The Broadwing

Publication of the Montclair Bird Club
February 2021

Montclair, NJ
Volume LXVI, Number 6

President's Message
February 2021

It is pleasing to be able to offer so much content in *The Broadwing*. In this issue you will see how one longtime member is working to help establish a larger breeding kestrel population in New Jersey. Another offers extensive descriptions of the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge in the northwest corner of the state. You can enjoy her trip or plan your own.

Our youngest member reports conservation activities on Heligoland in a fascinating story and an array of pictures.

Sandy

In This Issue

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 10
Virtual Bird Walk: Thursday, February 18

Cars with Bird Names

Buick Skylark

Datsun Bluebird

Plymouth Road Runner

Ford Falcon

Stutz Blackhawk

The 100-Word Essay Challenge

The editorial staff of the *Broadwing* is inviting members and friends to contribute a 100-word essay on birds for publication in the March *Broadwing*. The essay may contain up to 100 words and no more. Excess words will automatically disqualify the essay. You can add a title to your essay, but those words count towards the 100-word maximum.

A moderately generous donor has offered a $25 prize for the best entry. The donor will remain anonymous unless he decides to increase the size of the prize. Both members of the editorial staff, and possibly a third volunteer, will constitute the judging committee. While their judgment is final, readers of the March *Broadwing* may determine that a second award is appropriate. Readers who disagree with the elite judging staff should submit their objections and recommendations by email.

Submit entries by email (MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com) with 100 Words in the subject line.
The deadline for entries is February 18, 2021.

The theme of the February Virtual Bird Walk is pictures from a favorite country or US state.

Participants will be able to share their screens or email their pictures to for inclusion in a group PowerPoint.

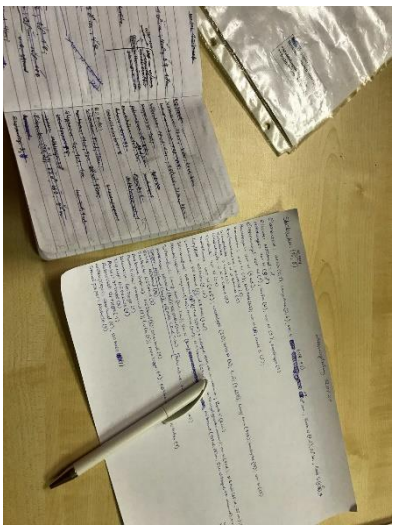
If you plan to send them to me at MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com, photos should be less than 2mb each, and sent at least three days in advance of the meeting.

January and February on Heligoland

by Anna Karapin-Springorum

As a biology student who loves fieldwork and research, I imagine that working at any research station is exciting and interesting. So far, working at the Institute of Avian Research's Heligoland field station has lived up to that expectation. For those that don't know, I'm currently living in Germany, having taken a semester off from majoring in biology at Mount Holyoke College. I'm spending January and February on Heligoland, a small island off the coast of Germany in the North Sea. Two years ago, I worked here for the Verein Jordsand, a non-profit, during my gap year, and now I'm back on the island, working for a different non-profit.

The Institute of Avian Research has been operating on Heligoland for over 110 years. As one of the first research stations of its kind, it has compiled some of the longest-running data sets in the world. These are very important when looking for changes in bird populations and migratory habits, for example. Apart from detailed records of birds observed on and around the island and the station's banding data, specific scientific projects are also completed here. Since we have a small MRI machine and rudimentary laboratory facilities, many Ph.D. students have collected data for research projects at the field station, examining topics like departure decisions and hormone levels in migratory birds.



Because long-term data sets are so important, most of our day is spent gathering and recording data. After a communal breakfast, our first task of the day is to sit down and fill out our daily birding journal. We each report on all of the birds we saw the day before, as well as where we saw them. This journal "only" illustrates chance sightings, since we take different routes across the island each day, but it's still interesting data worth keeping track of.

