



The Kingfisher

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The Cape Cod Bird Club meets on the 2nd Monday of each month, Sept through May, at 7:00PM, currently via Zoom.

When in-person meetings are permitted again, we will meet at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, 869 Route 6A, Brewster.

Deadline for the next issue is December 8, 2021.

Send submissions by email. Attach text as a MS Word document or plain text. Attach images as separate files; please do not embed them in email body. Send the largest file possible of images. Will not print well if formatted for the Web. Please credit the images. Submissions may be edited for style or length. Editors have the final say on content.

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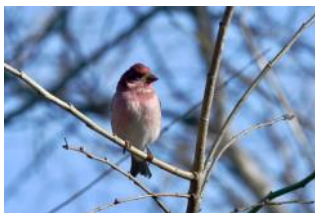
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Purple Finch, Brewster (photo D. Clapp)

President's Message

Dear CCBC Members,

As I write, migration is in full swing: shorebirds, swallows, Osprey, and many passerines are gone or leaving soon; sparrows and boreal species like finches are arriving; raptors are passing through; and juncos, ducks and alcids will be here soon. I haven't seen my Ruby-throated Hummingbird for more than a week, and I expect my Gray Catbird will soon be on its way to the Yucatan. Please get out and participate in one of the many walks organized by MJ Foti this fall (see pp 2-3). Join a Waterfowl Survey team (see p 6).

Speaking of migration, I highly recommend the new book by Scott Weidensaul, *A World on the Wing*. I read it this summer, and it presents the very latest research on migration in easy-to-understand and engrossing language. Read an online review and get the book!

You can support the CCBC by purchasing some of your holiday presents at our webstore. While supply chain issues are affecting some of the items we offer, there are plenty of good selections still available (see p 6).

Covid is still bedeviling us, so we won't try to meet in person until December, where we hope to start celebrating our 50th Anniversary year (see pp 4-5). Zoom presentations have been good in that some of our off-Cape members have been able to join in, and we have been able to recruit speakers who would not otherwise be able to come to Cape Cod. Nevertheless, we all want to get back to some semblance of normal, including meeting in person. We will continue to keep you informed as we move into the fall and winter.

Good birding!

Peter Bono, President



Splendid Fairywren, Australia

IMPORTANT — PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

The new membership year started on September 1. We need your membership support to print and distribute this newsletter, to host our website, to pay for our Zoom account, to pay speakers, and to fund our Young Birder Scholarship, as well as to support other worthy bird causes through the Conservation Fund. Check the Mailing Label: the expiration date of your membership is given after your name. If it doesn't say "(8/22)" or later, you have not renewed for 2022.

CCBC Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings and programs will be via Zoom until it's safe to once again gather at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History in Brewster, hopefully later in the fall. Our meetings are free and open to the public and start at 7 pm online via the Zoom teleconferencing platform. No registration necessary. A link will be sent to all active members. If you are not a member and wish to attend, email pbono@prba.com a few days before the meeting to request a link. Check the [CCBC website](#) for detailed information.

Join us by Zoom on **Monday, October 11** and **Monday, November 8** at **7 pm**. Topics will be announced on our website and by email.

Monday, December 13, 7 pm - Holiday Get-together, in person!

We hope to hold our first in-person meeting to celebrate the holidays. Program and events to be decided in mid- to late November. Please keep a close watch on our website and the notices emailed to all members for the details.

Welcome New Members

Bill & Sandy DeRosa - Mashpee

Suzanne Johannet - Belmont

Ross Sormani - Provincetown

Susan Glasper & Denise Peck - Dennis

Bill & Rebecca Siegel - Belmont

Emily Wheeler - Harwich

CCBC Fall Bird Walks: Oct 2021-Jan 1, 2022



Please join us on any of our upcoming field trips. Registration is no longer required. Carpooling is generally encouraged, but we've modified this standard practice to address pandemic related concerns. Please see our revised Covid guidelines below.



Cape Cod Bird Club COVID Guidelines

Although the risk of infection and hospitalization has dramatically lessened for vaccinated individuals, there is still risk regardless of vaccination status. Please follow this guidance during any trip for the safety of our members and their loved ones, and please also follow all local and federal COVID guidelines.

