



The Kingfisher

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Spring April-June, 2022

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President's Message

Dear CCBC Members,

With this issue, we're excited to bring you 50% more pages of interesting and informative reading. In addition to an inspiring article from one of our 2021 Young Birders, Emily Swift, our editors have introduced book reviews—a content area you asked for when we took our membership survey in late 2020. You will also note that MJ Foti has assembled an amazing set of bird walks, led by many of our most experienced members. If you haven't been on a bird walk lately with us, please come out this spring and enjoy our marvelous spring migrants, which mostly pass through very quickly. If you are attentive, you will notice which species come early and which ones are later in the spring.

The April meeting will again be on Zoom, but we are hoping to meet in person in May at the Museum of Natural History. Please watch your email and check our website as our plans take shape. In May, we will hold our Annual Meeting with election of Officers and two Directors. **If you are interested in joining the Board, please let me know immediately.**

The book reviews in this issue remind me that one of the side effects of the Covid precautions has been to give me more time to catch up on my reading. In *Bird Watching* magazine (pp. 24-29), an innovative study of Mountain Chickadees in the Sierra Nevadas of California has revealed that these unlikely chickadees might possess mental abilities that rival the skills of some of the more celebrated intellectual stars of the bird world (like parrots and corvids). In *Scientific American, August 2021* (p.84), biologists from Australia combined scientific data for 724 well-studied bird species with counts from the citizen science app *eBird* to make global abundance estimates for 9,700 species. Four species—House Sparrow, European Starling, Ring-billed Gull, and Barn Swallow—were estimated to include more than 1 billion individuals worldwide. At the other end of the scale, 1,180 species (12% of 9,700) are estimated to have populations numbering fewer than 5,000 individuals, including too many with under 500 individuals. Many of these latter are island species or live in niche habitats under severe threat from mankind.

There are so many interesting stories from the natural world. I hope you get as much pleasure from reading as I do.

Good birding,

Peter Bono, President



Prothonotary Warbler Mike Tucker

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 June 8, 2022.

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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► **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. Meetings **start at 7 pm and are free** and open to the public. **No registration necessary.** A **Zoom link will be sent to all active members and the link will be published on the CCBC website.** **Non-members are welcome to attend.** Check capecodbirdclub.org for detailed information.

Club Meetings



April 11, 7:00 pm via Zoom: A Record Big Year with Tiffany Kersten

Tiffany Kersten didn't set out to do a big year, but after a series of unanticipated and serendipitous events, she suddenly found herself amidst one. As a sexual assault survivor, she spent 2021 birding all corners of the Lower 48 States, gifting personal safety alarms to women she met on the trails and raising awareness of women's safety in the outdoors. Her initial goal was to see 700 species, but she wound up breaking a major birding record.

See Tiffany's bio and more at our [website's meetings page](#).



May 9, 7:00 pm, in person!!

Join us at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History for the first time in over 2 years! Check back with our website for the program announcement.

See you in September!!

Welcome New Members !

Kristine Felos	Brewster	Brooks, Grace, Jeb, & Patsy Handy	Yarmouth
Adam Poirier	Osterville	Beckett, Emily, & Phoebe Faherty	Harwich
Darlene Lagoy	West Barnstable	Abbie, James, John, & Kathy McCaffrey,	
Patricia Gifford	Schenectady, NY	& Emalee & Taylor Whipple	E. Harwich
Tina McGrath	Harwich	Catherine, Fintan, & Trey Duffy	Westboro, MA
Nancy Collins	Park Ridge, NJ	Barbara Balkwill, Melitta King,	
Nancy Blosser	North Eastham	& Wendy Breindel-Gardner	Randolph, MA

CCBC Conservation Fund

The CCBC offers grants of up to \$1,000 to support conservation efforts relating directly or indirectly to the well-being or protection of birds. While we will consider applications from anywhere in the world, we will give preference to proposals from the Western Hemisphere where many of our local, Cape Cod migrants spend some part of their lives.

