

The Broadwing



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Message from the Editor January 2023

Dear Members and Friends,

The new year is upon us and comes with some changes to The Broadwing. This issue has the most extensive field trip report we have ever published, and in February we have some serialized fiction for the birding community.

If you haven't remitted dues, now would be a good time to make it your first resolution after the annual resolve to diet or to take more frequent birding trips.

I would also like to encourage all our readers to submit their own pictures, stories, and birding adventures.

Sandy

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Next club meeting: Wednesday, January 11
Virtual Bird Walk: Thursday, January 19
Theme: Snow & Winter Birds

Billed Birds



Boat-billed Heron

Long-billed Starthroat



Thick-billed Murre

Broad-billed Hummingbird



Fossil overturns more than a century of knowledge about the origin of modern birds

by University of Cambridge

Fossilized fragments of a skeleton, hidden within a rock the size of a grapefruit, have helped upend one of the longest-standing assumptions about the origins of modern birds.

Researchers from the University of Cambridge and the Natuurhistorisch Museum Maastricht found that one key skull feature shared by 99% of modern birds—a mobile beak—evolved before the mass extinction event that killed all large dinosaurs, 66 million years ago.

This finding also suggests that the skulls of ostriches, emus, and their relatives evolved "backwards," reverting to a more primitive condition after modern birds arose.

Using CT scanning techniques, the Cambridge team identified bones from the palate, or roof of the mouth, of a new species of large ancient bird, which they named *Janavis finalidens*. It lived at the very end of the Age of Dinosaurs and was one of the last toothed birds ever. The arrangement of its palate bones shows that this "dino-bird" had a mobile, dexterous beak almost indistinguishable from that of most modern birds.

The full article: [Fossils](#)

Nature Canada certifies 14 cities as ‘bird friendly’

The nonprofit group Nature Canada recently announced that 14 new cities and municipalities across Canada have earned certification as a “Bird-Friendly City.” The certification was developed by Nature Canada to encourage municipalities to become safer places for birds. The program was made possible by a \$655,000 investment from Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Vancouver, Toronto, London, and Calgary were the first cities to be certified, in spring 2021. Seven of the newly certified cities are in Ontario, Canada’s most populous province, and three are the capital cities of their provinces. The 14 newly certified cities are:

Halifax, Nova Scotia
Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec
Barrie, Ontario
Burlington, Ontario
Guelph, Ontario
Windsor, Ontario
Halton Hills, Ontario

Hamilton, Ontario
Peterborough, Ontario
Regina, Saskatchewan
Edmonton, Alberta
Strathcona County, Alberta
Lions Bay, British Columbia
Saanich, British Columbia

The full article: [Nature Canada](#)

Some parrot species are better mimics than others

While most animals don't learn their vocalizations, everyone knows that parrots do—they are excellent mimics of human speech. But how large is the vocabulary of different parrot species? Does one sex “talk” more than the other? Does a parrot’s vocabulary expand with age? A new study published December 5 in the Nature journal *Scientific Reports*, titled “A survey of vocal mimicry in companion parrots,” adds to what we know about animal vocal learning by providing the largest comparative analysis yet of parrot vocal repertoires.

The paper documents species differences in vocal mimicry, shows that many parrots use words in appropriate contexts, and highlights the value of crowd-sourced data.

Data were collected as part of a community science project called “What does Polly Say?” Humans who live with companion parrots reported on the number of human “words” and “phrases” used by their parrots, as well as human-associated sounds (such as a whistled tune) and contextual use of sounds. This approach allowed researchers to collect standardized data on vocal learning in nearly 900 parrots representing 73 species, a sample that would have been impossible to gather on wild parrots.

The full article: [Parrots](#)



Monday, January 9, 2023

Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge (Brigantine)

Meet in the main parking lot (by the bathrooms/porta potties) at 10 a.m.

Inclement Weather Date: Tuesday, January 10, 2023

Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge (aka Brigantine) encompasses 48,000 acres of coastal habitats, 78% of which is salt marsh. Easily reached from Exit 48 on the Garden State Parkway, Brig is the site of great bird migrations spring and fall, but winter is an equally wonderful time to visit. We may be treated to the sight of many thousands of snow geese spooked into flight by a circling peregrine falcon. Northern harriers hunt low over the marsh, and in the past, we have been fortunate to be able to watch a short-eared owl during daylight hours surveying its winter home. Our plan is to drive the eight-mile gravel loop; depending on the weather, a short walk may be added. Bathroom facilities are usually available at the parking lot. This is a fee area (currently \$4/vehicle); bring a current duck stamp or other pass if you have one. Dress warm, since even if we do not take any extended walks, we will still be standing outside the vehicles to scan the marshes. A scope is helpful if you have one; the leaders will have one available for use. Depending on the weather, we may spend the better part of the daylight hours here, so bring a lunch or snack.

Leaderless Walks will be joining us on this field trip. For more information, call or text Donna Traylor at 973 903-1664.



Saturday, January 21, 2023
Round Valley Recreation Area
Meet at the East Picnic Area at 9 a.m.

Hunterdon County's Round Valley Reservoir and the adjoining Recreation Area cover about 2,400 acres. The reservoir does not usually freeze over, making it a good spot for wintering water birds including loons, grebes, buffleheads, mergansers, and scaup. The walking trails along the reservoir and through the adjacent pine forests can be good for waxwings, nuthatches, several species of woodpeckers, and the occasional red crossbill. We'll walk about two miles on these trails, which are slightly hilly but not steep; tree roots and some rocky patches make hiking boots preferable. It can be windy, so dress for cold weather. Bring binoculars, water, and snacks or lunch. A scope will be useful while birding along the reservoir, which is quite large.

We will meet at 9:00 am at the East Picnic Area, where the restrooms will be open. We can bird along the sandy beach here before heading over to the trailhead at the south parking lot. The two-mile loop we will hike includes a portion of the Pine Tree Trail and the Water Trail. We should finish by noon. For more information, contact Dawn Pompeo at 973 715-8451. For directions, trail maps, and more, visit nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/parks/roundvalleyrecreationarea.html.

DUES

Annual membership dues are due.
Individual dues are \$25, and family dues are \$35.
Students are free.

Please make your check out to the *Montclair Bird Club* and mail it to
Montclair Bird Club
c/o Sanford Sorkin, Treasurer
3 Marquette Road
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043-2625

Northeast Bird Habitat Conservation Initiative Mapping Tool

A new GIS mapping tool from the Northeast Habitat Conservation Initiative (NBHCI) integrates eBird Status & Trends breeding season data for 43 bird species of conservation priority in the eastern United States with other land and climate data layers across five habitat types. This free tool is yet another example of your eBird observations at work to support land management and conservation activities.

[Explore the NBHCI Mapping Tool](#)



Pheasant pigeons have laterally flattened tails, giving them a regal, pheasant-like appearance. *Illustration by Jan Wilczur/Birds of the World.*

Caught on Camera: A Bird Not Recorded Since the 1880s

On tropical Fergusson Island, a small dot off the northeast coast of New Guinea, the local community and the science community worked together to find a bird that some thought might be extinct. Thanks to the knowledge, expertise, and openness of Indigenous community members, researchers were able to capture [the first-ever video of the little known Black-naped Pheasant Pigeon](#)—marking the first scientific confirmation of its existence in 140 years.

Ken Buchanan River Front Park

December 20, 2022

A small but hardy contingent of MBC members visited Sayreville's Ken Buchanan River Front Park on December 20, where we shivered a bit in the breezy late autumn chill. Thousands of gulls were loafing and feeding at the nearby Middlesex County Landfill, with smaller numbers on the Raritan River and its banks. We found no rare larids, but enjoyed outstandingly good views of ring-billed, herring, and great black-backed gulls, a chance to hone our skills a bit in



the identification and aging of these often challenging birds. The river was lively with double-crested cormorants, buffleheads, and a pied-billed grebe, while its shores were patrolled by northern harriers and red-tailed hawks. The entire scene was presided over by a pair of adult peregrine falcons on the disused power plant, looking content after a feathered breakfast.



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I Married a Birder?

Sanford Sorkin

My wife insists that she is not a birder. I used to take her word for it, but something has changed. Most of her birding is through the kitchen window and into the yard, where I have a suet feeder mounted by a great perching stick. Food is one bird attraction, along with the safety of a community of birds dwelling under the boxwood bush. I think the variety of the window bird roster is exceptional for our suburban location. This table is just a partial list:

Downy woodpecker	House sparrow	Turkey	American robin
Hairy woodpecker	Song sparrow	Titmouse	Sharp-shinned hawk
Red-bellied woodpecker	White-throated sparrow	Goldfinch	Red-tailed hawk
Yellow-bellied sapsucker	White-breasted nuthatch	House finch	Cooper hawk
Northern flicker	Northern cardinal	Pine siskin	Dark-eyed junco
Black-throated green warbler	European starling	Veery	Carolina wren
Yellow-rumped warbler	Northern mockingbird	Blue jay	Cape May warbler

We also have nesting gray catbirds, common grackles, and mourning doves. We can't easily see the numerous birds that fly over in migration, including raptors.

I know she wasn't a birder pre-Covid because she would periodically announce from the kitchen that there was a bird out there. No size information, no color, not even a behavior clue, just a bird out there. Then things started to improve for no discernible reason. I no longer heard "there is a bird out there," but rather "there's a woodpecker" or "we have some sparrows." This is clearly a huge pivot from non-birding spouse to birding spouse. She still had no interest in getting up at unusual early hours to try another location, and remained satisfied with her kitchen vantage point.

I am typically drinking tea in the living room when Kathy announces her bird sightings. But while she continues to deny being a birder, her messages are changing. She now tells me which woodpecker is in the yard, and accurately distinguishes between the white-breasted nuthatch, the chickadee, and titmice. There is still a little confusion with mockingbirds and catbirds, but she is right most of the time.

Our yard birding is best in the morning, and Kathy has taken to dispersing some seed on the patio and back steps before making coffee. I only note this because there was a time when coffee came before bird feeding. Starting at some early hour, doves congregate on the cable wire to wait for her, and white-throated sparrows and the juncos take up positions on the patio chairs. The cardinals stare from a tree and a few small sparrows line up beneath the boxwood. And yes, a couple of squirrels hide nearby.

Two weeks ago, it became apparent that she was clearly a birder. A friend told her that while she was in London's St. James Park, she had seen a large bird with a white eye ring. Without hesitation, Kathy told her it was an Egyptian goose. I have no doubts, and she no longer has any plausible deniability: she is a birder regardless of her protestations. I wouldn't be surprised if she is a closet eBird lister as well.

Israel: Nature, Culture, and History
November 2–14, 2022
with Rick Wright and Jonathan Meyrav



Jerusalem: The Western Wall and Temple Mount. Photo Rick Wright

Yes, this was a birding trip.

But not all of our passion is always directed at things feathered, and like all birders everywhere, we found happy distraction in plants, butterflies, lizards, turtles—anything wild drew our curious attention.

As we left the Hula Valley at the end of an overwhelmingly bird-rich day November 6, our ears and our memories filled with the wild calls of Common Cranes in their incredible thousands, Jonathan spotted a brown lump in the field not far off the road: a jungle cat! We watched for the better part of half an hour as the light faded and the cat stretched languorously before finally rising, yawning, and carelessly marking a hay bale before slinking off into the woodland edge. Any mammal is bound to be a highlight on a day outdoors, but the wild cats—shy, scarce, silent—are of a different order altogether, and every sighting has a good chance of being a once-in-a-lifetime event. We were breathless with a sense of privilege and good luck.

The sea daffodil, *Pancratium maritimum*, a declining plant of Mediterranean dunes. Photo Lili Shell

Israel proved a great place for mammal watching even beyond the amazing jungle cat. Golden jackals, thick-furred and chubby this time of year, were seen almost every day, once a small pack of them slowly, methodically, futilely pursuing dainty mountain gazelles across a grassy slope. We would see two gazelle species in our days together, along with the impressive goat known as the Nubian ibex, large numbers of which seemed equally at home on the steep cliffsides of desert wadis and in the parking lots and front yards of urban Mitzpe Ramon.

The most exotic of all the four-footed creatures was certainly the hyrax, a chubby, woodchuck-like animal found in lazy assemblies on rocks and ruins. The hyrax lineage diverged, along with that comprising the elephants and dugongs, early from the other branches of the mammalian family tree; richly diverse until the Eocene, the group is now represented by only four species, all of them now restricted to Africa and portions of the Middle East.





