large Ka’ena Point colony just 25 miles to the southwest.





Visiting the colony is well worth the effort. After a three-mile hike along the coastline, you arrive at 60 protected acres that provide a sanctuary for nesting Laysan albatrosses and many other seabird species. The albatrosses appear to be indifferent to human visitors, often soaring just overhead and performing courtship displays that are easy to observe even without binoculars. However, the nests are hidden by vegetation, and the chicks themselves are well camouflaged.



Saving my favorite for last, the Pacific golden plover is an occasional, hard-to-find visitor to the Pacific Northwest. On Oahu, though, the “kolea” can be found virtually anywhere there’s a lawn to browse. The vibrant plumage of this bird in Kahuku indicates that its trip to the arctic is coming up soon.



Rare Birds in Australia Have Forgotten How to Sing Their Own Song

Critically endangered regent honeyeaters are forgetting their songs because there are few elder birds to pass them on.

The yellow-speckled, nectar-eating honeyeaters (*Anthochaera phrygia*), which live in Australia, learn their complex courting and territorial songs from other birds. When populations are very small, there's no one for young honeyeaters to learn from.



Ross Crates at the Australian National University in Canberra and his team located more than 100 male honeyeaters by combining data from a monitoring program with sightings reported to the conservation group BirdLife Australia. The researchers recorded the birds' songs and compared them with historical recordings.

Overall, 27% of males sang songs that differed from the typical melodies. Some 12% had resorted to singing the songs of other bird species.

As habitat loss and competition with bigger birds threaten honeyeaters, the loss of their songs could accelerate their decline, the researchers say. Without a common song to bring them together, the birds might simply fail to mate.

American in Germany by Anna Karapin-Springorum

I spent a few days in the German city of Kiel for a few days. A spotted sandpiper had been reported nearby, and, with time on my hands, I went to visit it.

Strolling along a narrow Baltic beach, I spotted the American visitor within minutes. Happily running along the water's edge, pecking at seaweed and gobbling down yummy worms and other invertebrates in the gently lapping waves, the spotted sandpiper didn't seem bothered by my presence, and let me take a few photos. Spotted sandpipers have a European counterpart, the common sandpiper, which is rare in the US, found only occasionally in Alaska, and once in Hawaii.





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BIOBLITZ

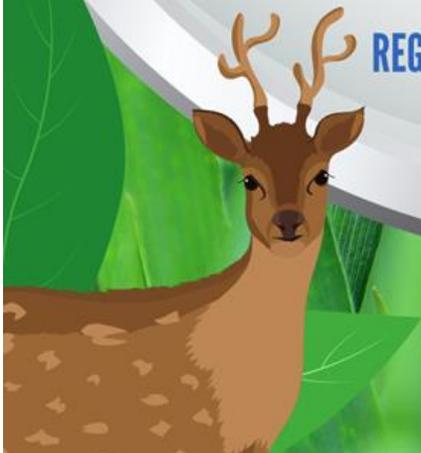
WITH FRIENDS OF GARRET MOUNTAIN RESERVATION

A BioBlitz is an event that focuses on finding and identifying as many species as possible in a specific area over a 24 hour period. At a BioBlitz, scientists, families, students, teachers, and other community members work together to get a snapshot of an area's biodiversity. We're inviting the community to help us by attending one of our expert led nature walks or events and by downloading the iNaturalist app to take pictures of the plants and animals you find around Garret Mountain Reservation and Rifle Camp Park.

GARRET MOUNTAIN RESERVATION | RIFLE CAMP PARK

Starts Friday, June 11 at 4 PM
through
Saturday, June 12 at 4 PM

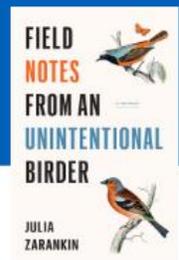
REGISTER: PASSAICCOUNTYREC.ORG



@passaiccountynj

Virtual Meet the Author

at Ridgewood Public Library



Tuesday, May 11, 2021

7:30pm EST

Field Notes From an Unintentional Birder by Julia Zarankin

When Julia Zarankin saw her first red-winged blackbird at the age of thirty-five, she didn't expect that it would change her life. Recently divorced and auditioning hobbies during a stressful career transition, she stumbled on bird watching, initially out of curiosity for the strange breed of humans who wear multi-pocketed vests, carry spotting scopes and discuss the finer points of optics with disturbing fervour. What she never could have predicted was that she would become one of them. Not only would she come to identify proudly as a birder, but birding would ultimately lead her to find love, uncover a new language and lay down her roots.