Following the approach introduced to the club by Herb Raffaele, we welcome applications that encourage community involvement, particularly that of children, as a way of promoting bird-friendly environments. To date, we have donated around \$16,000 to organizations in the Caribbean, Africa, South America, and right here on Cape Cod.

If you know of an organization which shares our goals but needs seed money to begin or additional funding to continue, let them know. Applications are reviewed and funded twice per year, in spring and fall. Deadlines are May 1st and November 1st. [Guidelines for submitting applications are available here.](#)

Or if you would like to donate to this fund, mail a check in any amount to CCBC, PO Box 351, Centerville, MA 02632 and write "Conservation Fund" in the memo.

Hog Island: A Magical Experience *by Emily Swift*

Hog Island in Bremen, Maine, is a tiny paradise in the summertime: wildflower gardens buzz with bees and hummingbirds, ospreys soar overhead on the salty breeze, and songbirds dart from tree to tree between the quaint New England cottage houses that have been upgraded into lodging and kitchens. Sitting outdoors, enjoying a home-cooked breakfast of fresh Maine blueberry pancakes, I watch terns wheel and plunge into the bay just in front of me, catching their own breakfast.

A diverse group had gathered for Field Ornithology week—young and old, educators and hobbyists, retirees and published scientists. But at the breakfast tables we talked like old friends, sharing stories of our home states and how we each got into birding; we flipped through field guides and argued about the pronunciation of “pileated” and “parula,” making sure no one had forgotten their binoculars or sunscreen for the day of birding ahead. All of us



formed an amazing sense of camaraderie—any reservations I had about talking to new people disappeared when I realized everyone here was just as nerdy about birds as I am, if not

more! I learned so much during my stay: we got a crash course in bird anatomy with taxidermy specimens, learned to identify female and out-of-season warblers, and listened to Scott Weidensaul’s amazing presentation on all things birds, filled with critical information on bird migration, conservation, and hilarious personal anecdotes.

Each morning on the short walk from my cabin to breakfast, I passed by a Northern Parula nest, an unassuming hammock of hanging moss that suddenly burst into activity and noise as momma Parula flitted in with food for her babies. It was a rare treat and my first Parula sighting, and, over the course of the week we were lucky enough to watch the babies fledge and leave the nest.

We enjoyed hikes into Hog Island’s wooded interior, listening for birdsong amidst tall pines and knee-high ferns, only to turn a corner and be greeted by a clear view of the ocean; fog swirling through the trees made misty, rainy mornings feel like a fairytale. On boat tours around the island, I became well acquainted with Black Guillemots and their bright vermilion feet and flashing wing bars; these comical seabirds look as if they can barely stay in the air as they flap their wings frantically to lift off from the water. I got to see Bald Eagles fishing along the coastline and Common Eiders floating along the shore with their young. On the mainland tour, we skirted through marshes and backyards to spot Red-winged Blackbirds, Cedar Waxwings, and a female Wood Duck.

After some schedule changes due to weather my group was finally able to take the most exciting boat tour of all:

the trip to see puffins! This is the southernmost nesting colony of Atlantic Puffins, which has been reestablished due to hard work from Audubon volunteers and scientists. Though we couldn’t land on the island—there’s no dock—and the researchers that stay there during the summer have to make their way haphazardly onto the rocks in a small dinghy, we did get amazing up-close views of these charismatic and colorful little seabirds. They zoomed back and forth past us, beaks full of fish to feed their young in rocky burrows. Cormorants and guillemots perched alongside them on the rocks as gulls and terns wheeled overhead, reveling in the bounty and abundance of summertime.



After we’d made a few circles of the island and gotten all our photographs, we headed to a larger forested island for lunch and bird banding. Nets were set up at the tree line and we saw Magnolia Warblers, a Wood Thrush, a White-throated Sparrow, and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet up close as they were banded and measured. I got to hold the kinglet gently in my hands to release it, feeling its soft feathers and staccato heartbeat in my palm before it flew right past my face and back into the woodland. That was a truly magical experience.

