



# The Kingfisher

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## President's Message

*"The presence of a single bird can change everything for one who appreciates them."*  
— Julie Zickefoose

Dear CCBC friends, With the pandemic's worst effects beginning to recede, I hope you all have been able to be in the presence of at least a single bird!

The Club is planning on holding our first indoor, in-person meeting starting in September, but that will depend upon the availability of our meeting room, so please check the website and look for an email later in the summer. Our Spring program of bird walks went very well—thank you to our leaders and to all who participated and followed the Covid-19 guidelines.

We had a very well attended annual meeting in May, where new Officers and Directors were elected. Thank you to Rick Floyd who is retiring from the Board, and welcome to Mike Simons, who will be taking over as Refreshments Director. We continue to need volunteers to serve on the Board, so please consider serving in 2022. Over the past year, we had a marvelous set of speakers, and I remind you that we have links to recordings of almost all the Zoom sessions on the Meetings page of the CCBC website.

*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.*

*The Kingfisher* is published quarterly.

**Deadline for the next issue is September 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 the email body. Send the largest resolution possible for your images; they will not print well if preformatted for the Web. Please credit the images. Submissions might be edited for style or length. Editors have the final say on content.

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Take a close look at the final paragraph of John Goodchild's article: we've created a new Conservation & Education page on the CCBC Website. All the project proposals are there, along with Final Reports posted as we receive them. The stories are truly inspirational, and you all should be proud of the impact that our contributions are having. We're grateful to Herb Raffaele for starting the CCBC micro-grant program. We've also revitalized our Facebook CCBC group, thanks to Peter Fang's commitment to posting fresh material on a regular basis.

Now that we have started going out more, we need more walk leaders. You don't have to be a bird id expert; it's more about creating a welcoming space for all participants and handling the logistics of the walk. Please let MJ Foti know if you are willing to lead a walk this summer or fall.



*Kagu, New Caledonia – Oct 2017*

Good birding!  
*Peter Bono, President*

► **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 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](mailto:pbono@prba.com) a few days before the meeting to request a link**. Check the [CCBC website](#) for detailed information.

**Club Meeting: Sept 13, 7 pm  
Speaker and Location  
To be Announced**

**Check the CCBC Website for details  
in early September.**

## **Club Bird Walks Are on Again!**

**Message from Mary Jo Foti, Walks Coordinator: All are welcome to join our field trips. There are no fees, however, walk participants are asked to register online. To view a complete list of upcoming walks, check our website at [capecodbirdclub.org/walks](http://capecodbirdclub.org/walks). The link for each signup form is directly below the walk leader's name next to *Register*. If you have any questions about the signup form, you may contact MJ at [maryjo1226@yahoo.com](mailto:maryjo1226@yahoo.com).**

**Wednesday, July 28, 2021 8 AM *Morris Island, Chatham* Mary Jo Foti, [maryjo1226@yahoo.com](mailto:maryjo1226@yahoo.com)**

We'll meet and park at the Monomoy Visitor Center, then make our way through the neighborhood down to the Morris Island flats for birding on the outgoing tide. We'll scope the flats while the shorebirds come in to forage. Please be prepared for wet conditions (possible ankle-high wading). Also be aware that there is Poison Ivy on some of the trails. Low tide will be about 9:27 AM.

**Saturday, August 7, 2021 5:30 PM *West Dennis Beach* Peter Bono (Pres, CCBC) [pbono@prba.com](mailto:pbono@prba.com)**

(774) 487-2848 Meet at the West Dennis Beach parking lot at the far end (as near to the breakwater and Bass River as you are permitted to drive). We will look for lingering, summer-breeding Piping Plovers and Least Terns, as well as migrating shorebirds. To participate, please contact the leader in advance. Rain cancels.

**Sunday, September 12, 2021 8 AM *Crosby Landing Beach, Brewster* Nate Marchessault (Pres, SSBC)**

[natemarchessault@gmail.com](mailto:natemarchessault@gmail.com) and Mary Jo Foti [maryjo1226@yahoo.com](mailto:maryjo1226@yahoo.com) Join us for a co-lead walk along Brewster flats with members of **South Shore Bird Club**. Starting at the parking lot off 6A at the end of Crosby Lane, we'll head to the flats on the outgoing tide to scope for shorebirds and gulls, then walk the marsh trail behind the dunes for Marsh Wren, Meadowlark, and other passerines.

