



Lancaster County Bird Club

Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Founded December 8, 1937

... observing and preserving our community's native bird life

Call Notes

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2021

FROM PRESIDENT BARBARA HUNSBERGER:

Welcome to a new year of birding with Lancaster County Bird Club (LCBC). We start off the new season with a much more optimistic outlook than in July 2020. We expect to be able to return for meetings at the Farm & Home Center and will have field trips beginning at the end of August. It is now time to renew your LCBC membership and perhaps to introduce a friend to the joys of birding and membership in our club. I especially want to extend our sincere appreciation to all the members who sent an extra contribution this past year to support the activities and programs we offer. The generous extra donations that many members have sent to LCBC are important in keeping our organization a vital and sustainable one for the Lancaster County community. We are very grateful to all donors for their generosity and any extra contribution of any amount is most appreciated.

I also want to give you an update on the status of the election of officers and board members. Our bylaws allow us to continue with the current board members and officers until an election is held. Since we are pretty sure we will have our meetings beginning in September 2021, the present board members and officers have agreed to continue serving until our election is held in April 2022, that is the usual meeting for elections. We are always looking for members interested in taking a step forward to volunteer for a position on the board or as an officer. So please contact me if you are interested and your name will be forwarded to the nominating committee for consideration this winter. Enjoy the summer and I look forward to seeing you out there birding.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The LCBC Officers and Board of Directors are pleased to announce a planned donation of two birding backpacks to the Lancaster Public Library to increase the accessibility of birding to the wider public, especially youth. Each pack will include binoculars, a field guide, a list of helpful resources to learn the basics of birding, along with a copy of the club's field trip and program schedule. The packs will complement the library's collection of unique items available for checkout. Given the rise in birding over the past year, it will be an opportunity to expand the club's outreach to children and adults, students and teachers, and anyone new to birding. The birding backpacks should be ready for check-out in time for the school year and fall migration! If you have questions or interest in supporting the project, please contact a member of the board.

Written by Emily Broich.

The LCBC Board of Directors was pleased to approve two donations to Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA), one of the premier birding locations in our area. In addition to our recurring continuing donation of bird seed to the center, we have made a donation to cover the expense of a new bench being added to the revamped birdwatching window in the visitor center. The current viewing area is being modernized and one of the new benches in this area will be funded by the club. A marker on the bench mentioning the club was made possible by the club will also be installed. It is expected this bench will provide a location for many people to enjoy birds well into the future.

In addition, if you have visited Middle Creek WMA recently you have seen that construction has started on an addition to the visitor center. The addition is being made to the north end of the existing visitor center and will host the Pennsylvania Conservation Heritage Museum. The new museum will feature artifacts dating back to the formation of the Game Commission and showcase the history of the agency through today. A variety of learning platforms, interactive displays, and hands-on exhibits will provide visitors with an understanding of conservation history in Pennsylvania, the role of the Game Commission, and actions they can take to further conservation in their lives. The board also approved making a donation that includes an 8" x 8" paver as part of a fundraiser for the new Conservation Heritage Museum. The paver will mention the club and be incorporated into the floor plan of the museum. If you are interested in making a personal donation to support the new museum and getting your own paver, forms are available on the Pennsylvania Game Commission's (PGC) Middle Creek WMA webpage. Two different sizes are available. A google search for Middle Creek WMA will allow you to find the official PGC website where the forms are listed under a section of the main page detailing the new museum.

Written by Ted Nichols II.

PREVIEW OF COMING EVENTS

Sunday, September 5, 7 a.m. – Conejohela Flats on the Susquehanna River Field Trip

Zach Millen will lead a field trip to the Conejohela Flats on the Susquehanna River for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. Meet at 7 a.m. at the Blue Rock Road River access south of Washington Boro. Participants must provide their own canoe or kayak. **This trip is limited to 14 participants and LCBC members only.** Contact Zach Millen (717-723-1279 or zjmillen@gmail.com) by 6 p.m. the day before if you have questions or to register for the trip.

Thursday, September 9, 7 p.m. – “Native Species of Pennsylvania”

Club meeting at the Farm & Home Center, 1383 Arcadia Road, Lancaster, PA.