Our time at Hog Island ended with a freshly-caught Maine lobster dinner with “cream puffins”—eclairs with puffin-head shaped cookies stuck on top. Our chef, Cleo, made every meal at Hog Island a delight, and all of the staff, counselors, and volunteers worked together to make sure we had an amazing time learning about birds. My heart ached taking the short ferry ride back to the mainland, knowing I’d have to leave this wonderful place behind after such a short time there. My fond memories of Hog Island will surely last a lifetime, inspiring my artwork and igniting my childhood love of birds all over again. I look forward to making new memories there someday as a volunteer or artist-in-residence, but for now, I’ll hold the friends and memories I made close to my heart.



Cape Cod Bird Club, thanks so much for making this amazing trip possible for me! I can’t express my gratitude enough for this scholarship, and this incredible experience I never would have had otherwise.

—Photos by Emily Swift

The Cape Cod Bird Club offers a scholarship each year. If you know a Cape teen who may be interested, please check [our website](#) to apply. Deadline is APRIL 15!

Citizen Science

December 2021 Waterfowl Census

During the first weekend of November of 1983, Blair Nikula and members of the Cape Cod Bird Club initiated a census of the lakes and ponds on Cape Cod. Participants were instructed to identify and count all the waterfowl (loons, grebes, geese, ducks, and coot) present on each pond. Covering 202 ponds, participants tallied 3,957 individuals of 22 species of waterfowl.

The census continued the following year but was moved to the first weekend in December. Many ducks and geese do not arrive on Cape Cod until inland bodies of water freeze, and the later date would more closely coincide with peak waterfowl numbers locally. Covering 225 ponds, 25 species of waterfowl were counted with 9,097 individuals being recorded. That year, and in those following, detailed counts of each species on each pond were recorded. These provide the data presented on the website. Now in its 38th year, the Cape Cod Waterfowl Census is an excellent example of citizen science in which birders, regardless of their expertise, can gather useful data and make a meaningful contribution to our knowledge of the Massachusetts avifauna. Waterfowl are relatively conspicuous, generally easy to identify, and thus readily censused with only a modest effort.

On December 4th and 5th, 2021, 26 teams participated. Saturday brought mild winds and overcast skies, with sun occasionally breaking through: excellent conditions for observation. The volunteers demonstrated their impressive collective birding skills as they scouted primary observation locations, recorded data, and entered observation results within days of the survey.

A total of 35 species of waterfowl and 11,488 individual birds were seen on our freshwater ponds. This includes 27 species of ducks, 2 geese, 2 loons, and 2 grebes, plus Mute Swan, and American Coot. Some of the more notable finds include Northern Pintail, 3 Northern Shoveler found by Team Orleans, 3 Blue-winged Teal, and 5 Mallard X Black Duck Hybrid. Overall, numbers are up from last year, which may reflect the challenging weather encountered in 2020.

I wish to express my appreciation to the dedicated volunteers, both newcomers and seasoned veterans, for their spirit, enthusiasm, and drive, as well as for generously sharing their collective birding expertise. Please visit our website where you will find a link that will display all waterfowl data in spreadsheet format from 1984 through the present. The survey website is: <https://www.capecodwaterfowl.info/>.

by Mary Jo Foti, Volunteer Coordinator



*Long-tailed Duck
Ron Cadillac*

Crows Pasture Nest Box Report, 2021

Cape Cod Bird Club members have been working with the Dennis Natural Resources Department since Spring 2004 to monitor bluebird nest boxes in Crows Pasture in East Dennis. With 14 boxes to track, surprises happen each time we open a box and record the activities of the adults and chicks. During last summer, seven Eastern Bluebirds were fledged from two nest attempts; 37 Tree Swallows from 14 nests; and about 25 House Wrens from six nests.



