

The Broadwing



Publication of the Montclair Bird Club
April 2021

Montclair, NJ
Volume LXVI, Number 8

Birds on Ice

In This Issue

President's Message April 2021

What a difference a year makes! March 2020 was filled with so many uncertainties, and now we are beginning to see the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel.

Birds are returning on their own schedules and we see territories being claimed and nests being built. Migration may be slightly early, and hopefully the insect populations will be high to welcome the arriving birds.

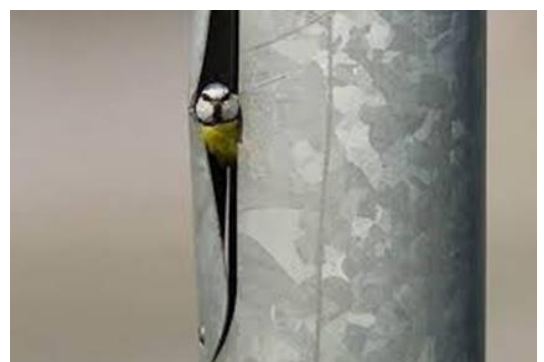
The other big change is that we are again talking about field trips, hoping to resume a "normal" schedule in the next months.

Sandy

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Next meeting: Wednesday, April 14
Virtual Bird Walk: Thursday, April 22

The Best Nest



Virtual Bird Walk

The theme of the May Virtual Bird Walk is *Birds in Motion*. That includes just about any bird not perched. We will also discuss cameras and photography.

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.

Global Big Day: 8 May 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](#)

Why sea slugs cut off their own heads

Two species of sea slug, *Elysia marginata* and *Elysia atroviridis*, decapitate themselves—only to regrow a new body from the severed head. Researchers were astonished to [observe slugs in captivity cutting off their own heads](#) after their bodies became infected with parasites. Within 3 weeks, the heads regenerate a whole, parasite-free body, though the bodies never grow back new heads.

New Bird Species Discovered Near New York City

April 1, 2021

The Allendale Ornithology Institute (AOI) is pleased to announce the discovery of a new bird species, the wild turducken, a heretofore undocumented upland bird of northern New Jersey.

The new species is believed to share a common ancestor with the northern shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*), wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*), and Jersey giant chicken (*Gallus gallus domesticus*).

The free-range turducken makes its home in North Haledon on The Nature Conservancy's land near the summit of the 1,260-acre High Mountain Park Preserve, located in the Watchung Mountains.

"To discover such a rare new species in the middle of suburbia is literally unbelievable," said David Wheeler, Executive Director of the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey.

The rare find comes on the heels of the announcement in *Science* magazine last year that paleontologists in the Netherlands had discovered that the world's oldest modern bird skull was that of a turducken—with the traits of duck, chicken, and turkey lineage.

The present-day wild turducken has rarely been sighted because the nocturnal fowl's chocolate-brown feathers make it virtually undetectable after dark.

The first known sighting of the elusive bird was in the woods at the Celery Farm Natural Area in Allendale exactly five years ago—on April 1, 2016—by Joseph Koscielny of Oakland, NJ. A primary feather and an egg were later recovered on High Mountain, and I sent them by courier pouch to the little-known National Paraphyletic Avian Research Foundation in Patuxent, MD, for DNA analysis.

Additional DNA research confirmed that the wild turducken is a distant relative of the bare-fronted hoodwink, an uplands bird displayed in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, on this date in 1975.

Jim Wright, author of "The Real James Bond," the biography of the noted Philadelphia ornithologist and identity-theft victim, urged the AOI board of trustees to name the potentially new species *Turduckensis flemingi* in honor of thriller writer Ian Fleming.

"When James Bond's wife Mary wrote to Fleming and accused him of stealing her husband's name, Fleming admitted his guilt," Wright explained. "He then offered the real James Bond 'unlimited use of the name Ian Fleming for any purpose he may think fit. Perhaps one day he will discover a horrible new species which he would like to christen in insulting fashion.'

