

The Sussex

Flyway

December 2024

Vol. 70 · NO. 2

The Sussex Flyway

is the quarterly publication of The Sussex County Bird Club, established 1953.

www.sussexcountybirdclub.org



**Next Meeting:
January 17, 2025
7:30 PM**

Inside this Issue:



- Book Nook
- Club & Meeting News
- Field Trips - Future trips
- Field Trips - Results
- Member's Corner
- Membership Registration Form



Go to our website:

Sussex County Bird Club
P.O. Box 428
Augusta, New Jersey 07822

The Sussex Flyway

December 2024
Volume 70, Number 2

The Newsletter of the Sussex County Bird Club
Editor: Karyn Cichocki
PUBLISHED QUARTERLY:
(September, December, March, and June)
by The Sussex County Bird Club
P.O. Box 428 · Augusta, New Jersey 07822

THE SUSSEX COUNTY BIRD CLUB OBJECTIVE:

To encourage the study and appreciation of
birds and other forms of nature and to
further the cause of conservation of our
natural resources.

The Board

Kathy Wilson - President

Bill McDaniel - Vice-President

Karyn Cichocki - Secretary

Bob Wilson - Treasurer

Non-Officer Board Members
Charlie Fineran, Sandy McPhail

MEETINGS:

Will be held the 3rd Friday of the month
Sept-Nov, Jan-Mar, May-June
Sparta Ambulance Squad Building
14 Sparta Ave N., Sparta Township, NJ 07871

CLUB CONTACT:

info@sussexcountybirdclub.org

FLYWAY CORRESPONDENCE & SUBMISSIONS:

Please send all materials no later than the
15th of the following months,
August, November, February, and May to:

Editor:

Karyn Cichocki
79 Beaver Run Road - Lafayette, NJ 07848

EMAIL:

kdc05@ptd.net

PHONE:

973-579-7914

A note from the Editor:

After over a month of no significant rainfall, we finally got a little over an inch here in Lafayette. It was a nice steady rain, so the ground got a good soaking and then it was followed by snow. We then got another inch a week later. The birds seems to know that something was coming as there was a feeding frenzy at the feeders. We have lots of Black-capped Chickadees and Tufted Titmice and it is fun to watch them flitting from the peanut, sunflower and thistle feeders. Now that December has arrived, we are surprised to still get visits from American Robins and Red-winged Blackbirds.

I wish you a happy holiday season
and wishes for good birding in the
coming new year.

Cheers!

Karyn



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Dues Reminder

2024 - 2025 Our annual dues were due in September. You can pay at the September meeting or if you wish mail it in. Please fill out the form (on last page) and mail it with your dues to SCBC, PO Box 428, Augusta, NJ 07822.

Club News

From the President

With snowfall appears the leucistic White-throated Sparrow near our feeder. The second year in a row, I double check what I am seeing. This year's is two thirds white, last year's was just the head. Is it the snow accumulating on the bird --- no.

We had a very long, very dry Indian Summer and boom into winter weather. One yard bird watching benefit of our drought was seeing so many taking advantage of our bird baths. Another bad/good of trying to attract yard birds is also attracting brown rats. They came when we put in a new septic system and feeders in the same area. We moved the feeders and the rats tunneled to them. Now we have daily visits from a Red-shouldered Hawk who was even perched on the roof of one of our feeders. I haven't seen the rats recently, is this due to successful hunting or fear of the Hawk? I'm rooting for the Hawk.

Kathy Wilson
President

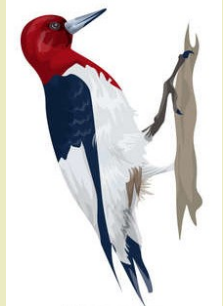


Rosemary Mosco cartoon-reprinted with permission which appeared in the Summer 2024 issue of LivingBird, magazine of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Sussex County Bird Club was formed to encourage the study and appreciation of birds and other forms of nature and to further the cause of conservation of our natural resources.

Please help continue over six decades of fulfilling this mission and sharing experiences in nature.



SCBC Committee Chairs:

Conservation.....Giselle Smisko
info@sussexcountybirdclub.org

County Records **Open**

DinnerKathy Wilson

Email SightingsBradley White
bhw357@gmail.com

FacebookSandy McPhail
<https://www.facebook.com/SussexCountyBirdClub>

Field TripsSandy McPhail
info@sussexcountybirdclub.org

Flyway EditorKaryn Cichocki
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Historian **Open**

MembershipKathy Wilson
info@sussexcountybirdclub.org

Picnic **TBD**

ProgramsMelissa Ingala
info@sussexcountybirdclub.org

PublicityLori Krieger
info@sussexcountybirdclub.org

Rare Bird Text Alerts.....Bradley White
bhw357@gmail.com

WebsiteBill McDaniel
info@sussexcountybirdclub.org

Welcome New Members

Liz DelGrosso
Jeff & Paula Galloway
Lisa & Tony Handwerker
Ellen Helman
Kathy & Scott Miller
David Savage
Mary, Lanie, Riley & Victor Scuralli,

Club News

2024 Harvest, Honey and Garlic Festival

The club once again had a table at the festival. April and Bill McDaniel along with John and Lori Krieger greeted visitors to the table. The pictures below were provided by Bill.