A Rock Hyrax greets the day. Photo Rick Wright

The great hope of early mornings in the desert, of course, is reptiles. Even more secretive than mammals, and more susceptible to temperature changes, most snakes and lizards do a good job of avoiding human disturbance. That is exactly what a hapless horned viper was doing at the bustard blinds on Ezuz Road when Jonathan set his tripod up right on top of the poor creature—to the great and understandable startlement of both. As expected, the snake, a dangerously poisonous species for which antivenins are not readily available, began to move toward the shelter of a shady rock; we were obviously a bit too close, though, and the viper suddenly rolled onto its side and straightened its coils in a flash, “jumping” several centimeters into the air, an astonishingly acrobatic maneuver it repeated several times before reaching its refuge. Once in a lifetime, indeed.

Yes, this was a birding trip.

But birders are, virtually by definition, interested and interesting people, eager to learn as much about the human and historical landscape as its physical setting. Israel is as rewarding a place as one could imagine for pondering the lives and deeds of several of the most important figures in the history of civilization, and to walk quite literally in the footsteps of Jesus, Mohammad, and the heroes of the Jewish past and present was moving, inspiring, and sometimes surprising, as when a scruffy hillside village turned out to be Magdala, the hometown of Mary Magdalene, or when an anonymous parking lot in the desert proved a fine spot to look across at the caves in which the Dead Sea scrolls were preserved for almost two millennia before their discovery by an illiterate shepherd boy.



Evening on the Sea of Galilee. Photo Rick Wright

History was all around us, nowhere more than in Jerusalem, where we had a short day's tour of holy and historical sites conducted by Omer, a local guide dazzlingly familiar with every crooked corner of the Old City. Other localities brought more recent events to life for us, from the Valley of Tears, a terrible battleground in the Yom Kippur War of 1973, to the visitor center of Makhtesh Ramon, commemorating the life and work of Israel's first astronaut. Our visits to areas right on the country's borders with Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan were sobering reminders of the entire region's geopolitical volatility even today. Most of all, perhaps, our tardy arrival at Capernaum, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, just as the sun was setting and the moon rising, took us back to long-ago days when simple fishermen, tax collectors, and shepherds peopled the hillsides.

History, though, is no more than the accumulated memories of daily living, and we were privileged to witness such festive events as weddings and Sabbath suppers. We saw the daily work of the countryside, from Bedouins herding their livestock to farmers tilling the soil of their kibbutz. And we interacted—in restaurants and gas stations, parking lots and hotel dining rooms—with a vast variety of people representing virtually all of the ethnic, political, and religious groups that live and work together to make Israel the vibrant young nation that it is.



Bedouin camels. Photo Lili Shell

Yes, this was a birding trip.

And how. This was a first birding visit to Israel for all of us, and thanks to the country's astounding variety of habitats, strong conservation ethic, and, especially, Jonathan's unparalleled knowledge of Israel's birds and birding sites, we came away dazzled by the beauty and diversity of so many species new to us. It would be invidious to single out ten, or a hundred, of the birds and birding experiences we had, but none of us is likely to forget soon the sight and sound of so many thousands of Common Cranes right in front of us in the Hula Valley, or the wonderful views of Marbled, Ferruginous, and White-headed Ducks on marshes and lakes, or the spectacular eagle show on fields and in the air. Hoopoes, Arabian Green Bee-eaters, and still red-throated Red-throated Pipits provided plenty of color, and even the brown birds of open country—Skylarks, Crested Larks, Caucasian Water Pipits, Corn Buntings—were dazzling in their sheer abundance.



Cranes in the Hula Valley. Photo Lili Shell

And then there were the chats. That family, Muscicapidae, is barely represented in the New World, but Israel is blessed with a delightful, at first slightly confounding abundance of stonechats, robins, bluethroats, and wheatears. We eventually had close studies of Siberian Stonechats; the identification is subtle, but Jonathan's expertise stood us good stead here in pointing out the plumage details needed to clinch the diagnosis. His thorough knowledge of the wheatears and their identification was even more essential: adult males of the more contrastingly marked species are not particularly difficult given decent views, but females and young birds are decidedly more daunting. Happily, these birds are generally far from secretive, and not only did we all get to see all of the seven *Oenanthe* on our list, but I think we

came away from the experience with knowledge to help us next time we meet up with these most charming of desert birds.

Even the most common species were exciting, and we found it impossible to weary of noisy Spur-winged Lapwings, pastel-colored Laughing Doves, or curious, wide-eyed White-spectacled Bulbuls. But we also saw many less common species, including a Lesser Spotted and multiple Imperial Eagles, two dainty Namaqua Doves, African Swamphens, a startling Cinereous Vulture, an immature Bonelli's Eagle, Clamorous Reed Warblers (well named if ever a bird was), and nine Syrian Serins.

We were fortunate, too, to get excellent looks at several typically furtive birds. A male Black Francolin welcomed us on our first full day of birding by exploding out of the grass and giving great views as it flew past. African Swamphens and Water Rails, both so often no more than an evocative voice in the marsh, emerged from the reeds to be admired, as did a startling Great Bittern and a number of Squacco Herons, perhaps the most attractive of the Western Palaearctic ardeids.



A flock of Pin-tailed Sandgrouse. Photo Jonathan Meyrav

We birders tend to think in the first instance at the species level, but one of the delights of visiting places far from home is the chance to encounter whole taxonomic families that are new or unfamiliar. The sandgrouse, for example, in the family Pteroclididae, are unlike anything seen in the continental US and Canada, and we had remarkable experiences with three species: great flashing flocks of Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, a nice cluster of Spotted Sandgrouse, and more than 40 Crowned Sandgrouse shuffling their way in to drink at a desert pond. The Graceful Prinia is a member of a group of “warblers” found only in the Old world; these bizarrely tiny but big-voiced birds called to mind both gnatcatchers and wrens as they worked the low vegetation almost everywhere we went. Bulbuls of various species have been introduced to many places around the world, including California and Florida, but to see so many handsome and tuneful White-spectacled Bulbuls in their restricted native range was a fine experience repeated almost daily. Babblers and sunbirds, two very different groups of Old World songbirds, both struck as equally exotic, the Arabian Babbler for its entertaining sociability and the Palestine Sunbird for its incredible colors and flower-piercing habits.

All of the 160+ bird species we saw in our time together were a source of excitement—and made even more enjoyable by the cultural, historical, and natural settings in which we watched them.

Yes, this was a birding trip—and so very much more.

Rick Wright, November 2022

November 2: Departures from US for Tel Aviv for most participants, with arrival the next day.



The Mediterranean from our Tel Aviv hotel. Photo Rick Wright

November 3: We gathered at 6:00 for introductions and a few remarks about what we could expect on the tour, then made the short walk to Maganda in the city's beautifully peaceful Yemeni quarter. A surprise along our pleasant route was the predominance of Bauhaus structures; it turned out that Tel Aviv is in fact the site of more Bauhaus architecture than any other city in the world. The greatest concentration, just steps from our hotel, is known as the White City, for the usual white stucco cladding of the buildings. On we went to dinner, which proved to be nothing short of lavish, and each

time we thought we were finished, another tableful of food arrived: fresh vegetables and imaginative dips and sauces, followed by grilled meats, all accompanied by bread straight from the oven. It was a very content group that walked back through the mild night air.



Idelson Street, Tel Aviv. Photo Wikimedia Commons

November 4: Itching to get out and see some birds, we breakfasted in our hotel, then set out under bright skies and in pleasantly warm temperatures for the north. Ma'agan Michael and its fish ponds was our destination. We started on the Mediterranean beach right at the parking lot, and as soon as we stepped out of the bus, the birds appeared: among our first sightings were a Water Rail and a Squacco Heron, both stepping out from the reeds to give uncharacteristically good views; a flock of Slender-billed Gulls; a very late Common Cuckoo; and a shy but eventually visible Clamorous Reed Warbler. A small pack of busy mongooses worked the parking lot, oblivious to (or perhaps grateful for) the human presence.

We walked a few feet to the first set of fish ponds, Ma'ayan Tzvi, and its shorebirds. Delicate Marsh Sandpipers picked at the water among flocks of anything-but-delicate Black-winged Stilts, and the peep on the mudflats turned out to be close to equal numbers of Little and Temminck's Stints; that last species is fairly uncommon, and none of us North Americans had ever seen so many at a time. Among the larger wading birds were Eurasian Spoonbills and a surprisingly large flock of Greater Flamingos.

After lunch, we moved on to the Lehavot Habashan fish ponds, with enormous Great White Pelicans, Black Storks, and our first distant views of Greater Spotted Eagles. All three kingfisher species were also here: the diminutive Common, the hulking Pied, and the remarkably colorful White-throated; we would have many more views of all three. We drove on to Kfar Blum, where we settled in to our rooms before assembling for a checklist review and buffet dinner.



Nimrod Castle. Photo Rick Wright

for it.

November 5: The morning broke cool, bright, and calm, perfect for an exploration of the grounds of our hotel on the banks for the River Jordan. Bulbuls, kingfishers, Black-shouldered Kites, and European Robins were among the highlights, while the only site for Rooks on our entire tour was the pecan tree in the hotel courtyard. After breakfast, we drove up to Nimrod Castle, a well-preserved medieval fortification perched strategically above the main routes through the valley. Birding here was relatively slender, but our first hyraxes, stretched out on the ancient building stones and soaking up the morning sun, more than made up

As the morning warmed, we moved uphill to the slopes of Mount Hermon, Israel's highest mountain. We spent most of our time at the small retention basin below the ski lift, where precious water attracted cows and birds. Chaffinches were in the majority, to no one's surprise, but the flocks coming down to drink also included a couple of Bramblings, at least nine of the rare and extremely local Syrian Serin, and half a dozen Rock Buntings. It was here, too, that we saw our first Long-legged Buzzards, probably a local pair hunting the hillside and interacting in the air.

As the skies grew overcast and the temperature fell with the passage of a weak cold front, we had lunch nearby, then drove to the Valley of Tears, a site commemorating the Yom Kippur War of 1973. Jonathan's personal perspective on that historical event gave us all a clearer view into Israel's relations with its national neighbors, and insight into how the experience of battle affects soldiers and common citizens alike.

Our first Finsch's Wheatear, a somewhat puzzling female, was here. The skies soon cleared, and we birded our way back to the hotel, where we had a short break before another buffet dinner and a look back at a day full of new impressions.

November 6: Today's was our earliest morning departure: we were on our way to Hula Valley by 4:30 am. The early start was necessary to catch the early "mobile blind," which we had reserved all to ourselves. The short ride out through the dark felt like an adventure. Our moving shelter took us to the very shore of Lake Agmon, where some 20,000 Common Cranes were just visible in the pale dawn—just visible, but the noise was almost deafening, one of the wildest sounds in all of nature. Pelicans and herons strode among the increasingly restless cranes—and then they were off, groups of dozens and hundreds lifting into the reddening sky as we watched from just a few feet away.



Watching the Hula Valley cranes from a tractor-drawn blind. Photo Lili Shell

Nearly speechless with awe, we returned to our hotel for breakfast, then returned to Agmon for more birding on a warm, bright, breezy day. As moving as our early morning had been, the time we spent watching fields and ponds was every bit as spectacular, with outstanding views of such fine birds as Lesser Spotted and Greater Spotted Eagles, Purple and Squacco Herons, an amazing Great Bittern, and imposing numbers of Black Kites: an unforgettable visit to an unforgettable place.

We spent the afternoon at Ha'ela Park, in search of winter passerines. It had grown hot, nearly 90 F, and the breeze was up again, but we still enjoyed excellent views of Brambling and European Goldfinch in the wild pistachios. The last hour of

daylight found us back at Lake Agmon, watching the same cranes trickle back to roost that had burst so dramatically into the sky that morning.

November 7: A final walk on the grounds of our hotel was followed by a big breakfast and the departure for the archaeological and natural preserve at Gamla, the site of a harrowing siege during the First Jewish Rebellion in the 60s AD. The view down onto the ruins of the ancient city was moving and dramatic, and it was easy to imagine the desperation of the site's defenders as their food and water inevitably ran out.

The city was built on the slope of a small mountain separating two gorges, and two millennia later, it was those deep, steep-sided canyons that produced some excellent birds. Just as we were beginning to worry that the local Eurasian Griffons had gone elsewhere for the day, the big birds began to drift past us, eventually four of them soaring by on their huge wings. Our search of the blue skies also turned up four Little Swifts, the only individuals of that species we would see.