Tracie Young of Raven Ridge Wildlife Center (RRWC) will present a program appropriate for children. Meet the mammals, birds, and reptiles that share our backyards! Learn to appreciate and live in harmony with some of these amazing creatures. Educational ambassador animals will be present to share the joys of wildlife with you. Raven Ridge Wildlife Center is our club’s closest wildlife rehabilitation center and is located in Washington Boro and offers rehabilitation services for raptors (bird of prey), mammals, and waterfowl.

Tracie founded RRWC in 2015 and currently still serves as director and rehabilitator. Tracie holds permits from the PA Game Commission, PA Fish and Boat Commission, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that allows Raven Ridge to provide wildlife rehabilitation services and wildlife education programs. RRWC currently rehabilitates nearly 2000 animals every year.

Saturday, September 11, 7 a.m. – Middle Creek WMA Field Trip

Ted Nichols II will lead a field trip to Middle Creek WMA. Meet at the visitor center parking area at 7 a.m. Be prepared for ticks. The emphasis of this trip is to look for fall migrants that could include warblers, flycatchers, thrushes, shorebirds, and hopefully a surprise or two along the way. The group may bird into the early afternoon so bring some snacks, lunch, drinks, and dress for the weather. Contact Ted Nichols II (717-856-3851 or tanicholsii@gmail.com) by 6 p.m. the day before if you have questions or to register for the trip.

Sunday, September 12, 7 a.m. – Pumping Station Road Field Trip

Bruce Carl will lead a field trip to Pumping Station Road outside Brickerville. Meet at 7 a.m. at the parking lot at Route 322 and Pumping Station Road. Contact Bruce Carl (717-368-4824 or hrdabrd@gmail.com) by 6 p.m. the day before if you have questions or plan to attend.

Saturday, September 18, 7 a.m. – Chestnut Grove Natural Area Field Trip

Larry Bernhardt will lead a field trip to Chestnut Grove Natural Area (CGNA). The CGNA is an ideal place to view wildlife and observe nature due to habitat diversity, which includes stream corridors, wetlands, open water, grasslands, and forested uplands, as well as its location along

the Susquehanna River migratory corridor. Target species for this trip are migrating raptors and shorebirds, songbirds, and grassland birds. CGNA is located south of Washington Boro. Follow River Road for 2.1 miles past the Turkey Hill processing plant to the point where River Road makes a sharp turn to the right. Stay on River Road for .7 miles to where Chestnut Grove Road goes straight ahead, and River Road makes a sharp turn to the left. Stay on Chestnut Grove Road for .2 miles. CGNA parking lot is on the right. Be prepared to walk mostly in the sun on trails and service roads. Snacks, water, sunscreen, and insect repellent are recommended. Contact Larry at (717) 314-1461 or sjbernhardt@verizon.net by 6 p.m. the day before if you have questions or to register for the trip.

Sunday, September 19, 9:30 a.m. – Ironville Community Park Raptor Watch

Carl Groff will lead the count at a hawk watch that will take place in the Ironville Community Park parking lot off Prospect Road starting at 9:30 a.m. The viewing area is level and comfortable. Bring chairs and a lunch. The site has public restrooms and a pavilion. Target species will include: Broad-winged Hawk, Am. Kestrel, Osprey, Bald Eagle, and Sharp-shinned Hawk. The watch will continue until the flight ends. Feel free to come and go as you wish.

Binoculars are needed and a spotting scope is helpful. Contact Carl at (717-471-9969 or fledge19@verizon.net) by 6 p.m. the day before if you have questions. Prior registration is not required.

Saturday, September 25, 7 a.m. – Noel Dorwart Natural Area (NA) Field Trip

Emily Broich and Pam Fisher will lead a field trip to Noel Dorwart NA to look for fall migrants with Connecticut Warbler as one of the target species. This park, in East Hempfield Township, is easy walking on well-maintained trails. Meet the leaders at 7 a.m. in the parking lot on Good Drive which is located just north of the railroad crossing and south of Harrisburg Pike. There is a Port-a-John at this location. Please contact Emily at (717) 333-9146 or emilybroich@gmail.com) by 6 p.m. on the day before if you have questions or to register for the trip.