House Wren stuff a box so full of sticks that it is hard to find the nest cup and eggs. Can't imagine how many trips it takes the adult pair to accomplish this feat! House Wrens have become the "new predator" on other birds trying to use the boxes. So box swapping goes on all summer. All the information gathered is shared with the Cornell NestWatch program.

In addition, the monitors stop by to view the Osprey nest in Quivet Creek. This summer is the first time in several years the Ospreys raised three young. Predation seems to have been the problem recently. A nearby neighbor has finally added enough shielding to stop raccoons or other predators from climbing the pole to the nest. Amazing persistence the adult Ospreys have shown!

Thanks to Steve Petruska, and Joyce and Jonathan White for monitoring last summer. If you enjoy walking and watching birds, please join the team. Or join us to help with box maintenance. Training provided. Contact: Carolyn Kennedy, 508-255-7564, clkenn@verizon.net.

Bird Survey Help Needed

The Harwich Conservation Trust is interested in knowing the birds that occur in a large 85-acre woodland tract in East Harwich, as well as the birds of Hawksnest State Park. Anyone interested in helping to develop an inventory of these birds for the Trust should contact Herb Raffaele at birds.18@hotmail.com or call him at 774-237-9954.

Cape Cod Bird Club Spring Walks 2022



- Remember to visit the [website](#) for updates, and **weather-related cancellations**
- Please let the trip leader know you wish to join their walk by **sending an email**
- Scroll down for revised **Covid-related guidelines**

April 2022

High Head/Pilgrim Heights – N. Truro

Sunday, April 10, 8:00am MJ Foti (maryjo1226@yahoo.com)

Meet at the High Head Bike Trail parking lot. Take High Head Rd., bear left at the steep hill to stay on the 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 as we walk the well-paved, easy to navigate trail.

Robert F. Smith Cold Brook Preserve (formerly Bank Street Bogs) – Harwich

Wednesday, April 13, 8:00am Al Curtis (alcurtis48@gmail.com)

From Rt. 39 in Harwich, take Bank Street to #203 - the Harbormaster's Workshop.

Over 60 acres of wetland and surrounding upland provides ideal habitat for a variety of passerine, hawks, waterfowl and other species, and includes a bluebird trail with 44 nest boxes maintained by CCBC and the Harwich Conservation Trust.

Fort Hill – Eastham

Friday, April 22, 8:00am MJ Foti (maryjo1226@yahoo.com)

Enjoy Earth Day by joining us for a walk along the loop trail at Fort Hill in Eastham. We'll check out the lower parking lot for passerines, scan the open field for raptors, and check out the marsh for incoming shorebirds and hopefully a bittern and/or rail. Meet in the lower parking lot on Fort Hill Road. You might want to wear waterproof boots.

Spring Walks (continued)

Crowes Pasture – Dennis

Thursday, April 28, 8:00am Jeff Bryant (five_loons@yahoo.com)

Turn onto School Street and make your first right onto South Street. Meet in the dirt parking lot on the right shortly past the cemetery. We will walk the wooded trail to the meadow where we'll visit the blue-bird nest box trail maintained by CCBC. From there, we'll head back to the parking lot along the road. This area offers a diversity of habitats including oak and pine woodlands, fields, dunes, beach, freshwater ponds, salt marsh, and tidal creek.

Clapp's Pond – Provincetown

Saturday April 30, 8:00am Ross Sormani (rsormani@yahoo.com)
Jeff Bryant (five_loons@yahoo.com)

Drive 1.2 miles past the traffic light at Race Point Rd. on Route 6. Parking is permitted along the side of the road as per Provincetown Parking Commission. We'll follow a wide loop-trail running along a ridge offering many overlooks of the pond, the surrounding bogs, and woodlands. This is a three-mile hike with some sizable hills, which we expect will take a full 2-1/2 hours to cover. We hope to be rewarded with some early-migrating thrushes, vireos and perhaps even one of the more southern warblers.



Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Common Tern, Song Sparrow, Baltimore Oriole. David Clapp

May 2022

Beech Forest Walks for May 2022 – Provincetown

CCBC is offering bird walks for May migration. Meet at the **Beech Forest** parking lot at **8 AM**. From Route 6, turn north onto Race Point Road. The parking lot is about 0.5 mile down the road on the left. We will bird the parking lot, then stroll along the sandy loop trail around Blackwater Pond for migrating warblers and other passerines.

- ◆ **Sunday, May 1** Ed Banks (68edbanks@gmail.com)
- ◆ **Wednesday, May 4** Al Curtis (alcurtis48@gmail.com)
- ◆ **Wednesday, May 11** Jeff Bryant (five_loons@yahoo.com)
- ◆ **Saturday, May 14** Peter Crosson (capecodbirder@gmail.com)
- ◆ **Sunday, May 15** MJ Foti (maryjo1226@yahoo.com), Peter Bono (pbono@prba.com)
- ◆ **Wednesday, May 18** Mike Tucker (bnatural2@gmail.com)
- ◆ **Saturday, May 21** Ross Sormani (rsormani@yahoo.com)
- ◆ **Sunday, May 22** David Clapp (ontheroadwithdec@gmail.com)
- ◆ **Wednesday, May 25** Keelin Miller (capekeelin@hotmail.com)

(See next page for **additional walks in May.**)

Spring Walks (continued)***Peterson Farm – Falmouth*****Thursday, May 12, 8:00am** Mike Tucker (bnatural2@gmail.com)

Worm-eating Warbler
Stephen Broker

We will meet at Peterson Farm, where we will walk around the thickets looking for flycatchers, vireos, warblers and possibly a bobolink. From the intersection of Palmer Ave and Jones Road (near Falmouth Hospital), continue south on Palmer Ave, which turns into Locust Street. Follow Locust Street, which turns into Woods Hole Road. Follow Woods Hole Road for about 0.5 mile and turn right onto McCallum Drive; then take an immediate right and follow the Town of Falmouth Conservation signs to the parking area.

Bridge Creek Conservation – Sandwich**Thursday, May 26, 8:00am** MJ Foti (maryjo1226@yahoo.com)

Take Route 6 exit 65 to MA-149, and keep right at the fork. Take a right onto Church Street shortly after the exit. We'll be parking at the Jenkins Wildlife Sanctuary entrance on Church Street. Small boardwalks spring up to help navigate these boggy, wooded trails. Listen for warblers, vireos, and other passerines. Past sightings include Hooded Warbler, and Red and White-eyed Vireos.

June 2022***Bell's Neck Conservation Area – Harwich*****Wednesday, June 1, 8:00am** Jeff Bryant (five_loons@yahoo.com)

Meet at Bell's Neck Road at the landing of the West Reservoir. We will explore some hidden mixed woodland and old cranberry bogs for passerines, scope the low tide on the East Reservoir for peep species and waterfowl, and the West Reservoir for Black-crowned Night Herons, raptors, gulls, and terns. Waterproof boots recommended.

Hatches Harbor Fire Rd. to Race Point Light – Provincetown**Saturday, June 4, 8:00am** 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. Low tide is 9:43 AM. There could be wet conditions on the way out to the lighthouse, so you might want to have a pair of boots on hand.



Yellow-crowned Night Heron
Stephen Broker

"Preparation"

*The little bird sits in the nest and sings
A shy, soft song to the morning light;
And it flutters a little and prunes its wings.
The song is halting and poor and brief,
And the fluttering wings scarce stir a leaf;
But the note is a prelude to sweeter things,
And the busy bill and the flutter slight
Are proving the wings for a bolder flight!*

—Paul Laurence Dunbar

Spring Walks (continued)

Forest Beach Conservation, South Chatham

Tuesday, June 14, 8:00am MJ Foti (maryjo1226@yahoo.com)

Take Route 6 to exit 85 and head South towards 28. Make a right on 28 and a left turn about .5 miles at Forest Beach Rd. This will take you directly to the beach – parking is free of charge! We'll walk the marsh trail to where it meets Mill Creek, and return via the beach, then head towards the overlook where we'll likely find herons, egrets, shorebirds, passerines, gulls, Osprey, and possibly Northern Harrier. This is another area with mixed habitat, a nice variety of bird species, and the occasional rarity. Waterproof footwear recommended.