Giselle Smisko, Avian Wildlife Center, also had a table at the festival.

Save the Date!!!!!!

The annual dinner will be held on Thursday, April 17, 2025 at the Lafayette House, Lafayette, NJ.

Program: NJ Bald Eagle Project: An all-American Recovery



Larissa Smith is a Senior Biologist with the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey. She has been coordinating the NJ Bald Eagle Project since 2000. Larissa also works on a variety of other projects including the Delaware Bay Shorebird Stewards, Barn Owls, Eastern Tiger Salamanders and Ospreys.

The bald eagle population in New Jersey continues to soar largely due to the work of faithful volunteers and biologists from the NJ Endangered & Nongame Species Program and Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ. Learn how the population rebounded from one pair in the 1980's to over 260 active pairs today. Larissa will discuss the efforts that continue to document and protect eagle nests and educate the public about New Jersey's bald eagle population.

Club News

Meeting Programs

January 17, 2025

Lachlin Robertson “**Forest Ecology of Wallkill River NWR**”.

Lachlin is the Wildlife Refuge Specialist for Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge, with a background in forest ecology. After seeing his first old growth Douglas fir in Vancouver, BC, he fell in love with forests and all that they have to offer. He has previously worked in Arizona, Montana, and Vermont for US Fish & Wildlife Service and US Forest Service before arriving at the Lenape Wildlife Refuge Complex.

The presentation will dive into the history and ecology of Wallkill River NWR’s forests, how staff manages them, and the benefits that they provide wildlife and humans.



February 21, 2025

Program: Member’s night. Members are encourage to share nature related photos, videos, crafts or projects they are involved in.

A Day at with the Weslers - Karyn Cichocki

As I mentioned in the last issue of the newsletter, in mid-August, we visited the home of Jayne and Richard Wesler. This photo of Coral Fungus (*Clavicornia pyxidate*) was taken by Kathy Wilson



Fundraising

As mentioned in the previous issue of the *Flyway*, the club will be selling t-shirts, hooded sweatshirts, caps and bags as a fund raiser. If you are interested in the following items shown on this and the next page, please place your order with Kathy Wilson at info@sussexcountybirdclub. Please indicate the color and size for the t-shirt and sweatshirt. The hat is one size fits all. Note that pricing will depend on the quantity of each item that is ordered. Deadline for the orders will be January 13, 2025, so that we can have the items available at the January meeting.



Carolina Blue t-shirt

Quantity	Price
1	\$27
5	\$22
10	\$19

Continued on next page.....

Club News

Fundraising *continued*



Sport Grey T-Shirt

Quantity	Price
1	\$27
5	\$22
10	\$19

Forest Green
Hooded Sweatshirt

Quantity	Price
1	\$68
5	\$53
10	\$48



Navy Blue
Hooded Sweatshirt

Quantity	Price
1	\$68
5	\$53
10	\$48



Blue Zippered Tote

Quantity	Price
1	\$29
5	\$25
10	\$20



Port Authority Garment-Washed Cap - Green

Quantity	Price
1	\$50
5	\$34
10	\$24

All orders should be placed with Kathy Wilson at info@sussexcountybirdclub. Please indicate the color and size for the t-shirt and sweatshirt. The hat is one size fits all.

Announcements

Avian Wildlife Center Seeks Volunteers

Are you interested in checking out a report of an injured bird, locating a nest to assist with replacing nestlings, helping with releases of birds?

The Avian Wildlife Center (AWC) receives thousands of calls throughout the year from the public about birds in trouble. As the only licensed wildlife rehabilitation facility for birds in Sussex County and one of only 2 in northern New Jersey, AWC needs assistance in responding to requests.

We are looking for people who would be available to go to observe a bird that a caller thinks is injured and report what you find. In the warmer months we are inundated with calls about nestlings. When possible, we try to re-nest young. Volunteers that could assist with locating the right nest for the species could facilitate that. The ultimate goal of our work is to return a healthy bird to the wild. Finding the proper habitat and sometimes finding others of the same species is critical to a successful release.

If you are interested, please contact AWC by email info@avianwildlifecenter.org or by phone (973)702-1957. Volunteers can determine their availability. Requests for help vary in frequency and generally amount to just a few over the year. Most calls are from Sussex and Warren counties, but we do receive calls from all over the state and New York state. If you know of a birder who might be interested, please pass our information to them.

Thank you for the support that Sussex County Bird Club members have already provided.



Memories

It has been 10 years this month since the passing of Jim Zamos. The following pictures and tributes are reprinted from the March 2015 issue of the *Flyway*, Cheryl Boyd, editor.

MEMORIES OF JIM ZAMOS

Long-time charter club member, Jim Zamos, passed away on 12/19/2014.

Jim was known and loved by many of us, and he touched countless lives during the course of his time on our planet. There are many stories and memories of our times with him; these are but a few.



Karyn Cichocki, Cheryl Boyd and Jim

Cheryl Boyd: I met Jim through the Sussex County Bird Club and my husband, Alan. One of my earliest memories of Jim was on one of his walks through Hyper Humus in April of 2003. New to birding and just wanting to tag along, I brought my camera in hopes of photographing some of the birds. I had no idea how difficult it can be to get a shot, forget a good shot, of these quick- moving creatures.