**Saturday, September 25, 2021 8 AM *Crane Wildlife Management Area, East Falmouth***

Mike Tucker (of the 300 Committee Falmouth) [bnatural2@gmail.com](mailto:bnatural2@gmail.com) Located off Route 151, Crane WMR is home to a variety of grassland species, including Eastern Meadowlark, Grasshopper Sparrow, American Kestrel, and possibly Blue Grosbeak. Drive past the baseball field where parking is located across from Otis Model Aero Club Flying Field.

## **Merchandise Corner—shop, support, and promote the Club**



Our collaboration with Cape Cod Embroidery will be open **for two weeks starting on the day of our monthly meetings: September 13, October 11, and November 8.**

During those times, please visit the website (<https://ccbird.itemorder.com/>), where you will be able to purchase items such as shirts, caps, hats, jackets, and backpacks bearing the club's Belted Kingfisher logo. Meanwhile, if you need anything, contact John Goodchild, the CCBC Merchandise Director ([john.goodchild@worchester.edu](mailto:john.goodchild@worchester.edu)).



## Birding Guatemala *by Jean Warneke*

Club members had the opportunity to meet bird guide John Cahill *via* Zoom in March 2021. Reading this article will allow you to learn more about him and the project his family manages in central Guatemala. Thinking about Guatemala usually suggests ancient ruins, indigenous cultures, and colorful celebrations. If you haven't considered Guatemala for birds, however, think again. The climate/habitat is right for many colorful birds such as the **Resplendent Quetzal**, Pink-headed Warbler (considered by some to be the most beautiful of the warblers), and several highland regional endemics like Blue-and-white Mockingbird and Rufous-collared Robin. Guatemala also provides the overwintering grounds for many North American birds and the country has some excellent bird guides who are more than happy to show them to you.

Our group traveled in January 2019 with John Cahill as our guide. His father Rob filled in with historic and cultural information. We arrived at the main airport in Guatemala City and immediately drove west to the area of Tecpán where we spent our first two nights. It was on a farm nearby that the great naturalist and writer Alexander Skutch lived and began his study of the tropics before moving on to Costa Rica. We started birding in earnest on the farm where the goal was the Pink-headed Warbler.



*Resplendent Quetzal*

The next three nights found us at the campus of Community Cloud Forest Conservation (CCFC), a US-based NGO located in the central highlands near Cobán and operated by the Cahill family. The environmental education curriculum of CCFC serves over 50 surrounding communities of Q'eqchi' Maya. The campus sits in a pine-oak forest, the winter home of many North American migrants. Birding there in January can produce a healthy trip list!

Several private preserves have been created in this central part of the country specifically to protect migrant birds. I was impressed that so much land has been set aside, as owners receive little government support for their efforts—only a small amount of money per acre that must be used for care and improvements to the land. On these private preserves, we were pleased to see Resplendent Quetzal, Golden-cheeked Warbler, and Scaled Antpitta.



*Orange-breasted Falcon*

We ended our tour in Tikal, perhaps the greatest of the Maya cities, where we picked up a cultural guide who added greatly to the experience. The Petén region is hot, tropical, and heavily forested. As we walked among ancient pyramids, we saw amazing birds like Keel-billed Toucan, Slaty-tailed Trogon, Tody Motmot, and several species of parrots and raptors. We were thrilled to get excellent views of the rare **Orange-breasted Falcon** perched atop a temple. Ocellated Turkey, so ugly they are beautiful, abound in the park and they add a comical touch; one saw his reflection and kept pecking at the side mirror.

Only in his mid-20s, John Cahill is part of the new generation of birders. Before even finishing high school, he completed two Guatemalan Big Years. Many consider him to be the country's top birder. He and his father, Rob, also an excellent birder, are the eBird coordinators for Guatemala. John has trained many other bird guides and is well-known and respected throughout the country. He is a talented and patient guide with a wonderful disposition. He has an amazing ear and knows these birds like it's his backyard, which it is! The family moved to Guatemala about 20 years ago, so he and his siblings all grew up there. They all speak English, Spanish, and Q'eqchi' Maya.

