

Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club

November 2021



Northern Shrike by Nancy Halliday

Concerned about Birds? You bet! *by Libby Hill*

We're excited to announce that the building at the northwest corner of Green Bay Road and Central Street in Evanston — the Maya Papaya & Tony Macaroni children's store at 1901 Central -- has a new look!

Our *"Birds of Concern" mural*, funded by ENSBC in cooperation with Art Encounter, the Arts Council of Evanston and Central Street businesses, now enlivens that corner with a stunning painting of a Red-headed Woodpecker, an American Kestrel and a Blackburnian Warbler against a cloud-filled blue sky.



Photo by Libby Hill

You, our members, selected these birds, and Arden Davidson tabulated your votes. The mural artist is, Tyrue "Slang" Jones, a well-known muralist who got his start by painting blocky letters on railroad cars. The Board reviewed several drafts of the mural, and Slang worked with us to incorporate our suggestions and ideas.

The ENSBC mural was inspired by a virtual tour of the New York Audubon Society's series of murals, many in Harlem, depicting birds impacted by climate change and painted by John J. Audubon. Our mural features birds seen locally that are threatened not only by climate change but also by habitat loss on their breeding and wintering grounds, pesticide use and other factors.

We were very fortunate to have our way smoothed by Lea Pinsky of Art Encounter. She chose the building, got the wall repaired by the owner, took our request for money to the Evanston Arts Council, and last, but not least, chose the artist. A plaque explaining the mural is posted on the wall.

An official ribbon cutting was held on Saturday, October 16. It was intentionally a small event because of limited sidewalk space and concerns about crowding during Covid. "Slang", representatives of ENSBC's Board, the sponsoring partners and local officials were there to celebrate.



Article cont'd on page 2

We have printed 500 educational bookmarks, designed by Marj Lundy, to be distributed throughout Evanston and elsewhere. Interested in taking bookmarks to your local neighborhood businesses, libraries or other organizations? Contact libbyhill@comcast.net. And watch your mailbox. We'll be mailing bookmarks to all members.

The mural can best be appreciated on foot, but driving by works too. Parking and a number of coffee shops are available nearby. Please come, see and enjoy our latest environmental project. It's worth the trip!

Many thanks to Libby Hill for working with our partners to make this happen!



Slang, at the mural ribbon cutting, with Past President Jim La Rochelle, who spoke on behalf of ENSBC.

Photo by Beking Media

Welcome to the following New Members!

Mira Barbir	Evanston
Jason Carlson	Evanston
Penny Doyle	Evanston
Janice Kaye	Evanston
John Koch	Highwood
Nancy Kruger	Evanston
Victor Lefevre	Evanston
Carole & Steve Levin	Evanston
Thomas Mulcrone	Evanston
Vlad Nevirkovets	Evanston
Lori Osborne	Evanston
Stephanie Riger	Evanston
Piper Rothschild	Wilmette

A Heartfelt Thanks....

All of us at the Clark Street Beach Bird Sanctuary offer our sincere thanks to the following volunteers who consistently monitored the birds in the Sanctuary this fall: **John Bates, Suzanne Checchia, Josh Engel, Gerald Ginsburg, Jerry Herst, Mary Hotson, Scott Judd and Sarah Miller.** Without their dedication and skill, we would be woefully uninformed about the wide variety of birds visiting the Sanctuary and the immediate surrounding area.

And thanks to **Amanda Zeigler** for giving our Facebook page a new look. Check it out!

[https://www.facebook.com/
EvanstonNorthShoreBirdClub/](https://www.facebook.com/EvanstonNorthShoreBirdClub/)



Volunteers working at Clark Street Beach Bird Sanctuary

Mad about Birds and Butterflies too!

by Debby Storms

Monarchs
Photo by
Jeff Wade



On September 30, a congenial group of 14 ENSBC members met in Philadelphia to begin a five-day exploration of the many natural areas surrounding Cape May, New Jersey. Located on the southernmost tip of New Jersey, Cape May is a world-famous resting place for migrating birds of all varieties – songbirds, shorebirds, saltmarsh specialties, ducks, seabirds, and an incredible raptor migration. We were lucky to encounter about 129 species per Josh Engel's official count.

With such richness to look at and learn about, one could easily be overwhelmed. Not a problem on this trip, as we were led by two expert birders – Josh Engel, owner of Red Hill Birding which arranged the trip, and Jason Weckstein, an associate professor in Drexel University's Biodiversity, Earth & Environmental Science department and associate curator in the Department of Ornithology at the Academy of Natural Sciences. Great creds, but more important, both Jason and Josh have patient, fun, and generous personalities, are great teachers and tried to make sure everyone in the group had enough scope time to see each bird and learn its field marks and distinguishing behaviors.