Jim was concentrating on making sure that everyone in the group got a glimpse of a Virginia Rail that was moving around in the cattail marsh. When he noticed me, with my camera at the ready, he said Oh, you want a photograph? Hold on, I'll have the rail come out for you.

I looked skeptically at Alan, thinking, This isn't going to happen, we've barely even gotten a good look at this bird. Jim called to the rail and damned if that bird didn't hop right out for his photo to be taken.

That was just my first experience with the magic that was Jim Zamos. I'll be forever grateful for his guidance and his friendship.

Dennis Briede: Jim was the best. He was an adviser to me on real estate, Sussex County historical facts, and especially birding.

He always had a funny story to tell. He was the most humble, patient, & dedicated birder that I have ever met. He would always ask the question, "Are you having fun?"

Continued on next page.....

Memories

MEMORIES OF JIM ZAMOS



Dennis Briede & Jim

Sandy McPhail: I cannot remember the exact year I met Jim. I joined the club around 1989. A few years later, I held an officer position and worked my way up to president. Not being in the club a long time, I was nervous, trying to attract new members and keeping in mind the opinions of the long time members. I knew Jim was a founding member of the club and I wanted to do a good job. After almost a year of meetings, Jim said to me "you're doing a good job. He always had encouraging words. That meant a lot to me.

I knew Jim was a good birder. Jim always got his bird. In the field, he was always patient and wanted to make sure everyone saw the bird. And who can forget him asking, "Are you having fun?"

I would have loved to have spent more time with him talking about birds and the trends he has seen over the years. I know he took with him a wealth of knowledge. I will miss him; the bird trips and meetings won't be the same without him. I hope he knows how much he meant to me.

Sandy & Jim



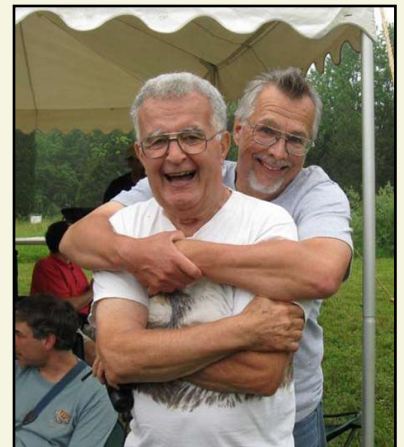
Jim with childhood friend and honorary life member George Johnson

Donna & Don Traylor: I can't remember how long Don and I knew Jim. He seems to be part of my memory for much of my adult life. When I first moved to Sussex County close to 30 years ago, it seemed I kept bumping into this super sweet man every time I went out birding. Since I was new to the area, Jim's knowledge and assistance were invaluable to me.

When I started to run trips to Hyper Humus for the Montclair Bird Club, I would call Jim and ask if we could join forces and make it a joint trip with Sussex. It was fun to walk those paths that Jim and fellow Sussex County bird club members knew so well and learn from all of them. It was hanging out there with Jim that made me comfortable enough with the area to bring other clubs there to share its wonderful resources.

Seems that many times when Don and I would stop alongside the road to check some bird out in a field, there would be Jim. Throughout each season, it would be our pleasure to bump into our friend along the byways of Sussex County and get to share the beautiful place we all called home. Jim always felt like family to me - must be our shared Greek blood! And then, there were the meetings where we would bump into each other - sometimes birds, sometimes butterflies - Jim would have a big smile for me and a hug and a comment on what a wonderful day each one was. How true his words. How he is missed.

Jim and Wade Wander



Memories

MEMORIES OF JIM ZAMOS *continued*

Alan Boyd's photos below, birding with Jim



Alan's photo taken at one of the club picnics at Dennis Briede's house. Rosemary (Posie) Popa, George Johnson, ? and Jim.



Kevin Cronin photo of Jim at Hyper Humus



Jim with childhood friend and honorary life member George Johnson

Kevin Cronin: Although I have been interested in birds since I was a kid, I only became an avid birder (not a big fan of the use of the word "serious" when it comes to birding since it's supposed to be something we birders enjoy) after being inspired by the movie "The Big Year" in July of 2012. I decided to get out there to look for birds, rather than naively think they would all eventually come to me. It wasn't long before I met countless birders in the field and became so impressed with how friendly, helpful, and enthusiastic everyone was.

One of those people was Jim Zamos. When I was introduced to Jim a couple of years ago, I was so impressed with how comfortable he made everyone -- including such a novice -- feel. When I said my last name, he said, "Cronin? Are your kids the soccer stars I've been reading about in the paper?" I told him they were and, in typical Zamos fashion, he quickly replied, "Their mother must be a great athlete" and gave me that classic Jim Zamos smile.

I was lucky enough to go on a few walks/trips with Jim, including one at his haunt, Hyper Humus, on a Saturday morning in May when we both just happened to be there at the same time. We walked and talked and spotted several species. At one point, I asked him if he wanted me to carry his scope for him and he gave me a look I'll never forget and, of course, carried his own scope the entire walk. I had to depart for a soccer game before I would've liked. When I got home, I told my wife what a great guy Jim is and that I could bird with him all day.

The following are recent member memories of Jim

Joan Detyna: Jim and I were with a small group of very excited birders at Watergate when we saw my first Bobcat in NJ - Jim said it was his first in decades. I will never forget the excitement we all shared. The last time I saw Jim, we were viewing a Neotropical Cormorant in NJ. Both of us were by ourselves and he made an effort, in his usual kindly manner, to come over and talk to me. I will always remember his extraordinary kindness as well as his willingness to share his knowledge with others.