The real prize, though, and one of the most unexpected birds of our entire time together, came as we were thinking about moving on. All at once, an enormous black bird came in low—a Cinereous Vulture, one of Israel's scarcest wintering birds. Again and again this tremendous rarity passed by, flying up and down the canyon in search of anything edible.



Gamla. Photo Rick Wright

Our own similar search was successful, and then we drove to another ancient city, the ruins of Hippos, or Susita, named in Greek and in Hebrew for the mountain ridge's remote resemblance to a reclining horse. The views into the valley and across the Sea of Galilee were breathtaking; the Blue Rock Thrushes that eventually came in to investigate us were just a bonus.

It was growing late when we arrived in Capernaum on the shore of the Sea. Black-headed and Armenian Gulls had gathered in preparation for the evening roost, and Whiskered Terns flew by, swooping and fluttering as they fed one last time for the day. As the sun set and the moon rose, we felt ourselves transported in time, one of the most moving experiences of the entire tour. But it was getting chilly, and dinner called.

November 8: Following breakfast and a very efficient check-out process, we drove up the road to the Jordan Belvoir. This was a dry, sparse habitat, just right for the mountain gazelles on the hillsides, and for the little pack of golden jackals that gave desultory chase.

The contrast could hardly have been stronger with the ponds and cultivated fields of the Be'et Shean Valley. The full suite of waterbirds and shorebirds included our only Kentish Plover and Bonelli's Eagle, and it was here, too, that we lucked into a male Namaqua Dove. Our first Spanish Sparrows were clumped in the roadside bushes, and an impressive flock of more than 400 Eurasian Jackdaws was in attendance on a large and fragrant cattle shed.

We started for Jerusalem after lunch, the drive taking us through the West Bank and past telephone poles offering perches to White Storks. We arrived at our hotel at the stroke of 5:00 pm, under cloudy skies and in cool temperatures; dinner was another hotel buffet, the meal punctuated by excited conversations about what we had seen and what the next day would hold.

November 9: Our day in Jerusalem, the site of so many events that shifted the history of the world, started at a tiny patch of woods between the Israeli Supreme Court and the parliament building. This was the Jerusalem Bird Observatory, one of the country's leading institutions for research and conservation. We were privileged to



A Common Chiffchaff at the Jerusalem Bird Observatory. Photo Lili Shell

talk to both the outgoing and the incoming director of the observatory, and then we turned to the activities of the banding station. A feature I had not seen before was a large computer screen on the wall, mirroring the screen of the computer into which the data for each captured bird was entered, thus letting us spectators learn the age, sex, fat score, weight, and (flattened) wing chord at the same time as the banders. Great Tits, Common Chiffchaffs, Blackcaps, and a Lesser Whitethroat were removed from the nets during our visit, a fantastic opportunity to gain a different perspective on birds we had seen in the field.

Jonathan left us and we met up with our city guide, Omer, for an exploration of the Old City of Jerusalem. We started with a brief visit to David's Tomb, part of a medieval building that—in best Jerusalem tradition—has served as a church, a mosque, and a Jewish seminary. Up the stairs is the Cenacle, standing in since early Christian days for the Upper Room of the Last Supper, Pentecost, and other events recounted in the New Testament.

A brief stop in front of the twelfth-century Armenian cathedral of St. James was followed by a visit to the tranquility of the Emanuel Center. After taking advantage of the welcome coffee shop and its shady tables, we walked across the street to Christ Church, built in the mid-nineteenth century, for a fascinating introduction to the history and mission of this first Protestant church in

the Middle East; founded by the German-born Jewish Anglican bishop Alexander, Christ Church is a site of prayer for people of all nations, and a reminder of the great debt owed by Christians to Jews. A small museum behind the coffee shop holds further historical exhibits, including two painstakingly crafted models of Jerusalem's Old City through the ages.

After a locally colorful lunch in the souk (all of us somehow resisted the good-natured persistence of some of the salesmen there), we set out for the medieval Church of the Holy Sepulchre—but we were stopped by the only rain of the entire tour, which drove us into a tiny theater where we saw a moving short film of interviews with citizens who had been living in Jerusalem in time of war. The showers stopped soon enough, and we went on to the Holy Sepulchre, an impressive building in spite of the press of tourists and pilgrims.



Jerusalem's Western Wall. Photo Rick Wright

We ended up at the Western Wall, where some of us recorded our hopes and feelings on paper to leave in the cracks of the ancient stones. Our day and the walk had been physically and emotionally more than full, and we were grateful to Buki for thoughtfully driving down to pick us up, sparing us the walk back up the long stairs. Tired and amazed at all we had seen and done, we had a nice break before our hotel dinner and checklist review.

November 10: We left this morning after breakfast to drive out of Jerusalem and on to the agricultural fields at Kalia. The warm, dry weather and the wide-open landscapes were a shock after the cool mountain temperatures and crowded warrens of Jerusalem, but it took no time at all for us to start seeing new birds, the most striking among them the implausibly colorful Arabian Green Bee-eater, common and confiding on the fences and low trees.

A walk a short ways up Wadi Kalya put us in yet another very different habitat, hot, dry, and relatively barren, but supporting good numbers of handsome Nubian ibex, Blackstarts, and our first small flock of Sand Partridges. Ein Gedi Nahal David Reserve was decidedly lush in comparison; Fan-tailed Ravens, comically long-winged and short-tailed, fussed at us from the trees while beautiful chestnut-winged Tristram's Starlings hoped for a handout.



Nubian ibex. Photo Rick Wright

After lunch, we drove to the scenic lookout over Sodom Reservoir. There were no pillars of salt in sight, but the warmth and lovely afternoon light were ideal for sorting through the many birds on the water below. Good numbers of the uncommon Ferruginous Duck were mixed in with the Northern Shovelers and Common Pochards, but the true excitement came when an African Swamphen, that huge purple, red-billed rail, emerged from the reeds to afford uncharacteristically leisurely views; we even saw this or another swamphen fly from one side of the lake to the other, unusually public behavior for a bird that rarely leaves the safety of dense marsh vegetation.

Dinner was in our Mitzpe Ramon hotel, on a quiet hill across the shallow valley from the Ramon “crater.”

November 11: We started on the edge of Mitzpe Ramon this morning, birding a picnic grove and the local school’s ballfields; Blackstarts and a busy band of Arabian Babblers reminded us that we were still in the desert. After breakfast in the hotel, we walked a few feet up the narrow canyon Ein Avdat. It seemed forbiddingly stark at first, but then we reached the first of the ponds, surrounded by luxuriant vegetation. A Bluethroat and a Common Moorhen seemed out of place here, when we had just been admiring Eurasian Griffons, Brown-necked Ravens, and Rock Martins on the barest of cliffs. The temperature had risen into the high 70s F by the time we re-emerged, and the sky was blue as only a desert sky can be.



Makhtesh Ramon, not a crater but a great "slump" in the desert. Photo Rick Wright

We went on in search of raptors on the fields at Sde Boker and along Urim Powerline Road. Black Kites were virtually innumerable, hunting and loafing everywhere, and Greater Spotted Eagles paced off the newly disked fields. The most exciting find was four Imperial Eagles, obviously so intent on seeking their rodent prey that they lingered, unconcerned, as long as we did.

A restroom break at Kibbutz Gvulot on the way back to our hotel yielded another surprise, a fine Long-eared Owl in the very same tree where Jonathan had found one several years ago.



The bird blinds of Ezuz. Photo Rick Wright

November 12: Our second early departure, this time a relatively humane 5:30 am, got us to the Ezuz area and the bustard blinds (a brace of repurposed Ottoman railroad cars, a nice variation on the theme) not long after sunrise. While the normally reliable bustards failed to appear this time, simply being out in the desert on a warm, clear morning was exhilarating, and our encounters with Desert Wheatears and distant Cream-colored Coursers felt almost extraneous.

With the heat rising and avian activity diminishing out on the open flats, we moved a couple of miles down the road to Ezuz, where a friend of Jonathan's maintains a pond and feeding station. The shade, cold water, and strong coffee were welcome, but not as welcome as

the flock of more than 40 Crowned Sandgrouse that shuffled in to drink from the pond.

We paid a short visit to another pond, at Nizzana Military Base, then gave the bustards one final chance. No bustards, but a memorable encounter with a Field's horned viper, a reminder that the desert is full of unseen life. After lunch, we walked through the exhibits at the Makhtesh Ramon visitor center, then took some time to admire the enormous erosional artifact of the "crater" and the Desert Larks in the parking lot before returning to our hotel for a break and dinner.

November 13: On a bright, chilly morning we visited Nafha Vineyards, where dozens of Chukars scrambled up the hillsides on our arrival. After breakfast in our hotel, we set out for Tel Aviv.

Our major birding stop on the drive was the impoundments of Timorim, where we had a very special bird in mind. It took some patience, with more than a thousand ducks on the water, but we were happy to find some nine White-headed Ducks, rare winterers in Israel and rare, indeed, throughout their global range. The icing on the ornithocake was a Jacksnipe, somehow convinced that it was invisible sitting in the open two feet from the nearest cattails.

We arrived in Tel Aviv with plenty of time to pack and prepare before making the walk to Maganda for a final extravagant meal together.

November 14: Our private shuttle took us in two shifts to the Tel Aviv airport.



Birding Ein Avdat. Photo Rick Wright

More details, maps, precise numbers, etc., are at <https://ebird.org/tripreport/87469>.

WATERFOWL—ANATIDAE

Egyptian Goose, *Alopochen aegyptiaca*: a total of about a dozen roadside birds as we left Tel Aviv the morning of November 4; better views of 4 at Timorim ponds November 13. This weirdly handsome bird—strictly speaking not a goose at all, but rather a shelduck—has been introduced to many parts of the world, including Israel, but old records suggest that the species may have occurred there naturally in the past.



An Egyptian Goose at Timorim. Photo Rick Wright

Northern Shoveler, *Spatula clypeata*: one at Ma'agan Michael and half a dozen at Lehavot Habashan November 4. Three dozen at Sodom Reservoir November 10, followed by eleven at Nizzana's water treatment plant November 12. A total of about a hundred at Hula November 6 was far eclipsed by the 660 tallied at Timorim on our last birding day. This is the same species so familiar in North America.

Gadwall, *Mareca strepera*: at least four at Hula November 6, with another November 10 at Sodom Reservoir. This is the same species so familiar in North America; its numbers have increased dramatically throughout its range over the past fifty years, our low tallies notwithstanding.

Eurasian Wigeon, *Mareca penelope*: two among the **Marbled Teal** at Lehavot Habashan November 4, with another half dozen total on November 10 and 13.

Mallard, *Anas platyrhynchos*: common throughout in almost every wetland habitat, including city parks in Tel Aviv. Our trip total approached 700 individuals. This is the same species so familiar in North America.

Northern Pintail, *Anas acuta*: three female-plumaged birds at Lehavot Habashan November 4; a similar number at Hula November 6. Only one at Sodom Reservoir November 10, followed by about three at Timorim November 13. This is the same species seen over most of North America.

Common Teal, *Anas crecca*: encountered in good numbers at every wetland site we visited; almost exactly half of our total of 450+ were in the Hula Valley November 6. Many authorities "split" this bird and the North American Green-winged Teal, *Anas carolinensis*, while more conservative taxonomists consider them conspecific. Males in their bright plumage are readily distinguishable, while brown birds of these taxa are more challenging.

Marbled Teal, *Marmoranetta angustirostris*: a startling tally of 334 on a single pond at Lehavot Habashan November 4, an excellent count for this globally rare duck. The Marbled Teal is classified as Vulnerable by the IUCN, threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation and hunting.

Common Pochard, *Aythya ferina*: three at Ma'agan Michael November 4 and one at Sodom Reservoir November 10 were followed by two dozen at Timorim November 13. Visually recalling both the Redhead and the Canvasback, this fairly common diving duck differs from both in head shape and bill pattern. No one has satisfactorily explained the origins of the odd English name, though it may have something to do with the birds' habit of "poking" beneath the water.



Ferruginous Ducks and friends at Sodom. Photo Rick Wright

Ferruginous Duck, *Aythya nyroca*: thirteen at Hula November 6, a nice tally for this quite uncommon duck. A similar number were at Sodom Reservoir November 10, while Timorim three days later held no fewer than 28. The IUCN lists this species as Near Threatened.