The Ridgewood Public Library and Bergen County Audubon society join together to bring you this exciting book talk and get participants ready to start their own birding adventures.

Register at www.ridgewoodlibrary.org for a Zoom invitation.

Ridgewood Public Library
125 N. Maple Ave
Ridgewood, NJ 07450
201-670-5600 x 130

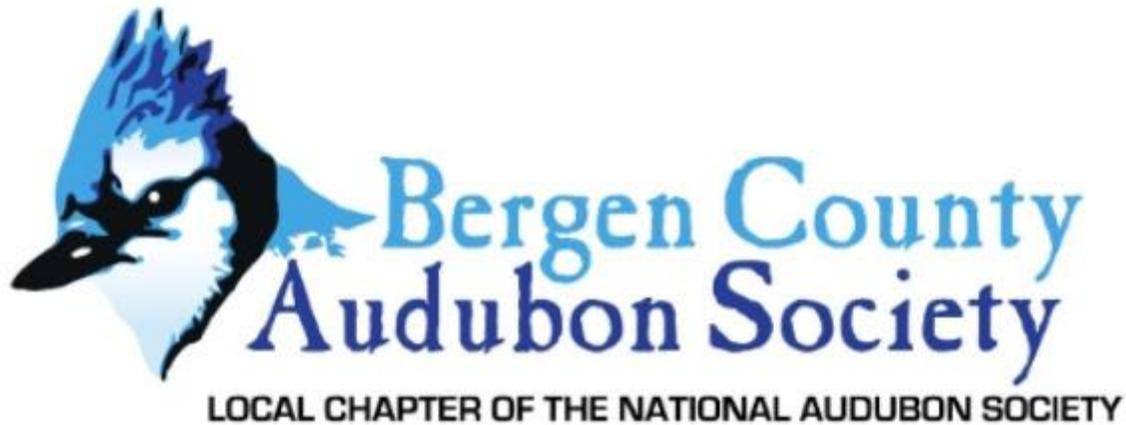


Support the Friends of the Ridgewood Library and the Bergen County Audubon Society by purchasing a copy of this title from Amazon Smile.

amazonsmile

Extreme Breeding Effort of Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)

http://www.tichodroma.sk/pdfs/32/Tichodroma_32_rubacova.pdf



Volunteers Needed: Meadowlands Breeding Bird Atlas

Drew McQuade from the NJSEA Natural Resources Department will be heading up the compilation of the first ever Meadowlands Breeding Bird Atlas. This project is being designed and led by NJSEA staff but will require volunteers to assist with the approximately two-month field effort this summer.

A **Breeding Bird Atlas** is a population survey project designed to cover large geographic areas. Each participant in the project, referred to as an observer or atlaser, will be assigned one or more blocks in which to conduct extensive surveys. The observer will record all species present in the survey block, and will also look for behaviors which provide evidence of breeding. NJSEA will collect the data and analyze the results, with the end product being a comprehensive database of breeding bird distribution in the Meadowlands and publication in a scientific journal.

Training will be provided to those interested in participating. Some experience in bird identification is needed, but species that will be identified will be those you typically identify here in the Meadowlands District. The total time required of volunteers is approximately five to six hours in June and July.

If you are interested in signing up as a volunteer, please email Drew McQuade (dmcquade@njsea.com) or Terry Doss (tdoss@njsea.com) before May 7, 2021.

Observatory Bed and Breakfast Osoyoos, British Columbia

Alice Newton



Don't even think about visiting British Columbia's spectacular Okanagan Valley if you have a sore neck: You will be constantly gazing down, up, and straight ahead, with tantalizing views everywhere!

In 1998, my husband, Jack, and I chose a mountainside 1,500 feet above British Columbia's Osoyoos Lake as our forever home. Below us are the friendly town of Osoyoos and sweeping vistas of the Okanagan Valley, Canada's pocket desert, the northernmost portion of the Great Basin Desert. And above us? The darkest of night skies and outstanding conditions for astronomical observation. We weren't the only ones to notice: The area had been rigorously assessed for its suitability as home to Canada's National Observatory and the Queen Elizabeth II Telescope. That project did not come to fruition, but this wonderful location, blessedly free of light pollution, air pollution, water pollution, and noise pollution, has proved absolutely ideal for our needs.