Sunday, September 26, 7 a.m. – 12 p.m. – State Game Lands 220 Field Trip

Bruce Carl will lead a field trip to SGL 220. The group will spend the morning looking for migrant species that may include flycatchers, thrushes, vireos, raptors, sparrows, and warblers, specifically the possibility of Connecticut Warbler and hopefully a surprise or two. Bring snacks, water, and be prepared for the weather and for ticks. Meet at 7 a.m. at the SGL 220 parking lot located along Swamp Church Road just outside of Reinholds. From Rt. 222 north, exit at the Denver/Turnpike exit. Turn left at the end of the ramp towards Rt. 272 north. Follow Rt. 272 north for .5 miles to the intersection of Rt. 272 & Rt. 897. Turn left onto Rt. 897 north for 3.1 miles to a 4-way stop in Reinholds. Go straight at 4-way stop. Drive .4 miles to Galen Hall Road. Turn right just past the Reinholds Ambulance building. Turn left onto Swamp Church Road. Follow Swamp Church Road .3 miles to SGL 220. Parking lot is on the right. No

restrooms are available. Contact Bruce Carl (717-368-4824 or hrdabrd@gmail.com) by 6 p.m. the day before if you have questions or to register for the trip.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS BY LARRY BERNHARDT

The LCBC would like to welcome the new members listed below. This takes the LCBC membership for the 2020-2021 year to 291 members. This is down from last year's membership of 332, and the average of 345 for the previous four years. Hopefully with the return of monthly meetings and the club's scheduled field trips, our membership will increase to previous numbers.

The LCBC 2021-2022 membership forms, along with the schedule for the meeting and field trip dates, will be mailed to the members shortly after July 5. Please return the membership forms and dues in a timely manner, as this assures more accurate records.

NEW MEMBERS:

Richard Carter, Lancaster
Gary Shirk, Lebanon

Donna Drew, Lancaster

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

Sustaining members:

James & Carolyn Karl

General Club Support:

Richard Carner & Donna Drew
James & Carolyn Karl

Employee Match Programs:

Julie Broich - in support of Binns for Kids program
Jonathan Heller

Conoy Wetlands Project:

Leonard A. Eiserer

You might notice a new category for supporting the club. We have received Employee Match donations from two organizations - Benevity and YourCause. If your company participates in a donation matching program and you choose to make a donation using their program, please be sure to let us know so we can acknowledge your gift. This can take some time as the information is slow coming to us and unless we are registered with the organization's program, we cannot see

any details concerning the donation to confirm its validity. We do appreciate the donations the club has received through these additional channels!

MEMBERS' ADVENTURES AND ACTIVITIES

Rosemary Spreha's trip to Big Bend National Park

In 2020 I signed up for a trip to Big Bend National Park (NP) to see the Colima Warbler. Then COVID came along and the trip was postponed until 2021. Two days before departing for Texas, the tour company called to say that due to a large fire, Big Bend NP was closed and we could not visit. Fortunately, our guide, Chris Benesh, was able to change the itinerary so the trip didn't have to be cancelled.

I went a day early and spent the night in San Antonio in a hotel on the Riverwalk. After visiting the Alamo, I took a walk along the Riverwalk and saw two large ducks. They turned out to be Egyptian Geese which are now an ABA countable species in San Antonio.

The group met our guide at the San Antonio airport the next afternoon and we headed east to Corpus Christi. We went to Blucher Park, a small city park. Immediately Chris spotted a Painted Bunting, then another and a group of Indigo Buntings. The group saw 10 species of warblers. The next day we visited the Rancho Los Aves where we got great looks at a Ferruginous Pygmy-owl, White-tailed Hawk, Harris's Hawk, Green Jay, and Black-crested Titmouse. At Laguna Atascosa we saw an Aplomado Falcon. We visited Sabal Palm Sanctuary where we saw Least Grebe, Red-crowned Parrot, and Olive Sparrow.

A trip to Brownsville Dump yielded the Tamaulipas Crow and Chihuahuan Raven. The high point of the trip was South Padre Island. We were there for a fallout as dozens of orioles, tanagers, buntings, and warblers fed on the oranges and birdseed provided by the volunteers. At Estero Llano Grande we saw Clay-colored Thrush, Elegant Trogon, and a Parakeet with two babies on the ground. At Bentsen State Park the highlights were Grove-billed Ani, Elf Owl, and Fulvous Whistling Duck. All life birds for me. Red-billed Pigeon and Morrelets Seedeater were seen at Salinena on the Rio Grande. We visited Lost Maples to look for the Golden-cheeked Warbler. We had several good looks. Our last target bird was the Black-capped Vireo. It was not an easy find but eventually we got good looks. Our last evening was spent watching thousands of Free-tail Bats exiting the cave at Frio. It was a great trip. 239 species in all.