Heligoland is an important rest stop for many birds in Europe. Located about 50 km (31 miles) from the coast of Germany, Heligoland is one of the few places where migratory birds crossing

the North Sea on their way to and from Scandinavia can stop to sleep and eat. Because of this, Heligoland is an excellent island not only for recreational birders but also for an avian research station.

In order to get an idea of which birds are on the island and how they're doing, our next job of the day is to catch some birds. Perhaps the largest physical feature here at the field station is the "Fanggarten" or "catch garden." The long, fenced-in garden is filled with trees, shrubs, thickets, and water features designed to attract as many migratory birds stopping over on the island as possible. At regular intervals, three large net constructions cut through the garden (see image of model). These are called Heligoland traps, a design invented on Heligoland in the early 1900s by Hugo Weigold, who founded the island's research station in 1910. The process of catching birds in the trap is straightforward: a team of people run through the garden along designated paths, hissing loudly, scaring up any birds that are there. The birds then fly away from the noise and towards the nets. Set up to form a funnel, these nets guide the fleeing birds into the end of the trap, where ideally, they fly into a final trap/box system where they're easy to scoop out. However, some often remain in the end of the funnel, in a small space that we can seal off once they're inside by closing two netted doors. Either way, once we have the birds, we place them in small (or large, depending on the size of the bird) cotton bags to easily and safely transport them to the banding hut. There, they are banded, weighed, measured, and set free again.

Weighing and measuring birds gives us important data about the condition of migratory birds; in addition, many of the birds captured can be aged or sexed by examination of their plumage and molt status.

The numbered bands placed on the bird's feet allow us to associate all the data of a particular bird with a certain number, and should that bird be caught again or found when it dies, we can identify that individual and see where it flew off to.

All birds that we band are given a metal band with a number stamped into it. Bands must be light enough so as not to weigh the bird down, and yet not too tight, so that they don't pinch or chafe the bird's leg. They must also not slide off over the "ankle" joint, so they can't be too big or loose. As a result, we have tiny bands for tiny birds, big bands for big birds, and many sizes in between. These bands are typically made of aluminum or stainless steel, depending on the size of the bird and the environment it lives in. For example, Eurasian woodcocks and some gulls have similarly thick legs and so they are given bands of the same size; but because gulls because gulls spend so much time pecking around in rotting seaweed, standing in sand, water, and various other abrasive environments, they are given steel bands, while woodcocks get aluminum ones. Some bands are even tailored to a specific species: when banding common murres, we use special oblong bands that are more streamlined, since murres spend so much of their lives swimming and diving in water.

The openings also have special pliers with circular openings for banding. Those allow us to fasten the bands around birds' legs in a perfect circle, and because the openings are the exact size of the band, they also prevent bands from being put on too tight.

In the main migratory season, interns and those living at the research station run through the garden every hour, but in January and February, with so little bird traffic, we just run twice a day: once in the morning and once in the mid-afternoon. These past weeks, we sometimes haven't caught anything all day, but in the main migratory season, hundreds of birds are caught and released daily.

Some birds are given additional bands. These are typically colorful, and many are made of plastic. They can be big, with large characters, as on this European herring gull. This sort of band allows us to identify individuals without recapturing them. Other birds, often smaller ones, are given thin, colorful plastic bands, often without any lettering on them. In those cases, the combination of colors allows us to identify individuals. I see this most

often on sanderlings and purple sandpipers, but a number of Eurasian blackbirds on the island have them too. Bands of this type are often used for research projects. Because the order of the colors is important in order to identify individuals, there is a specific method to writing down those sightings. Color bands are read from the top of the "stack" of bands to the bottom, and the left leg of the bird (from the bird's point of view) is read first. So, when recording the bands on the bird illustrated here (a rendition of an actual banded Eurasian blackbird I saw on my way home from the supermarket), I wrote down KWM-OOV (Light pink, White, Metal, Orange, Orange, Violet). Each (standardized) letter corresponds to a particular color, and the dash separates the two separate legs of the bird.

