

The Blue Jay



Bergen County Audubon Society
LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Spring/Summer 2025

Volume LXXXII Issue 2

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH

WHAT MAKES A GREAT BIRDER?

Sadly, the reason most people tell me they don't go out on a group birding field trip is that they don't have enough experience. As strange as it seems some folks feel they need to have some kind of special qualifications and may not be "good enough" for going outside and enjoying nature with a group of people that enjoy the outdoors the same way they do.

Now just for the record, over the years I have had the opportunity to go out in the field with many world class birders, and I must tell you they have made really awful mistakes by misidentifying birds to the point of embarrassment. That is what birding is, humbling to even the most experienced.

I am not one for labels, it just puts one in a box that tends to define who they are - often not very fairly. I also have never been impressed with titles, they always seemed to overshadow who a person really is. When some well-meaning folks say to me I am a "Real birder" I am never sure what to think? I remember many years back when I used to spend many a summer day bass fishing, this gentleman getting into his boat and telling me he was a Professional Bass fisherman, and then promptly asking where the "Hot" fishing spots were on the lake - so every title is relative I guess.

Now like anything else there are good birders and birders that are better than most, and there are experienced birders and beginner birders, birders that compete and others that don't, still others travel around the world to find birds they have never seen and some that may never leave their home town. Others may love watching warblers and some that only hanker for the hawks. Some birders love watching birds in the backyard and others don't even have a backyard. Some birders keep a life list and others no list at all. Some birders own a library full of field guides and some just stick with their 40-year-old Petersons Guide. There are some that drive a Mercedes and others that take a bus. Some birders go birding every day and others only when they can. Some birders are great at birding by ear and others don't hear that well any longer. Some use APPS and others don't even have a computer.

One of my favorite kind of Birders are folks that don't think they are birders at all. They just go out and tell me about all the birds they have seen but for some reason don't think they are birders. *So what then is a Great Birder ?*

This is what I have come to believe a "Great Birder" truly to be. A Great Birder is someone who deeply cares about all of nature especially the birds. Birds are a part of their everyday lives; they see birds when driving to work, walking to the bus stop or on their way to school. A birder understands and endorses the need to protect birds through conservation efforts. For example, they keep a safe distance from nesting birds, never stress them by getting too close with a camera or binoculars and they help others understand the importance of our birds. Sometimes passing on their passion for birding through helping new birders (children and friends) to appreciate and respect all of the natural world especially the birds.

We don't need to worry about labels or titles, it wastes our time, and no need to burden ourselves with who is a great birder and who is not. While we concern ourselves with these trivial designations the barbarians are at the gate: habitat destruction, climate change and special interests are attempting to plow over all the conservation work that has been accomplished over the last forty years. We need all birders of all kinds to stand up and protect and defend endangered species, clean air and water, and save the critical wildlife habitat that we have left and that we need everyone to protect. We also need everyone to join together to teach others to love, respect and protect nature the way we all do or one day there may be no place or birds left for us to enjoy - no matter what kind of birders we might consider ourselves to be.

See you in the Meadowlands!

Don Torino

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BCAS PROGRAMS – APRIL-JUNE 2025

All programs and events are free and open to the public. We are supported by memberships and donations. *These programs will be presented on zoom at 7:30pm.*



April 9- Don Torino, BCAS president, (shown at left) will speak on **Gardening for Butterflies with Native Plants.**

May 14 - **African Safari Birds and Mammals.** Presented by Kevin Watson, a local Bergen County birder and photographer. The program is about the incredible wildlife in Africa.

June 11 - Tina Morris, author of **Return to the Sky: The Surprising Story of How One Woman and Seven Eaglets Helped Restore the Bald Eagle.**

Please check www.bergencountyaudubon.org for more updates and info on our speakers, and further descriptions and photos of the event.

Send program suggestions to Marilyn Sadowski, msadowskicas@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP REMINDERS

Thanks everyone for your continued support. In order to keep our membership records up to date, it is important you let us know if you change your mailing address as well as your e-mail address. This will insure that you get your copy of the Blue Jay. Let me know at joedadcpa@aol.com or 201-337-3405 if you have any changes.

You can renew/join your membership online by going to bergencountyaudubon.org and clicking on the **Join** tab. If you want to include a donation, go to the **Donate** button instead and add a note stating the amounts for membership and donation. Please join us on our walks and events. Have a great spring! **Enjoy the Spring migration.**

Joe Koscielny, Membership Chair



Welcome to Tony and Toy Gordon who have joined our BCAS Field Trip Committee.