Osprey, Ronald Cadillac

Goodwill Park – Falmouth

Saturday, June 25, 8:00am Peter Fang (fangmail@comcast.net)

Meet at the parking lot for Goodwill Park (entrance off Gifford Street approximately 0.6 miles north of Jones/Gifford intersection). A variety of warbler species, Brown Thrasher, and many nesting songbirds are among the species you can expect in this beautiful woodland habitat. Those who want to make a day of it can continue on to Crane Wildlife Management Area in East Falmouth to look for raptors and grass-land specialties.

from "Sympathy"

*I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;
When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,
And the river flows like a stream of glass;
When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,
And the faint perfume from its chalice steals—
I know what the caged bird feels!*

—Paul Laurence Dunbar



Canada Warbler, Stephen Broker

CCBC Revised COVID Guidelines: April - June 2022

As we move into Spring, 2022, there are encouraging signs of reduced transmission rates and COVID related-hospitalizations. Nonetheless, we continue to remain vigilant out of consideration for the safety and well-being of all walk participants.

- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Individuals should feel comfortable wearing a mask at any point during a trip regardless of vaccination status.
- ◆ It is up to each 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 their personal choice.
- ◆ We will continue to monitor local and federal COVID guidelines. Please visit [Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) to access the most up-to-date information.

Book Reviews

Hurricane Lizards and Plastic Squid: *The Fraught and Fascinating Biology of Climate Change*

Where do we look for hope in the face of unstoppable climate change? Government policies, green industry, meatless Mondays and electric cars—any and all of these seem far too little and much too late in response to human-induced rising temperatures. Those of us who were paying attention have been warning and waiting for the arrival of catastrophe, and, sure enough, it's trickling in—in the form of deadly heat waves, stupendous hurricanes, drought and fire and flood.

It's unlikely that human ingenuity can stop the warming of the planet, or even mitigate the severity of the symptoms of change. What's left for us is to try adapting to new environmental extremes by moving back from the water's edge, protecting our frail skins and lungs from broiling sun and hot nights, by building different kinds of shelter, and eating unfamiliar foods.

That's already happening in the larger community of creatures that live on Earth, as Tor Hanson shows us in **Hurricane Lizards and Plastic Squid: The Fraught and Fascinating Biology of Climate Change**. He reports that more than thirty thousand climate-driven range shifts have already been documented, including everything from dragonflies to foxes, whales, and plankton. Scientists estimate that between 25 and 85 percent of all species are now in the process of relocating.

Climate change deserves our curiosity as well as our concern, Hanson tells us, and with the curiosity of the scientist he takes us with him as he talks to researchers who are discovering the astonishing ways animals and plants are responding to their evolving environments. The eponymous lizards have developed larger toe pads, the better to cling to blades of grass in the face of more violent hurricanes. In North America, dozens of species of tree have shifted their range since 1980; and, rather than shift north, they've moved west, into areas where rainfall has increased. Dovekies in Russia now fly for four minutes to a floating smorgasbord of plankton killed by glacial meltwater, rather than to the food source an hour out to sea. Grizzly bears have abandoned their picturesque hunting of spawning salmon to devour inland elderberries whose

ripening now coincides with the migrating fish. Among failed and empty coral reefs, aggression in butterfly fish has dropped, saving energy once used in fighting to forage farther for food.