Tufted Duck, *Aythya fuligula*: one of the Old World's commonest diving ducks, represented during our time together by a dozen at Timorim November 13. These birds resemble both the Ring-necked Duck and scaup, and hybrids are relatively frequent, making it necessary to check closely the Tufted Ducks that occur on the East and West Coasts of the US and Canada each winter.

White-headed Duck, *Oxyura leucocephala*: a true prize on any birding excursion, this uncommon and bizarre-looking duck was represented by about nine individuals at Timorim November 13. The birds were quite active, diving and staying underwater for long stretches, but with patience and persistence, we all had satisfyingly good looks at them among the coots and other waterfowl. The White-headed is a close relative of "our" Ruddy Duck; indeed, one of the reasons for its listing as Endangered is the potential for

competition and hybridization with introduced Ruddies. Fully one third of the population of this species has been lost since 2005, and it is now extinct as a breeder anywhere in Europe outside of Spain.

PHEASANTS AND GROUSE—PHASIANIDAE

Black Francolin, *Francolinus francolinus*: excellent, if brief, views of a dapper male in flight at Lehavot Habashan November 4. The introduced population in Louisiana died out at the turn of this century, but Black Francolins persist at many sites in the Hawaiian Islands.

Indian Peafowl, *Pavo cristatus*: two possibly feral birds roosting in trees beside the Dead Sea at Capernaum November 7. As is true of poultry worldwide, it is very difficult to tell whether free-flying peafowl have wandered from the nearest barnyard or are in fact surviving on their own in the “wild.”

Sand Partridge, *Ammoperdix heyi*: half a dozen scramble-flying up the canyon side at Wadi Kalya November 10, several pausing for good views. Then seen fleetingly at several desert sites November 12, with excellent close views of birds on the ground at Ezuz November 12. The genus name means “sand partridge,” unimaginatively enough, while the species epithet refers to a German collector of the early nineteenth century.

Chukar, *Alectoris chukar*: our first were four birds at Arsuf Kede November 3; views that day were relatively poor and brief. We made up for it soon enough, and our trip total was nearly 250, some 150 of those scrambling around on the rocky slopes of Nafha Vineyards November 13. This species enjoys a reputation as a fine delicacy, and Chukars have been introduced around the world; the dry country of the Intermountain West is where they are most easily found in the US, but stray birds can be encountered virtually anywhere.

FLAMINGOS—PHOENICOPTERIDAE

Greater Flamingo, *Phoenicopterus roseus*: a flock of 64 birds over Ma’agan Michael November 4, first distant then closer and closer and lower and lower; the birds obviously wanted to land on the ponds, but the large numbers of human visitors on the dike roads discouraged them. A total of at least 112 at Hula November 6, a notable count for the area; a flock of 44 we saw earlier that morning may or may not be included in that total, such that we may have seen as many as 150 flamingos on that date. Long considered conspecific with the American Flamingo, *Phoenicopterus ruber*, but the two have recently and sensibly been re-split.

GREBES—PODICIPEDIDAE

Little Grebe, *Tachybaptus ruficollis*: those of us used to encountering these delightful little divers in small and scattered numbers in Europe were more than impressed to see a good 200 individuals over our time together. The largest gatherings we encountered were the 50 in the Hula Valley November 6 and the 65 each at Sodom Reservoir November 10 and Timorim November 13.



Little Grebe. Photo Rick Wright

Eared Grebe, *Podiceps nigricollis*: nearly as surprising as the large numbers of Little Grebes was the fact that we saw a grand total of just one Eared Grebe, diving and feeding among the coots at Timorim November 13. This is a very abundant bird in the interior West of the US, but less common elsewhere in its very wide northern hemisphere range.

PIGEONS—COLUMBIDAE

Rock Pigeon, *Columba livia*: feral birds abundant throughout, with hundreds at some sites in Tel Aviv, the Hula Valley, and the Be’et Shean Valley. More exciting were wild-plumaged birds on the cliffsides of desert canyons and wadis; while “purity” is probably an impossible standard to hold Rock Pigeons to anywhere across their vast range, the combination of habitat, historical distribution, and evenly gray plumage without white patches or black speckling suggests that these were representatives of the original, wild-dwelling, unadulterated ancestral stock—countable, in other words. Including birds of city parks and farmlands, our total for the trip was something like 2,000.

Common Wood Pigeon, *Columba palumbus*: one overhead at Hula November 6 was a locally notable sighting.

Eurasian Collared Dove, *Streptopelia decaocto*: not quite as abundant as the Rock Pigeon, this familiar species was still strikingly common in the countryside, with, for example, 400 in the Hula Valley November

6 and 350 along the Urim Powerline Road November 11. Our trip total easily exceeded 1,000, clear evidence of lasting success on the part of a bird that was apparently not known in Israel before the mid-nineteenth century. On the very strange species epithet, meaning “eighteen,” see tinyurl.com/RWrightEighteen.



The unassuming Laughing Dove. Photo Rick Wright

Laughing Dove, *Spilopelia senegalensis*: moderate numbers throughout, especially in settled areas; one of the first birds of the tour was a single Laughing Dove on the sidewalk at our hotel as we prepared to leave the morning of November 4. We saw this species every day but November 10, when we spent the day in Jerusalem; our trip total was about 250.

Namaqua Dove, *Oena capensis*: very good and repeated looks at a male at ponds in the Be’et Shean Valley November 8, followed by more fleeting views of a single bird in the Kalia fields November 10. This tiny African dove’s range has been expanding dramatically over the past half century; Israel’s first were recorded in the 1960s.

SANDGROUSE—PTEROCLIDAE

Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, *Pterocles alchata*: two dazzling flocks along the Urim powerline road November 11, totaling 750 individuals. The most impressive views were of the flocks in flight, flashing their white underwings as they wheeled and darted across the fields. We had reasonable views of some of the birds on the ground, through significant heat waves.

Spotted Sandgrouse, *Pterocles senegallus*: a flock of fourteen was on the ground in the Sde Boker fields November 11; unfortunately, here too we were faced with poor visibility due to heat waves, but views were satisfactory.



Thirsty Crowned Sandgrouse. Photo Rick Wright

Crowned Sandgrouse, *Pterocles coronatus*: We had the great good luck to find two flocks, totaling 43 birds, at Ezuz November 12, and were able to watch them at close range in perfect light as they nervously toddled toward the small pond there to drink.

SWIFTS—APODIDAE

Little Swift, *Apus affinis*: four birds over the deep canyon at Gamla November 7, easily identified by their square white rump patches.

CUCKOOS—CUCULIDAE

Common Cuckoo, *Cuculus canorus*: a notably late bird flew through very quickly at Ma'agan Michael November 4, landing out of sight in the reeds.

RAILS—RALLIDAE

Water Rail, *Rallus aquaticus*: one seen well at the beach parking at Ma'agan Michael November 4; a Great White Egret chased it into the phragmites as we watched. Excellent views of at least one more at Hula November 6. Similar and closely related to the Virginia Rail, the Water Rail is equally furtive most of the time, far more often heard giving its porcine squeal than seen as it moves cautiously through dense vegetation.

Eurasian Moorhen, *Gallinula chloropus*: common in damp habitats throughout, from parks to marshlands and river banks. The most surprising was a single bird flying down Ein Avdat Canyon November 11; the small stand of cattails there no doubt harbors other secrets, too. Our trip total was 131.

Eurasian Coot, *Fulica atra*: common on deeper bodies of water throughout. The largest flock we encountered was of approximately 300 birds tightly massed on the Hula Valley's Lake Agmon November 6, accounting for nearly half of our eventual total of some 650.

African Swamphen, *Porphyrio madagascariensis*: a fairly scarce bird in Israel, but two or three individuals put on a spectacular show at Sodom Reservoir November 10, emerging from their densely vegetated fastnesses to swim, loaf, and once even to fly from one side of the lake to the other, a memorable sight indeed. The taxonomy of these giant purple rails remains vexed, but at present, the genus *Porphyrio* comprises twelve species, including the African Swamphen, the Western Swamphen of southwestern Europe and northern Africa, and the Gray-headed Swamphen of southern Asia; it is that last species that has become established in Florida.

CRANES—GRUIDAE

Common Crane, *Grus grus*: migrants were seen and heard on five days of our time together, often in significant numbers. All that paled, though, in comparison to the experience of watching an estimated 20,000 cranes awaken and take to the air in the Hula Valley November 6. The sight was memorable, the sound overwhelming as family group after family group took off on six-foot wings. The coexistence of large numbers of big birds and the farmers whose fields they feed on has been eased by a number of compromise measures, including constant monitoring to keep the cranes off newly planted fields. The estimated total for our entire trip was more than 35,000 cranes, but these are difficult birds to count, especially in areas where they are actively moving between fields and wetlands to feed.



A final few Common Cranes waiting to leave their Hula Valley roost. Photo Rick Wright

STILTS AND AVOCETS—RECURVIROSTRIDAE

Black-winged Stilt, *Himantopus himantopus*: common and noisy at most major wetland sites, totaling about 225 individuals; the biggest concentrations, of up to 60 birds, were in the Hula Valley November 6 and the Be'et Shean Valey November 8. This is a widespread shorebird in the warmer parts of the Old World, with a single startling record from the Aleutian Islands.

Pied Avocet, *Recurvirostra avosetta*: similar in numbers and distribution to the closely related Black-winged Stilt; the largest flocks were in the Hula Valley, totaling between them almost 200 birds. This attractive species' range and population shrank in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but it appears to have recovered well in recent decades, and its elegant black-and-white plumage and less elegant shrieking toots are now a familiar part of visits to many wetlands from Great Britain to the Russian Far East.

PLOVERS—CHARADRIIDAE

European Golden Plover, *Pluvialis apricaria*: nice looks at four individuals in a lapwing flock at Hula November 6; two more were on a grassy field in the Be'et She'an Valley November 8.

Northern Lapwing, *Vanellus vanellus*: this common migrant and winterer was seen on six days of our tour, with low double-digit concentrations in the Hula Valley November 6 and along the Urim Powerline Road November 11. Our total was about 67 birds.

Spur-winged Lapwing, *Vanellus spinosus*: dramatic in plumage and exhibitionist in behavior, this large plover was common everywhere from highway medians to fish ponds. Our total of nearly 600 included birds perched on the roof of our hotel at Kfar Blum and others walking down city sidewalks in Tel Aviv. The small black spurs at the bend of the wing are only rarely visible in the field.



As charming as it is noisy: a Spur-winged Lapwing. Photo Rick Wright

Kentish Plover, *Charadrius alexandrinus*: a single bird with Common Ringed Plovers on mudflats in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. Until recently, this species was often considered conspecific with the New World's Snowy Plover.

Common Ringed Plover, *Charadrius hiaticula*: about 15 at Ma'agan Michael November 4, followed by thirteen in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8.

SANDPIPERS—SCOLOPACIDAE

Black-tailed Godwit, *Limosa limosa*: a single flock of 86 birds as we watched the cranes in the Hula Valley November 6.

Ruff, *Calidris pugnax*: a more than respectable total of about 250 included flocks of more than 100 each in the Hula Valley November 6 and at Timorim November 13.

Temminck's Stint, *Calidris temminckii*: wonderful looks at surprising numbers of this demurely plumaged peep at Ma'agan Michael November 4, in direct comparison with Dunlin and Little Stint; this is an uncommon bird anywhere in its range, and to see more than twenty on a single mudflat was a memorable experience. Six or so in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8.

Dunlin, *Calidris alpina*: half a dozen at Ma'agan Michael November 4, most still showing juvenile wing coverts. Three in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. This is a very widespread sandpiper, breeding across the entire Arctic in several discrete subspecies.



A visible Jacksnipe. Photo Rick Wright

Little Stint, *Calidris minuta*: seen in the same places as the Temminck's Stint and in similar numbers.

Jack Snipe, *Lymnocyptes minimus*: a single bird seen by all on the ground at Hula November 6, and then an amazing view of one on the water's edge at Timorim November 13; that bird believed steadfastly that it was invisible, even a foot or more from the nearest camouflaging vegetation. "Jack" in bird names means "small," and this is the world's smallest snipe species.

Common Snipe, *Gallinago gallinago*: ten or so at Ma'agan Michael November 4, including several birds feeding in the open on mudflats with stints and redshanks. Five or six at Hula November 6. As many as 15 in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8.