However, not all migratory or breeding birds on the island like to hang out in the garden next to the research station. To figure out how many of those birds are currently on or around the island, we regularly get outside and look for the birds ourselves. Every two weeks, we conduct a "waterfowl mapping," which essentially means we walk along the coastline of the island and the neighboring island (The small island is Düne.) and count all the birds we see as well as where we see them, focusing primarily on waterfowl and shorebirds. We split up to do these counts, and last time I was part of the group that counted waterfowl on the north end of the main island, which includes the "Lummenfelsen," the rocky cliffs where common murres can sometimes be found even in the winter.

I wrote down all the birds we counted in my notebook, but in the field, which, on Heligoland, is always windy, often cold, and sometimes wet, those pages ended up being a rather chaotic mess. However, our tallies were legibly transcribed onto a clean sheet of paper, we found that in three hours, we had counted over 3,600 birds on our section of the island alone. For those squinting at the image below for more details, many of these 3,600 were common murres and European herring gulls. We also counted common eiders, a long-tailed duck, mergansers, fulmars, gannets, great cormorants, a kestrel, a peregrine falcon, razorbills, a black guillemot, a variety of gulls, various corvids, pipits, and some other passerines.

Other inventories of birds present on the island are conducted less frequently. Some take place only a few times a year, such as the island-wide sparrow count. We had one of these last week, and it involved walking down every street on the island, counting all the birds we saw (especially the sparrows), and making note of all the bird feeders and birdbaths. Heligoland is a small island, but the little alleys and winding streets made the job a test of patience and sense of direction.

Finally, a considerable portion of our day is typically spent typing up data. All the new data we record needs to be entered into Excel sheets, and now, during the long winter months, with few migratory birds, we're also tasked with typing up old banding data and the old daily ornithological journal data. The older data involves a lot of squinting to decipher scrawled cursive handwriting on 60-year-old, yellowed paper, but it's always exciting to see what they

caught and banded in the past. We also get to see which individual birds were found again elsewhere in the world, often in Scandinavian countries or in Spain.

All in all, working here at the Institute of Avian Research's field station has been not only educational and enriching, but a lot of fun as well. Looking forward to reporting back with even more next month!

Here are some photos of birds we've caught (some of which I banded!):

All bird identifications are on page 22.

Kestrel Comebacks

By Deb DeSalvo

I fell in love with American kestrels in the early 1970s. We lived outside of Oswego, NY, where my father taught mathematics, and our neighborhood was surrounded by farmland. On our family walks—both of my parents were birders—we would see many birds, but kestrels were among our favorites. We were mesmerized by the extraordinary ways that their tiny bodies moved as they hunted along the roadsides near our home. I think I just liked their very hip 1970s sideburns.

Fast-forward to 2019, when my husband Jason and I bought a 43-acre property in Oldwick, NJ. It is about a quarter mile down a dirt road, surrounded by rolling and picturesque farmland, and as you enter the property, you are faced with a 13-acre rectangular field, now with a barn and house in mid-construction. To the north of our farmland, there is a 5-acre wetland, with three massive old willows in various states of decay. And then, beyond the field to the east is a 25-acre woodland, consisting of mostly red maples, red cedars, and a few walnuts, sycamores, hickories, and oaks. There is a brook that winds its way through from north to south between the field and the woods. It is beautiful and a haven for all kinds of wildlife.

When we first walked our land, we imagined creating more and better habitat than what existed there already. And included in this plan was a desire to put up all kinds of nest boxes. Wren and chickadee houses were easy. And so were bluebird and wood duck boxes. Kestrel boxes required ladders and digging massive holes. My neck was not cut out for that kind of work.

In February of 2020, we were invited to a "woodcock walk" at a local preserve managed by the Raritan Headwaters Association. The evening was magical, with a full moon, mild temperatures, and a woodcock doing his mating sounds and dance. A fox brayed; a great horned owl appeared. And we met some wonderful people who introduced us to more wonderful people. All of them dedicated to this vital organization.

