



WINGBEATS

Newsletter of the Audubon Society of the Capital Region of New York State

-Winter 2021 -

Audubon Society of the Capital Region

Thanks all who participated in this year's Bird Seed Sale!

Despite challenges of the ongoing pandemic we were able to pull off our annual Bird Seed Sale.

We would like to offer a big thank you to all of the volunteers who helped coordinate and deliver bird seed orders and a bigger thank you to all those members, volunteers and readers who made a purchase. This annual drive is an important fundraiser for our local chapter, it not only helps our winter, winged friends in filling their bellies but also supports our chapter activities.

Thank you! We hope to see everyone at next year's sale too!

Officers:

President: Teresa Murphy

Vice President: Vacant

Treasurer: René Facchetti, Krista Galliher

Correspondence Officer: Fred Bockis

Recording Officer: Laetitia Duret

Board of Directors:

Rebecca Allmond

Jennifer Ford

Eric Latini

In This Issue...

Board News.....	1
Conservation Corner.....	2
Book Review.....	3
Bird of the Quarter.....	4
Get Involved.....	5-6
Activities.....	7
Chapter Leadership Information.....	8

The Great American Outdoors Act

With everything going on throughout the fall and summer, with all of the stresses of 2020, the election, and other news we missed an important, bird related announcement that impacts the well-being of U.S. Natural Parks, wildlife (yes, that means birds) and us!

In July of this year Congress passed **The Great American Outdoors Act**. This act guarantees permanent funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund for an annual amount of \$900 million. On top of that, the bill includes a new fund (for at least the next five years) which will include \$1.9 billion annually to be used by agencies such as the National Park Service, Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to restart previously delayed maintenance and restoration projects.

In a nutshell, what's this all mean? It means that some much needed resources are now available for the maintenance, restoration and protection of our habitats here in the U.S. Positively impacting us, our bird populations and many other habitats.

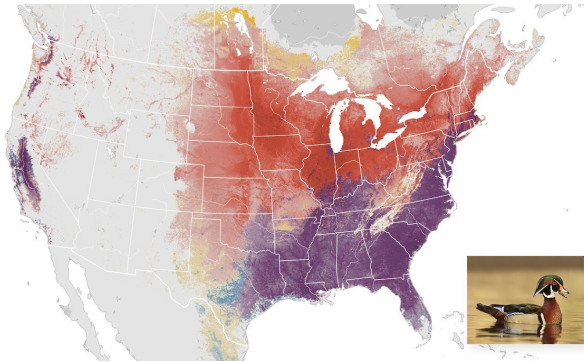
What to read more? Click the links below:

[From New York Audubon](#)

[From the National Park Service](#)

Conservation Corner

By N. Fox



Sourced from: eBird.org

It's been a while since we've discussed Atlasing in our newsletter but with a quickly approaching winter season and new year, now seems like a good time.

I think of Atlasing as next level bird watching. It involves not just spotting and identifying a bird but also taking the time to observe that bird's habits and behaviors, focusing particularly on breeding habits. It's about slowing down and really paying attention. The NY BBA (New York Breeding Bird Atlas) uses eBird (an app supported by Cornell and other organizations—to include NASA) to track bird breeding patterns.

This is a Citizen Science program available to anyone with a smartphone. It is great for those slow, snowy winter days that are coming and adheres to social distancing recommendations. Plus, it is a great community activity (get your friends and family involved and share your observations—consider it a version of real-life Pokémon). The initiative began in 2020 and runs through 2024 so there is still plenty of time to participate.

If you want to get learn more, then head to the website listed below where you can sign up, get tips on the “how” of atlasing and start logging your own data. The website also includes guidance on downloading and using eBird.

[Click here to get started.](#)

Bird Words “Halcyon” By Fred Bockis

HALYCON [HAL-see- en]:
Of or relating to the kingfisher; 2) calm, peaceful; 3) happy, golden; 4) prosperous, affluent

According to Greek mythology, Alkyone, the daughter of the god of the winds, became so distraught when she learned that her husband had been killed in a shipwreck that she threw herself into the sea and was changed into a kingfisher. As a result, the Greeks called such birds *alkyon* or *halcyon*.

The legend also says that these birds built floating nests on the sea, where they so charmed the wind god that he created a period of unusual calm that lasted until the birds' eggs hatched.

This legend prompted people to use *halcyon* both as a noun naming a genus of kingfisher and as an adjective meaning either “of or relating to the kingfisher or its nesting period” or “calm”.

You will see this word used more often as “golden”, such as, the *halcyon* days of our youth were quite productive”.