During the school year, CCFC teaches its *Birds & Kids* course to fifth graders as part of the local school curriculum. The course, based on Cornell's BirdSleuth program, is conducted at the CCFC campus. From mid-October to mid-December, CCFC offers an interdisciplinary program for young women. Students spend 25 days learning agro-ecology, reforestation, birding, hygiene, and family and career planning. The final step in the course is for each student to plant an agro-ecology plot at her home, including heirloom plants and forest trees, thus providing a food source for their family and the opportunity to participate in reforestation. The agro-ecology plot has proved very important to these families. When the pandemic struck and classes were shut down, I contacted Rob and his wife Tara to see if help was needed, but most of the families whose children had gone through CCFC's program had sufficient food from their gardens. Self-sufficiency has also helped stem human migration from this region.

*(Continued on page 6)*



## Catch Them Young *by John Goodchild*

*“We must reach all mentors of children, their teachers and those who teach their teachers. We must give them the tools and instill in them responsibility for creating in their young charges a knowledge and love of nature.”* Roger Tory Peterson

The best investments my wife and I ever made were two pairs of binoculars for our grandsons, John and Ben, when they were 7 and 5 respectively. John had just started showing an interest in natural history and on our first outing with the binoculars, they saw Least Terns and Cedar Waxwings. As children so often do when they find something that captivates them, they thought of little else than birds for the next few years. During that time, they inhaled everything in the field guides for eastern and then western North America. Soon, they were memorizing the avifauna of South America and Australia, leaving me still working on those of the eastern USA (that’s Ben in the photo giving me some tips on shorebird id.).



Sometime in their early teens, I realized that they had



far sur-

passed me in field skills and that my role in our outings to Plum Island or Race Point had changed from trip leader to chauffeur. Their interests also widened to include dragonflies, butterflies, whales, ants or just about anything that breathed. Our grandsons were the best possible travelling companions for Therese and myself on trips to Cape May, Brigantine and the gannet colony at Bonaventure Island. (That’s John and Ben a few years later at Bonaventure.)

Now in their 20s, they are both still avid naturalists.

John has just graduated from college and was offered a summer job working on the Maine Breeding Bird Atlas. Ben will be a senior and hopes for a career in some area of field biology. He spent last summer studying diamond-backed terrapins and is working on ground-nesting bees this summer. He once stood in as the naturalist on a whale watch trip, and it was Ben who discovered the Pacific-slope Flycatcher in Cambridge last November; it was only the second record for the state. You have to be a pretty sharp birder to make that call!

I am sure that the love of nature John and Ben acquired as children will be lifelong. But when the time comes for them to buy binoculars for their own grandchildren, will the Least Terns and Cedar Waxwings still be around? To give them a chance, we need to get as many people as possible advocating for birds (and whales – and ants too!). Our best legacy for the next generation is to catch them young!

Just ask Maria Curley. Our hard-working club treasurer has started a junior branch of the Cape Cod Bird Club for the children at her school (Barnstable Intermediate School) and has inspiring tales to tell of their enthusiasm. Many people became birders through a stunning encounter with an everyday bird such as a cardinal, jay or flicker. The best way to relive that epiphany is through the eyes of children. It’s good for you, the child, and, in the long run, the bird.

You can find out about projects the Club sponsored further afield by clicking the **Conservation and Education** tab on our website. In particular, check out the report “I protect birds and what do you do?” It has some great photos of Cuban children learning about birds and birding. We have recently posted a new report from Caribbean islands of Antigua and Barbuda: “Promoting citizen science through birding”. This provided classroom and field training in bird identification. In addition, 35 people were trained to monitor wetlands in globally Important Bird Areas. Another recent report posted is from Grenada’s “Waste to Art” competition to foster an appreciation of the island’s native birds.

## Peep ID Basics – Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers

by Peggy Sagan

Not all 2-legged summer visitors to Cape Cod wear flip-flops and sunscreen. Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers return to our shores each summer to feast on local seafood and small invertebrates.

Both Least and Semipalmated sandpipers are small sandpipers that frequent our beaches and marshes. Although size is an obvious clue (Least are smaller), unless the birds are feeding side-by-side, size can be difficult to judge. Many birders identify them easily by “GISS” (General Identification of Size and Shape), but I begin each season by refamiliarizing myself with their distinguishing fieldmarks. For me, counting (to 4 or 5) helps. Maybe this technique will work for you.

Least (5 letters) Sandpipers tend toward brownish hues, with some rusty highlights. (Note that “brown” and “rusty” have 5 letters.) Their short legs are yellowish to green, and their slightly down-curved bills come to a sharp point. (“Short,” “green,” “curve” and “sharp” have 5 letters.) Although you may find them on beaches, they prefer grassy habitats, such as marshes. (Count ‘em: “Grass” and “marsh” have 5 letters.)