Say hi when you see them on the trails.

BCAS FIELD TRIPS - MAY-JULY 2025

All field trips are rain OR shine. For additional information or to make suggestions for field trips, please contact Field Chair, **Chris Takacs at 201-207-0426 or americanchris22@gmail.com**. For a complete list of directions to field trip sites please visit www.bergencountyaudubon.org. Unless indicated, Contact Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

May 4 (Sun.) 10AM Richard DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

May 7 (Wed.) 10AM State Line Lookout, Alpine
Contact: James Falletti jamesfalletti@gmail.com (212) 203-3775

May 10 (Sat.) **BCAS Annual Spring Count Fundraiser**, Various locations. Participants needed.
Contact: Dave Hall david.hall@einsteinmed.edu (973) 226-7825

May 11 (Sun.) 8AM Mother's Day Walk at Garret Mountain Reservation, Meet in the three tiered parking lot, entrance off Mountain Avenue, Woodland Park.
Contact: Chris Takacs americanchris22@gmail.com (201) 207-0426

May 11 (Sun.) 10AM Mother's Day Walk at Teaneck Creek Conservancy, Teaneck. Meet in the parking lot off Puffin Way.
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com

May 14 (Wed.) 10AM Losen Slote Creek Park, Little Ferry. Park in lot adjacent to the soccer field.
Trails may be muddy, boots are highly recommended.
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

May 15 (Thurs.) 9AM Halifax Road/Lake Henry, Mahwah.
Park at Continental Soldiers Park.
Contact: Chris Takacs americanchris22@gmail.com (201) 207-0426

May 17 (Sat.) 10AM-2PM **Native Plant Day at Richard DeKorte Park**, Lyndhurst. Plant walks and talks, partner information tables. Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com

May 18 (Sun.) 10AM Mill Creek Marsh, Secaucus
Park behind Bob's Furniture Store. Contact: Don Torino

May 21 (Wed.) 10AM **Endangered Species Day at Harrier Meadow**, North Arlington. Contact: Don Torino

May 25 (Sun.) 10AM New Jersey Botanical Garden, Ringwood.
Meet by the carriage house. Contact: Don Torino

May 28 (Wed.) 10AM Teaneck Creek Conservancy, Teaneck.
Meet in the parking lot off Puffin Way. Contact: Don Torino

June 1 (Sun.) 10AM Richard DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

June 4 (Wed.) 10AM Borg's Woods, Hackensack
Meet at the Allen Street entrance.
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

June 8 (Sun.) 10AM Annual **Bluebird Walk at the New Jersey Botanical Garden**, Ringwood. Meet by the carriage house.
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

June 11 (Wed.) 10AM Hackensack River County Park, Hackensack
Entrance is behind the Shops at Riverside. Contact Don Torino.

June 12 (Thurs.) 10AM **Celebrate Frank Chapman's Birthday** along the Frank Chapman Trail, Meet in the parking lot on the corner of River Road and Riverview Ave., Teaneck. Contact: Don Torino .

June 15 (Sun.) 10AM Father's Day Walk at Teaneck Creek Conservancy, Meet in the parking lot off Puffin Way.
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

June 18 (Wed.) 10AM Pascack Brook County Park, Westwood
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

June 22 (Sun.) 10AM **First BCAS walk of the summer**. Mill Creek Marsh, Secaucus. Park behind Bob's Furniture Store..
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

June 25 (Wed.) 10AM Van Buskirk Island County Park, Oradell
Park in the lot on Elm Street (across from the waterworks).
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

June 29 (Sun.) 10AM Teaneck Creek Conservancy, Teaneck. Meet in the parking lot off Puffin Way. Contact: Don Torino

July 2 (Wed.) 10AM Mill Creek Point and Schmidt's Woods, Secaucus. Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

July 6 (Sun.) 10AM **Native Plant and Butterfly Walk** at Richard DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst. Contact: Don Torino

July 9 (Wed.) 10AM Frank Chapman Trail, Teaneck
Meet in the parking lot on the corner of River Road and Riverview Avenue. Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com

July 11 (Fri.) 8:30PM-10:30PM **Moth Night at Teaneck Creek** Conservancy, Teaneck. Bring a flashlight if you have one.
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

July 13 (Sun.) 1PM **Butterfly Walk** at the New Jersey Botanical Garden, Ringwood. Meet by the carriage house. Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

July 16 (Wed.) 10AM Teaneck Creek Conservancy, Teaneck. Meet in the parking lot off Puffin Way. Contact: Don Torino.