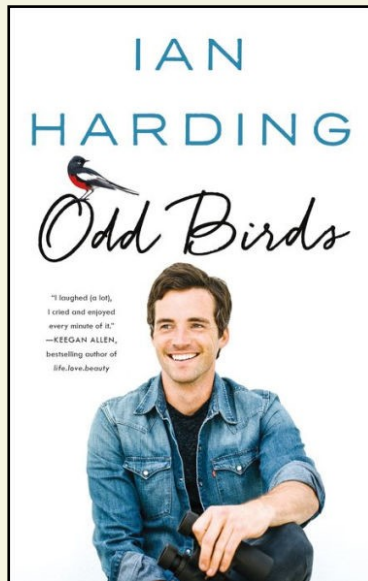
Karyn Cichocki: I always learned something new on the trips that Jim lead. He always stressed that we should have fun and I'm sure that he is smiling upon the bird club, when he sees that we continue to do that.

Book Nook

Odd Birds - Ian Harding

Research shows 55% of people experience stress daily. Birding has been found to relieve stress, promote conservation, and connect with nature.

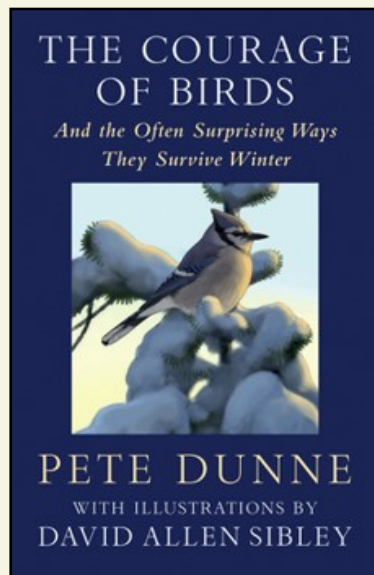
Alice Piatek



The Courage of Birds – Pete Dunn

From our own backyards to the rim of the Arctic ice, countless birds have adapted to meet the challenges of the winter season. This is their remarkable story, told by award-winning birder and acclaimed writer Pete Dunne, accompanied by illustrations from renowned artist and birder David Sibley.

Sandy McPhail



Field Trips

Greetings all

I hope you are enjoying the selection of field trips the club continues to have. We did a survey at the October meeting to find out what members want with trips. The respondents praised the current trips, but wanted more of them and some new destinations. All said the leaders are knowledgeable, trips are fun and they learn a lot. I would love to see more trips. That means more leaders. Remember you don't have to be an expert birder to lead a trip. Just pick a spot and meet people there.

Here are suggestions that I've received;

- *We had more trips last year than this year. Last year I led some beginner bird walks to a few places that were not very birdy. I have decided to remove those from the schedule, there are 2 places. The same person mentioned Lake Illif was missing. We did do Lake Illif this year.
- *Shorter trips, 1 ½-2-hour trips. It is difficult to get people to lead trips and to ask a leader to travel a distance to do such a short trip is not really feasible. If anyone needs to leave a trip early that is not a problem. Just kindly let the leader know so we don't think you fell in a stream when we realize you are missing. If anyone would like to lead a short trip, let me know and we can of course set it up.
- *Start trips later. Birds are early risers; most active early morning and they get quiet late morning. But again, if anyone wants to lead a trip later in the morning, please let me know.
- *More local trips in the county. Once again, if you want to lead a trip, please let me know. I'm all for it.

So as you can see most of what I do involves our leaders. If not for them we would not have trips at all.

If members want more trips to different spots at different times we need more leaders. Right now, we have approximately 145 members and 7 leaders who have led trips, there must be some out there itching to lead a group somewhere.

Please contact me if you have any ideas about trips. Our trips are always listed on our club website, our Face Book page and sent out as email reminders. We also have last minute "pop up" trips, usually scheduled when it looks like good weather in the next few days. These trips are set up only with a few days' notice so check your email. It is always at the discretion of the leader weather a trip is cancelled. If there is ice on trails, we don't want anyone getting hurt.

As always, a huge "Thank You" to those who do take the time to show us great birds and places. Good Birding and see you in the field.

Sandy McPhail
Field Trip Coordinator
srncphailmt@yahoo.com,
862-266-2994.

Sussex County Bird Club Field Trips

Liberty Loop Trail at The Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge for winter raptors.

Sunday January 18th, 2025

Leader: Ken Witkowski

Meet at 2:00pm at the Owens Station Crossing parking lot. This is an afternoon trip will focus on Short-eared Owls, Harriers and Rough-legged Hawks. We should also expect sparrows.

Dress for the weather. Restrooms in parking lot.

For questions and to register email leader

kenwitkowski@yahoo.com

Kittatinny Valley State Park

Saturday January 25th 2025

Leader: Matt Skalla

Meet at 8:30 am at the larger parking lot on the east side of Goodale Road across from the campsites.

Approx 3 mile walk through the park. We will look for winter sparrows and woodland birds.

There will hopefully be a mix of waterfowl on the ponds if they aren't frozen.

Trip ends approx. 1:00pm. Dress for the weather.