- Please do not participate in trips if you do not feel well or have recently been exposed to someone with COVID or COVID-like symptoms;
- Unvaccinated individuals are requested to wear a mask at all times during a trip and to not carpool with other participants unless they are within the same family or social pod;
- Vaccinated individuals should feel comfortable wearing a mask at any point during a trip;
- It is up to each vaccinated participant to decide whether or not they wish to carpool. Though the trip leader may offer to do so at the beginning of the trip, it is not an obligation – it is their personal choice;
- Cape Cod Bird Club will continue to monitor public health recommendations related to the COVID-19 pandemic. If these guidelines require revision, we will update the guidance on our website and in the following newsletter. Thanks to all in the birding community who are helping us move forward safely and responsibly!

Garden Varieties: Brewster – Harwich - Saturday, October 2nd, 8 AM

Peter Bono, (pbono@prba.com) (774-487-2848)

Meet at the parking lot across from Cape Cod Museum of Natural History. Rise and shine with the birds at Brewster and Harwich Community Gardens. These areas have had vagrants in past years, so why not check it out just in case? Plus, we will have a variety of local birds that are pleasing to the eye. Email Peter to let him know you are coming. Rain will cancel. Email Peter if unsure.

Fall Walks, continued



Chapin Beach, Dennis - Thursday, October 7th, 8 AM

MJ Foti, (maryjo1226@yahoo.com)

Meet in the Chapin Beach parking lot off Chapin Beach Rd. Walk the flats at this secluded beach, offering views of Sandy Neck Lighthouse and Grays Beach boardwalk. Scoping the tide line and beyond at dead low offers great views of terns feeding on baitfish harassed by the occasional agile Jaeger. Wade in front of the rock outcropping during incoming tide as shorebird and tern species gather in tight knots. Forster's Tern occurs in nice numbers at this location.

Pilgrim Heights, Provincetown - Easy Access - Wednesday, October 13th, 9 AM

Jeff Bryant (five_loons@yahoo.com) MJ Foti, (maryjo1226@yahoo.com)

Meet at the parking lot off Pilgrim Heights Rd. We'll be taking advantage of the fall migration show where the Cape is at its most narrow, funneling raptors into easy viewing range. We'll observe from the parking lot, but you can also check out the two overlooks on the Small Swamp Trail. This is an ideal birding opportunity for viewing from a single vantage point. Bring your binoculars, scope and camera (if you have), and a portable deck chair. All are welcome to join us for this unique birding experience.

High Head - N. Truro - Friday, October 22nd, 8 AM

Keelin Miller (capekeelin@hotmail.com)

Meet at the High Head Bike Trail parking lot. Bear left on High Head Rd. when you reach the steep hill and you'll be on a dirt road that leads to parking for the bike trail. We'll be looking and listening for rail, bobwhite, and American Bittern skulking through the marsh, searching overhead for raptors, and scanning the thickets for songbirds while we walk the well paved trail.

Sandy Neck - Sandwich (with South Shore Bird Club) - Sunday, November 7th, 7 AM

MJ Foti (maryjo1226@yahoo.com) Nate Marchessault (natemarchessault@gmail.com)

Sandy Neck Beach Park in Sandwich can be easily accessed by parking at the lot near the gatehouse if you plan on hiking the trails that border Great Marsh. Walk the loop along the Marsh Trail, through the dunes, and back along the beach, looking for migrating shorebirds, songbirds, and terns. You might even be treated to some pelagic species as you walk the beach. It's about 1.5 miles of walking in soft sand.

Pier to Pier Sweep - Outer Cape - Thursday, November 11th, 8 AM

Ginie Page (vgpage@juno.com)

Meet at the Wellfleet Town Pier. We will venture across several stops from Wellfleet to the Provincetown Piers to scope for wintering waterfowl, observe the occasional alcid, and search for passerines sheltering in the brush. You can carpool with family members from there, or continue on individually.

Hatches Harbor Fire Rd. to Race Point Light, Provincetown - Sunday, November 14th, 8 AM

Ross Sormani (rsormani@yahoo.com)

Meet at the dirt parking lot on the west side of Province Lands Rd. about a mile south of the National Seashore Visitor Center. From the dirt parking lot, we'll follow the fire road that runs northwest to the dike separating Hatches Harbor from the airport that leads out to both the harbor and Race Point. Gulls, terns, waterfowl, raptors, and passerines are among the many species observed. The occasional rarity is always possible in this unique habitat.