Our house is an astronomy-themed bed & breakfast, with a large observatory on the roof equipped with a 20-inch telescope. For nights when Mother

Nature does not cooperate fully, we also have a theater with an 11-foot screen and a sound system that would shake an eagle loose from its nest! Jack and I are proud to offer great hospitality, and my astro-imaging husband is always happy to share his passion for astronomy with observers from 8 to 80 and beyond.



Photo Sanford M. Sorkin

Stays with us between May and September include both evening and morning tours of the skies, featuring "birds" that are literally out of this world. Cygnus the Swan shares the heavens with planetary nebulae (areas

of interstellar gas and dust thousands of light years from Earth) including the Owl, Robin's Egg, Pelican, Duck, Eagle, and Parrot's Head.



Photo Jack Newton

Daylight finds many of our guests venturing forth to seek out the myriad of earthbound birds that nest and rear their young here. The South Okanagan region has the best birding in Canada, with more than 300 species of birds found here. According to a BC Ministry of Environment report, well more than a million ducks, geese, and other waterbirds migrate through the valley, in turn attracting a broad range of hawks and eagles, falcons, vultures, and owls.

One owl species, the comical little Burrowing Owl, is particularly closely associated with the Okanagan. Canada's entire population of this species is estimated at only 1000 pairs. The renowned Burrowing Owl Estate Winery, one of over 200 in our area, is located just 20 minutes from the B&B, in the town of Oliver. The winery's owners contribute all wine-tasting fees to the non-profit, community-based Burrowing Owl Organization; this effort has raised over a million dollars to support a captive breeding program for this endangered species. Lucky

visitors to the winery may be treated to the sight of a live burrowing owl perched right in the wine shop, a feathered ambassador whose role is to raise awareness and appreciation of this and other rare species. The birds selected for this role are usually the last to hatch in a clutch, the "runts" of the litter, and would likely not have survived in the wild. Each owl makes only three or four appearances a year in the shop, and they are always closely monitored for stress by members of the Burrowing Owl Conservation Society.

Burrowing Owls are just one of the many xerophile species found in the Okanagan, the most arid region in Canada. In the rain shadow of the Cascades, our annual rainfall is about the same as that in Tucson, and we have sand dunes nearby.



Photo Rick Wright

Scorpions and rattlesnakes fit right in with a characteristic desert flora including sage and prickly pear cactus. Large mammals visitors can hope to see include badgers, wolves, bears, and coyotes; the cliffs above nearby Vaseux Lake are inhabited by a large herd of bighorn sheep. Among the abundant birds, California Quail, Sage Thrasher, and even the odd Black-throated Sparrow find a home in this dry country.

In contrast, our marshes and lakes—among them Osoyoos Lake, Canada’s warmest freshwater lake—are happily inhabited by turtles, otters, and beavers. The ponderosa pine, fir, and larch forests are a small but prominent part of an ecosystem with an abundant ground cover of grasses, forbs, and shrubs.



Photo Sanford M. Sorkin

Canadian birders know this area as the country’s best woodpecker watching: Williamson and red-naped sapsuckers and black-backed and American three-toed woodpeckers all breed here, and the extremely fortunate birder may stumble across one of Canada’s last white-headed woodpeckers, one of the country’s most endangered species. Nesting western bluebirds and mountain chickadees take advantage of the holes excavated by this abundance of picids. This is also a fine place to look for such classic western mountain birds as the Cassin finch, Cassin vireo, and Townsend solitaire.

Evening grosbeaks and red crossbills are usually present year-round.

You can learn more about the Observatory B&B and about birding and astronomy in the area by visiting jacknewton.com and hellobc.com/stories/6-places-to-bird-watch-in-osoyoos. The *Okanagan Birding Trail Guide*, an essential resource for visiting birders, is available at southokanagannature.com/product/okanagan-valley-birding-trail-guide.



Photo Jack Newton



M42 and Running Man Nebula, Photo Jack Newton

Do you know these avian constellations?