Please email leader with questions and to register.

matt.skalla@gmail.com

Richard W. DeKorte Park

Saturday February 8, 2025

Leader: Matt Skalla

1 DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst, NJ 07071

Meet at 9 am at parking area on right - just after gate house, before the Meadowlands Environmental Center.

Should have a nice mix of wintering ducks. Also be on the lookout for raptors, gulls and the usual passerines.

Most of the walk is in the open so be prepared if it's forecast to be windy.

As of now the Environmental Center seems to be closed so we likely won't have access to the restrooms.

Trip ends approx. 1:00 pm

Please email leader with questions and to register.

matt.skalla@gmail.com

Merrill Creek Reservoir

Saturday February 15, 2025

NOTE (Trip contingent upon the Snow Geese being here) will be a pop up trip if they show up later.

Leader: Mike Livesey

Meet at the Boat Ramp parking lot. 10:00am. Trip ends at about 3pm but come and go as you like. Over the years numbers of Snow Geese into the tens of thousands have gathered here. We can walk along the Perimeter Trail to the Main Dam. It is a good wide trail, however at this time of year be prepared for slippery conditions. We will also search for wintering ducks and woodland birds on the trail. Bring lunch. Dress warm.

Email leader for info and to register.

m.livesey2019@outlook.com

Other Field Trips

S. Marie Kuhnen, NJ North Coast Region

2025 Memorial Field Trip

Sunday January 19, 2025

Leader: Jack Padalino

The Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen Memorial Field Trip at the NJ North Shore will take place along the New Jersey North Coast Region on Sunday, January 19, 2025. The Brandwein Institute sponsors this memorial field trip. The tour begins at Manasquan Inlet's south jetty Point Pleasant Beach, at 10:30 a.m., and concludes at Lake Takanassee. Jack Padalino, president emeritus of PEEC and the Brandwein Institute, a partner with the National Park Service, will orchestrate this North Shore tour that includes visiting numerous fresh water ponds, estuaries, inlets, and oceanfront. Members of the Sussex County Bird Club are welcome and invited to participate. Participants will need to dress warmly and bring lunch.

A New Jersey North Shore tour, November through March, is noted for loons, grebes, Northern Gannet, Great Cormorant, geese, ducks including dabblers, divers, and sea ducks, Purple Sandpiper, Gulls, and if we're lucky, Alcids. It is also possible to see noteworthy species sighted in the past such as Red-necked Grebe, Eurasian Widgeon, Common and King Eiders, Harlequin Duck, Little, Common Black-headed, Bonaparte's, Iceland, Lesser Black-backed, and Glaucous Gulls, as well as Black-legged Kittiwake. A list of rare species observed in the past include Eared and Western Grebes, Tufted Duck, Barrow's Goldeneye, Sooty Tern, Black-tailed Gull, Sabine's Gull, Dovekie, Common and Thick-billed Murres, Black Guillemot and Razorbill, an impressive list of "target species" for the tour.

Jack first birded the NJ North Shore during a Field Ornithology course in 1967 at Montclair State taught by Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen. Subsequently, Marie and Jack birded the region together for the next 40 years. This will be the 57th consecutive North Shore field trip led by Jack. Many of those trips led by Marie and Jack served as opportunities for Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) staff members' professional development and personal enrichment.

Please contact Jack Padalino either by phone (845-325-0536) or via e-mail (jackpeec@aol.com) with questions or if you plan to participate in the 57th memorial field trip.

Continued on next page.....

Other Field Trips

SEARCH FOR EAGLES FIELD TRIPS

John (Jack) Padalino will do citizen science research, "Search for Eagles" in memory of Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen. The research will be conducted in the mid and upper Delaware River watershed including New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania from Poxono Island to the Wallenpaupack Dam above the Lackawaxen River. The research is sponsored by the Brandwein Institute, www.brandwein.org. Padalino, a AAAS Fellow, president emeritus of the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) and Paul F-Brandwein Institute will conduct eagle research Sundays, January 5, 12, February 2, 9, & 16, and March 2, 2025.

Wintering Bald Eagles arrive in the mid and upper Delaware River watershed early December and leave the area in March. Eagles seek open water to catch fish, and the Delaware, which remains partly ice free even during the coldest of winters, is excellent wintering habitat for them. The area typically hosts two dozen wintering Bald Eagles, as appropriate elements for the Bald Eagles' winter habitat are provided. During the Brandwein Institute's research, open waters that the Bald Eagles use for fishing as well as large stands of trees where the birds perch and roost will be visited. The U.S Fish & Wildlife Service has afforded wintering eagles protection from human disturbance.

This region in recent years has become a site for reintroduction programs of Bald Eagles. During 1983, the first year of the Bald Eagle Recovery Program conducted by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, eagles obtained in Canada were brought to a site along the Delaware River near Shohola Falls in Pike County. The method used to encourage eagles to breed is called "hacking." During the mid-90's at weekend search for eagles workshop as many as 90 Bald Eagles were seen. In January of 2010 eight area Bald Eagle nests were monitored. By 2024 at least a dozen successful eagle nest sites occurred along the mid and upper Delaware River locations that will be studied during this research. Currently there are fifteen Eagles' nests in the watershed along the study transect that will be monitored.