Written by Rosemary Spreha

LNP Story – Falconry Owl Capture

A pair of Great Horned Owls has been nesting in a cavity of a sycamore tree in the Little Chiques Park in Mount Joy for years. The owls have been well-known to locals as well as folks from afar, many visiting with cameras. The LNP on April 13 in *Town Gives a Hoot* shocked many of us when it was reported that a licensed falconer took one of the two owlets from the nest to be trained for falconry. Readers learned that the action which occurred on March 21 was legal and

within the guidelines of the PA Game Commission. Through social media and word of mouth, residents of Mount Joy including borough officials learned of the incident well before the April 13 article. The president of the PA Falconry and Hawk Trust called the falconer's action in Mount Joy legal but unethical. Jack Hubley, well-known local outdoors person and falconer, wrote in the LNP on April 22 that "A highly visible raptor nest in a public park is a wonderful opportunity for nature lovers to get to know wildlife and encourage the public to save a space for nature on a planet where so much of the natural world is disappearing at a discouraging rate." Jack's column was called *True Falconers Disapprove of Little Chiques Park 'stunt'*. The borough of Mount Joy has begun discussing rule changes which would ban the removal of wildlife from the park and prohibit climbing trees. The ban of hunting and falconry in the park is also being discussed. Stay tuned for the official rule changes. Sean Sauro is the LNP reporter covering this story.

Written by Bettina Heffner

LANCASTER COUNTY BIRD OBSERVATIONS – Spring 2021

Editor's Note: This is Zach Millen's report on Lancaster County birds that appears in the *PA Birds* publication. This article is printed with the permission of the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology.

Locations: Lake Grubb Nature Park (LGNP), Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (MCWMA), Noel Dorwart Park (NDP), Octoraro Reservoir (OR), Shenk's Ferry Wildflower Preserve, Susquehanna River Conejohela Flats (SRCF), Susquehanna River Lake Clarke (SRLC), SGL 220, Susquehanna W.T.P Washington Boro (SWTPWB), Woods Edge Park (WEP).

Daily high temps in Mar were above normal by 6 degrees, breaking Feb's icy grip and allowing earlier migrants to push. Apr stayed a mite on the warm side, but May was nearly normal. Precipitation was a bit lower overall. Weather information is derived from Harrisburg data from the National Weather Service, which dates back to 1888. 232 species were recorded during the period, just below the prior 4-year average of 234 (243, 233, 232, 232 previous). Two completely unexpected first county records appeared, and coincidentally both were also second state records!

Official counts of **Snow Geese** peaked at 90,000 on 3/8, as Feb ice cover kept their numbers from really accumulating as in most years. **Ross's Geese** were reported in small numbers coinciding with the Snow Goose peak. A **Greater White-fronted Goose** resided at WEP 3/2-20 (SS, m.ob.).

One of the most shocking discoveries in recent memory came in the form of a **Tundra Bean-Goose** at SRCF 5/2 (EW). The only prior state record spent the past winter in *Delaware* and *Philadelphia*, but by close examination of the bill pattern, this bird was a different individual. These are exceptionally rare Eurasian vagrants to North America which are most likely to show

up on the Aleutian Islands, much less east of the Mississippi, much less on a river in the middle of Pennsylvania in May!

Surprisingly, no scoters or Long-tailed Ducks were recorded.

Common Nighthawks built in regularity toward the end of May, particularly along the Susquehanna R. It's always a pleasure to see these spirited, but substantially declining aerial insectivores grace an evening sky. A singing **Whip-poor-will** was recorded at LGNP 4/29 (EB, TN), which is a very tough species to encounter in the county. Single **Sandhill Cranes** were recorded at SRCF 4/18 (EW) and MCWMA 5/3-7 (SF, m.ob.).