Hinckleys, Seymour and Long Ponds - Harwich and Brewster - Wednesday, November 17th, 8 AM

Jeff Bryant (five_loons@yahoo.com)

Meet at the Rail Trail parking lot off Headwaters Drive. From Route 124, turn on Headwaters Drive and drive less than a half mile to access the Cape Cod Rail Trail parking area. Explore these mid-Cape ponds that host a variety of waterfowl species, including Greater and Lesser Scaup, Mergansers, Bufflehead, and American Coot. After exploring Hinckleys Pond, you can drive separately, or carpool with members of your group, to the large parking area for Long Pond, accessed from Crowells Bog Rd.

Crane Wildlife Management Area, East Falmouth - Sunday, November 28th, 8 AM

Maria Curley (mcurley04@gmail.com) Jeff Bryant (five_loons@yahoo.com)

Meet at the parking lot of Otis Model Aero Club Flying Field. As you drive north on Nathan Ellis Highway, the entrance to Crane will be on your right. You can count on productive raptor activity, even the occasional rare Northern Shrike. This unique grassland habitat is host to a rich variety of species, including Eastern Meadowlark, Grasshopper Sparrow, American Kestrel, and possibly Blue Grosbeak.

West Dennis Beach - Wednesday, December 15th, 8 AM

MJ Foti (maryjo1226@yahoo.com)

Meet at the East end of the Dennis Beach parking lot just past the entrance. This will be a leisurely paced walk as we sort through gulls in hopes of seeing the Lesser Black-backed that has been a regular at this beach for many a winter season. There will also be a variety of waterfowl and late shorebird species, including Dunlin, yellowlegs, and Sanderling in their winter plumage.

New Year's Day with Ed Banks - Mid-Cape - Saturday, January 1, 2022, Noon - 4PM.

Ed Banks, (68edbanks@gmail.com) (508-769-6762)

Meet in the Stop & Shop parking lot at Patriot Square on Route 134 in South Dennis. Please join us for this annual New Year's Day walk. Get your 2022 year list off to a great start! Click off your yard birds in the morning and join us at noon. We will bird the mid-Cape and perhaps some other hotspots. Party hats optional!



Cape Cod Bird Club, 50 Years, Still Going Strong

When the time came to work on this issue of *Kingfisher*, I realized that we were starting Volume 50. I looked on our own website and found a treasure trove of CCBC history!

Below is from the Nov-Dec 1986 issue of our newsletter commemorating the 15th anniversary of the club. Is there anyone still around from those days? If so, please contact your editor, Jean Warneke at 512-217-4814 or jeanwarneke@gmail.com for a brief interview.

FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY: At ten o'clock on Saturday morning November 20th, 1971, a group of 22 bird enthusiasts met at the Cape Cod Bank & Trust Company in Orleans with the purpose of forming a bird club on Cape Cod. This group, under the leadership of Mrs. Lucien Rowell of Eastham, did not sit around and wait for things to happen. It was decided to schedule monthly meetings starting early the next month, and two field trips a month, and to name the club the Cape Cod Bird Club. Temporary committees for bird walks and programs were formed and a slate of temporary officers was named. It was decided that dues would be \$5 per family, \$3 per individual, and 50¢ for students. \$56 was collected on the spot (all you delinquents please note).

A couple of weeks later on "the cold, rainy night of December 6, 1971, fifty-one people attended the first meeting of the Cape Cod Bird Club." Then, as now, the meeting was held at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History on a Monday night. A brief business meeting established the Museum as the permanent meeting place on the first Monday of each month. A slide show and lecture entitled "Introduction to Cape Cod Birds" was presented by Dick Cunningham, naturalist at the Cape Cod National Seashore. It is interesting to note that the early Bird Club had close ties to the National Seashore; Mr. Cunningham acted as advisor.

The first club sponsored walk met at the Salt Pond visitor's center at 8 AM (these early clubbers got going early, after this, walks started at 7:30). It was warm for December (50°) and 22 persons saw 32 species at the Salt Pond, Coast Guard Beach, Fort Hill, and Red Maple Swamp (I have a feeling some cars were employed). In January, the temperature was 10° (wind-chill -25°) still, 24 people showed up at 7:30 and stayed long enough to sight 25 species.