Bald Eagles will be observed from very accessible areas at established river access points that are easy to find and that provide clear views of the river channel and ridge crests. Active eagles' nests will continue to be discovered and monitored. Primary sites for monitoring eagles include the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Upper Delaware Wild and Scenic River, Mongaup, NY Reservoir, Rio Reservoir, NY Dam, Eagle Institute Observation Blinds along the Upper Delaware, confluence of the Lackawaxen and Delaware Rivers, and Lackawaxen River, PA. Observation blinds at Mongaup, Barryville, and Minisink Ford will serve as viewing points for the research. The research is conducted in state managed land in PA, NJ. and NY as well as National Parks, the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and the Upper Delaware Wild and Scenic River.

The objective is to monitor Bald Eagles in the prescribed area. In excess of 300 Bald Eagles have been known to winter within a 50 mile radius of where Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York converge. Prior weekend studies of eagles have yielded up to 90 sightings including a few Golden Eagles. Other wintering raptors in the area include Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, American Kestrel, and on rare occasion Rough-legged Hawk. Both Turkey Vultures and Black Vultures are present in winter as is the Common Raven.

The researcher will use instructional material developed by the Paul F-Brandwein Institute focused on Wintering Eagles. He has been leading birding field trips for over five decades. Many of the field trips led were in search of eagles. The research will focus on specific locations eagles have been known to frequent as well as nest. Through first hand field experience identifying and observing wintering eagles, the results of research disseminated will enable citizens to come to appreciate and help conserve eagles as well as habitat required for their successful re-introduction.

Research results will be posted on the Brandwein website www.brandwein.org and shared with: Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology via eBird, Pennsylvania Fish and Game Commission, New Jersey Department of Conservation, New York Department of Environmental Conservation, Hawk Migration Association of North America, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Delaware Valley Ornithological Club, Upper Delaware Highlands Conservancy, New Jersey Chapter of the Nature Conservancy, Gifford Pinchot Audubon Society, Northeast Pennsylvania Audubon Society, Orange County New York Audubon Society, Orange County Land Trust, New Jersey Audubon, Sussex County Bird Club. Pennsylvania Audubon, New York State Outdoor Education Association, Pocono Environmental Education Center, National Park Service Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic River.

TO PARTICIPATE IN A SEARCH FOR EAGLES FIELD TRIP, please register via e-mail: jackpeec@aol.com or via phone: 845-325-0536



Sussex County Bird Club Field Trip Results

By Sandy McPhail

Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, August 10th

Leader: Mike Livesey with NJ Audubon

An intrepid group of 6 SCBC birders went on safari to South Jersey to look for shore birds. We met at 6:30AM at the Mount Arlington Train Station Park and Ride. Then vanpooled to Galloway NJ.

We joined a New Jersey Audubon trip to Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Reserve, known to Birders as Brigantine, or just 'Brig'. We took the 8 Mile Wildlife Drive and with the help of the Audubon Associate Naturalists saw dozens of great shore birds.

The sighting went from a Bald Eagle, Osprey, to 5 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Among the others were, Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Clapper Rail, Least Turn, Black Skimmer, Glossy Ibis, Great and Snowy Egret, and more gull and sandpiper than we could count. We left Brig about 4:30PM and arrived back at the Park and Ride about 6:30PM. Safe and sound and having had a great day birding.

The club is looking into going again during the fall to see the duck migration. Please let us know if you are interested



Sandy McPhail photos



Hillside Park/Lake Iliff Rail Trail

September 8th

Leader: Karyn Cichocki

Eight members and one guest enjoyed the walk along the rail trail from Lake Iliff Road, under Newton/Sparta Road up to Mulford Road and back. The trail borders along Lake Iliff where we saw Great Blue Heron, Canada Geese and Double-crested Cormorants. A total of 44 species were seen or heard including five different woodpeckers, four different flycatchers.

We struggled trying to pick out all the warblers that were flitting around in the trees at two points on the trail, but managed to identify nine; Black-and-white, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Prairie Warbler, and Black-throated Green Warbler. We had several Ruby-throated Hummingbirds buzz by the group and saw one feeding on the Jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*) flowers.

It was a great day and the special treat was having long time member, Peter Grannis join us.



Female Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Karyn's photo

Continued on next page....

Sussex County Bird Club Field Trip Results

By Sandy McPhail

Winding Waters Trail

Saturday, October 5th

Leader Ken Witkowski

Five members joined me. We met at Owens Station Parking Lot and from here we went to The Winding Waters Trail on Oil City Road.

Highlights for the day were Northern Harrier, about a dozen Phoebe's, Ruby crowned and Golden crowned Kinglets. House Wren, Great blue Heron and Green Heron, Great Egret, Swainsons Thrush. Sparrows: Field, Song, Swamp and White-throated, Savannah and Lincoln's Sparrow. Hundreds of Tree Swallows. Rose-breasted Grosbeak. We had Palm Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Black-throated green Warbler. The trip total was 41 species.

Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, October 12th

Leader: Mike Livesey

A Group of SCBC birders made another trip to the Jersey Shore to see the fall bird migration.

We joined a scheduled NJ Audubon trip to Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, birders know it as Brigantine or just "Brig". NJ Audubon organizes these day trips, provides a leader, and a number of associate naturalists to help with identification. The fee charged goes to NJ Audubon to continue its good work.