Bill Pitts and Deb Digging

Which brings me to November, during the COVID pandemic, and a lovely afternoon spent walking the same preserve, which I have visited every week since moving out here. I met Dr. Kristi MacDonald, the director of science for RHA. Beth McConnell, the development consultant for

RHA, whom I had met in February, made the introduction. Both of them were excited to help me put up my kestrel boxes. I didn't realize that they had an outreach program and worked with Bill Pitts from the NJ Fish and Wildlife, Endangered and Nongame

Species Program. In the last two years, they have mounted and monitored 18 boxes on private and preserved lands in and around the region. I thought they did me the favor, but they saw it as I did them the favor. A win-win-win. (Me, them, the kestrels.)

In early December, Bill and Kristi met me on the property to take a walk around and see where we might mount the boxes to be the most successful. Kestrels are particular, as they should be. The site cannot be too noisy or have too many trees, and the nest box opening should not face north. Despite a snow-covered ground, and once we stopped looking at all the fox, mouse and deer tracks, we found two spots on the perimeter of our field and got to work with a post-hole digger and a tamping bar. Kristi had supplied both of these tools. Bill had a drill, a ladder, and a second nesting box.

The first one I supplied; it was a birthday present from friends who knew me well. We spent five hours digging the holes and setting the posts in the ground. (My neck was sore, and my toes were frozen.) The posts were red cedar, harvested from our back woods. Jason cut them down and sized them to 14 and 16 feet each and removed

Jason Tamping

all the knobs. The three of us managed to put the posts up. A week later, Jason and I refilled the holes that had settled, causing the posts to shift a little. All is right after more tamping and more fill. They seem to fit right into the landscape. Now we wait and hope that a pair of kestrels finds their way here, to boxes #19 and #20 of the RHA Kestrel Program.

Deb and the nest box

If you are interested in learning more about the Raritan Headwaters Association, head here: www.raritanheadwaters.org Look under “our work”, “land stewardship” to learn more about their Kestrel restoration project.

Waiting for kestrels

The 100-Word Essay Challenge

The editorial staff of the *Broadwing* is inviting members and friends to contribute a 100-word essay on birds for publication in the March *Broadwing*. The essay may contain up to 100 words and no more. Excess words will automatically disqualify the essay. You can add a title to your essay, but those words count towards the 100-word maximum.

A moderately generous donor has offered a $25 prize for the best entry. The donor will remain anonymous unless he decides to increase the size of the prize. Both members of the editorial staff, and possibly a third volunteer, will constitute the judging committee. While their judgment is final, readers of the March *Broadwing* may determine that a second award is appropriate. Readers who disagree with the elite judging staff should submit their objections and recommendations by email.

Submit entries by email (MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com) with 100 Words in the subject line.
The deadline for entries is February 18, 2021.

Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge

A Gem in Northern New Jersey

By Donna Traylor

Sussex County, New Jersey, is a nature lover's paradise. Approximately 38% of the County's land base is public open space. This includes multiple state parks, one state forest, many wildlife management areas, part of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge currently encompasses over 5,500 acres in Sussex County, New Jersey and Orange County, New York. It is only one hour from New York City.

The refuge was established in 1990 by Congress "to preserve and enhance refuge lands and waters in a manner that will conserve the natural diversity of fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for present and future generations and to provide opportunities for compatible scientific research, environmental education, and fish- and wildlife-oriented recreation."

The Wallkill River is the heart of the refuge. The Wallkill begins in Sparta (Sussex County, NJ) and flows north into New York (Orange and Ulster Counties), merges with the Rondout Creek, where it merges with Rondout Creek, a tributary of the Hudson River. The refuge is located along a ten-mile stretch of the Wallkill River, within the Appalachian Ridge and Valley physiographic province. The Kittatinny Ridge is to the west and the Hudson Highlands to the east. This is all part of the Great Valley, which runs from Canada to the southeastern United States.