July 20 (Sun.) 10AM-3PM **16th Annual Butterfly Day at Richard DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst.** (Rain date Sunday, July 27th)
Celebrate all things butterfly with walks, talks, children's activities, partner information tables, music and more.
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) 230-4983

July 23 (Wed.) 6:30PM Richard DeKorte Park Evening Walk, Lyndhurst. Please note, this is an evening walk.
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201) -2304983

July 30 (Wed.) 10AM Hackensack River County Park, Hackensack
Entrance is behind the Shops at Riverside.
Contact: Don Torino greatauk4@gmail.com (201-2304983)

##

EDUCATION

MARIE LONGO, Chair

Certified Wildlife Garden Program

Our Certified Wildlife Garden Program is still holding at 249 certified gardens. A simple pot or planter, a window box, a pollinator patch or better yet, a front yard or backyard garden create stepping stones for birds, pollinators and wildlife in between areas devoid of habitat and are crucial for their survival.

Given the current status of the Monarch butterfly, we ask that you plant milkweed and nectar sources, particularly late blooming natives to fuel their migration journey. Applications and additional information may be found on our website, bergencountyaudubon.org/cwg/. Certify your garden today and you'll receive a free sign to display in your yard.

Audubon Adventures

Bergen County Audubon Society proudly sponsors the kits to schools, nature centers and groups in our area free of charge. Welcome to our newest Audubon Adventures schools.

St. Paul School-Burlington, NJ
Samara Community School-Bronx, NY

Each classroom kit contains enough materials for 32 students. Homeschool kit contains enough for 1 student. Nature news packets are also available and contain enough materials for 32 students but are topic specific.

If you are interested in learning more, please visit our website bergencountyaudubon.org/audubonadventures/ and/or audubonadventures.org. If you are interested in ordering, contact Marie Longo MLongo8383@aol.com.

DEAR BCAS BIRDLIVERS

by Nancy Salvati

I want to share the tips you'll need to keep our birds safe and disease free. (For example, recently my finch feeder had a whitish film around the inside bottom of it. I immediately took it down and proceeded to empty and soak in a soapy pot then dunked in a 1-9 bleach solution, e.g. 1 part bleach to 9 parts water).



Some of the more common diseases that birds can spread through feeders include house finch eye disease (the colloquial name for mycoplasmal conjunctivitis, which can infect

more than just the bird for which it's named), salmonellosis (caused by salmonella bacteria), aspergillosis (a fungal respiratory disease), and avian pox.

To prevent the spread of illness in the birds that frequent your seed buffet, try these four steps:

1. Clean feeders regularly. Rinse the feeder well with soapy water, then dunk it into a bleach-water solution.

"A monthly cleaning with a nine-to-one water-bleach solution will deter bacteria in plastic, ceramic, and metal feeders. "A dilute vinegar solution (three-to-one) or non-fragranced biodegradable soap should be used on wood to minimize fading." Dry out the feeder before hanging it back up. Double the frequency of cleaning if you suspect disease a-lurking.

2. Tidy below the feeder. This can mean raking or shoveling up feces and hulls (seed casings)—particularly those that are moldy, wet, or spoiled—and throwing them out. "Bird food scattered on the ground also can attract rodents."

3. Share the wealth. Spread out food among a couple of feeders so there's less opportunity for sick birds to touch and contaminate each other. "Crowding only expedites the spread of disease," the Audubon guide reads, "so give the birds variety and plenty of room."

4. To keep your birdbath fresh, just rinse and scrub it with nine parts water, one part vinegar. Skip the synthetic soaps and cleansers; they can strip the essential oils off of bird feathers. And make sure to refill the water every other day to keep it from bugging up.

Did anyone say Hummingbirds?



Change sugar water at least every 3 to 5 days to prevent mold and deadly fermentation, and more frequently during hot weather. Clean feeders at least once a week with hot water and a bottle brush. Don't use soap or a detergent. You can also clean hummingbird feeders by filling with a dilute bleach solution, but make sure to rinse them thoroughly and allow them to air dry before refilling.