Hurricane Lizards and Plastic Squid is a pleasure to read. Thor Hanson imparts important information in a straightforward, convivial style that doesn't talk down to an audience of non-scientists, and his reports are laced with humor, a quality that's not easy to find in discussions of climate change.

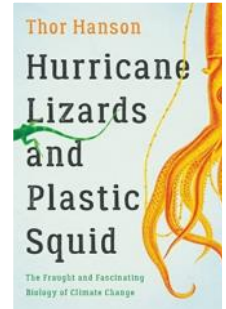
The scientists whose work he investigates and the stories he tells about their discoveries are inspiring not because they're winning a war against climate change but because they're exploring the way the world works. It's cliché to say we should take lessons from Nature; but when we see ourselves as part of that Nature, we realize that we too are taking steps to deal with the changing environment.

We have developed toilets that flush more efficiently, light bulbs that use less energy, and cars that don't run on fossil fuel. We can move our houses back from the eroding shore, or, in the case of some island nations, move our entire population to new ground. We begin to heat our houses differently, we start eating differently, we change our ideas about travel and voting and shopping and business.

Not all species of flora and fauna survive their transitions; not all human beings will be able to make the necessary changes in the time we have. But, Hanson asks, if butterflies can evolve larger wing muscles in response to this crisis, then shouldn't we at least be able to change where we set the thermostat? Understanding the challenges we face "may not make us worry less about the crisis, but it does help us to worry smart."

Hope is all around us, in the myriad shapes and behaviors of the non-human denizens of the planet. Hope is the thing with feathers, and scales, and fur.

Alison Rilling



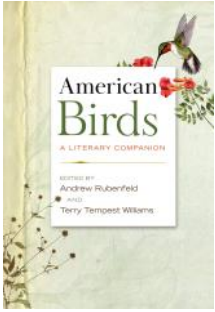
A Glance at Anthologies of Bird Poetry

"Poets were the first ornithologists." —Frank M. Chapman, ornithologist

Birds invite poets to write; bird poetry invites birdwatchers to read. Poems about birds are found in many places: poetry journals, the "collected works" of individual poets, odd corners of birdwatching magazines and bird club newsletters—as with birds, poems are where you find them. And as bird-finding guides help locate birds, anthologies present collections of bird and nature poems.

Bird Poetry (continued)

The recent publication of *American Birds: A Literary Companion* (Andrew Rubenfeld and Terry Tempest Williams, editors, 2020) has me thinking about the many anthologies of English language bird and nature poems on my shelves. Here I offer thoughts on a handful of these.



The Rubenfeld and Williams volume on U.S. birds includes poems and prose. There are many more poems than prose pieces, with the poems heavily biased toward recent decades and weak in the 19th century. One of the strongest features is the evocative, poetic foreword by Williams. The introduction by Rubenfeld, though, is the weakest writing in the book, with a sometimes misleading overview of human-bird interactions in the U.S. The selection of recent bird poems is quite nice but necessarily falls short of Rubenfeld's claim that the book contains "a comprehensive who's who of modern American poetry" as shown in comparison with other anthologies or with lists such as Pulitzer Prize or National Book Award winners.

Billy Collins's *Bright Wings: An Illustrated Anthology of Poems of Birds* (2009) lives up to its "bright" title as perhaps the most colorful of anthologies with David Sibley's lovely paintings resonating with the poems. Collins's delightful, often funny introduction explains his decision to omit many classic bird poems and to focus on some lesser-known and contemporary ones "to give the reader a better chance of being taken by surprise."

Comparison of those two recent anthologies might suggest which poets and poems will still be anthologized a century from now, just as it is interesting to see changing editorial tastes over the past century. While Emily Dickinson's bird poems gained ground with anthologists, many poets who were present, even prominent, in collections from the early 1900s largely disappeared over subsequent decades. Sarah Williams's 1900 *Through the Year with Birds and Poets* provides a good collection of 19th century U.S. and Canadian bird poems, including many by poets who vanish from later anthologies. Some of these, e.g., Alexander Wilson, Celia Thaxter, Paul Laurence Dunbar, are, to my taste, regrettable losses.