“In the spirit of the real J.B., I asked that the wild turducken be named in the legendary 007 author’s honor, and the AOI is considering it,” said Wright. “I hope that someday the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia will name a new species far more horrible than the wild turducken after Ian Fleming—like a hideous pink-colored wading bird called a ‘Flemingo.’”



In this rare photo, a wild turducken can be seen drinking in a marsh. *Photo by Alice Leurck.*

Forty-six years ago—April 1, 1975—the Royal Scottish Museum announced the discovery of another new species, the bare-fronted hoodwink. *Photo courtesy of the Royal Scottish Museum Edinburgh.*



For more about Jim Wright’s latest book, *The Real James Bond*, visit realjamesbond.net. Jim’s nature blog is at www.celeryfarm.net.

Montclair Schools 100-Word Essay Competition

Winners:

High School

Ezra Siegartel

Puffin Cruise

I am lucky to have visited the United States' southernmost Atlantic puffin colony several years ago when I first become interested in birding. The colony is on Eastern Egg Rock, a small rocky island that can be reached by a thirty-minute boat trip from Boothbay Harbor, Maine. From the boat, I had an amazing view of hundreds of Atlantic Puffins, Great Black-backed Gulls, Common Eiders, Laughing Gulls, and many more birds. The birds and other natural beauty were awe-inspiring, and the memory is especially meaningful because I have not been able to return during the pandemic.

Middle School

Lia Scheier

The beams of light that peek through the oak trees radiate a warm glow on the babbling creek. The majestic blue jay perching in a nearby nest thrusts into the clear sky and glides through the velvety clouds. The plumed species whistles a sour melody along with the crickets chirping. The medley of species that lurk in the woods croon together the song of the forest. As I lie on the warm grass, the gentle breeze cradles me. The serenity that illuminates my soul grounds me in the forest of peace.



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](#)

Trinidad and Tobago Features the Bearded Bellbird

Jason Radix



Very few visitors to the rainforest of Trinidad fail to hear the explosively loud calls of the bearded bellbird (*Procnias averano*). The species is a unique member of the “neo-tropical” Cotinga family. It is widely considered one of the loudest birds in the world. Its cousin the white bellbird (*Procnias albus*) holds the official title of the loudest bird in the world, recently determined by the BBC to reach 125 decibels.

Also called the *campanero* or anvil bird, the male perches just below the canopy,

where he produces a series of single and monotonous croaking sounds that can heard up to a mile away. Thus, it’s easy for the uninitiated explorer to assume that it is the sound of something large, inorganic or mechanical, yet these deafening emanate from the syrinx, or voice box, of an eleven-inch black and white bird with a brown head and thick rubbery wattles—the “beard”—dangling from its throat.



Only the male of the species performs the daily ritual of announcing his territory to neighboring males. It is believed that these calls also serve as a form enticement to females. During courtship, the male, who is polygamous, flies feverishly from branch to branch, showing off his glamour to the potential mate who sits nearby.

She raises the young alone, and forages in relative silence, staying clear of the more brightly colored, noisy males, who might draw unwanted attention to the nest.

Because bellbirds eat only fruit, a resource available in abundance in tropical forests, it is relatively easy for the female to perform the tasks of building the nest, laying and incubating the eggs, and nurturing the young alone, while the male spends the day “screaming at the world.”

In spite of this perceived gender unfairness and inequality of responsibilities, the male bearded bellbird is one of the main target birds for birders visiting the rainforests of Trinidad, Venezuela, Guyana, Colombia, and northern Brazil, a peculiar must-see that always inspires a sense of wonder in the observer.



Eureka Natural History Tours

naturetobago.com

(868) 731-0759

February on Heligoland

by Anna Karapin-Springorum

February was a rather quiet month on Heligoland. But between a few unexpectedly cold weeks and a field trip to the neighboring island of Düne, there was still plenty to see and do. On the Düne, we caught and banded European stonechats and saw seals relaxing on the beach, including a very curious young gray seal that watched us work.



Back on the main island, the northern gannets and common murres are back on the cliffs most days. Unfortunately, now is when the plastic that the gannets incorporate in their nests becomes dangerous to other birds on the cliffs. A few gannets sat so close to the fence that runs along the cliff's edge that I could take pictures of their metal bands, which are otherwise almost impossible to decipher in the field.