Historically, the area the refuge encompasses was inhabited by Native Americans beginning approximately 10,000 BCE. The land was important for flint and chert supplies, which they used to make hunting and cutting tools. Today, the land along the river is used for agriculture and outdoor recreation. Numerous properties adjacent to refuge are preserved through the State of New Jersey's Farmland Preservation program.

The refuge offers a variety of habitats. There are mixed hardwood forests, swamps, floodplain forests, grasslands, scrub shrub areas, and a small Atlantic white cedar forest. Before the refuge was created, there were sections where farmers had channelized the river. Currently, many of these areas have been restored to provide more natural habitat. A former 335-acre sod farm area is now managed by the refuge in waterfowl impoundments. The bottomland along the Wallkill River is some of the highest-quality waterfowl habitat in northwestern New Jersey. One of the original focuses of this refuge was to manage for American black ducks and other

waterfowl, including wood ducks, mallards, green-winged teal, common mergansers, and Canada geese. The refuge headquarters on County Route 565 is a good point to gather information and take a short walk on the Dagmar Dale Trail.

This refuge is a magnet for birds, butterflies, moths, and other wildlife. Over 260 species of birds have been documented within its boundaries. This includes 29 species of waterfowl, 22 species of raptors, and 31 species of shorebirds. Depending on the habitat and season, wildlife including black bears, white-tailed deer, beavers, minks, muskrats, red fox, gray fox, river otters, coyotes, skunks, and possums can be seen.

Since its inception, the refuge has developed a wonderful trail network. Many of the trails were originally rail lines; therefore, they are flat and easy hikes for anyone. One of the most popular hikes begins across Owens Station Road. Owens Station Road has a large parking area, a butterfly garden, and a secondary refuge headquarters. The trail here is an easy, level hike beginning on Owens Station Road. Walk approximately ½-mile from the parking area to the back end of the Liberty Loop Trail. Initially, the raised trail goes through wetlands and then enters a forested section. At the ½-mile mark, you reach the NJ side (back end) of the Liberty Loop trail. The impoundments begin here. Turn left at the T intersection and start scanning. A spotting scope is always a good in these large marshy areas, where waterfowl, wading birds, and shorebirds are common. In the fall, this open area allows unobstructed views of migrating hawks. Peregrine falcons are often seen at this time. Bald eagles are regular throughout the year. The refuge has hosted nesting sandhill cranes over the last several years. A good variety of passerines can be tallied in the woodlands, especially in migration. Rusty blackbirds are seen each year in the marshy areas.

If you are looking for a slightly longer hike, the Liberty Loop Trail is a good choice. It can be reached from Owens Station Road (see above) or from the small parking lot by the refuge kiosk and platform on Oil City Road in New York. The round-trip hike is 2.75 miles. The trail is flat and almost completely exposed to the marshland. This is a great four-season destination. There are sections that traverse woodland edges which are productive in spring and summer for nesting passerines. Waders and waterfowl are evident year-round. This trail provides excellent opportunities to scope out the many impoundments. This is one of the best areas in northwestern NJ for shorebirds. In the winter months, Liberty Loop is the place to go for a short-eared owl show. Typically, January and February are the best months to experience this owl as it hunts low above the marshes. Arrive at the Oil City Road platform half an hour before dusk. This will allow some time to search out the regular northern harriers, red-tail hawks, and possibly rough-legged hawks. At dusk, there is a changing of the guard as the harriers disappear for the day and the owls appear. Look for the characteristic butterfly-like flight of these birds as they glide low over the marshes looking for dinner. There may be just a few or you may witness something amazing. We experienced amazing about half a dozen years ago when, after a brilliant sunset, thousands of Canada geese flew noisily above the marshes from New York to New Jersey and put up approximately 33 short-eared owls. The owls appeared suddenly and all together and flew high into a kettle formation for several minutes, finally separating to begin hunting individually. It was one of those very special birding moments to treasure forever.