Book Review: *Flight Paths: A Field Journal of Hope, Heartbreak, and Miracles with New York's Bird People* by Darryl McGrath

If you are looking for a great book to curl up with on a cold winter day, *Flight Paths* by Darryl McGrath may be just what you are looking for.

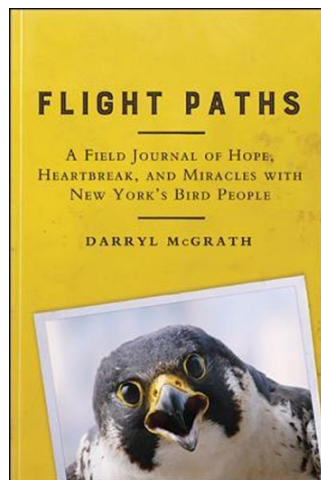
McGrath recounts the early efforts to save Peregrine Falcons and Bald Eagles in. She also explores current efforts to save four species – the Short-Eared Owl, Common Loon, Bicknell's Thrush, and Piping Plover.

This is nature writing at its best. McGrath weaves scientific information, natural history, and interviews with a writing style that grabs and holds your attention throughout. Even though I was learning so much, it read like a story that I did not want to put down until I knew how it ended.

Another thing that made this such a fascinating read for me is that much of it takes place in New York State and the greater northeastern U.S. Reading about the amazing events that took place in areas that I know was fascinating.

I highly recommend *Flight Paths*, and I hope you enjoy it as much as I did!

-Jennifer Ford



A Passing Gift

The passing of a family member, friend or loved one is never, never easy. We would like to express our condolences and thanks to the Esposito family.

Donald Esposito chose to leave a generous donation to our local Audubon chapter upon his passing. We are grateful for his gift and enheartened to know his donation will help us in our mission to connect people to nature and inspire them to protect birds and their habitat.



Bird of the Quarter

The Kingfisher

By Fred Bockis



- ✧ Are a family of small to medium-sized (6.3-6.69 in length and weighing 1.23-1.41 oz.), brightly colored birds which have a worldly distribution and are usually found in tropical regions of Africa, Asia, and Oceania. The family contains 114 species.
- ✧ All have large heads, long, sharp, pointed bills, short legs, and stubby tails. Their wingspan is 9.44-10.24 in and they live 7-21 years. **Their top speed is 24.85 mph.**
- ✧ Most have bright plumage with only small differences between the sexes. They live near rivers and eat fish, some live away from water and eat small invertebrates. A slight majority are found only in forests.
- ✧ They consume a wide range of prey usually caught by swooping down from a perch.
- ✧ They nest in cavities, usually tunnels dug into the natural or artificial banks in the ground. Some kingfishers nest in arboreal termite nests.
- ✧ They are territorial and generally monogamous.
- ✧ Their eggs are white. Clutch size is 2-10 eggs. Both sexes incubate the eggs.
- ✧ Vocally they are well known for a long, trilling call like a repetition of the sound "chee".
- ✧ A few species, principally insular forms, are threatened with extinction.

What did I miss?

Our work continues!

The cool weather and holidays are here! We wish everyone a safe and healthy holiday and look forward to our 2021 year where we hope to resume more regular activity.

- ✧ Discussions on our chapter strategy have continued! Board members and volunteers dedicated to this project have continued virtual meetings to further develop and implement our new strategy.
- ✧ Board meetings continue! We are still offering virtual board meetings on a monthly basis. Please feel free to join in and catch up on our chapter activities.
- ✧ The Bald Eagle Watch is under way. This socially distanced project is perfect for our winter inclined outdoors people.
- ✧ Our bird seed sale still came through!

Read more on the next page! 

Get Involved!

As mentioned in our Summer Newsletter, Audubon has been working on its strategy during this year. After defining our vision, mission statement, niche, we have defined the threats to birds that we would like to focus on as well as the tools we will use to do it.

We have now written an action plan for the 2021-2024 period to define which programs we would like to implement each year regarding strategy, community engagement, funding, Bird-friendly communities, climate change, birding for beginners, conservation, etc. This action plan will be shared and voted on during our December Board meeting on December 14th at 6:30pm (which is open to the public) and will be published on our website.

Our chapter is run only by volunteers. Therefore, the more volunteers we have, the more we will be able to do. You don't have to be a board member to participate you can join us simply as a volunteer to help out with one or more programs.

Send us an email to info@capitalregionaudubon.org to register for one of our board meetings.

For more on how to get involved keep reading!

ASCR Board Meetings

Second Mondays of every month.

Meetings are being held on a monthly basis again! This is an easy and meaningful way to get involved. We welcome all who have interest in our chapter, what we do, how we do it and how you might contribute!