Migration Madness Bonus: Monarch Butterflies

We chose to visit Cape May because we knew it was famous for birding, but to our surprise, it's also a resting place for Monarch butterflies on their way to Mexico. Luckily we were there at peak time for the southward-bound butterflies. On our first morning, we gathered at Cape May Point, where hundreds upon hundreds of Monarchs were perched on evergreen boughs. As the sun rose to the treetops, the butterflies came to life, taking off in swirling circles like little orange fairies, ready to make their way across Delaware Bay and accomplish another leg in their epic journey. It was magical and a highlight of the trip.

Other Special Moments, Special Birds

We saw so many wonderful birds, it's hard to pick just a few for special mention: certainly the huge groups of Black Skimmers careening about on the ocean one early morning; also great views of Clapper Rails, American Avocets, Black-bellied Plovers, and many other shorebirds, gulls and terns. Herons were in abundance, as were hawks, falcons and Bald Eagles – including a pair of soaring eagles who locked talons and spiraled to the ground – then repeated the performance for good measure. We also were lucky to see a few Saltmarsh Sparrows, the only endemic on the “possibles” list.



Osprey in Cape May
by Josh Engel

Cape May is a charming area with beautiful homes and many gardens planted with butterfly-attracting natives (they love their butterflies!). We enjoyed perfect weather and delicious meals at several of Cape May's great restaurants. There was even a chance for a bit of sunbathing on the beach across from our hotel. It was a great trip that I'd gladly do again.

For more on Red Hill's Cape May Madness trip, go to <https://www.redhillbirding.com/capemay>.

This trip was so popular we are offering it again, with a maximum of 7 people, September 29 - October 3, 2022. Jason Weckstein will be our guide. Preference will be given to ENSBC members on the 2021 waiting list. Details may be found at the address above.

Recap of Oct. 26 Program

On Tuesday night, October 26, **Peggy McNamara** charmed a Zoom audience of over 50 people (more than would have been allowed in the Ecology Center room for a live presentation), telling her personal history of how she and her art evolved as artist-in-residence at the Field Museum. Peggy's wonderful art may be viewed on her website [Peggy McNamara.com](http://PeggyMcNamara.com) and on her Facebook page.

Upcoming Program (on Zoom)

On Zoom(

November 23: Heather Skeen, "Kirtland's Warblers' Microbiomes." What is a microbiome? Within each bird species are communities of micro-organisms that interact with each other and the environment. This community is known collectively as the microbiome. Kirtland's Warblers offer a unique opportunity to understand how the changing environments of migratory birds impact the composition of the microbiome. Heather Skeen, of the Integrative Research Center at the Field Museum, will describe research centered around the microbiomes of individual Kirtland's Warblers that were tracked using geolocators from the Bahamas to Michigan.



Breaking Conservation News!

The remnant gravel Bell Bowl Prairie, one of the last remaining remnant prairies in Illinois, has received a last-minute temporary reprieve from going under bulldozers for an expansion of the Rockford International Airport. Thousands of concerned citizens have joined the Natural Land Institute, a chapter of the Sierra Club and the Illinois Environmental Council to save the prairie.

Your support is needed! Click on [**#SaveBellBowlPrairie**](https://www.facebook.com/SaveBellBowlPrairie) for details and to learn what you can do to help.



Our Earth

**What is earth when its trees are gone?
And there is no life left to greet the dawn
When the ocean no longer teems with life
And climate change has melted the ice.
This would be the result of a world filled with people
Whose impact on the world is extremely lethal.
Because of pollution and deforestation
We must work together as a whole, as a nation!
We must use a renewable energy source
And work together so we can all change course.**

*by 14-year-old Chloe La Rochelle of Portland, OR,
granddaughter of ENSBC Past President, Jim La Rochelle*

2021 Christmas Bird Count

The 2021 ENSBC Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be held on Sunday, December 26. John Leonard, Compiler, will contact area leaders who will organize groups. The in-person countdown party is cancelled, but John will hold a Zoom countdown as he did last year. Joel Greenberg will again coordinate the feeder counts, and sign-up sheets will be available at Wild Birds Unlimited in Glenview. Additional CBC information will be posted at <http://www.ensbc.org> as it becomes available.



*Red-headed Woodpecker, Evanston,
by Tammy Wells, Fall 2021*