I distinguish Semipalmated Sandpipers by counting to 4 (the number of letters in “Semi”). Compared to Least Sandpipers, Semis tend toward grey plumage, they have long, black or dark legs, and they are more likely to be found on sandy beaches. (“Grey,” “long,” “dark,” and “sand” have 4 letters.)

More experienced birders are likely to observe differences in posture and feeding behavior. For example, Least Sandpipers are sometimes described as short, fat, and chunky. In every plumage, their breasts and undersides are generally darker than Semipalmated Sandpipers’.

In flight, if you’re fast, you might notice that Semipalmated Sandpipers have longer wings than Least Sandpipers.

My confidence in distinguishing these peeps usually returns by August, just as a Western Sandpiper or (very rarely) a Little Stint decides to visit. Then I sidle up to a birder with a good scope and casually inquire, “Seeing anything interesting?” It usually works. Grab your binoculars and a field guide, head for the beaches, and good luck!



*Least Sandpiper*



*Semipalmated Sandpiper*

## Birding Guatemala *(continued from page 3)*

By completing the 25-day course, the young women earn a scholarship for another year of education. CCFC has successfully assisted hundreds of young women to continue schooling in an area where sixth grade is the traditional end of formal education. Many have gone on to finish high school and university, thus postponing an early marriage and young motherhood.

The campus is an architectural wonder and is 100% off-the-grid. They operate on a combination of solar and hydropower, have huge gardens, both for edibles and reforestation. Currently, in addition to its educational focus, CCFC is working with a grant from US Fish & Wildlife to rehabilitate habitat to benefit the overwintering Golden-cheeked Warbler, a U.S. endangered species, and other Neotropical migratory birds of special concern such as the Golden-winged Warbler, Wood Thrush, and Olive-sided Flycatcher.

In addition to a successful trip list and an introduction to the lifestyle of Maya families, a donation of a half-acre of reforested cloud forest from our participation in the tour totally off-set our carbon footprint. My company, [JB Journeys](http://JBJourneys.com), has partnered with John Cahill in running birding tours that also benefit CCFC and allows groups to stay on the campus. Please contact me for more information at [jbjourneys@yahoo.com](mailto:jbjourneys@yahoo.com).



CCFC Campus

## Results of the Club's Newsletter Survey

The Cape Cod Bird Club Board and Officers were delighted that so many members responded to our survey about the Club's newsletter, *The Kingfisher*. Over 40% of our members (190 respondents) took the time to complete the short survey and provide helpful suggestions and direction for future issues. Thank you!

It was gratifying to learn that over half of you read the newsletter cover-to-cover. Here are a few other things we learned:

- Although most of you read the newsletter online, there are about a quarter of you who prefer or require that we provide a printed newsletter. That's very important to know!
- Your favorite features are **Club Bird Walks, Articles**, and information about **Monthly Meetings/Programs**. Other features that you find valuable are **Photos, Club News**, and **President's Message**.
- You expressed strong interest in articles including: where to go birding on Cape Cod, bird behavior, research briefs in ornithology, and local travel articles. Knowing what types of information members value will help our editors, Carolyn and Jean, solicit articles for future issues.
- Finally, we asked whether you had ideas and material you'd like to submit for publication, and 25 members responded. Your submissions are always welcome. Send your ideas, articles and images to the fall editor, Jean Warneke, at [jeanwarneke@gmail.com](mailto:jeanwarneke@gmail.com). The deadline for the next issue is **September 8, 2021**. We'd love to hear from you.

## Welcome New Members

Carolyn and Jeffrey Bryant - East Dennis  
 Scott Dresser - Boxborough, MA  
 Janet and Brian Flanagan - Chatham  
 Jack Hadley - Arlington, VA  
 Kate Hecht - Harwich Port  
 Marcia Johnson - Harwich  
 Peg McClellan - Wellfleet  
 Robert Micznik - West Dennis

Tom Perzan - Osterville  
 Ginnie Peterson - West Falmouth  
 Steve Petruska - East Dennis  
 Albert Schechterman - Mashpee  
 Ross Sormani - Provincetown  
 Meera Subramanian - West Barnstable  
 John Thomas - Centerville  
 Joyce and Jonathan White - Orleans  
 Claire Wilcox - Harwich Port

**Note: We have a new membership category for Youth (18 and under). Its FREE. Send in the form on page 7 to join.**

## 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/](https://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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