We hope to see you there!

Contact us at: info@capitalregionaudubon.org for more on how to attend a virtual meeting.

Be sure to check our website for more programs and information!
www.capitalregionaudubon.org

NEWSLETTER EDITOR WANTED

Our Newsletter editor is heading west! We want to thank Nichole for the amazing work she has done as our Newsletter Editor over the past years. Beside managing this position, she has conducted birding walks for the community and helped us in other programs. We will greatly miss her and we wish her well in her new endeavors!

We are actively looking for someone to assist in producing our quarterly newsletter. Working alongside board members, you help generate, edit and format content on a quarterly basis. This role is perfect for someone with experience using MS publisher who enjoys writing and being creative! If you've wanted a chance to volunteer but have limited time or may be shy, this role may be the way to go. ***Training will be provided.***

RECORDING OFFICER

We want to thank Laetitia Duret for her excellent work as the board Recording Officer over the past year. Laetitia spent numerous hours documenting our strategic plan, creating and presenting the "Bird Collision Webinar", "Climate Watch Program" and "Birding for Beginner Webinar". We will greatly miss Laetitia and we wish her well on her return to France.

This also means that we are looking for a new Recording Officer. This is a board position and would require a minimum commitment of attending monthly board meetings to record meeting minutes. However, there is plenty of flexibility to contribute to programs and other volunteer efforts as well. ***Training will be provided.***

ANNUAL SEED SALES (FALL 2021)

This event is one of our largest undertakings. Fred has been a staple in coordinating the sale from orders to delivery these last few years, but it takes a team and some serious planning to really run smoothly. If you are interested in helping set up next year's sale, we are looking for an additional 2-4 people to help us out.

More on the next page!



Get Involved!

BIRD WINDOW COLLISION PROGRAM ADVOCATES

Bird-window collisions occur on average one million times a day in the USA and it is one of the top 3 human causes of bird mortality worldwide. Our chapter delivers presentations about this problem to educate people and provide solutions to reduce the threat of their windows. We are looking for advocates ready to deliver a presentation once or twice per year. The presentation is ready to use with slides and notes included. We train you and partner you with someone experienced! We are hoping to reach new audiences but need our volunteers!

If you are not comfortable with public-speaking but feel this project speaks to you, you can help us by making window collision deterrent products available locally (contact us for details).

CLIMATE WATCH PROGRAM SURVEYOR'S

Audubon's Climate Watch is a new community science program that explores how North American birds are responding to climate change. We are looking at participants willing to conduct surveys for Eastern Bluebirds once annually, between January 15 to February 15. Locations include the Albany Pine Bush Preserve, Five rivers, Vischer Ferry, Schodack Island, Troy/Cropseyville and can be completed at your leisure. We are also looking for volunteers to help coordinate the program – including recruiting and training participants, assisting volunteers in planning and conducting Climate Watch surveys, and ensuring that the data collected is submitted to the national Climate Watch team.

BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS (WEBINAR 101 BIRDING)

Our chapter has set-up a webinar to educate our community on the basics of birding (when and where to bird, how to use binoculars, which clues should you collect on the field to identify birds). We are looking for volunteers to help us deliver this presentation to our community. The presentation is ready to use with notes for each slide and we will train and partner you with somebody who has already delivered the program. We aim to offer this program two or three times in 2021 (please know we will do this as a team, you are not required to offer more than one presentation). You can also help us by reaching out to local libraries and preserves to organize the webinar without delivering the presentation yourself.

BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS (WALKS)

Depending on the Covid-19 situation, we will resume our first-time birders walks at the end of 2021. If you would like to assist us in conducting a bird walk that would be great!

CONSERVATION (TANGLE TAINERS)

The ASCR have set up container for fishermen to collect wastes from fishing to decrease instances of birds get trapped by fishing lines. Our volunteers Eric and Fred collect the content of these containers on a regular basis. If you would like to help them for the maintenance or help set-up more containers, we would love to have you!

NEST BOX BUILDING

In 2020, this long-standing program took a back burner. We have drafted an action plan to build nest box for Eastern Blue Bird through workshops with kids and families in 2021 (dependent upon COVID 19 regulations). No woodworking skills needed. This position focuses on coordinating the program. We will train!

BALD EAGLE WATCH PARTICIPANTS

Do you love to watch birds and wildlife? Do you enjoy spending time outdoors? Are you looking for ways to volunteer that allow you to do both of those things? Then Bald Eagle Nest Watch might be for you!