Our trip total was about 45—and with snipe, it is certain that there were at least that many more concealed in the vegetation.

Common Sandpiper, *Actitis hypoleucis*: this is a poorly named bird, as it is far from common at most places throughout its broad range. We enjoyed small numbers at Ma'agan Michael and at Lehavot Habashan November 4, totaling about eight. About three at Hula November 6. Two in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8.

Green Sandpiper, *Tringa ochropus*: one or two at Ma'agan Michael November 4. One flushed from a roadside pond November 5. Two at Hula November 6. Two in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. This is the Old World counterpart of our Solitary Sandpiper, generally preferring the same shady habitats as that species.

Spotted Redshank, *Tringa erythropus*: one at Ma'agan Michael November 4, with four roosting birds in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. The numbers of this extremely elegant shorebird have plummeted in the last decades.

Common Greenshank, *Tringa nebularia*: a dozen at Ma'agan Michael November 4 and about eight in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. This tall, noisy sandpiper resembles our Greater Yellowlegs in appearance, voice, and behavior.

Marsh Sandpiper, *Tringa stagnatilis*: wonderful encounters with this uncommon bird at Ma'agan Michael and at Lehavot Habashan November 4; one gave unsurpassed flight views at close range at the former site, while at least seven more distant individuals were seen at the latter. We also tallied at least eight in the Hula Valley November 6 and four or more in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. Gracile and pale, Marsh Sandpipers bring to mind a tiny, slender-billed greenshank.

Wood Sandpiper, *Tringa glareola*: two at Ma'agan Michael November 4.

Common Redshank, *Tringa tetanus*: common and characteristically alert at most wetland sites throughout, calling loudly whenever they caught sight of a bipedal mammal or whenever they thought they might possibly be threatened. Our trip total approached 50 birds. Oddly, a bird of this species visited Michigan while we were enjoying them in Israel.

PRATINCOLES AND COURSERS—GLAREOLIDAE

Cream-colored Courser, *Cursorius cursor*: four birds in the desert along Ezuz Road November 12, at ridiculous distances but still readily identifiable by their upright stance, sandy upperparts, and bold face pattern.

GULLS AND TERNS—LARIDAE

Slender-billed Gull, *Chroicocephalus genei*: repeated close views of birds in flight at Ma'agan Michael November 4, totaling about 65 birds; breeding in widely scattered colonies from Spain to India, this is one of the least common gull species and one of the loveliest.

Black-headed Gull, *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*: oddly, only distant views November 4 of this abundant and usually very conspicuous species. One (!) at Hula November 6. More than 350 staging on the dock at Capernaum before heading off to roost at sunset November 7. Sixty-five in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8.

Armenian Gull, *Larus armenicus*: good views at Ma'agan Michael November 4 of adults and first-cycle birds, totaling 35 birds. About 40 in the Hula Valley November 6 and ten at Capernaum November 7; a small raft of 18 in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. This member of the herring gull group has a restricted and disjunct breeding range from the Caucasus east to northwestern Iran.

Whiskered Tern, *Chidonias hybrida*: twenty or more flying past over the Sea of Galilee at Capernaum November 7. Sixteen in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8.

STORKS—CICONIIDAE

Black Stork, *Ciconia nigra*: two loafing at Ma'agan Michael November 4 and four high southbound birds over Hula Valley November 6. One of the most impressive sights of the entire tour was an astonishing 150 Black Storks on fields and overhead in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8.

White Stork, *Ciconia ciconia*: two in a loafing flock of Black Storks in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8.

CORMORANTS—PHALACROCORACIDAE

Pygmy Cormorant, *Microcarbo pygmeus*: common at most deeper wetlands, fish ponds, and lakes, with a very respectable trip total of more than 230 individuals. The population and range of this once uncommon species have increased noticeably this century, though the Pygmy Cormorant is still vulnerable to habitat destruction and human persecution.

Great Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax carbo*: oddly, not seen at all until November 6, when several flocks, totaling about 120, passed over Hula. Eighty-five in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8.



Great White Pelicans. Photo Rick Wright

PELICANS—PELECANIDAE

Great White Pelican, *Pelecanus onocrotalus*: common at and over Ma'agan Michael November 4, small flocks soaring high or commuting between fish ponds. A dozen at Hula November 6. Four over the road to the Jordan Belvoir November 8. Around 450 in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8, many of them resting on plowed fields. Our trip total was an impressive 600+. This very large pelican is superficially similar to the American White Pelican, but among other distinctions, the pattern of bare skin on the face is quite different.

HERONS—ARDEIDAE

Great Bittern, *Botaurus stellaris*: amazing views of a single bird in the Hula Valley November 6, emerging silent from the reeds and eventually disappearing back into them just as stealthily. This uncommon heron is more often seen flying across the water, or not seen at all.

Gray Heron, *Ardea cinerea*: common November 4, especially at the Ma'agan Michael fish ponds, where birds happily perched on lines above the water in search of a meal. Common at Hula November 6. Two or three November 7. Twenty-five in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8, but just one each at Sodom Reservoir November 10 and Timorim November 13. The trip total was approximately 88. At first glance, this species resembles the Great Blue Heron, but it is smaller, stockier, and more monochrome, lacking the characteristic red on the thighs and at the bend of the wing in the American species.

Purple Heron, *Ardea purpurea*: fine looks at six to eight November 6 in the Hula Valley; all but one, a splendid adult, were brown juveniles. We also found one roadside bird at the top of the Sea of Galilee November 7 and about three in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8.

Great Egret, *Ardea alba*: this very large white heron was common throughout at wetland sites, above all—predictably—at fish ponds; our highest single count was 85 in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8, our trip total almost 200 birds. At present, this and the Great Egret of the New World are considered conspecific, but they differ signally in the color of the bill and tibia in breeding condition, and are likely to be re-split soon.

Little Egret, *Egretta garzetta*: common in all wetland habitats, and not infrequently seen commuting between ponds over otherwise dry country. Our trip total of 270 individuals included a count of 125 in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. This species is increasing in the New World, expanding from an initial base in northeast South America and the West Indies, a pattern familiar from earlier colonizations by the Cattle Egret and Glossy Ibis.

Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis*: similar numbers to the Little Egret, but more likely to be found away from water—sometimes in odd situations, as the several birds clambering around in the ornamental bushes in Capernaum November 7.

Squacco Heron, *Ardeola ralloides*: outstanding views of this often retiring species at Ma'agan Michael November 4, then of five birds at Hula November 6, simply standing around on mud rather than withdrawing in their usual panic into the reeds.

Black-crowned Night-Heron, *Nycticorax nycticorax*: eight at Hotel Pastoral November 5; one of the two birds seen there the next morning was mobbed by Rose-ringed Parakeets, an unusual sight.



Not as shockingly bright as the Roseate Spoonbill, the Eurasian has its own discreet elegance. Photo Rick Wright

IBISES AND SPOONBILLS—THRESKIORNITHIDAE

Glossy Ibis, *Plegadis falcinellus*: this was by far the most abundant long-legged wader we found, common wherever there was water. Our total of more than 1,100 birds included flocks of more than 200 at Maga'an Michael November 4, in the Hula Valley November 6, and at Timorim November 13. This species is undergoing explosive population increases in many parts of its very wide range.

Eurasian Spoonbill, *Platalea leucorodia*: common at Ma'agan Michael, with smaller numbers at Lehavot Habashan November 4; scattered birds totaling about 60 in the Hula Valley November 6, and three in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. Our eventual total was more than 100.

HAWKS, EAGLES, KITES, AND OLD WORLD VULTURES—ACCIPITRIDAE

Black-winged Kite, *Elanus caeruleus*: one very confiding adult at at Lehavot Habashan November 4, unconcernedly landing on a telephone pole just a few feet away from us. Impressively common at Hula November 6, often five or six birds in view at once, and a total there of nearly 30. Three or four at Hotel Pastoral November 7, two in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8, 1 at Sde Boker and 3 along the Urim Powerline Road November 11. The Asian subspecies *vociferus* colonized Israel in the early twenty-first century, and is now a common breeding bird, as our total of almost forty birds suggests. This Old World bird has at times been considered conspecific with the American White-tailed Kite, but they differ consistently in plumage and morphology.

Cinereous Vulture, *Aegypius monachus*: one surprising bird giving fantastic views above and below us at Gamla November 7. This huge scavenger is listed by IUCN as Near Threatened, and is quite a rare winterer in Israel.



The imposing Cinereous Vulture. Photo Rick Wright

Eurasian Griffon, *Gyps fulvus*: at least four, and probably as many as seven, at Gamla November 7; this was once the species' stronghold in Israel, but as Jonathan explained, the local population was devastated by feeding on the carcasses of poisoned livestock. We saw three more, including two at what appeared to be at least a potential nesting ledge, in Ein Avdat November 11.

Short-toed Snake Eagle, *Circaetus gallica*: one bird overhead near Ein Avdat canyon November 11.

Lesser Spotted Eagle, *Clanga pomarina*: one subadult on a dike in the Hula Valley November 6; the bird allowed disconcertingly close approach, and was later captured and taken for treatment and, one hopes, rehabilitation and eventual release.

Greater Spotted Eagle, *Clanga clanga*: two identified by Jonathan at Lehavot Habashan November 4. Excellent looks at three or four at Hula November 6, including both adults and lavishly spotted immature birds. One adult on the road to the Jordan Belvoir November 8. Four in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. At least six on the Urim Powerline Road November 11, and two in flight at Timorim November 13. Israel is a major wintering area for this dramatic eagle.

Booted Eagle, *Hieraaetus pennatus*: a light-morph adult, bold and brash, came hunting over a pond in the Hula Valley November 6, startling the loafing plovers and ruffs into panicked flight. We had a very good tally of

seven, with five in sight at once, in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8, one of them a dark-morph bird. A final individual over the Kalia fields November 10 gave us a more than respectable trip total of nine.

Imperial Eagle, *Aquila heliaca*: one of many highlights was our encounter with four Imperial Eagles on a disked field along the Urim Powerline Road November 11; whatever the machinery was turning up was irresistible, and we had once-in-a-blue-moon close, lingering views of these huge eagles. At times considered conspecific with the Spanish Eagle, *Aquila adalberti*.



One of four Imperial Eagles hunting a newly tilled field. Photo Rick Wright

Bonelli's Eagle, *Aquila fasciata*: very impressive views of a single immature bird in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. This is one of Europe's rarest birds, and in Israel, there were fewer than 20 breeding pairs known in the 1980s.

Eurasian Marsh-Harrier, *Circus aeruginosus*: this is a common raptor over marshes and fields, and we enjoyed excellent looks at many of the approximately 48 individuals we saw over the course of the tour. The highest concentrations, of about 15 birds each, were encountered in the Hula Valley November 6 and the Be'et Shean Valley November 15. Most of the individuals we saw were brown, females or immature males, but we also saw several of the colorful adult males. Bizarrely, while we were watching marsh harriers in Israel, one visited northern New Jersey.

Hen Harrier, *Circus cyaneus*: one adult male along the Urim Powerline Road November 11, unfortunately briefly seen and not by all. A later "ring-tail," the name given the difficult-to-identify brown harriers, could not be identified to species. The taxonomic history of this and the Northern Harrier of North America is complex, with the first authoritative split promulgated by the AOU 120 years ago—followed by a long

series of re-lumps and re-splits. At present, this and the Northern Harrier are, almost certainly correctly, both given full species status.

Pallid Harrier, *Circus macrourus*: three adult males along the Urim Powerline Road November 11. In happy distinction to so many other raptors, this species appears to be increasing and its range broadening.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk, *Accipiter nisus*: our total of ten included one distant bird over Hotel Pastoral November 5, very good views of a female in the Hula Valley November 6, a roadside bird on the way to Capernaum November 7, one on the road to the Jordan Belvoir and one in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8, one along the Urim Powerline Road November 11, and one each in Nafha Vineyards and at Timorim November 13. This small bird-eating hawk closely resembles the American Sharp-shinned Hawk.

Black Kite, *Milvus migrans*: one of the marvels of Israel in autumn is the almost incredible abundance of this species. We began the tour with a dozen here, a dozen there, but nothing could prepare us for the approximate two thousand kites in the air, on the fields, and half-heartedly fishing in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. The concentration of 650 along the Urim Powerline Road November 11 was nearly as impressive. Resolute omnivores, Black Kites hunt by packing off newly disked fields, flying low over roadside meadows, and perching patient on the edges of marshes and ponds. Along with the Common Cranes of the Hula Valley, these flocks of kites were among the most convincing demonstrations of sheer abundance in the bird world.