Don't put oil or other sticky substances around feeding ports to deter bees; you might contaminate the nectar. If bees, wasps, or ants become a problem, try moving the feeder.

Thanks for the bird love!

2025 BCAS SPRING COUNT ON MAY 10 - BIRD-WATCHERS WANTED!

Please volunteer for the 33rd Annual "Spring Count". This is a celebration of World Migratory Bird Day.



It will be held Saturday, May 10, rain or shine. Similar to last year, we invite participants to view birds in your local park, your yard, or in one of the larger natural areas in Northern New Jersey, such as Garret Mountain, Oradell Reservoir, Teaneck Creek, DeKorte Park, Losen Slote, or the Celery Farm. But we would also love to send people to other promising habitats such as MahWah/Ramapo, Flat Rock, Greenbrook, Van Saun Park, Tenafly Nature Center, the Hudson River shoreline, or even further afield. The goal is not only to identify as many bird species as possible, but to estimate the number of birds per species that you have found in your territory. This event will also be the basis for our Spring Fundraiser, which is explained below.

Invite a friend to join you. Tell me in advance (by email, please) where you plan to be birding, and I may be able to match you with other birders with the same goal. If you send an email in advance of the event, I can also share a report form to record your birds. After May 10, please send back your findings to **Dave Hall** (973 226-7825) david.hall@einsteinmed.edu, including a clear account of where you were birding.

May brings us a wonderful selection of birdlife, and this event can be a fun way to practice your bird identification skills. The more the merrier!

DAVE HALL

BCAS SPRING FUNDRAISER - SATURDAY, MAY 10, 2025



Pledge your support for BCAS and all our conservation and education projects by sending in this form or using our website.

You may pledge "X" amount per species and your donation will be multiplied by the total number of species seen on that day, or you can pledge/donate a fixed amount. Your donation is fully tax deductible. Please consider using a "Matching Grant" from your employer. Checks should be made payable to Bergen County Audubon Society.

1. Mail form/check to BCAS Spring Fundraiser
P.O. Box 235
Paramus, NJ 07653-0235 or
2. Use the donate button at www.bergencountyaudubon.org.

We appreciate any donation you can make and if your financial situation is limited we appreciate that too, but hope you can still go birding and help with the data collection and enjoy the spring migration.

Pledge- per species amount \$ _____

or check amount \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Tel # _____ Email _____

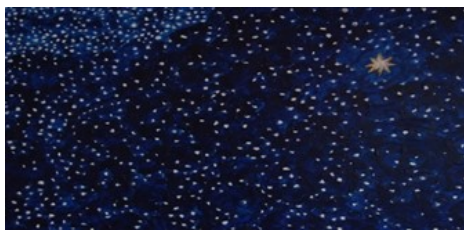
Contact Tammy Laverty, Chair at 201- 440- 0904 if you have any questions.

CONSERVATION

Karen Nickerson, Chair

Protecting the Skies

Bird navigation remains a subject of research. But, we do know for sure that light pollution affects birds negatively, particularly during migration. New Jersey Senate bill S1610, now in the Budget and Appropriations Committee, has a goal of reducing light pollution, conserving energy, and minimizing environmental impact. Under this law, all state projects and those receiving state funding would be required to observe lighting regulations that control the upward angle of the lighting direction and would limit light levels and color. Although the bill does not apply to private properties, it would go a long way toward protecting wildlife and to provide a strong model for responsible lighting. Stay tuned as the legislation progresses in Trenton.



Another initiative to reduce light pollution is the international advocacy organization DarkSky. Through their website (darksky.org), they offer information about responsible home lighting, commercial vendors, and advice on how to promote safe lighting in your community or park. Information sheets are available for download to help explain the benefits of safe lighting. If you would like to advocate for responsible lighting in your town, DarkSky offers practical advice on how to proceed. They even offer sample code structure that might be adopted <https://darksky.org/what-we-do/advancing-responsible-outdoor-lighting/darksky-recognized-codes-and-statutes/>. If you recognize a need in your community, these resources will support your case.

With spring migration arriving soon, please don't forget to make your home safe by preventing window collisions. Up to a billion birds die each year in building strikes. Forty-four percent of these deaths occur at structures no higher than three stories. Consult the American Bird Conservancy to find solutions. Remember that protective window products must be applied to the exterior surface in order to be effective.

I wish you all a spring migration of thriving bird populations!