All of the following shorebird observations were made at SRCF unless otherwise noted. Memorial Day weekend 5/29-31 brought very poor weather and excellent shorebird variety and counts. Over these dates, maximum counts of the following occurred: 5 **Black-bellied Plovers**, 27 **Semipalmated Plovers**, one **Sanderling**, 20 **Dunlin**, 30 **Least Sandpipers**, 2 **White-rumped Sandpipers**, 35 **Semipalmated Sandpipers**, and 8 **Short-billed Dowitchers**. After a dismal shorebird showing in fall 2020, these birds were a welcome sight. An adult **Long-billed Dowitcher** was discovered at MCWMA 5/10 (SF, m.ob.), the first of its kind documented in spring in *Lancaster*, prior being one on 5/11/1991 at the same location. A fortunate birder briefly observed a flock of 4 **Willetts** at WEP on the morning of 4/28 (RN).

Strong numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls were hard to come by, with the best count being a brief peak of 475 on SRLC 3/30 (ML). Numbers did not build much on the lake as happens in many years. As a result, **Little Gulls** were difficult to find, with only one record seen on the later date of 4/27 (ML, JM). There were two **Lesser Black-backed Gull** reports in Mar, which occur in low numbers. **Caspian** and **Common Terns** were regular, but somehow Forster's Tern was dipped which is quite unusual. **Common Loons** were numerous, but Red-throated Loon did not show. An **American Bittern** was seen in wetlands near Kirkwood 4/27 (CG). A **Snowy Egret** stalked SRCF 4/28-5/4 (ML, m.ob.), followed by a **Cattle Egret** roosting there 5/8 (MS). Numbers of **Black-crowned Night-Herons** once again returned to their rookery at Ephrata Wellspan Hospital, joined by the single male **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** which has frequented this colony since 2015.

An imm **Golden Eagle** glided over a Kirkwood farm 4/17 (m.ob.), to the delight of numerous observers waiting on an even better rarity which the reader will find shortly. A **Mississippi Kite** was described in flight over the Welsh Mountain south of New Holland 5/22 (ZM), on a day when numerous individuals traversed the region. A continuing light imm **Rough-legged Hawk** at MCWMA was last reported 3/9 (m.ob.), and sightings of wintering **Short-eared Owls** petered out after 4/6 (m.ob.).

The only location **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were reported was MCWMA between the dates 5/19-26 (BC, TD, DK), and a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was photographed at NDP 5/16-17 (SM). Uncommon **Alder Flycatchers** were found in passage at SFWP 5/10 (RN) and NDP 5/14 (SM), while breeders were first heard at MCWMA 5/19 (m.ob.). NDP continued the rarity production with a **Philadelphia Vireo** 5/19 (SM), which may be the first photographed in spring

in the county. **Black-capped Chickadees** holding over from the winter's irruption largely disappeared after Mar, but two were described at feeders 4/17 (SB, BM) in concert with later reports in southeast PA. Uncommon **Cliff Swallows** returned to two known breeding colonies along the Susquehanna R. Plenty of wintering, irruptive **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were reported through Apr, with most May reports seemingly representing more southern individuals found near mixed migrant flocks. Single **Marsh Wrens** were found at 3 locations 5/2-11 (m.ob.). Continuing irruptive **Purple Finches** and **Pine Siskins** were prevalent well into May.

Two **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** were seen accompanying large flocks of other blackbirds: A male 3/3 near Quarryville (WW), and a female near Penryn 3/4 (BC).

In an incredible turn of events, *Lancaster* set not one, but two second state records this spring! Early in Apr the birding community learned of a male **Scott's Oriole** which had overwintered since Jan at a Kirkwood Amish farm. One lucky birder saw it briefly the morning of 4/6 (CG), however, its food source of orange slice and homemade peach-pineapple jam had dried up, so it disappeared for several tantalizing days. Then, on the afternoon of 4/9 the homeowners reported its return and were gracious enough to allow visitors. From then on you could set your watch to the oriole's visits, and by the end of Saturday 4/17 the visitor logbook contained 495 signatures! The last day of its whirlwind residence was 4/18, seen privately by the homeowners on that Sunday. The bird was extraordinary, the family's hospitality legendary, and we in the birding community extend a hearty thank you to them.

