



The Kingfisher

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President's Message

"Coming down out of the freezing sky
with its depths of light,
like an angel, or a Buddha with wings,
it was beautiful ..."

So starts *White Owl Flies Into and Out of the Field*, by Mary Oliver, who wrote this poem in 2010 when she lived in Provincetown. I was directed to the poem by a bystander with whom I shared my scope, as my wife and I looked at one of the Snowy Owls wintering on the dunes at West Dennis Beach (the same owl shown in the photo below). It's worth reading the rest of the poem. Please take time this winter season to get out into nature, take one of the CCBC bird walks (see pages 2-3), and relieve some stress. I'm sure all of us are happy to see 2021 in the rear-view mirror.

On page 6, Phoebe Gibson provides an eloquent statement as to why our Young Birder Scholarship program is so important. In the Spring issue, we will hear from Emily Swift, another of our scholarship winners.

Your Conservation & Education Committee has been busy this fall. After opening up the competition by publicizing on Terra Viva, we received 33 proposals for funding. Most were deserving, and it was a difficult task to select just six that we could afford to fund at \$1000 each (Benin, Cayman Islands, Costa Rica, Cuba, Venezuela, and the Republic of Georgia). Please go to the CCBC website, where all the funded proposals are available for perusing.

Thank you to all members who made contributions beyond the membership fee. Without your support, we could not be making a difference in the lives of young people and in these places where birds are under such serious and often existential stress.



With the current surge in Covid infections due to the Omicron variant, it is difficult to project when we might resume in-person meetings with speakers. It won't be before April, so keep checking the CCBC website for our Zoom meeting programs. Mark Faherty is doing a great job keeping us educated and entertained.

Happy New Year and good birding!

Peter Bono, President

Snowy Owl, West Dennis Beach,
Nancy Orbe

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 March 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; we hope that will be in the spring. 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 and the link will be published on the CCBC website. Non-members are welcome to attend.** Check capecodbirdclub.org for detailed information.

Club Meetings:

January 10 at 7 pm Speaker, John Nelson

This slide show blends science, literature, and personal observation to explore the distinctive lives of seven bird species—in Massachusetts and beyond—and the stories they tell us about sex, family life, song, and adaptability in birds and humans.

John Nelson is author of *Flight Calls: Exploring Massachusetts through Birds* and *Cultivating Judgment: A Sourcebook for Teaching Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum*. His essay "Funny Bird Sex" in the *Antioch Review* was awarded a 2018 Pushcart Prize. A professor emeritus at North Shore Community College, he was the 2021 Visiting Writer at the college. John chairs the Association of Massachusetts Bird Clubs.

Meetings to follow: February 14 and March 14, 7 pm via Zoom.

Speakers to be announced.

Check the CCBC Website for details on each meeting.

Club Bird Walks to Brighten your Winter Days! — Mary Jo Foti

Please join us on any of our upcoming field trips. All are welcome. Carpooling is generally encouraged, but we've modified this standard practice to address pandemic related concerns. Please see our revised Covid guidelines on page 5.

Please email the field trip leader if you wish to join one of our walks

Winter Walks: January 1st – March 31st 2022

New Year's Day with Ed Banks – Mid-Cape

Ed Banks (68edbanks@gmail.com; 508-769-6762), *Saturday, January 1, 2022, Noon – 4PM.*

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!

Chatham - Fish Pier and other favorite spots

MJ Foti (maryjo1226@yahoo.com), *Tuesday, January 18th, 8 AM.*

Meet at the Chatham Fish Pier to see the waterfowl and gull species as well as seals enjoy the catch of the day. From there, we'll head to Cow Yard Lane where tightknit groups of wintering waterfowl always hold out the possibility of a surprise visitor. Then we'll make a stop at Chatham Light before continuing towards the Monomoy Visitors Center. We'll head to the trail for Morris Island via the easement off Tisquantum Road. This is the only remaining access point.

Corporation Beach, Dennis and Brewster Ponds

Jeff Bryant (five_loons@yahoo.com), *Sunday, January 30th, 8 AM.*

Meet at Corporation Beach off Rt 6A in South Dennis, known for its seabird and gull activity as well as its impressive variety of sea ducks. We'll then head to Scargo Lake, Slough Pond, and Walkers Pond for a variety of wintering waterfowl species. Bring along a scope if you have one.

Scusset Beach State Reservation, Sandwich

Keelin Miller (capekeelin@hotmail.com), *Friday, February 11th, 8 AM.*

Take Scusset Beach Road to the main entrance. Parking is 0.25 miles past the entrance at the fishing pier. We'll walk the bike path that parallels the canal to view impressive numbers of wintering waterfowl, Great Cormorant, and possible alcid species. The campground area and adjacent field by the playground hosts a variety of wintering passerines. This trip may include lesser-known trails opposite the fish pier parking lot.