Among the early speakers were John Hay and Mrs. Bradley Fisk. Jonnie was more formal then, but still enthralled the club with her talk about bird banding (as she continued to do as late as last April).

Our records indicate that fifteen of the attendees at one or both of those 1971 meetings are still members of the Club, and it is planned to recognize them briefly at the November meeting.

Our [website](#) offers a great history of the club including copies of newsletters since 1985 and a list of all programs from the beginning in 1971. Following are just a few highlights.

For years, the [newsletter](#) included recent sightings. Now you can find that information on apps like eBird, which has been the topic of several meetings recently. It wasn't until the September/October issue of 2002 that the newsletter was named *The Kingfisher*. Up until then, the logo with the Belted Kingfisher and the words Cape Cod Bird Club were at the masthead.

[Programs](#) have featured presentations on birds from as close by as Cape Cod and as far afield as Iceland, Guyana, the Galapagos (many times), India, Australia, and Antarctica. Topics also included bird behavior, identification problems, the history of birding books, changing migration patterns, and attracting birds in your landscape. Many of the presenters have been our own members, several from Mass Audubon, and a number of well-known ornithologists and authors, such as Don and Lillian Stokes, Kenn Kaufman, and John Kricher. Our members are a well-traveled and knowledgeable group, and we are fortunate they are so willing to share. Most common speakers have been Peter Trull (13), Blair Nikula (12), David Clapp (10), Wayne Petersen (10), John Kricher (9), Bob Prescott (9), and Roger Everett (9). We have always met at Brewster's Cape Cod Museum of Natural History on a Monday.

Walks are an important activity of our club and have been offered on and off-Cape since the beginning. With the wealth of knowledge of our members, these walks offer an amazing opportunity to bird and learn. Only during Covid did we not offer group outings; however, in our newsletter we suggested places to bird on your own.

In the first few years, the club celebrated with a Christmas dinner at Wychmere Harbor Beach Club or the Wayside Inn. For several years, a picnic was held instead of a May or June meeting, before the summer break. Members Night, where we share bird pictures from our own collections, started in 1981 and has been repeated most years. Since 1983, members have conducted a Cape-wide [Waterfowl Survey](#), a citizen science project, making a meaningful contribution to our knowledge of the Massachusetts avifauna.

Since the Cape Cod field checklist was created, it has been continuously updated by Blair Nikula—most recently in 2020.

At various times, the club has organized trips off Cape and way-off Cape to places like Trinidad and Tobago, Iceland, Alaska, and the Canadian Rockies, among others.

CCBC History, continued on P 5

CCBC History, continued

CCBC members have built and monitored bird nest boxes and participated in Bird-a-thons, feeder watches, breeding bird surveys, and Christmas Bird Counts.

In 1990, [Birding Cape Cod](#) was published as a joint venture between Mass Audubon Wellfleet and CCBC, and was updated in 2005. However, it is now out-of-print.

In 2011, we began offering scholarships for Cape Cod teens to attend birding camp, usually at Audubon's Hog Island in Maine. So far, we have awarded 13 scholarships. Historically, a silent auction during Members Night has provided money to fund the scholarships.

For several years in the 2000's into the teens, the club organized a weekend of birding which morphed into the Cape Cod Bird Festival, which ran from 2013 – 2015.

Herb Raffaele, former chief of the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of International Conservation, author of *Birds of the West Indies*, and fortunately for us, a Cape Cod resident who served on our board, urged the club to offer micro-grants for conservation initiatives in the Caribbean and beyond. A fundraiser in the fall of 2020 collected \$2950 from 48 members, much of which has been donated to a [number of excellent projects](#).

In 2020, Maria Curley, CCBC treasurer and science teacher at Barnstable Intermediate School, started a student chapter of our bird club. They have feeders outside the classroom, are learning eBird, and are using donated binoculars.

Our membership continues strong. Even during Covid, when we quickly switched to Zoom presentations, we added new members. Our current membership is 300 families or 474 individuals.

How's that for an all-volunteer organization?

Want to get involved? Lead a field trip, monitor nest boxes, write for the Kingfisher, serve on our board.
Contact any of your board members (see page 8).