Thirty-three expected warbler species were found this spring. Of this group, a male Brewster's Warbler (Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warbler) was photographed in the vicinity of the dam at MCWMA 5/9-11 (NW, WW). Coincidentally, a female **Golden-winged Warbler** was photographed in precisely the same location 5/10 (JW), and so the Patagonia Picnic Table Effect strikes again. The continuing male **Painted Bunting** was last observed 4/9 by the homeowner, and hopefully he extends his remarkably lengthy stay with us next winter (roll scenes from *The Incredible Journey*). Lastly, 3 **Dickcissels**, a pair and separate male were seen in Peach Bottom fields 5/25 (JH) where they bred in past years.

Observers: **Zach Millen, 101 Bridle Path, New Holland, PA 17557, (717) 723-1279, zjmillen@gmail.com**, John Baird, Sabrena Boekell, Emily Broich, Bruce Carl, Tom Donahue, Carlton Groff, Jason Horn, Steve Ferreri, Darlene Kershner, Meredith Lombard, Brett Matlock, Seth McComsey, Jeff Musser, Randall Nett, Ted Nichols II, Mike Schall, Stanley Stahl, Eric Witmer, Joe Wolf, Nina Wolf, Warren Wolf

BIRDS ON THE MOVE

For those members who may not use online resources to share their significant bird sightings or like to see their sightings in print, LCBC would like to continue to allow members to share their recent significant sightings through our newsletter.

Each member is asked to put their sightings into a narrative format (descriptive sentences) that tell the who, what, where, when, why, and how of their sightings.

Each member is asked to limit their submission to four to 10 sentences for printing in each edition of the newsletter.

Sightings can be submitted by email or paper to:
Carol Feister
cjfeister@comcast.net
225 Spencer Ave., Lancaster, PA 17603-4929

Keep in mind, the newsletter is printed only four times a year. **The deadline for submission of observations for this column for the Fall Newsletter is September 10, 2021.**

Submissions made for this column should be made by the deadline date and be for observations that occurred after the previous deadline date (June 9, 2021) and before the current deadline. The “Birds on the Move” column editor or “Call Notes” newsletter editor reserves the right to edit submissions based on newsletter space constraints.

Please note the club will no longer cull online forums/resources for information to populate this column. Submissions must be made by an individual to the column editor if they wish for their sightings to be published.

From Jane and Leon Schreffler – Breakfast at Valleybrook

Early one morning in mid-March, Leon Schreffler looked out his kitchen window to check on the birds and spotted a Bald Eagle sitting in a tree about 150 feet away feeding on something. He set up his scope and determined that it was an opossum. Jane got her camera and started snapping pictures. The eagle continued to eat undisturbed for a little over an hour until he consumed the entire opossum – including the tail. He rested for a while, then flew off over their roof. It was an exciting way to begin the day.

From Carlton Groff – Scott’s Oriole

On March 30, I received a phone call from a former Amish employee suggesting I view an oriole that was at her friend’s farm since early January. They were ready to call it a Scott’s and I think they wanted to share the sighting rather than get confirmation.

Not one to chase rarities, I pondered two conflicting thoughts. If I saw the bird, I had an obligation to the birding community to call Zach Millen and was this Amish family ready for the crowds that would appear when the word got out?

A second call came on April 5, so the following morning I made the short trip to Morrison Mill Road. I was barely out of my car when I was approached by several youngsters with the question; are you here to see our oriole?

They led me around the house and the oriole was perched atop a nearby maple tree. I showed them several other oriole pictures but it was clearly a Scott's. The parents weren't home. Upon leaving, I emailed Zach.

Zach, myself, two wives, and a young lady doing a PA big year returned late that afternoon with no success. As Zach put it, there was no joy again the following morning. Zac talked to the parents who had just returned home.

They called Zach when the bird reappeared the afternoon of April 9 after a three-day absence. The rest is history as the next days were quite busy.

My wife and I returned the morning of April 16 to find the bird. The Amish resident was pleased with recent events, a lawn easily surviving the foot traffic, and a guest list pushing past 350.

By now the bird had mastered his act. Within five minutes he flashed to the feeder only to disappear around the house in a few seconds to prove that he was still there. A few minutes later he returned for the main act. He showed his front, his left side, his back and his right side as he inspected every nook and cranny of the complex feeder setup for several minutes, as if he was new to town.