In this fun and flexible program, volunteers monitor a Bald Eagle nest once a week, and submit observations via an online citizen science website (citsci.org). This data is used by the NYS DEC to help monitor Bald Eagle nests, and success rates, in this area. **This project starts in January and runs through June 2021!**

Please contact Jennifer Ford, Bald Eagle Nest Watch Coordinator at jsf@nycap.rr.com for more information.

Message us at

info@capitalregionaudubon.org

if you're interested in learning more!

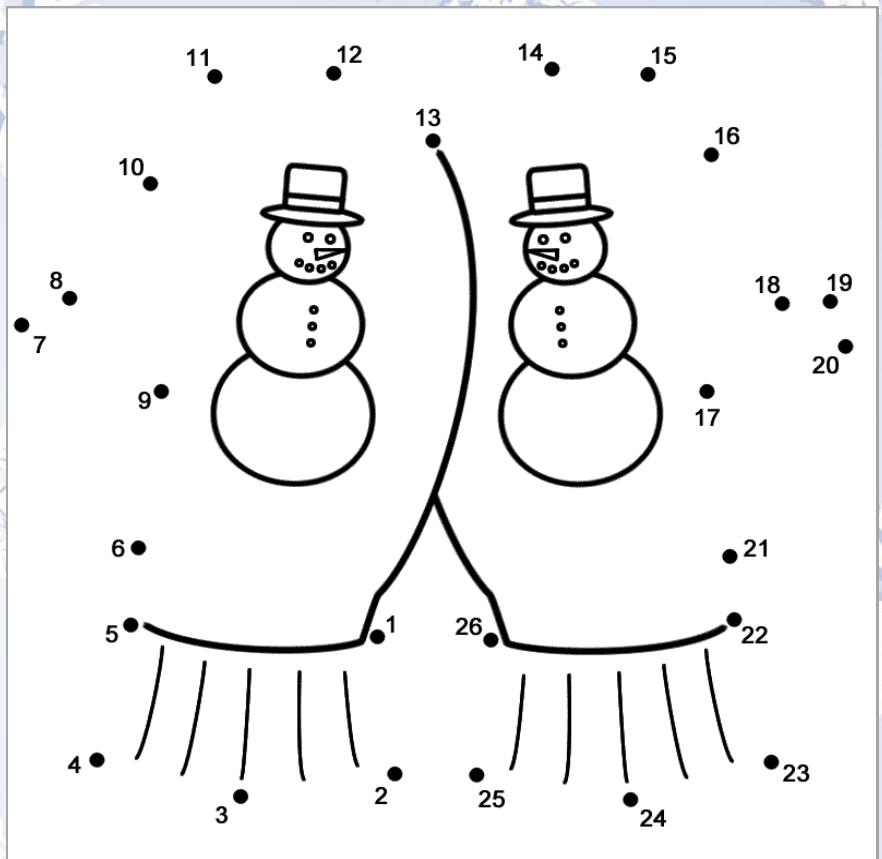


ACTIVITIES



PC: Tom Amico | Macaulay Library Allaboutbirds.org

Did you know cardinals stick around New York all year? They're just easier to spot in the snow with their bright red feathers!



© 2009-2020 www.BigActivities.com

Winter Wonderland

Start!

TheTeachersCorner.net

provided by: www.TheTeachersCorner.net

End!



Connect the dots to complete the Picture!



Can you make it through this maze?



Board members of the Audubon Society of the Capital Region

An All Volunteer Chapter Organization of the National Audubon Society

Officers

President: Teresa Murphy
Vice President: Vacant
Correspondence Officer: Fred Bockis
Treasurer: René Facchetti, Krista Galliher
Recording Officer: Laetitia Duret

Directors

Rebecca Allmond
Jennifer Ford
Eric Latini

WebMaster: René Facchetti
WebAdmin: Rebecca Allmond

Board Meetings held virtually the second Monday of every month. We discuss upcoming events and make decisions that guide this chapter for the year.

Please join us!

Email
President@CapitalRegionAudubon.org
for more information!

Audubon Society
of the Capital Region
P.O. Box 14135
Albany, NY 12212-4135
www.capitalregionaudubon.org

Questions?

Email: info@capitalregionaudubon.org

Looking to have an impact in your community?

Become an Audubon Society of the Capital Region

Chapter Supporter.

As a Chapter Supporter, 100% of your membership dues stay local. This helps us support local conservation efforts, continue to promote birding and bird education, and to support other special initiatives, such as the construction of bird blinds. The Chapter Supporter membership is just \$20.

In return you get:

- An official ASCR Chapter Supporter Membership card
- An ASCR Chapter Supporter window cling to prevent window strikes
- The satisfaction of knowing you are supporting local birds and their habitats

Click [here](#) for more information on how you can become an ASCR Chapter Supporter!!