For a similar hike on the New York side of Oil City Road, check out the Winding Waters Trail. This is another relatively level walk of about 2 1/2 miles. Although much of the trail is through a marsh, there is more woodland habitat on this trail. Additionally, it parallels the Wallkill River for a bit. In the fall, this area should produce good numbers of bobolinks and a decent variety of sparrows. If you enjoy canoeing or kayaking, you can put in at the Winding Waters parking lot. There are other areas to paddle, including a large pond on Owens Station Road and put-ins on County Route 565 and Bassetts Bridge Road, all in New Jersey.

Birding is excellent throughout the refuge, but I suggest exploring Kelly Road, in Vernon Township, in spring and summer for Empidonax, flycatchers especially Willow and Alder. This is a short dead-end road that is easily walked (parking lot at the end). Swallows share the many eastern bluebird boxes here, and indigo buntings make their presence known. Pull in at dusk and listen for the distinctive sounds of American woodcock in their courtship displays. If you are up for a walk, the Timberdoodle Trail begins here and continues north to Bassetts Bridge Road.

Refuge trails have been open throughout this pandemic. Social distancing Guidelines for social distancing and face coverings should be followed. There are so many trails to choose from that from that you may feel you have the refuge to yourself. Pack the binoculars and camera and a picnic lunch, and plan on spending the day at the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge—so close to NJ's urban/suburban areas, but a world away.

The Montclair Bird Club

Organized 1920

Else Greenstone Avian Essay Competition
January 2021

Overview

The Montclair Bird Club (MBC) is soliciting proposals for an original essay to be published in the Club's newsletter, *The Broadwing*. The contest honors the decades of contributions that Else Greenstone made at the Montclair hawkwatch to raptor conservation, the MBC, New Jersey Audubon, and the Hawk Migration Association of North America. Through her passion and commitment, thousands of visitors to the Hawkwatch, including generations of schoolchildren, novice birders, hawkwatchers and members of the general public, were inspired to look up and experience the magic of migration. This competition is intended to honor and continue that legacy.

New Jersey students ages 12 to 17 are invited to submit an original essay about birds, illustrated if possible, with photographs or other graphic media, suitable for inclusion in *The Broadwing*. The essay should be approximately 700–1,000 words in length. The author of the winning essay selected by the MBC Executive Committee will be presented an honorarium of $500.

The Montclair Bird Club

The MBC was organized in 1920 and celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2020. The purposes of the Montclair Bird Club are to stimulate and increase the appreciation of nature and an understanding of birds and their natural environment, and to encourage conservation practices through support and education. The club holds monthly meetings with guest speakers (except for July, August, and December). The June meeting features presentations by club members. While the Club's name recognizes a focus on birding topics, many of the lectures address other nature-related topics, such as forestry, soil management, and endangered species, and non-avian species, including reptiles, butterflies, and bats.

Objectives of the Competition

The competition was established to honor Else Greenstone by encouraging students to pursue their interests in nature, and to introduce them to the MBC, and invite them to join in our monthly meetings. It will also serve to enhance the Club's mission by expanding our commitment to a mutually beneficial relationship with the community.

Essay Format

Title: A short descriptive title that can be used to promote the topic in *The Broadwing* and on our website.

Length: Between 700 and 1,000 words. Photographs or other Illustrations are desirable.

Full Description: The essay can reflect your birding experiences, other encounters with the natural world, conservation, your research or academic interests, or any other related topic. The scope can be local, national, or even international. The topic should be addressed clearly and in an organized fashion.

Contact Information: Please provide your name, age, grade, and an email address, how you would like to be contacted. If your preference is a phone call, please provide that number.

Selection Criteria: The MBC Executive Committee will be solely responsible for reviewing essays and selecting the winning essay. The submitted essays will be judged on originality and relevance to the mission of the MBC (set forth on page 1 in the description of the MBC). All decisions of the Executive Committee will be final. If more than one exceptional essay is received, the Executive Committee may grant the author(s) a smaller honorarium and request permission from the authors to also publish their essays in *The Broadwing.*

Timeline: **August 30, 2021** Essays must be received by the MBC Executive Committee by this date. The submission in a PDF or DOC format should be made to MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com

September 15, 2021 Notification of winning essay. Publication will be in the October or November *Broadwing*.