FUNDRAISING, 2025

Tammy Laverty, Chair

Bergen County Audubon Society is thankful to all our members who so generously donated to help BCAS with its missions. We are planning another active year with wonderful walks, events, educational opportunities, and strong efforts to improve wildlife habitat. Again, thanks to all of you who make it possible.

TOTAL DONATIONS FOR 2025 (January 1 - February 21) \$ 2,341.00

GENERAL APPEAL / DONATE BUTTON / CHECKS: \$ 2,166.00

Hildegard Ampssler, Edna Berkovits, Elizabeth Biggio, Buckley Wirtshafter Giving Fund,, Michele Calise, Rosemary Caulk, Pedro Cruz, Kevin Dolce, Kay Fialkoff, James Foley, Beth Goldberg, Marianne Hermann, Jeanne Kehoe, David Luke, Monica Maley, Frank Mangano, PayPal Giving Fund, Paul & Elizabeth Rubock, Marilyn Sadowski, Nancy & Joe Salvati, Karl M. Soehnlein, Bob Sorce, Stop & Shop, Mary Thurber, John Trosky, Thomas & Anne Winner, Sandra Wolkenberg

MATCHING FUNDS FROM MEMBERS' EMPLOYERS : \$175.00

Lorraine Nealis, Carol Spilane-Mueller, Anonymous

REFRESHMENTS FOR EAGLE DAY DONATION:

Regina Coyle

NOW IS THE TIME TO BEGIN SPRUCING UP YOUR CERTIFIED GARDENS. DON'T FORGET TO CHECK ALL THE NATIVE PLANTS THAT BCAS HAS LISTED AT www.bergencountyaudubon.org/conserve/healthybackyards.



If you are looking for inspiration to design and choose your next perennial, visit BCAS Butterfly Garden at bergencountyaudubon.org. Check out Don Torino's video of our perennials for ideas or just visit the Overpeck Park garden and see for yourself.

SAVE THESE DATES.

- May 17 (Sat.) **10AM-2PM Native Plant Day at Richard DeKorte Park**
- July 6 (Sun.) **10AM Native Plant and Butterfly Walk at Richard DeKorte Park**
- July 13 (Sun.) **1PM Butterfly Walk at the New Jersey Botanical Garden, Ringwood.**
- July 20 (Sun.) **10am-2pm 16th Annual Butterfly Day at Richard DeKorte Park**
- Oct. 5 (Sun.) **8am-3pm Annual Meadowlands Birding Festival at Richard DeKorte Park.**

Don't forget to plant Milkweed and late blooming natives to fuel our butterflies' and birds' migration journey this fall.



Make a purchase of \$50 or more at Metropolitan Plant & Flower Exchange or Metropolitan Farm, and Metropolitan will donate \$10 to ***Bergen County Audubon Society.***

Complete Form Below & Present at Time of Purchase
Offer Expires 8/31/25

Cannot be combined with any other offers

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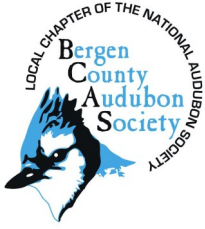
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(For Store Use) Order # _____ Total \$ _____ Date _____

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A CHAPTER OF THE
NATIONAL AUDUBON
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**Dated Material
MARCH 2025**

As Members of Bergen County Audubon Society, we share a love for birds and a concern for the environment. Our mission is to promote and protect wildlife in their natural habitat by providing opportunities for observation and conservation.

All field trips and programs are open to the public and free of charge.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2025

Please enroll me as a member of the Bergen Audubon Society and/or the National Audubon Society. My check is enclosed for:

Chapter Sustaining Member. \$20.00 - Single or \$35.00 for Family Membership. All funds stay in our area, helping us to support local efforts and provide services in Bergen County. Make check payable to Bergen County Audubon.

\$20.00 - National Audubon Society Member. (1st year rate for new NAS members only). Includes Chapter membership. Make check payable to National Audubon Society.

Name: _____

Address : _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____

E-mail (I would like to be notified of upcoming events online and receive the newsletter electronically.)

Please mail to : BCAS Membership Chair, PO Box 235, Paramus, NJ 07653-0235

Volunteer opportunities in local chapter activities or committees are available. Please circle the following and mail with your subscription or see any officer or chair at one of the meetings.

Conservation Membership Publicity Field Trips

Education Newsletter/Website