Here is a great way to volunteer—join a Christmas Bird Count circle and contribute to Citizen Science.
[Christmas Bird Count | Audubon](#)

The Falcon Thief, A True Tale of Adventure, Treachery, and the Hunt for the Perfect Bird

by Joshua Hammer, Simon & Schuster, 2020

I give this book high marks for a great opening scene.

In the Emirates Airline Lounge at West Midlands airport in May 2020, a janitor is impatiently waiting to clean the shower room; the occupant had been in there a long time. When the door finally opened, the man strolls past the janitor, not even giving him a glance. What the janitor found, and didn't find, was odd. The shower was dry, no one had bathed. In the trash, he saw an egg carton with one egg, dyed red. He suspected drug smuggling and contacted airport security who in turn brought in the counterterrorism team.

The passenger's hand luggage, with binoculars, a scope, GPS system, at first looked like a birder's luggage, but the carton of supposedly "duck eggs" was a surprise. He was told to strip down and it got even stranger. Around his waist was white surgical tape, under which were heavy woolen socks protecting 14 eggs. He said he had spinal problems and his physiotherapist suggested he strap the raw duck eggs to his abdomen to keep his stomach muscles taught. They were in fact the eggs of Peregrine Falcons!

So starts this astonishing story of Jeffrey Lendrum and Andy McWilliam.

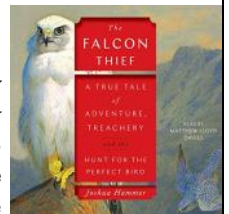
Lendrum is a native of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), an adventurer and convicted egg thief who has traveled the world over, climbed mountains and dangled from helicopters to pluck eggs from the nests of endangered birds. He is a master thief who steals with no remorse, evades capture, and sometimes escapes even when caught. While obsession and the thrill of the hunt seem to be what drive him, he also supplied eggs on the black market to Saudi elites in their high stakes game of falconry. Those peregrine eggs can fetch up to \$7,000 each. In 2015, he was caught trying to leave Brazil with an incubator with four eggs thought to be from a rare Peregrine subspecies, *Falco peregrinus cassini*, valued at up to \$80,000 each!

Andy McWilliam is a senior investigative support officer for the National Wildlife Crime Unit in the UK. Most of the work of the NWCU involves ivory smugglers or trading of endangered animal skulls. He'd been a police officer for 30 years and played rugby on the side. After an injury and looking for a way to spend his leisure time, he took up birding, and by default became the expert on egg theft. Much of his time is spent looking at crazy egg collections found in attics or basements around the UK. (The movie *Poached* gives you a look at this obsession.)

This book reads like a thriller, and author Joshua Hammer has done his research. He takes you from Zimbabwe to Patagonia to Dubai and back. He talks about the history of egg collecting and racing falcons and the meager power of authorities charged with controlling wildlife traffic.

One reviewer called the book "an international, ornithological whodunit."

Jean Warneke



Local Teens Attend Bird Camp in Maine

In June, two Barnstable High School students attended National Audubon's Hog Island Field Ornithology camp in Maine as recipients of scholarships from the Cape Cod Bird Club. Originally scheduled for 2020, they were able to go in June of this year. If you want to know where your donation money goes, just read about their enthusiasm for camp.



I had a great time at Hog Island!! I learned a lot, enjoyed the gorgeous scenery, saw some lifer birds and got to be better friends with Phoebe too. I didn't get too much time to actually make art while I was there, but I took a lot of photos and will be making some art inspired by my time at Hog Island over the next few months. I'd be happy to share these with you if you like!

Best, Emily Swift

Camp was great! I learned so much and I think it really helped give me a bit of a "reset" on how I was living and also how I was experiencing/interacting with the natural world. The instructors/camp leaders were amazing and their passion was evident and so incredible to see. They inspired me to want to be like them one day, so full of knowledge and passion for animals that they're practically full to bursting!

Thank you (and Cape Cod Bird Club) so much for the scholarship and opportunity to attend Hog Island!

Best, Phoebe Gibson

CCBC is offering this opportunity again for the summer of 2022. If you know a local teen who might be interested, have them contact Maria Curley at mcurlley04@gmail.com. They don't have to have a bird name, but maybe it helps!!