Common Buzzard, *Buteo buteo*: a total of thirteen for the trip was about as expected; our best views were of birds belonging to the nominate subspecies, but we also noted a couple of individuals most likely of the eastern race *vulpinus*.

Long-legged Buzzard, *Buteo rufinus*: wonderful close views of a pair at Mount Hermon November 5. Two at Hula November 6, including one bird perched nearby on the ground as we were watching a Lesser Spotted Eagle; one each at Wadi Kalya November 10 and Timorim November 13. Most impressive were the eleven on the fields along the Urim Powerline Road November 11, including one rare dark-morph individual. This large and powerful buteo of open country recalls the Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks in plumage and behavior.

OWLS—STRIGIDAE

Little Owl, *Athene noctua*: at least three near Ezuz November 12. These small, rock-dwelling strigids occur in 13 subspecies across their wide Old World range; Israel's birds belong to the pale, sandy-colored race *lilith*, a Hebrew word for "owl."



Little Owls on the lookout near Ezuz. Photo Rick Wright

Long-eared Owl, *Asio otus*: we had amazing good luck—or rather, Jonathan exhibited amazing skill—in getting to see three Long-eared Owls over the tour. The first was roosting in a pine on the grounds of Kibbutz Gvulot, the others roosting in poplars in a picnic area near Ramon. Many North American birders associate this species with cold days of trudging through the snow, but these extraordinarily widespread owls nest as far south as northern Africa and China.

HOOPOES—UPUPIDAE

Eurasian Hoopoe, *Upupa epops*: long, leisurely views of a bird feeding in a Ma'agan Michael parking lot November 4, just a few feet away from us. One at Hula November 6, three at Capernaum November 7, eight in the Be'et Shean Valley and another two at SPNI there November 8, two in Jerusalem November 9, one along Urim Powerline Road and two at Kibbutz Gvulot November 11, and two at Ezuz November 12: the recitation of dates and places shows just how common and conspicuous this weird bird can be, in habitats ranging from fishponds to city streets. The hoopoe is Israel's national bird.



Israel's national bird. Photo Rick Wright

KINGFISHERS—ALCEDINIDAE

Common Kingfisher, *Alcedo atthis*: our first views November 4 were brief, but one of the last individuals we saw that day, at Lehavot Habashan, perched on a nearby rock, showing off its amazing electric-blue back and attractive orange underparts. We would go on to see a total of 34 over our time together, with particular concentrations in the Hula Valley November 6 and the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. Though kingfishers are most often only heard giving their high-pitched, sharp flight calls, we had very good looks repeatedly.

White-throated Kingfisher, *Halcyon smyrnensis*: seen nearly every day, with a whopping trip total of 53 birds. Unlike the other two species, this colorful bird is not strictly bound to water, and we saw it on roadside wires, atop dead trees, and perched on the roof of our lodgings at Kfar Blum. Its diet is more eclectic as well, from crickets and crabs to mice and snakes; in Israel, it is said to specialize in autumn in exhausted migrant warblers.

Pied Kingfisher, *Ceryle rudis*: big, and striking as only a black-and-white bird can be, this was our most frequently seen kingfisher, totaling nearly 80 individuals over the tour. The biggest concentrations, unsurprisingly, were in the Hula Valley November 6 and the Be'et Shean Valley November 8, but we came to expect this species over just about any body of water. The scientific epithet *rudis* appears to refer to the bird's overall shaggy look.

BEE-EATERS (*MEROPIDAE*)

Arabian Green Bee-eater, *Merops cyanophrys*: newly re-split from the Asian Green, *Merops orientalis*, and the African Green, *Merops viridissimus*, this delightful small bee-eater was a roadside gem on the Kalia fields and at Sodom Reservoir November 10 and along Ezuz Road and at Nizzana November 12. Most birds afforded close and lingering views as they hunted from short trees and fences. In a land of beautiful birds, this species ranks high.



One of the loveliest birds of the Middle East, the Arabian Green Bee-eater. Photo Rick Wright

WOODPECKERS—PICIDAE

Syrian Woodpecker, *Dendrocopus syriacus*: we recorded a total of ten birds, with the two pairs seen November 9 giving the best views: one pair at our Jerusalem hotel, the other at the Jerusalem Bird Observatory; the open, park-like habitat at both sites is a typical choice for this species, which avoids dense forests in favor of orchards and backyards.

FALCONS—FALCONIDAE

Eurasian Kestrel, *Falco tinnunculus*: this was one of few birds seen every day of the tour; our trip total was 64 individuals, with twenty of them in the Hula Valley November 6. For those of us accustomed to seeing the dainty little American Kestrel, this species often seems strikingly large and lanky.

Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*: an adult at Hula November 6 and another in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8; our final sighting was of one along the Urim Powerline Road November 11.

OLD WORLD PARROTS—PSITTACULIDAE

Rose-ringed Parakeet, *Psittacula krameri*: our total of 216 was probably low for this extremely common and social bird. Contrary to expectation, parakeets were found not just in towns but in open countryside and roadside trees. Israel's present populations are descended from released and escaped birds, but older records suggest that the species may have occurred naturally in the past.



In the field. Photo Lili Shell

the Southern Gray Shrike, or a species of its own. The most reliable character separating this taxon from its near relatives appears to be the extremely short secondaries.

Masked Shrike, *Lanius nubicus*: John and Chuck ran into a migrant individual of this attractive and fiercely predatory species in a small city park near our Tel Aviv hotel before the tour started; always a good idea to arrive early!

NEW WORLD PARROTS—PSITTACIDAE

Monk Parakeet, *Myiopsitta monachus*: common as we left Tel Aviv November 4; this species has not yet spread from the cities, the presumed locus of introduction, into smaller towns and settlements.

SHRIKES (*LANIIDAE*)

Great (Arabian) Gray Shrike, *Lanius excubitor*: a total of 22 birds included no fewer than six on the Ezuz Road November 12. Shrike taxonomy, like that of so many “difficult” groups, is in violent flux, and the Arabian Gray Shrike, *Lanius [excubitor] aucheri*, has been treated as a subspecies of the Great Gray, a component (with the Iberian Gray) of a species to be known as



Photo Lili Shell

CROWS AND JAYS—CORVIDAE

Eurasian Jay, *Garrulus glandarius*: throughout on roadsides and near trees and bushes, with a trip total of 36 seen. Israel's jays are beautiful even by the exalted standards of this species; they belong to the white-faced, black-crowned subspecies *atricapillus*, quite different from the more subtly plumed European races many of us are used to.

Eurasian Jackdaw, *Corvus monedula*: small numbers as we left Tel Aviv November 4 and at Hotel Pastoral November 5 and 7, and fifty or more at Hula November 6, were completely overshadowed by the flock of 450 in attendance on livestock sheds in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8.

Rook, *Corvus frugilegus*: half a dozen at Hotel Pastoral November 5, taking pecans from the trees; nearby fields as we left the hotel held another 15 or so; smaller numbers were there on November 6 and 7 as well.

Hooded Crow, *Corvus cornix*: common and conspicuous throughout, in every habitat, including urban Jerusalem. Our trip total approached 1,000 individuals.

Brown-necked Raven, *Corvus ruficollis*: this was a fairly common bird in the deserts November 11, 12, and 13, with a total of about 40 for the trip. The brown nape and neck were rarely visible, but all of us were able to see it at least once.



The ridiculously short-tailed Fan-tailed Raven. Photo Rick Wright

Fan-tailed Raven, *Corvus rhipidurus*: seen only at the entrance to the Nahal David Nature Reserve November 10, where twenty ludicrously stub-tailed birds greeted us. In flight, these small ravens somewhat recalled a Black Vulture or a Bateleur.

TITS, CHICKADEES & TITMICE—PARIDAE

Great Tit, *Parus major*: one at Hotel Pastoral November 5 was followed by good looks at a noisy bird at Ella Compound November 6; we found a very active group of four or five at Hotel Pastoral November 7. Two on the road to the Jordan Belvoir November 8, and three at Jerusalem Bird Observatory the next morning, one of them in the hand. Our total was 20+ individuals. Over much of its range, this is the

commonest, and usually by far the most conspicuous, of the chickadees.

PENDULINE TITS—REMIZIDAE

Eurasian Penduline-Tit, *Remiz pendulinus*: four birds seen by some in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. This species is closely related to the Verdin.

LARKS—ALAUDIDAE

Desert Lark, *Ammomanes deserti*: nondescript in comparison to some others of its large family, this species is in fact very attractive in its simple, rock-colored homeliness when seen close up. Frustratingly, birds were most often seen flying across the road, when identification—not to mention enjoyment—was frustrating for those of us unfamiliar with the species, but excellent close-up looks finally came at the Ezuz pond and in the parking lot at Makhtash Ramon, where several posed nicely on the lark-colored rocks.



The Desert Lark. Photo Rick Wright

Calandra Lark, *Melanocorypha calandra*: fifteen or twenty in a large flock of skylarks in the western Negev November 11, unfortunately seen by most only in flight; the large size, blackish underwing, and broad white trailing edge to the wing, however, identify the bird even in a poor or distant view.

Eurasian Skylark, *Alauda arvensis*: constantly present over cultivated fields, with a trip estimate of more than 400—surely low. The largest flocks we saw were on the Urim Powerline Road, totaling at least 250. In spite of their abundance, skylarks were relatively difficult to see on the ground, far more often seen and heard overhead as they moved from field to field.

Crested Lark, *Galerida cristata*: seen nearly every day, with a trip total of more than 200; it was at first frustrating to see them lift off from the road as we approached, but we soon enough enjoyed great views of this comical bird, even from the bus.

CISTICOLID WARBLERS—CISTICOLIDAE

Graceful Prinia, *Prinia gracilis*: seen, and more often heard, in small numbers at most of our sites, usually in the shape of a long-tailed sprite disappearing into the brush, but in the course of our trip we had excellent views of several birds out in the open, where their diminutive size, lavish tail, and buzzy calls made them impossible to confuse with any other species. Our total approached 100 individuals.

Zitting Cisticola, *Cisticola juncidis*: oddly, only one of these short-tailed thumb-sized birds was seen, a fly-by at Timorim November 13, giving reasonable views to only some of our group.

REED WARBLERS—ACROCEPHALIDAE

Moustached Warbler, *Acrocephalus melanopogon*: three in the Hula Valley November 6, giving the usual brief views in lakeside vegetation. This is a common but secretive species in most parts of the Mediterranean basin.

Common Reed Warbler, *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*: usually less reclusive than the Moustached Warbler, three or four of these plain-colored marsh birds were detected in the Hula Valley November 6; one of them came out of its brushy fastness to pose briefly on the ground, where those standing nearby had good looks.

Clamorous Reed Warbler, *Acrocephalus stentoreus*: a loudly calling bird at Ma'agan Michael November 4 eventually showed itself, a split second at a time, in the vegetation; brief as the views were, we were able to see the very long bill of this truly stentorian warbler. Single individuals were also heard in the Hula Valley November 6 and at Sodom Reservoir November 10.

SWALLOWS—HIRUNDINIDAE

Rock Martin, *Ptyonoprogne fuligula*: a true desert bird, our first encounter was with several at an Agmom gas station November 8. Thereafter, we saw these large, monotone swallows each day from November 10 to November 13, with the highest numbers and by far the best views in Ein Avdat canyon November 11; the 25 we estimated there, flying and perching at potential nest crevices, made up more than a quarter of our trip total of about 90.

Barn Swallow, *Hirundo rustica*: common throughout, with a trip total approaching 700 birds. We saw both apparent migrants, in high flight or swarming mowed fields, and local breeders; the 55 at Hotel Pastoral included many recently fledged juveniles. Our highest single-site count was the 150 in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. Most of the individuals we looked at closely were of the dark-bellied subspecies *transitiva*, sedentary year-round in the eastern Mediterranean; paler-bellied birds may have represented the migratory nominate race from Europe. The Barn Swallows of the Old World are at present considered conspecific with those of the New, but notable differences in plumage and breeding biology suggest that they might after all be considered distinct.