One freezing cold day I found a flock of starlings cuddled together, and because we had just come back inside after a long walk in the cold and all of our cameras and binoculars were foggy, I took advantage of a quiet moment to sketch the scene.

Purple sandpipers and ruddy turnstones still run along the beaches here. A few days ago, we received an unusual delivery of a common murre from a wildlife rehabilitation station on the mainland! We set it free on a beach near the cliffs and watched it swim off towards its conspecifics. We've been hoping for a "first wave" of thrushes, which tend to start showing up here around this time of year, but between fair weather the last week or two and low-lying fog today, we haven't been catching more than usual.



Act Now to Protect New Jersey's Pollinators

With spring on the horizon, many look forward to the return of pollinators to their gardens and backyards. However, in recent years homeowners and farmers alike have noticed fewer pollinators returning to their flowers and crops. That's because the application of harmful insecticides, like neonicotinoid pesticides (neonics), are leading to colony collapse in bees and causing birth defects and other developmental damage in bees, birds, and other wildlife. To prevent further damage, we need strong leadership from New Jersey legislators to protect our pollinators from harmful neonics.

Based on sound research and science, New Jersey Audubon recognizes that neonicotinoid pesticides are linked to declining pollinator populations that are imperative to ecosystem health. In New Jersey, we have an opportunity to eliminate harmful neonic uses, but we need your help in urging Speaker Coughlin to post the bill for a full floor vote in the Assembly. We've already passed this important bill in the state Senate and a key committee in the Assembly, and a full floor vote is on the horizon.

Join New Jersey Audubon in supporting Assembly Bill A2070/S1016 which would limit unnecessary outdoor uses of neonicotinoid insecticides. Take action by contacting your Assembly member today.

Bees are a keystone insect helping to pollinate the Garden State's agricultural yields of blueberries, apples, cherries, cranberries, and more. With populations of bees declining, the state potentially faces a limited availability of adequate and diverse food sources. Pesticides, however, are not just used in agriculture. We also use them in our gardens and lawns. Non-agricultural neonic uses are the largest sources of neonic contamination in the state. Once absorbed into the soil through a treated plant root, pesticide leach pollution into our waterways, where they negatively affect fish and other wildlife and contaminate our drinking water, ultimately posing a threat to human health. We need your voice to ensure that A2070 gets across the finish line to protect pollinators and us from the unnecessary use of harmful pesticides.

Please contact your Assembly member and ask them to protect our pollinators by voting to restrict the use of the dangerous neonicotinoid class of pesticides.

New Jersey Audubon
9 Hardscrabble Road
Bernardsville, NJ 07924

www.njaudubon.org

Little St. Simons Island Glynn County, Georgia



A natural oasis, Little St. Simons Island is an ecolodge centered on the Atlantic Flyway in Georgia's Golden Isles. Beloved for its gracious hospitality, natural richness, and dedication to conservation, this private Island offers 7 miles of secluded beaches and over 11,000 acres of undeveloped wilderness.

The island is home to an abundance of native wildlife and natural landscapes, all held in a conservation easement which ensures its

natural richness will always be protected. Recognized as an Important Birding Area (IBA) by the American Bird Conservancy and identified as a Reserve Site by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN), the island hosts more than 330 bird species in the course of the year. Winter months attract a diversity of ducks, shorebirds, and nesting raptors. Spring and fall migrations boast an abundance of warblers and shorebirds. In summer, the Island is home to several wading bird rookeries with nesting wood storks, great egrets, tricolored herons, black-crowned night-herons, and roseate spoonbills. Similarly, our beaches offer critical nesting habitat for Wilson's plovers, American oystercatchers, willets, and colonies of black skimmers and Terns.



Maritime live oak forests, undeveloped beaches, muhly grasslands, and pristine marshlands provide habitat for nesting loggerhead sea turtles, diamondback terrapins, American alligators, and a range of migrating butterflies in the spring and fall, making this an island oasis for animals and people alike.