Winter Walks Continued

Herring River, Wellfleet

Ross Sormani (rsormani@yahoo.com), *Sunday, February 20th, 8 AM.*

We'll meet at the parking area at the far side of the dike on Chequessett Neck Road in Wellfleet. The tide will be low so there is ample parking on both sides of the street. We'll scan for waterfowl from the dike. Then we will hike the trail on the west side of Herring River to High Toss Road before crossing back again. This is a great area for rail and heron activity. The abutting woodland is winter habitat for woodpecker and a variety of sparrow species. This is also a strong area for sighting of birds of prey. Waterproof footwear is recommended.

Gray's Beach and Callery Darling Trail, Yarmouth Port

MJ Foti (maryjo1226@yahoo.com), *Saturday, February 26th, 8 AM.*

This beach is noted for its extensive boardwalk across the channel from Sandy Neck Lighthouse, just a stone's throw from Dennis Chapin Beach. In fall and winter, it affords an excellent vantage point from which to see geese, sea ducks, and gulls. The thickets within the Callery Darling Trail leading to Alms House Road provide shelter for a variety of over-wintering passerines.

Eastham Encounter, Eastham

Peggy Sagan (psagan88@gmail.com), *Saturday, March 12th, 8 AM.*

Meet at Great Pond beach parking area by turning right off Samoset Road onto Great Pond Road to begin the day viewing a nice variety of dabbling and diving ducks. We'll also stop on the opposite side for views from Wiley Park. Our second stop will be First Encounter Beach where we'll head to the first parking lot and then to the west end with nice looks at the marsh and Herring River. Our final stop will be Herring Pond, a productive spot for waterfowl including Ruddy Duck and Pied-billed Grebe, just a short drive from the beach.

Scusset Beach State Reservation, Sandwich

Peter Fang (fangmail@comcast.net), *Saturday, March 26th, 8 AM.*

Take Scusset Beach Road to the main entrance. Parking is 0.25 miles past entrance at the fishing pier. We'll walk the bike path that parallels the canal to view impressive numbers of wintering waterfowl, Great Cormorant, and possible alcid species. The campground area and adjacent field by the playground hosts a variety of wintering passerines including Horned Lark, an occasional Snow Bunting, and possibly Lapland Longspur.

Student Bird Club—Barnstable Intermediate School

The CCBC Student Bird Club Chapter has begun again for the 2021-2022 academic year at Barnstable Intermediate School. Currently there are about eight students signed up, but students will be joining throughout the academic year. Some of the Club participants are experienced birders from last year's group, but we have quite a few new birders this year, which is really exciting. Showing students how to use binoculars and then watching them experience the joy of seeing a bird up close is priceless! One new student was able to see a Northern Flicker for her first time on the top of a tall evergreen at a recent bird walk, and she was absolutely delighted! Bird numbers have been a little low this fall due to the time of day we do our bird walks (3:15-3:45pm), but we can rely on seeing or hearing our common feeder, brush, and pond area birds including Blue Jays, Tufted Titmice, Mourning Doves, chickadees, cardinals, Song Sparrows, Carolina Wrens, starlings, Northern Flickers, Downy Woodpeckers, and crows. We have deployed two window-tray feeders that have delighted the students: the Blue Jays come right up to them during class. A special shout-out to Wild Birds Unlimited for the donation last year of our awesome pole feeder station. The birds love it! It has been a great start to the year!

— *Maria Curley, CCBC Treasurer and Student Bird Club Advisor*



Welcome New Members

Michael Babcock - Cotuit
 Robert Barry - Falmouth
 David Bocian - Provincetown
 Leslie & Dwayne Breger - Eastham
 Susan Chapman - Brewster
 Robbin Dengler - Marston Mills
 Jessica Dudra & Katherine O'Malley - Newton, MA
 Susan Ellis - Orleans
 Paul Greenspan - Wellfleet

Eileen & Don Halliday - Harwich Port
 Bernice & Thomas Irwin - Falmouth
 Susan Kirk - Keswick, VA
 Diane Kovanda - Centerville
 Patricia Langley - Eastham
 Phyllis Lothrop - Yarmouthport
 Nancy Orbe - Brewster
 Lydia & Joseph Sheehan - Harwich Port

A Year in Birds by Nancy Orbe

The Kingfisher is pleased to feature “A Year in Birds” by Nancy Orbe, a CCBC member and Brewster wildlife photographer. When asked her secret to getting a good photograph, she revealed, “Patience.” Nancy checks out eBird reports and then heads out with her camera and a target species in mind. Sometimes she spends several hours, just waiting for the bird to appear – and then she waits some more. With luck, the bird will move onto an open branch so she can get a clear view and uncluttered background. Setting the aperture wide open serves to blur the background, bringing the bird into clear focus. She adds, “For me, the eye is key. I always try to catch light in the eye. It makes the bird ‘come alive.’”