Double Crested Cormorant Observation, May 1, 2021

On May 1, while operating the lift at the west fish lift at Conowingo Dam, we observed many herring coming to the surface and snapping the water. Hundreds would be a good number. The river flows for this time of year very low, drastically low, and we feel this is why the herring were coming up to the dam, which we have not seen in many years, instead of going up creeks below the dam. There were also hickory shad present. There were many, many, Double-crested Cormorants present at the dam. I would say conservatively 300 at least. At any one time there were 100 Cormorants in the water diving and catching fish. Most of the fish they were coming up with were herring. Now a herring is roughly between six and eight inches, rarely up to 12 inches long. I watched one Cormorant all by itself close to us dive and come up with and gobble down six herring, one at a time, of course. I had no idea they could fit that many fish in their stomach. Now I know.

Written by John Lahr

REVIEW OF COMPLETED EVENTS

April 8, 2021 – Webinar: Conservation Tourism...Make Your Trip Count

Kevin Loughlin, owner of Wildside Nature Tours, believes that travelers who really want to see wildlife should go to that region or country where that wildlife exists and not just read about these birds and animals in books. He said a tourist needs to fall in love with these wildlife

destinations to help protect them in the future. Money from tourism flowing into these areas helps to get the local residents motivated to protect the wildlives' homes and support wildlife conservation efforts, he believes.

One place where these efforts now exist is in Nagaland, a state in northeast India. This is a place where only a few years ago the local residents used to hunt and capture the Amur Falcon, a small insect-eating bird which migrated in the hundreds of thousands across Nagaland from southeast Siberia, over the Indian Ocean, and eventually landing in southern and eastern Africa. Residents hung fishing nets in the trees to capture these birds. It is estimated that they caught about 10-12 thousand birds each day during the migration. In total about 120,000 birds were killed in this manner. Thanks to a local woman who wanted to know more about the birds of Nagaland, she started working with conservation organizations of India on how to stop this killing process. Children of Nagaland were taught in schools that the Amur Falcon was not only the bird of Nagaland, but that other countries in the falcons' migrating path also felt the same way. The children told their elders that they no longer wanted to eat the falcons. "It's one of the most amazing conservation stories," Kevin said. Now no Amur Falcons are killed and about a million falcons pass through Nagaland each year on their way to Africa. And Kevin's Wildside Nature Tours is one of a few companies that run tours to Nagaland to promote this story.

One of Kevin's greatest places to travel is the Galapagos Islands. This month (July) he will be going back to these islands for his 40th time. He said that people who live on these islands wouldn't have anything if it wasn't for the tourists. He said National Park fees to get onto the islands ranges from \$200-\$400, depending on how long one is staying. It usually would cost more if the person is only staying for one day. But this entrance fee goes to all the parks on the islands. Only one-third of an island can be populated and farmed with the remaining two-thirds saved for wildlife. He added that our resources help to pay to keep other illegal fisherman and floating garbage from disturbing these delicate islands.

May 13, 2021 – Webinar: Birding Hawaii With Mandy Talpas

The Hawaiian Honeycreepers are endemic birds of Hawaii. Over the past two centuries, many of these species of birds have been driven to extinction because of environmental issues, people, habitat destruction, and outside predators. There were once about 56 different species of honeycreepers, but that number has since dwindled down to below 16 species, according to Mandy Talpas of Wildside Nature Tours.

Three of these honeycreeper species is the elepaio (monarch flycatcher) which live on the islands of Oahu, the most populated island, Hawaii (Big Island), and Kauai. Each island has its own elepaio specie.

Mandy explained that there are a variety of reasons why there are threats to endemic birds of these islands, including the elepaio birds. Mosquitoes (avian malaria and avian smallpox) never used to be a threat because there weren't any mosquitoes on these islands years ago, Mandy said. Now they are everywhere, as are rats, feral cats, Indian mongoose, pigs, goats, and sheep. All these things play a part in the shrinking populations of birds. Other reasons are climate change,

foreign diseases, non-native birds, overgrazing (uprooting native plants), hurricanes, forest clearing, and invasive plants. Rats eat the eggs and even the female birds while they are watching their nests at night.