Apus, the Bird-of-paradise
Aquila, the Eagle
Corvus, the Crow
Cygnus, the Swan
Tucana, the Toucan
Pavo, the Peacock
Columba, the Dove
Grus, the Crane

The small constellation Scutum, the Shield, is home to the open cluster known as the Wild Ducks.

Birds in This Issue

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Page 8:	Regent honeyeater, spotted sandpiper
Page 12:	Western tanager
Page 13:	Chukar, burrowing owls
Page 14:	Lewis woodpecker

SOUTH AFRICA: WESTERN CAPE AND KRUGER **September 27 to October 14, 2022** ***with Rick Wright and Patrick Cardwell***

We start in Cape Town and return from Johannesburg, in between visiting sites such as West Coast National Park, the Cape of Good Hope, Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden, and Kruger National Park. We will enjoy a vast range of birdlife, from penguins to rollers to cisticolas, along with many of the large mammals that South Africa is so famous for. With visits to Robben Island, the site of Nelson Mandela's long imprisonment, and Johannesburg's Apartheid Museum, our trip also offers insight into the history and culture of this beautiful and diverse country.

Strictly limited to 12 participants plus the two leaders, this trip is open to LSNY members, members of the Montclair Bird Club, and clients of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours. For more information and to register, please email or phone Erik Lindqvist at erik@ventbird.com or (800) 328-8368.

Consumer Guide to Window-strike Prevention

Being a member of a bird club means that you are frequently asked about preventing bird window strikes. The link below contains a very comprehensive guide that can be shared.

[Bird-Friendly Yards](#)

The MBC Bulletin Bird

Support the Montclair Bird Club Using Amazon Smile

The Montclair Bird Club is registered as a 501(c)(3) with Amazon. If you order from Amazon but have not chosen a charity, consider the Montclair Bird Club. Place your orders at

[SMILE.AMAZON.COM](https://www.amazon.com/Smile?ref=smile_home)

Select a charity from the upper right corner of the home page.

MBC will be credited with 0.5 percent of each Amazon Smile order.

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THE BROADWING

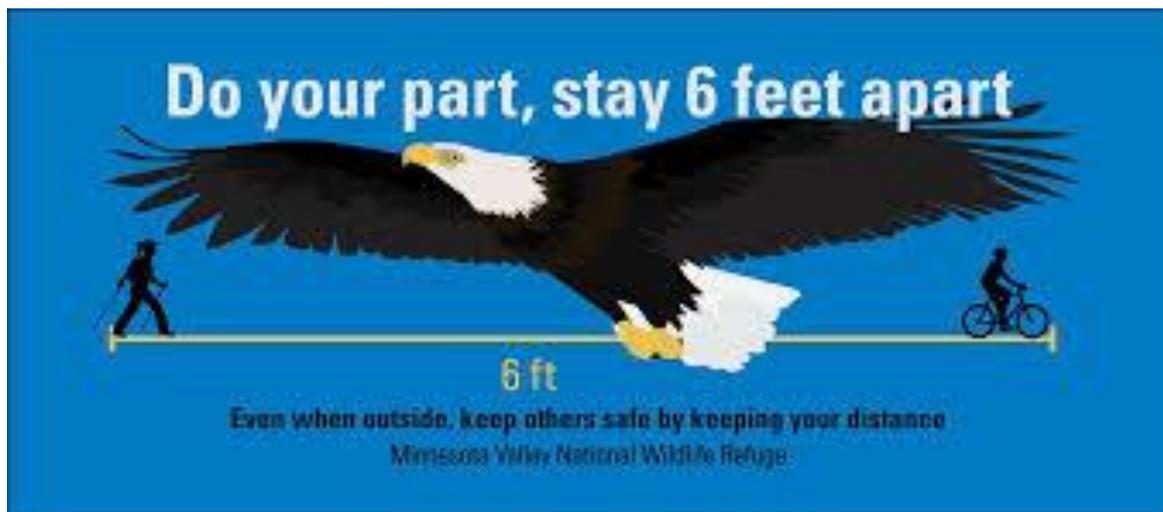
The *Broadwing* is published five times a year: January, March, May, late summer, and October.
Or monthly during a pandemic.

Send photos, field notes, or articles to the editor at MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com.

From the Editor's Desk

Please feel free to email me with any items you would like included in future issues of *The Broadwing*. Please include pictures and any other news that will reduce anxiety and make us smile.

MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com



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