Nancy captured these stunning photos throughout 2021 with her Nikon D500 equipped with two favored lenses: a Nikon 500 mm 5.6 lens and a Sigma 150-600 mm (Contemporary version) 6.3 lens. She prefers heading out in the morning or late afternoon, when the lighting is best.



American Wigeons, Marstons Mills



Northern Pintail, Marstons Mills



Willet chick, West Dennis Beach

If you are reading this in the print version, enjoy pictures in full color by checking out Nancy Orbe's website at nancyaorbe.com.

A Year in Birds, continued



Ash-throated Flycatcher, Sagamore



Yellow-rumped Warbler, Beech Forest, Provincetown



Black-throated Green Warbler, Beech Forest, Provincetown



Black-throated Blue Warbler, Beech Forest, Provincetown

Cape Cod Bird Club COVID Guidelines

As we move into the new year, we continue to monitor ever-evolving changes in our pandemic response. Currently, the Omicron variant is spreading both abroad and in the US, while health researchers evaluate the effectiveness of current vaccines. Please follow the guidance below to reduce risk to our members and their loved ones and monitor 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 those in the birding community who are helping us move forward safely and responsibly!

Opening My Eyes and Ears to Birds, by Phoebe Gibson

The day after I graduated from high school, I found myself on a boat cruising the picturesque coast of Maine. My week-long experience of a lifetime had just begun. Without the Cape Cod Bird Club, this opportunity would not have been possible for me. I am truly grateful to be a recipient of the CCBC Young Birder Scholarship for the Field Ornithology program at Hog Island.

My whole life I have felt a deep connection to nature and a feeling of responsibility to protect it. Although my greatest passion lies with animals, I am just as passionate about the environment and all of its different aspects. Growing up, I was taught the importance of appreciating nature and never taking it for granted. My family's long walks on the beach or in the woods are a staple of my childhood (and life now), and a practice that I know has shaped me into the person I am today.

When I first heard about the Audubon summer camps, I thought, "*This is it! This is what you've been waiting for!*" I was a junior at Barnstable High School and eagerly searching for opportunities to engage with animals and wildlife in general. I applied with the hope that I would receive a scholarship because I knew I was unlikely to go otherwise. Indeed, I was elated when I found out that I had been chosen as one of the CCBC scholarship recipients! Unfortunately, COVID hit and the 2020 camp was cancelled. Even though my scholarship carried over to June 2021, I was worried that it would be too late—I wouldn't appreciate the experience as much after the importance of building an impressive resume for colleges was no longer a pressing need. I couldn't have been more wrong.



Atlantic Puffins off Eastern Egg Rock

Not only did I learn multitudes about birds and the incredible wildlife of Maine, I also learned so much about *myself* and who I am meant to be. I went into this camp unsure of what to expect and I thought that when I returned, I would be relatively unchanged. Instead, that week was one of the greatest weeks of my life.

I awoke each day to the sounds of Northern Parulas, Black-throated Green Warblers, and Mourning Doves, among many others. We were fed nutritious and delicious meals by an exceptional staff of chefs (and FOHI volunteers), and I was incredibly happy with fresh, local ingredients and wonderful options for a vegetarian like me! The daylight hours were filled with all sorts of activities, and the staff/instructors expertly adapted the schedule when the classic New England weather changed at the drop of a hat. From intertidal zone exploration, bird hikes all over the island, visiting Mary Loomis Todd's cabin, boat rides to Easter Egg Rock and Burnt Island, and lessons in drawing/painting birds, every day had something new to offer. The instructors had such a depth of knowledge and were always willing and happy to answer whatever questions I had. Even though there were decades between some of the other campers and me, we were *all* able to bond over our basic love of nature. The instructors became friends, and the campers became family. Each night, I would go to bed exhausted but utterly, truly happy.

Though short, my time at Hog Island made me aware and a part of the world of birding. I went into this camp knowing I wanted to be a zoologist and help protect endangered species; now I am acutely aware of the plight of birds and intend to do my part to stop their mass extinction. Without this amazing experience I would have remained ignorant of birds and all that they have to offer; now, I am eager to learn more.

Thank you, Cape Cod Bird Club and Hog Island!

Photos by Phoebe Gibson

An essay by Emily Swift, also winner of a 2020 CCBC Young Birders Scholarship, will appear in the Spring issue of *The Kingfisher*.



Admiring the bog during our mainland walk

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**

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.

****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!*

- 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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