Mandy said her job several years ago was to set rat traps throughout the areas where birds are nesting. These L-shaped A-24 traps contain a CO2 cartridge which, when properly baited with a piece of chocolate, will insert a pin through the head of a rat which will instantly kill it. These traps, although expensive, have been very successful in reducing the rat population, Mandy said. Each trap works 24 times before the bait or cartridge must be replaced. Fewer elepaio females are being killed by rats which means more chicks. Mandy believes that these traps are really making an impact, especially with the Oahu Elepaio which has to find a nest on an approximately two-acre plot of land on an urban-type island which usually has a million people on it throughout the year. The females lay two eggs and there are now about 1,200 of these birds on Oahu. However, there are twice as many males as females, which is a big problem. These birds, however, have lived to be 22 years old, so they are guarding their nests for some 20 years. Mandy said the rat problem will never be fully eradicated, but with these A-24 traps the rat population decreases during the elepaio breeding season which is January through May.

Another project being undertaken for the protection of some endemic birds is the translocation of Albatross birds from Midway Island to Oahu. Mandy asks why would they bring Albatross birds to a place like Oahu? The reason she said is climate change and rising ocean levels at Midway. Midway Island is only approximately three meters above sea level and the water is rising. Mandy said the birds are relocated to predator-proof fenced areas in Oahu where they are fed and monitored by staff. Albatross chicks have fledged and have gone to sea for five to seven years before returning as adults to breed. Mandy said that some of the birds she has worked with returned last year to Oahu. This is another success story for birds on these islands.

Mandy also discussed the possibility of using genetically modified mosquitoes to help lower their population; however, the Wolbachia bacteria approach has not been approved by the state. Another bit of good news for birds on the island of Hawaii is the Hakalau Forest NWR, which used to be an overgrown cow pasture. Some trees here are estimated to be 1,500 years old. Mandy said it was the only natural wildlife reserve established in the United States just to protect birds. Elevation here is about 6,500 feet which is great because most mosquitoes do not live at these altitudes. The birds are increasing in population and are flourishing.

June 10, 2021 – Webinar: Pantanal – Realm of The Jaguar

The Pantanal which lies mostly in Brazil with parts in Bolivia and Paraguay, is the world's largest tropical wetland, covering some 60,000 square miles and is about the size of Georgia. It contains the highest concentration of wildlife in South America and is 20 times the size of the Everglades in Florida. Adrian Binns, senior Wildside Nature Tours leader, took his webinar audience down the Transpantaneira, a dirt road that is 90 miles long and contains the most bridges (120) of any road in the world. Adrian's goal in this excursion was the ever-elusive Jaguar which can be found at the southern-most part of the road near the settlement of Porto Jofre.

The Transpantaneira is divided into three main sections -- northern, central, and southern. The further south one goes on the adventure, the wetter the ground becomes. The northern part makes up about one-third of the wetland and is the driest. It consists mostly of grasslands and dry brush and has many rancheros driving herds of cattle and working farms. Some animals found in this area include the Giant Anteaters and Capybara (largest rodent), and an Azaras Capuchin that was the first non-ape primate where tool usage was documented in the wild. Birds found are the Blue and Yellow Macaw, Yellow-billed Cardinal, Pigmy Owl, Hyacinth Macaw, numerous storks and egrets, and the beautiful Sunbittern which features brown and rust patterns on its wings.

The central part of the road is both wet and dry. Birds seen include the Greater Rhea, Large-billed Tern, Yellow-headed Caracara that feeds on insects, Whistling Heron, Jabiru (Woodstork appearance), Greater Thornbird, Rufous Hornero (Ovenbird), Wattled Jacana (visible yellow bony spur on wing), and Toco Toucan. Some animals found here are the Brazilian Tapir (pig-like), Marsh Deer, Green Iguana, and Sacoati (Raccoon appearance).

Entering the southern section, which is about halfway down the road, Yacare Caiman can be seen in the hundreds along the river. Birds seen are the Great-horned Owl, Rusty Collared Seedeater, Spinetail, Savanna Hawk, Black-capped Iris, and Rufous-bellied Thrush, the National bird of Brazil. An unusual bird is the Sungrebe where the male has pouches under its wings to carry its young until they are ready to swim.

Once travelers reach the Piquiri and Cuiaba Rivers at the end of the Transpantaneira Road, it is time to search for Jaguars. Boats travel northeast from Porto Jofre and tourists only have to watch the reactions of the Capybaras to detect whether a Jaguar is hiding in the nearby brush.

If you have any questions regarding items in the newsletter, Club meetings/programs, or field trips, please feel free to contact a member of the Board of Directors. For your convenience, their names and telephone numbers are listed below:

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