Total sighting for the day were 62 species. Large birds of prey were Peregrine Falcon, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawk. Black Bellied Plover, Caspian Tern, Boat-tailed Grackle, Dunlin, Long-billed Dowitcher were shore birds we don't often see in Sussex County. The Northern Shoveler and Northern Pintail added to the list. And a favorite uncommon bird in New Jersey the White Ibis finished the day.

Thanks to all that joined. To those who couldn't make this one, let's talk about another sometime soon. And a special thanks to long time member of SCBC and NJ Audubon Hank Burk who along with SCBC member Melissa Ingala entertained us with dozens of "bird puns", some old favorites some invented that day.

Field Trip Bird Puns

The classic Turkey Vulture known as the "TV":

Two turkey vultures are a "TV Set"

A group flying is a "TV Network"

Last in line of the group is the "TV Anchor"

First in line is the "Network General Manager"

A Turkey Vulture on the telephone lines is "Cable TV"

Now for Terns:

"We are not sure all the Terns will Turn up."

"That's OK one good Tern deserves another."

"That's the last Tern today but not Least."

"You two are going to get dizzy with all these Terns"

And just for fun:

"Look a 'Great Egret'...."

.... Oh, it's not so 'Great' it's just an 'OK Egret'.

Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge

Owens Station to Liberty Marsh

Saturday, November 9th

Leader: Sandy McPhail

Weather 34-42 degrees, sunny, very mild breeze.

Myself along with 12 members met at The Owens Station parking lot and birded the trail along the lake where we saw Buffleheads and Green winged Teal. A Belted Kingfisher was seen and of course heard. There was a first year Bald Eagle soaring around the lake, it landed on a snag in the water allowing good scope views. A Great blue Heron was fishing for a meal.

Afterward we walked down the railroad bed to the Liberty Marsh, which is hardly a marsh now being drained earlier and with a drought has not been able to fill. We did see a nice variety along the trail including Swamp Sparrow, Yellow bellied Sapsucker, Red winged Black-birds, Golden crowned Kinglets, and Purple Finch. Over the marsh? 2 Northern Harriers were hunting.

It was a very enjoyable time with good company. We saw and heard a total of 36 species. Thanks to all for a great trip.

Member's Corner

Jayne & Richard Wesler - pictures from their Milford, PA backyard taken this past July.



Female Blackburnian Warbler



Wild Turkeys

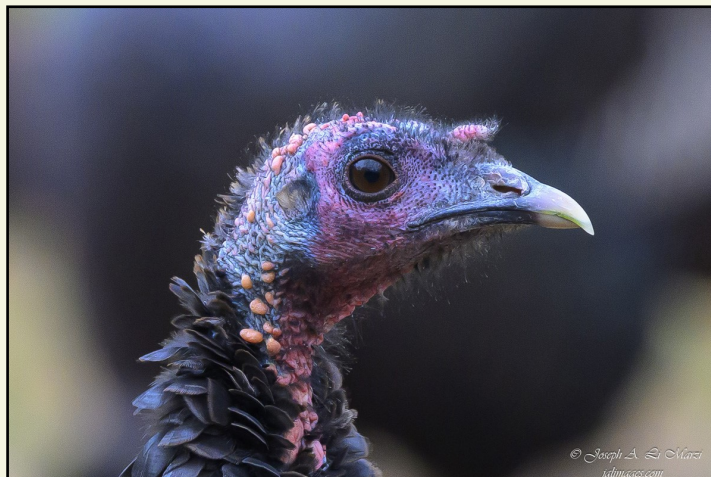


Brown Creeper

Joe Li Marsi backyard photos



Red-shouldered Hawk



Wild Turkeys

Continued on next page

Member's Corner

Joe Li Marsi backyard photos



Ruby-crowned Kinglet



White-throated Sparrow

Karyn Cichocki yard photos



Ovenbird

Karyn Cichocki yard photos

Eastern Phoebe



Immature Raccoon in large tree at corner of Laurence & Pierce Roads, Lafayette

Member's Corner

Barb Sendelbach September backyard photos



Black-throated Green Warbler



Barred Owl on Statesville Quarry Road guardrail

October yard birds



Chestnut-sided Warbler



Ruby-crowned Kinglet



Black-and-White Warbler



Hermit Thrush

Continued on next page.....

Member's Corner

Barb Sendelbach October backyard photos



First of the season male Purple Finch



Dark-eyed Junco



Wild Turkeys

Debbie Bifulco October and November backyard photos



American Robin



Purple Finch - male



Purple Finch - female

Continued next page.....

Member's Corner

Debbie Bifulco November photos from Kittatinny State Park



Cedar Waxwing



Song Sparrow

Cornell Labs e-bird Taxonomy update 10/22/24

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) will be split into:
American Herring Gull (*Larus smithsonianus*)
European Herring Gull (*Larus argentus*)
Mongolian Gull (*Larus mongolicus*)
Vega Gull (*Larus vegae*)

The iconic **House Wren** (*Troglodytes aedon*) is about to become seven. Two species are found on the American continents, overlapping in southern Mexico:

Northern House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*)
Southern House Wren (*Troglodytes musculus*)

Five additional species are endemic to individual Caribbean islands:

Cozumel Wren (*Troglodytes beani*)
Kalinago Wren (*Troglodytes martinicensis*)
St. Lucia Wren (*Troglodytes mesoleucus*)
St. Vincent Wren (*Troglodytes musicus*)
Grenada Wren (*Troglodytes grenadensis*)

Barn Owl—An overdue three-way split into:
Western Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) of Europe, Africa, and western Asia
Eastern Barn Owl (*Tyto javanica*) of South and Southeast Asia and Australasia
American Barn Owl (*Tyto furcata*) of North and South America.