BULBULS—PYCNONOTIDAE

White-spectacled Bulbul, *Pycnonotus xanthopygos*: I tend to think of “regional endemics” as scarce, retiring birds that require long and wearying search—not so for this one, though. The White-spectacled Bulbul is restricted entirely to the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula, but within its limited range, it appears to be very common and easily seen. We saw small groups of these handsome yellow-vented birds every day of the tour, even in the city of Jerusalem itself, and there were times when we actually ignored them in favor of something more surprising. Our trip total was 160 individuals, and would no doubt have been higher had we not grown so used to them so quickly.



A White-spectacled Bulbul looking suspicious. Photo Rick Wright

LEAF WARBLERS—PHYLLOSCOPIDAE

Willow Warbler, *Phylloscopus trochilus*: one seen very nicely at Ma’agan Michael November 4. This is an abundant autumn migrant through Israel (to the delight of the White-throated Kingfishers), but early November is on the late side for the species even here.

Common Chiffchaff, *Phylloscopus collybita*: common throughout, wherever any foliage was available. We saw this active little green-gray warbler every day, including our day in Jerusalem, and were delighted to get to inspect four individuals in the hand at the Jerusalem Bird Observatory November 9, when we could get a close look at the stubby wing and dark tarsi. We tallied about 90 individuals during our tour.



A Common Chiffchaff in a less frenetic moment. Photo Rick Wright

BUSH WARBLERS—CETTIDAE

Scrub Warbler, *Scotocerca inquieta*: one heard by some of us during our search for bustards near Ezuz, but for others (including me) this was one that got away.

Cetti's Warbler, *Cettia cetti*: three or four singing birds at Ma'agan Michael November 4. Similar numbers at Hotel Pastoral November 5, when one was seen briefly as it flew under a bridge. A couple at Hula November 6, including one that was briefly but repeatedly seen by some of our group. Three or four, all invisible, at Hotel Pastoral November 7. One in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. All told, we fared rather well in actually seeing this skulking resident of dense vegetation, even if not in classic field guide views. The challenge of getting a good look at this warm-brown warbler has been recognized since its original discovery; see birdnote.org/listen/shows/cettis-warbler.

SYLVIIDS—SYLVIIDAE

Eurasian Blackcap, *Sylvia atricapilla*: a male at Hotel Pastoral November 5 and a female at Nimrod Fortress that same day, followed by two at Hotel Pastoral November 7 and another two in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8. Of the six we saw at Jerusalem Bird Observatory November 9, three of them were in the hand. This abundant bird is one of the species most obviously affected by climate change in their European range: more and more are wintering in northwestern Europe and the UK, and those individuals that choose not to migrate have evolved shorter wings than their traveling cousins.

Lesser Whitethroat, *Sylvia curruca*: one in the hand at Jerusalem Bird Observatory November 9, with that or another individual heard later on our brief walk there.

Sardinian Warbler, *Sylvia melanocephala*: with the exception of familiar birds like the blackcap and common whitethroat, the warblers of the genus *Sylvia* can be devilishly hard to see, as the 18 or so Sardinian Warblers we saw demonstrated so well. Some of us had good views of two or three at Nimrod Fortress November 5, while for most of us, the several at Ella Compound November 6 and at Gamla November 7 were glimpsed at best. Two in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8 were no more forthcoming, and neither was the one heard at Jerusalem Bird Observatory November 9. Two more in the Kalia area November 10 were once again elusive for most of us, as was our final bird at Ezuz November 12. Common and easy to detect by its harsh rattling contact call, but this species is only rarely easy to see; in this it resembles North America's only member of the family, the Wrenit.

BABLERS—LEIOTHRICHIDAE

Arabian Babbler, *Turdoides squamiceps*: we ran across busy flocks of six or eight individuals on November 11, at the Mitzpe Ramon ballfields and in Sde Boker, and on November 12 at Ezuz. For many of us, including me, this was not just a new species but an entirely new family of birds; in shape and habitat, they recalled the desert thrashers, and in their sociability some of the large tropical wrens.

WRENS—TROGLODYTIDAE

Eurasian Wren, *Troglodytes troglodytes*: heard calling, and fleetingly glimpsed, at Mount Hermon November 5. This and the North American Winter and Pacific Wrens were long lumped as a single species; further splits are possible in the extreme east and the extreme west of the Old World wren's range.

STARLINGS—STURNIDAE

European Starling, *Sturnus vulgaris*: we first encountered this winterer in a flock of 13 over Lehavot Habashan November 4. Three flocks at Hula November 6 totaled about 60 birds. About fifteen at Hotel Pastoral November 7. Twenty-five in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8 were followed by single- or low-double-digit groups each day thereafter. Our trip total was just shy of 200. This is the same starling species so successfully introduced to so many places around the world, including North America.

Common Myna, *Acridotheres tristis*: common throughout, in towns and cities, parks and hotel gardens, and stands of trees in the middle of cultivated fields. Our total count approached 400. From an original population of zoo escapes in Tel Aviv, this aggressive starling species spread out to breed over most of Israel, entirely absent only from parts of the Negev and the heights of Mount Hermon. There is concern that this species, rather like the European Starling in the US and Canada, deprives native birds such as hoopoes and scops owls of nesting sites.



Tristram's Starlings. Photo Rick Wright

Tristram's Starling, *Onychognathus tristramii*: heard only at the Jerusalem Bird Observatory November 9, but then seen in good numbers in Wadi Kalya, at Mitzpe Ramon (including at our hotel), and especially, in Ein Avdat canyon, where a good 35 birds made up half of our trip total.

THRUSHES—TURDIDAE

Eurasian Blackbird, *Turdus merula*: heard at Lehavot Habashan November 4. Half a dozen seen at various sites November 5. Two or three at Ella Compound November 6. One at Hotel Pastoral November 7. One in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8 and at least two at lunch at SPNI. One at Jerusalem Bird Observatory November 9. Our trip total of only 16 birds certainly understates the species' abundance, but blackbirds tend to be relatively inconspicuous outside of the singing season.

CHATS AND OLD WORLD FLYCATCHERS—MUSCICAPIDAE

European Robin, *Erithacus rubecula*: Two on Mount Hermon and the same number at Ella Compound November 6, one of them singing incessantly. Several noisy birds at Hotel Pastoral November 7, a couple of them eventually rewarding our patience with good views. Two at Jerusalem Bird Observatory November 9, one of them in the hand. Unlike its confiding behavior in the British Isles, robins on the continent and, it turns out, in Israel are quite shy, feeding and vocalizing in shady places with thick vegetation.



A Bluethroat in a rare patch of green. Photo Rick Wright

Bluethroat, *Luscinia svecica*: close and leisurely views of a red-spotted male at Lehavot Habashan November 4 were followed by single individuals in the Hula Valley November 6, on the trail along the Jordan at Hotel Pastoral November 7, in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8, in the Kalia fields November 10, and at Nafha Vineyards November 13. Our best view was in a surprising place, a small pond among the arid rocks of Ein Avdat November 11. This is the same attractive species that summers in Alaska and the Yukon.

Common Redstart, *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*: a tardy male hunting in a Ma'agan Michael parking lot November 4. Two more November 5, one at Valley of Tears and another a couple of miles east of there; one was apparently a female, the other apparently a first-cycle male. The American warblers known as redstarts are only distantly related to these colorful chats.

Black Redstart, *Phoenicurus ochruros*: our trip total for these rock-loving chats came to about 13. All seen well appeared to be of the western subspecies *gibraltarensis*, widespread in Europe and northern Africa.

Blue Rock-Thrush, *Monticola solitarius*: two, one male and one female, on Susita Road November 7, at first characteristically flighty but then giving nice scope views.

European Stonechat, *Saxicola rubicola*: this wintering species seemed rarely out of sight in just about any open habitat; the largest concentrations, of about 15 each, were in the Hula Valley and the Be'et Shean Valley. We counted a total of around 90 individuals, but surely there were more.

Siberian Stonechat, *Saxicola maurus*: three in the Hula Valley November 6, one giving very good views of its contrasting throat, pale overall aspect, and unstreaked buffy rump. A beautiful male in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8 was flightier.

Blackstart, *Oenanthe melanura*: a common and surprisingly confiding wheatear of the desert, soberly plumed but handsome nonetheless with its jet-black tail. More than half of our total were found on November 10, in the Kalia fields, Kalya Wadi, Ein Gedi Reserve, and Sodom Reservoir; the following day we met with two on the Mitzpe Ramon ballfields and as many as four at Ein Avdat. Like the redstarts, this species flirts its tail as it hunts on or near the ground, presumably to startle prey into revealing itself. This bird is sometimes placed in a monotypic genus *Cercomela*.

White-crowned Wheatear, *Oenanthe leucopyga*: this is an essentially African species, ranging into the Middle East as the subspecies *ernesti*. We saw it twice, one individual in Wadi Kalya November 10 and two at the Mitzpe Ramon ballfields the next day.

Northern Wheatear, *Oenanthe oenanthe*: one on the Kalia fields November 10 and another on the ballfields at Mitzpe Ramon November 11. This species is one of the great athletes of extreme migration, with birds breeding in Alaska and western Canada flying across all of Asia and the Middle East to reach their wintering grounds in sub-Saharan Africa.

Mourning Wheatear, *Oenanthe lugens*: one of the most beautiful species in a terrifically beautiful genus, Mourning Wheatears crossed our path half a dozen times, the first a single bird at the Mitzpe Ramon ballfields November 11. The next day we observed a total of 15 individuals in Ezuz and at Nizzana; our final sighting was of a single bird at Nafha Vineyards November 13. The taxonomy and nomenclature of this wheatear is complicated, and at times it has been considered conspecific with the equally attractive Finsch's Wheatear.

Finsch's Wheatear, *Oenanthe finschii*: a mobile female at Valley of Tears November 5. First-rate views of at least three males on the road entrance to Gamla and of a similar number on Susita Road November 7.

Desert Wheatear, *Oenanthe deserti*: our first views were of a male at moderate distance early in the morning of November 12 at Ezuz; we saw another in the same area that midday, after having enjoyed good views of one at Nizzana later in the morning.

Isabelline Wheatear, *Oenanthe isabellina*: wonderful views of a single bird perched on a fence very near the vehicle at Hula November 6, followed by a less cooperative individual on the road to Ezuz November 12.

SUNBIRDS—NECTARINIIDAE

Palestine Sunbird, *Cinnyris osea*: continual good views at close range of this charming little bird on every day of our tour. Adult females are tan-brown, adult males sparkling blue and purplish black; immature males, which we saw several times, are patchy. The type specimen was collected on the plains of Jericho, whence the epithet *osea*, "holy [land]."

ACCENTORS—PRUNELLIDAE

Dunnock, *Prunella modularis*: a single bird drinking at the pool below the ski lift at Mount Hermon November 5.



A handsome male Spanish Sparrow. Photo Rick Wright

OLD WORLD SPARROWS—PASSERIDAE

House Sparrow, *Passer domesticus*: common throughout, with a total for the trip of about 300.

Spanish Sparrow, *Passer hispaniolensis*: a fine flock of some 45 birds on the roadside at Susita November 7, followed by gathering of up to 70 individuals over the next days. Our total tally was a very respectable 215.

Dead Sea Sparrow, *Passer moabiticus*: unfortunately, most of us had to content ourselves with vanishingly short glimpses of birds overhead, flying from one dense patch of tamarisk to the next, though some consolation was afforded by nice looks at the big, bristly stick nests.

WAGTAILS AND PIPITS—MOTACILLIDAE

Western Yellow Wagtail, *Motacilla flava*: three in the Hula Valley November 6, one of them identified by Jonathan to the subspecies *feldegg*, based on its flight call; somewhat better views were had of two along the Urim Powerline Road November 11.

Citrine Wagtail, *Motacilla citreola*: heard by Jonathan at Ma'agan Michael November 4 and in the Hula Valley November 6.

White Wagtail, *Motacilla alba*: common throughout on lawns, beaches, fields, and mudflats. A hundred on the fields in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8 and 150 along the Urim Powerline Road November 11 were

the biggest concentrations, but it was not uncommon to find forty together in a single scan of a field. There were eight at Jerusalem Bird Observatory November 9, with a few more over the city later that day. Our total for the trip came to approximately 650.

Meadow Pipit, *Anthus pratensis*: we counted about 45 over the course of our time together, nearly all in flight and identified by calls. The best view was of one along the entrance road to Gamla November 7.