"In the Loft"

*In the hay-loft, dark and sweet,
With the breath of new-mown hay;
There the lights and shadows fall
Weird upon the seamed, scarred wall,
And the dusky swallows soar
High above the broken floor,
Lightly poise on tiny feet,
Quiver, dip, and dart away.*
—Dora Read Goodale

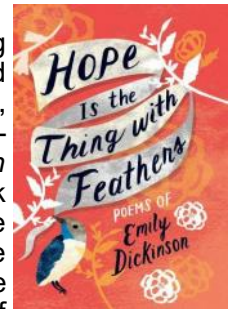
The question of poets' inclusion is not just a matter of changing taste. Issues of gender, race, class, and ethnicity intrude. Rubenfeld and Williams, for example, include many contemporary women poets, but only Emily Dickinson for the 19th century. Camille Dungy, introducing her anthology *Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry*, criticizes other anthologists for largely omitting Black poetry. Her scholarly discussion of African American perspectives on nature as expressed in the 180 poems she presents raises the question of what otherwise missing views might be emphasized in collections of Italian-American, Jewish-American, Chinese-American, etc., nature poems. Differences in anthologies would depend both on average differences in experience of various groups and the approaches of editors. In any group of American poets one might well find some bird poems in the tradition of Bryant and Longfellow along with poems that express different experiences of birds and of language. Dungy includes examples of both. Most of the anthologies discussed here are entirely or largely devoted to North American poetry. Peggy Munsterberg's *Penguin Book of Bird Poetry* (1984), though, is restricted to British poets. Munsterberg's 75 page introduction gives an overview of the history of British bird poetry. Her selection of 266 pieces from old English through the early 1900s includes both well-known skylark and nightingale poems by famous poets and many anonymous items from the folk repertoire. I consider this volume a cornerstone of my collection of bird poem anthologies.

No collection can do justice to the depth and breadth of bird poetry. Even for single authors, the choice of bird poems by John Clare, Emily Dickinson, or, where translations are included, Pablo Neruda, for example, poses problems (there are single-author volumes of bird poems by each of these). John Burroughs introducing his 1904 anthology *Songs of Nature* explicitly acknowledges the subjectivity of choice, "In such matters it all comes back after all to one's likes or dislikes." One approach to editorial idiosyncrasy is to collect anthologies; the shelf becomes an anthology of anthologies.

When you find those rare verses—the ones that sing to you, that tell you something you didn't know before about language, birds, or people, that ask you to return to reread—you can build your own anthology. There is a tradition of keeping "commonplace books," personal collections of quotes that move an individual. Copying out a poem, thinking about each line and word as one writes or types, makes it part one's own as the copyist shares language and birds with poets and birdwatchers Celia Thaxter, Wallace Stevens, Mary Oliver, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Alexander Wilson, Elizabeth Bishop, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, or Marianne Moore.

from "The Fish-Hawk, or Osprey"

*True to the season, o'er our sea-beat shore,
The sailing Osprey high is seen to soar
With broad, unmoving wings; and circling slow,
Marks each loose straggler in the deep below;
Sweeps down like lightning! plunges with a roar!
And bears his struggling victim to the shore.*
—Alexander Wilson



From "The Sandpiper"

*Across the narrow beach we flit,
One little sandpiper and I,
And fast I gather, bit by bit,
The scattered driftwood bleached and dry.
The wild waves reach their hands for it,
The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,
As up and down the beach we flit,—
One little sandpiper and I.*
—Celia Thaxter

Membership Form for the Cape Cod Bird Club 2022-2023 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, 2022**, and your membership will expire on Aug. 31, 2023. **New members may join at any time.**

RENEWING MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERSHIP

Youth*(18 or under) FREE**

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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): _____

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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.

***** Signature of adult family member of youth member** _____



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!*

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