Other taxonomies have recognized this split for some time. Barn Owl vocalizations are a complex array of sounds that mostly sound like raspy screeches to our ears, but probably mean a lot more to the owls. If we had to guess, we'd predict more Barn Owl splits in the coming decade, especially in the Americas. Decoding their screeches will be a key factor in these decisions.

'Accipiter sp.' No More

Identifying hawks in the genus *Accipiter* is a well-known problem worldwide, whether it involves distinguishing Eurasian Sparrowhawk from Eurasian Goshawk in Eurasia; Crested Goshawk from Besra in Southeast Asia; African Goshawk from Shikra in Africa; or Sharp-shinned from Cooper's Hawk in North America.

In recent years, research has shown that *Accipiter* is not a monophyletic genus, meaning its members are not all closely related. This year the long-anticipated breakup of the genus has finally occurred. The identification challenges will remain, but we are hoping it will be helpful to learn the characteristics and behaviors—especially flight displays—that are unique to the new genera.

Crested Goshawk and Sulawesi Goshawk move to *Lophospiza*—known from their flight displays with puffed up undertail coverts

Continued on next page.....

Cornell Labs e-bird Taxonomy update *continued*

'Accipiter sp.' No More

Cooper's Hawk, Eurasian and American Goshawk, and their close relatives (Gundlach's, Bicolored, and Chilean Hawks in the Americas; Black and Henst's Goshawks in Africa; and Meyer's Goshawk in New Guinea) move to *Astur*—highlighting their hefty size, slow languid wing flaps during display, and call similarity

African Goshawk and the closely related Chestnut-flanked Sparrowhawk move to *Aerospiza*—are known for vocalizing during early morning display flights with slow flaps, puffed out undertail coverts, and swooping flights; A large number of smaller hawks from Africa, Asia, and Australasia move to *Tachyspiza*—united by their small size and snappy flaps in flight and their propensity not to perform flight displays.

This leaves just six true *Accipiter*: Eurasian Sparrowhawk in Eurasia; Ovambo, Madagascar, and Rufous-breasted Sparrowhawks in Africa; Gray-bellied Hawk in South America; and Sharp-shinned Hawk, in North and South America.

While *Accipiter* sp. will no longer be available as a reporting option, birders will still have 'slash' options for the most similar species, including:

- Besra/Japanese Sparrowhawk
- Collared Sparrowhawk/Brown Goshawk
- Eurasian Sparrowhawk/Eurasian Goshawk
- Cooper's Hawk/American Goshawk
- Crested Goshawk/Besra*
- Levant/Eurasian Sparrowhawk*
- Sharp-shinned/Cooper's Hawk*

* note that the last three pairs are in different genera.

If you really don't know, and don't have an appropriate slash, you will have an equivalent option to *Accipiter* sp.: *Accipitrine hawk sp.* (former *Accipiter* sp.).



Karyn Cichocki took the above photo of an immature White-crowned Sparrow, and the top right photo of three Sandhill Cranes on 11/26 at the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge at the pond on Oil City Rd. There were five cranes in all.



Karyn notes; "in looking through my pictures I noted that during the winter of 2012, Donna Traylor had a study going on between commercially available Niger seed and locally grown seed. Those that wanted to participate in the study were given two seed socks and reported any preference difference between the seed. Who knew that year that there would be an invasion of winter finches, and our feeders were loaded with Pine Siskins, who always made pigs of themselves had not care what seed they were eating. A few days after these pictures were taken, hurricane Sandy hit, knocking the Cedar tree down. We had no other good place to hang the socks, so the seed was just spread out on the ground in two different areas. We did have one lone Redpoll that year as well.





SUSSEX COUNTY BIRD CLUB

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Meetings are held at the Sparta Ambulance Squad, 14 Sparta Ave., Sparta, NJ, at 7:30 PM on the 3rd Friday of Sept, Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb, March, & May. Special meetings are held in April, Dec.

NAME (Last, First): _____
(If applying for a family membership, please include the names of all applicable family members)

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

☐ Check if you might be interested in helping with club projects, field trips, outreach/events, etc.

How did you hear about the SCBC? _____

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

☐ Individual (\$20/YEAR)

☐ Family (\$35/YEAR)

☐ Student (\$13/YEAR)

☐ Life (\$300)

**Send your membership
application and check to:**

Membership Chair
Sussex County Bird Club
P.O. Box 428
Augusta, NJ 07822

Annual membership fee is due on or before the first regular club meeting in September. Membership in the Sussex County Bird Club is open to everyone and includes our quarterly newsletter, "The Sussex Flyway", interesting programs, meetings, sighting reports and field trips.

Visit us at:

On the web: <https://sussexcountybirdclub.org/>

Facebook: Sussex County Bird Club

Please note that your information is for club use only and will not be shared.

*The Sussex County Bird Club is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization.
Membership dues are tax deductible as permitted by law.*

9/24 Flyway