The Annual Cape Cod Waterfowl Census was started in 1983 by Blair Nikula and members of the Cape Cod Bird Club. The census is an excellent example of citizen science, in which birders, regardless of expertise, can gather useful data and make a meaningful contribution to our knowledge of the Massachusetts avifauna. For more information and results of past surveys, visit <https://www.capecodwaterfowl.info/>

The Annual Cape Cod Waterfowl Census will take place **Saturday and Sunday, December 4th and 5th**. Last year, 28 teams covered 365 ponds with a total of 29 waterfowl species observed. Thank you to all of the volunteers who contributed to this exceptionally successful survey. If you'd like to join a team, please contact me. *MJ Foti (maryjo1226@yahoo.com)*

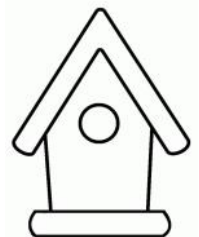
Harwich Nest Box Report

Kelly Sattman reported the 2021 data from five nest box sites monitored by volunteers from CCBC and Harwich Conservation Trust (HCT). The 103 boxes, on land owned by HCT or the town of Harwich, had 120 nest attempts that totaled 583 eggs and 321 fledglings.

- 11 Black-capped Chickadees
- 2 Tufted Titmouse
- 162 Tree Swallows
- 99 House Wrens
- 37 Eastern Bluebirds

- and 0 House Sparrows hatched from 27 eggs because monitors successfully used fake eggs in the nest to keep females incubating all summer.

The volunteers have recorded the data with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology citizen science network since 2011 but monitored the 3 largest sites since 2006. This year they had a "1st." A cowbird laid an egg in a bluebird nest. That nest successfully fledged all of its occupants although the cowbird exited over a week before the other fledglings.



Merchandise Corner—shop, support, and promote the Club



Please visit the Cape Cod Bird Club website for information about the club store. We have items available from our local merchandise provider, [Cape Cod Embroidery](#). You will be able to purchase a variety of items, such as shirts, jackets, and backpacks, bearing the club's Kingfisher logo. Items can be purchased online only, so check our website for merchandise offerings and future store opening dates.



Membership Form for the Cape Cod Bird Club 2021-2022 Membership Year RENEW NOW

This page may be used as your CCBC Membership **renewal form** and also may be used by **new members** joining for the first time. Remember—**dues should be paid before September 1, 2021**, and your membership will expire on Aug. 31, 2022. **New members may join at any time.**

RENEWING MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERSHIP

Youth (18 or under) FREE

Individual \$20.00

Family (Household) \$25.00

Supporter \$50.00

Sponsor \$75.00

Patron \$100.00

Additional donations are much appreciated. Thank you for your support.

Membership Dues \$ _____

Conservation & Education Fund \$ _____

General Operating Fund \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Please return this form with your check made out to Cape Cod Bird Club and mail to:
Cape Cod Bird Club, Attn: Membership, PO Box 351, Centerville, MA 02632

Household Address (required): _____

Household Tel. No. (required): _____

Name(s)	M/F/O*	Email Address**	Approx. Year of Birth*

Notes: * (Optional) Please provide your gender and approximate year of birth (it doesn't need to be exact), so that we can design programs to serve you better.

** (Optional) If we have your email address, we can send periodic, updated notifications in a timely manner regarding speakers, meeting cancellations due to bad weather, and so forth.
Your email address is not shared with any other organization.

CHECK HERE if you would like to save the Club postage and paper expenses by electing to receive your newsletter (*The Kingfisher*) **by email only.**

CHECK HERE if you would like to be contacted about helping with the Club by leading a walk, writing an article, being a guest speaker, or serving on the Board or one of its subcommittees.



Cape Cod Bird Club
PO Box 351
Centerville, MA 02632

Cape Cod Bird Club, Inc.

An organization whose members are interested in the protection and conservation of the bird life and natural resources of Cape Cod. *Please join us!*

- To join and pay dues online, visit www.capecodbirdclub.org/wordpress/join/join-online/.
- If you prefer to send a check, please use the form on page 7 or download a membership form from the website at <https://www.capecodbirdclub.org/wordpress/join/join-by-mail/> and send it along with your check to: CCBC, PO Box 351, Centerville, MA 02632

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