Legal: You own the copyright to your original work. If you have used additional resources, please give credit where it is due. The selection(s) of the Executive Committee are final.

If you need clarification or additional information, please email your question to MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com.

SARS-CoV2 (COVID-19) Pandemic Lockdown Influences Nature-Based Recreational Activity: The Case of Birders

Abstract

The new coronavirus infection SARS-CoV2 which was later renamed COVID-19 is a pandemic affecting public health. The fear and the constraints imposed to control the pandemic may correspondingly influence leisure activities, such as birding, which is the practice of observing birds based on visual and acoustic cues. Birders are people who carry out birding observations around the globe and contribute to the massive data collection in citizen science projects. Contrasting to earlier COVID-19 studies, which have concentrated on clinical, pathological, and virological topics, this study focused on the behavioral changes of birders. A total of 4484 questionnaire survey responses from 97 countries were received. The questionnaire had an open-ended style. About 85% of respondents reported that COVID-19 has changed their birding behavior. The most significant change in birdwatchers' behavior was related to the geographic coverage of birding activities, which became more local. People focused mostly on yard birding. In total, 12% of respondents (*n* = 542 cases) reported having more time for birding, whereas 8% (*n* = 356 cases) reported having less time for birding. Social interactions decreased since respondents, especially older people, changed their birding behavior toward birding alone or with their spouse. Women reported more often than men that they changed to birding alone or with their spouse, and women also reported more often about canceled field trips or society meetings. Respondents from more highly-developed countries reported that they spend currently more time for birding, especially for birding alone or with their spouse, and birding at local hotspots. Our study suggests that long lockdowns with strict regulations may severely affect leisure activities. In addition, a temporal and spatial shift in birding due to the pandemic may influence data quality in citizen science projects. As nature-based recreation will be directed more toward nearby sites, environmental management resources and actions need to be directed to sites that are located near the users, e.g., in urban and suburban areas. The results can be applied with caution to other nature-based recreational activities. **View Full-Text**

Keywords: **birding; birdwatching; citizen science; recreation; leisure; behavioral changes**

Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health **2020**, *17*(19), 7310; **https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17197310**

Namibian fishery reduces seabird deaths by 98%

After over a decade of work with the country's fishing industry, the Albatross Task Force in Namibia is celebrating a major conservation success. A new paper shows that seabird deaths in the Namibian demersal longline fishery have been reduced by 98%, which equates to 22,000 birds saved every year.

Upcoming tours with Rick Wright and Victor Emanuel Nature Tours
Click each tour title for more details.

- **April 20–28, 2021** France: Birds & Art in Provence
- **April 29 – May 9, 2021** France: Birds & Art in Burgundy
- **May 12–20, 2021** Poland: Birds & Art in Royal Krakow
- **July 18–31, 2021** Circumnavigation of the Black Sea
- **August 19–28, 2021** England: British Birdfair & Coastal Norfolk
- **September 8–17, 2021** Spain: Birds & Art in the Northwest
- **September 19–28, 2021** Germany: Birds & Art in Berlin & Brandenburg
- **September 27 – October 14, 2022** South Africa: Birds, Wildlife & Culture
- **May 12– 20, 2022** France: Birds & Art in Provence
- **May 20–30, 2022** France: Birds & Art in Burgundy
- **May 30 – June 9, 2022** Germany in Spring: Birds & Art in Berlin & Brandenburg
- **September 7–22, 2022** Hungary & The Czech Republic: Birds & Music from Budapest to Prague
- **September 27 – October 14, 2022** South Africa: The Western Cape and Kruger

Bali's thieving monkeys can spot high-value items to ransom
By Rebecca Ratcliff

From the *Guardian*, Rebecca Ratcliffe is the Guardian's south-east Asia correspondent.