Experience adventure and learn about the Island's unique animals and ecosystems on kayaking, fishing, hiking, biking, wildlife viewing, and birding excursions guided by skilled naturalists. Stays include charming accommodations, three delicious locally-sourced meals a day, naturalist-led adventures, and outdoor gear. At Little St. Simons Island, beautiful surroundings and warm hospitality combine to create an extraordinary getaway in the luxury of nature.

We are looking forward to several special spring programs this year:

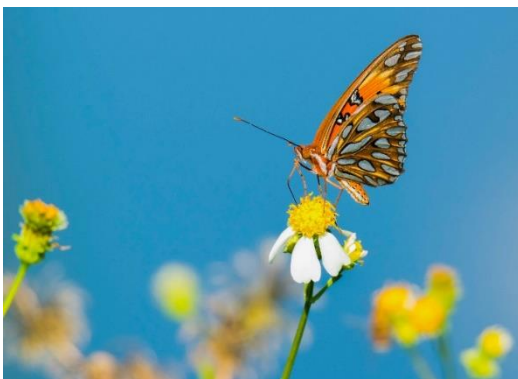
Spring Birding Days

Celebrate spring migration on Little St. Simons Island! Guest ornithologists join our staff naturalists on specialized excursions highlighting the abundance of species that flock to LSSI.

Drawn from Nature

Inspired by John Abbot, the early American naturalist and artist, this program is designed to highlight coastal Georgia's butterfly, moth, and plant diversity and merge natural history and art.





Little St. Simons Island Eco Resort
<https://www.littlestsimonsisland.com/>

[Learn More](#)

LOCKDOWN BIRDING IN SOUTH LONDON

by Eric Barlow

I have taken up the challenge of Lockdown Birding from my South London garden. Sadly, I do not have a large garden to attract many species. I have to rely on neighbors' trees and bushes to spot the birds. But If I see something with my binoculars—it counts!

One of my regular sightings is the European robin. His favorite perch is at the top of a silver Birch, two gardens down. On sunny days, he usually starts up at 6:00 am, and is quite content to sing his heart out on and off all day.



During the lockdown beginning in March 2020, I decided it would be fun to record and photograph birds on the surrounding rooftops. My camera has its limitations, but



here are some of the observations and photos I managed.

I am very lucky to see Eurasian jackdaws most days, as they nest locally. The gray mantle and piecing white eyes are outstanding features. Sometimes I have counted 50 or 75 jackdaws as they fly over in the early evening on the way to their roost on the grounds of a nearby hospital.

The European goldfinch is one of the commonest birds in the streets and gardens of South London. You will usually hear their song before you see them. The two birds in my photo are foraging in moss on a chimney stack, joined by a blue tit.



Since the lockdown, the stock dove, one of my favorite birds, has become a regular visitor, perhaps because the environment has grown so much quieter. Usually seen in pairs, they have an iridescent neck collar, which may be green, or mauve depending



on the light. The short black wing bars are another identification clue.

Populations of the Eurasian collared-dove are increasing in South London, and it will not be too long before its range extends into the capital. It frequents parks and gardens.



One of our most common birds, the Eurasian magpie is easily identified by its long tail and black and white plumage. On closer inspection, it has iridescent blue wings and green tail. It is often seen on rooftops, turning over moss and lichens in search of a meal. A few years ago, I photographed a leucistic magpie on the roof of the house across the street.



It is not uncommon to see black-headed gulls on streetlamps in my area, but chimney pots are a much less usual perch.

However, quite recently I happened look out my back window, and there were two



magnificent herring gulls perched on the roof opposite. My camera is always ready for action, so I quietly went into my garden and took some photos.

Suddenly they were joined by a group of black-headed gulls, an amazing sight. I happened to notice one that looked a little different, which proved to be a common gull. This was a remarkable find after twelve months of observation. The common gull was also a first for my garden bird list, and three gull species in one photo was quite extraordinary!



It is well worth checking out rooftops—you never know what you will find.

Birds in This Issue

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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.

The MBC Bulletin Bird

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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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