Red-throated Pipit, *Anthus cervinus*: like the Meadow Pipit, more often heard overhead than seen on the ground, but we had excellent looks at birds on compost piles in the fields of Sde Boker November 11. Our total was slightly more than 20.

Water Pipit, *Anthus spinoletta*: good looks at Ma'agan Michael November 4 and of six in the Be'et Shean Valley November 8, with scattered birds seen elsewhere. The wintering bird in Israel is the Caucasian Pipit, *Anthus [spinoletta] coutellii*; this population, breeding in Turkey, northern Iran, and Turkmenistan, seems ripe for the splitting.

FINCHES—FRINGILLIDAE

Common Chaffinch, *Fringilla coelebs*: a common winterer in Israel, but relatively elusive during our time together, most often seen headed away fast in the other direction. Our best views were probably of the two dozen drinking on Mount Hermon November 5 and of similar numbers at Ha'ela Park the next day. Together with others seen on seven days of the tour, our total was about 125.

Brambling, *Fringilla montifringilla*: three drinking at Mount Hermon November 5, and a similar number at Ha'ela Park November 6, one pausing in a treetop to give us all quite good close views.

Desert Finch, *Rhodospiza obsoleta*: eight birds perched on a wire at Wadi Kalya November 10 were distant and in poor light, but the short, dark bills and barely discernible hint of a complex wing pattern identified them.

European Greenfinch, *Chloris chloris*: another bird most often seen overhead, giving their popping calls and flashing bits of yellow in wing and tail. Eventually, we all had good views of some of the more than 100 individuals we saw during the tour.

European Goldfinch, *Carduelis carduelis*: half a dozen at Hotel Pastoral November 5 and two or three at Ha'ela Park November 6. Excellent views of a flock of about fifteen birds at Hotel Pastoral November 7. Our trip total was about 25 individuals. On the significance of this pretty species in Christian art, see Herbert Friedman, *The Symbolic Goldfinch* (Washington, D. C.: Pantheon, 1946).

Eurasian Linnet, *Linaria cannabina*: three or four in flight at Mount Hermon and about 15 at the Valley of Tears November 5. Small flocks overhead throughout November 7, and scattered ones and twos November 12 at Ezuz and Nizzana. The scientific name neatly sums up this small finch's diet: it is the hempseed flaxbird.

European Serin, *Serinus serinus*: at least one singing and calling at Ha'ela Park November 6, but stubbornly invisible.

Syrian Serin, *Serinus seriacus*: noisy at Mount Hermon, then finally giving good views drinking from the small reservoir there. The count of this very local species was about 9.

OLD WORLD BUNTINGS—EMBERIZIDAE

Corn Bunting, *Emberiza calandra*: a total of around 50 November 5, with the best looks provided by perched birds at close range at Valley of Tears. Smaller groups were at Gamla November 7, Ezuz November 12, and Nafha Vineyards November 13.

Rock Bunting, *Emberiza cia*: good looks at drinking birds on Mount Hermon November 5, totaling about six.

MAMMALS

HYRACOIDEA—HYRAXES

Cape Hyrax, *Procavia capensis*: common and easily observed at Nimrod Fortress and at Capernaum; often seen in passing on rocky roadsides. This odd marmot-like creature is more closely related to elephants and dugongs than to any other extant mammal.

RODENTIA—RODENTS

Indian Crested Porcupine, *Hystrix indica* †

Sand Rat, *Psammomys obesus*: one running across the road outside of Mitzpe Ramon, its large size and black-tipped furry tail recalling a ground squirrel.

Nutria, *Myocastor coypus*: at least one of these introduced Neotropical furbearers November 4. Very common at Hula November 6.

LAGOMORPHA—RABBITS AND HARES

Cape Hare, *Lepus capensis* †

CHIROPTERA—BATS

Kuhl's Pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus kuhlii*: one at Lehavot Habashan the early evening of November 4.

CARNIVORA—CARNIVORANS

Asian Jungle Cat, *Felis chaus*: an incredible experience with one individual in the Hula Valley November 6.

Egyptian Mongoose, *Herpestes ichneumon*: three or more haunting the beach parking lot at Ma'agan Michael November 4.

Golden Jackal, *Canis aureus*: a singing pack at Lehavot Habashan at sunset November 4 was our first meeting with this handsome wild dog. Seen well in the Hula Valley November 6, the total comprising a single animal, a group of three, and a group of four. Four on the trail of gazelles on the road to the Jordan Belvoir November 8.

PERISSODACTYLA—ODD-TOED UNGULATES

Onager, *Equus hemionus*: abundant sign in the deserts of this reintroduced but still threatened wild ass.

ARTIODACTYLA—EVEN-TOED UNGULATES

Mountain Gazelle, *Gazella gazella*: one seen by some November 7. At least fifteen, including kids, gave fine views on the road to the Jordan Belvoir November 8—at least until the jackals found them, when the herd vanished over the ridge.

Dorcas Gazelle, *Gazella dorcas*: half a dozen or more of these superbly elegant little grazers in the deserts November 12. The scientific name is tautonymous, both the genus and the species name meaning “gazelle.”

Nubian Ibex, *Capra nubiana*: this magnificent desert goat was easy to see and quite tolerant of close approach in rocky canyons and deserts; ibex have apparently adapted to urban life in Mitzpe Ramon, where they wandered the streets and housing areas.

Wild Boar, *Sus scrofa*: a large individual in the water in the Hula Valley November 6.



Perfectly adapted to life on the sand, a Field's Horned Viper. Photo Rick Wright

REPTILES

Field's Horned Viper, *Cerastes fieldi*: the nearly foot-long individual almost literally under Jonathan's feet in Nizzana was one of the non-bird highlights of the tour. At first the animal seemed fairly sluggish, but on too

close approach it flipped onto its side and snapped its coils straight, bouncing several centimeters across the sand in intimidating acrobatics.

Roughtail Rock Agama, *Stellagama stellio*: easily seen at Nimrod Fortress November 5.

Caspian Turtle, *Mauremys capsica*: common at most wetlands, usually seen hauled out in the sun.

Selected BUTTERFLIES

Painted Lady, *Vanessa cardui*

Blue-spotted Arab, *Colotis phisadia*

Caper White, *Belenois aurota*

Cabbage White, *Pieris rapae*

Plain Tiger, *Danaus chrysippus*



THE PEREGRINE PROJECT

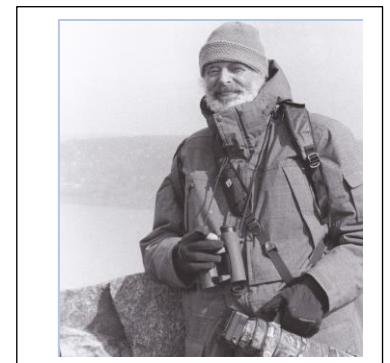
Through January 25

The peregrine falcon is the fastest animal on Earth, capable of reaching speeds over 200 miles per hour when diving upon prey. Yet this master of the skies fell victim to the pesticide DDT—and by the early 1960s, there were no known nesting pairs east of the Mississippi River. As the result of extraordinary human efforts to ban this dreaded poison and raise falcons in captivity for release into the wild, these formidable birds have made an incredible comeback over the past two decades.

This classic tale of human sin and redemption as told by the peregrine falcons of the Palisades holds the promise of hope and the belief that we can address our current existential threats with the same focus and resolve that brought the peregrine back from the brink.

Photographer Wayne Quinto Greenstone has been documenting the peregrine falcons that have returned to their historic nesting sites on the cliffs of the Palisades, some 500 feet above the Hudson River.

His extraordinary images and creative renditions will be on display at the Wayrick Wildlife Art Gallery at New Jersey Audubon's Scherman Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary, 11 Hardscrabble Road, Bernardsville, New Jersey.



*The gallery is currently open
Thursdays 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Fridays and Saturdays 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Sundays 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.*

Montclair Bird Club Meetings

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	Member's Meeting.
September	Exploring the Big Bend in Southwest Texas, by Donna Traylor.
October	Build-a-Bird, with Rick Wright.
November	On Safari: Botswana and South Africa, by Ric Cohn.
December	No scheduled meeting.

January Virtual Bird Walk

The theme for the January 19 VBW is “Snow & Winter Birds.”

**Wherever you went, with whomever or solo, anywhere in the world,
including new Jersey.**

**You are welcome to display your own images or forward them to Sandy
at MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com to be included in a group
PowerPoint.**

2022–2023 Officers

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Vice President	Evan Cutler
Secretary	Pat Sanders
Treasurer	Sandy Sorkin

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Bill Beren
Ric Cohn
Wayne Greenstone
Don Traylor
Rick Wright

Montclair Bird Club 2023 Bird of the Year

2022: Eastern Screech Owl
2023: ?

If your bird was not selected as last year's Montclair Bird Club "Bird of the Year," you have another chance in 2023. Personally, I plan to nominate the lesser yellowlegs again, or possibly the gray catbird. Based on last year, my guess is that the competition will intensify if the lesser yellowlegs must compete with cedar waxwings, redstarts, gray catbirds, and yellow-rumped warblers. But as always, the winner will be the choice of our readers.



Upcoming VENT Tours

VentBird.com

Kansas	Shorebirds on the Prairie	April 23–29, 2023
Great Britain	Jewels of the Coastal UK	May 3–17, 2023
France	Birds and Art in Provence	May 22–30, 2023
Colorado	A Summer Stay in Estes Park	June 18–24, 2023; June 17–23, 2024
Colorado	Northeast Colorado Extension	June 24–27, 2023; June 23–26, 2024
Germany	Birds and Art in Berlin	September 28 – October 7, 2023
Italy	Venice and the Po Delta	October 7–15, 2023
Israel	Birds and Culture in the Holy Land	November 3–15, 2023
Nebraska	Sandhill Cranes and Prairie Chickens	March 15–22, 2024
Alabama	The Gulf Coast and Dauphin Island	April 21–26, 2024
Greece	The North of Greece	May 5–20, 2024
Scotland	Wild Scotland	May 26 – June 27, 2024
Spain	Birds and Art in Asturias	August 28 – September 6, 2024

**VICTOR
EMANUEL
NATURE
TOURS**

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 reduce anxiety and make us smile.

Sandy

MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com

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- Page 4: Orange-winged parrot, (SS)
- Page 5: Brigantine (SS)
- Page 8: Canada geese, pigeon, northern harrier (SS)
- Page 9: Canada geese, peregrine falcons (SS)



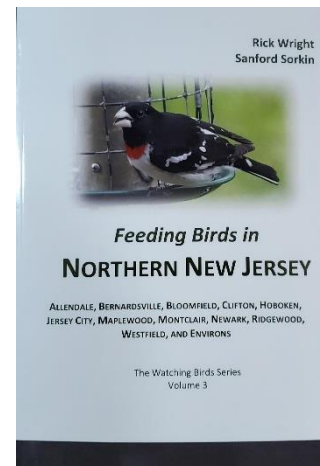
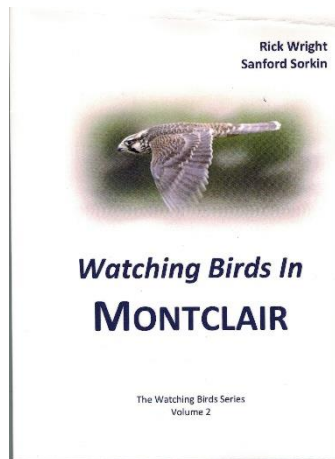
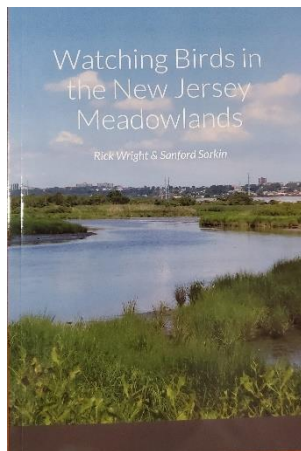
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With over 70 combined years of bookselling experience, the staff knows how to choose challenging, nurturing, and inspiring books, and knows, too, how to value the input and advice of readers and writers in our area’s thriving literary community. Watchung Booksellers further serves the community with a full schedule of events, including author presentations, poetry readings, children’s story times, in-house book groups, and special programs for writers and readers of all ages. The store and its staff are fierce supporters of our community’s schools and libraries among many other political, religious, and civic institutions, including the Montclair Bird Club.



The MBC Bulletin Bird

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**The Broadwing Editor
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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