At the Uluwatu temple in Bali, monkeys mean business. The long-tailed macaques who roam the ancient site are infamous for brazenly robbing unsuspecting tourists and clinging on to their possessions until food is offered as ransom payment.
Researchers have found they are also skilled at judging which items their victims value the most and using this information to maximize their profit.

Shrewd macaques prefer to target items that humans are most likely to exchange for food, such as electronics, rather than objects that tourists care less about, such as hairpins or empty camera bags, said Dr. Jean-Baptiste Leca, an associate professor in the psychology department at the University of Lethbridge in Canada and lead author of the study.

Mobile phones, wallets, and prescription glasses are among the high-value possessions the monkeys aim to steal. "These monkeys have become experts at snatching them from absent-minded tourists who didn't listen to the temple staff's recommendations to keep all valuables inside zipped handbags firmly tied around their necks and backs," said Leca.

ALDROVANDI'S BIRDS
RICK WRIGHT, PH.D.
7:00–8:00 PM, THURSDAYS

As we approach the 500th anniversary of the birth of Ulisse Aldrovandi, that consummate humanist's massive encyclopedia is increasingly recognized as the greatest product of Italian natural history. The three lavishly illustrated volumes dedicated to birds, published beginning in 1599, cover far more than mere avian physiology, preserving popular superstitions, classical myths, learned allegories, and etymological fantasies. We will read and translate selected excerpts from this treasure trove. For intermediate students of Latin. All assigned texts are available at no charge on line.

TELEPAIDEIA

https://www.paideiainstitute.org/online_classes

There were some bright positives in the past year for wildlife

Many of you have heard that the pandemic that kept more people at home allowed wildlife to venture into habitat that they formerly had avoided due to human activity. According to National Geographic some areas in the United States saw a 73% decrease in traffic and fatal collisions with wild animals dropped by 58%. More people did take to walking outside and discovered nature in their neighborhoods.

National Geographic also reported on Operation Thunder 2020, a global law enforcement effort to uncover and halt wildlife smuggling. Wildlife officials seized thousands of wildlife products, including live animals.

In October, Current Biology published an article about using technology to thwart the illegal trade in turtle eggs. 3-D-printed decoy turtle eggs outfitted with a GPS-GSM transmitter were buried in 101 turtle nests in Costa Rica. Dubbed the InvestEGGator, a decoy egg taken with the real eggs showed the locations where stolen eggs were taken. This technology can be used to track the movements of the illegal traffickers and provide other information to law enforcement.

Conserve Wildlife of New Jersey Foundation reports that the piping plover nest sites monitored at Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge hosted 39 pairs, and another pair used the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt. 68 chicks fledged from these nests. New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife reported a total of 103 pairs nesting in the state in 2020.

If anyone has heard of interesting conservation news, please email
Giselle Smisko at avianwildlife@embarqmail.com

Earliest modern bird *Science News: 3/18/20*

The nearly 67-million-year-old fossilized "Wonderchicken" (also known as *Asteriornis maastrichtensis*) is the oldest modern bird ever found, meaning that its descendants survived the asteroid impact that wiped out nonavian dinosaurs and led to the birds we see today (*SN: 3/18/20*). Wonderchicken did indeed look something like a chicken, if it were crossed with a duck and shrunk to the size of a quail.

Gulls to Great Auks: An Art Exhibit and Lecture Program

January 22 – May 14, 2021
Fairfield University Art Museum
Fairfield, CT

Several of the online lectures in this series are sure to interest Montclair Bird Club members. For the full program, click here.

Birds in This Issue

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

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.

Montclair Bird Club Officers for 2021

President..... Sandy Sorkin
Vice President..... Jim McGregor
Treasurer ..... Donna Traylor
Recording Secretary ... Pat Sanders

Committees
Field Trips..... Bill Beren
Programs..... Donna Traylor
Publicity ..... Wayne Greenstone
Refreshments ..... JoAnn Katzban
Betsy Cohen

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