

# The Broadwing



Publication of the Montclair Bird Club  
November 2024

Montclair, NJ  
Volume LXIX, Number 3

## Message from the President November 2024

Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to the November issue of the Broadwing. In the past, this space has been reserved for a message from the editor. Sandy has kindly handed over this space to me, and he's also told me I can write as much as I want, and I'm no longer confined to what will fit inside the little box. So, I imagine you're now seeing a bigger box—or perhaps no box at all. Which I guess is the theme of my first letter as president of the Montclair Bird Club.

When I first began birding, at the precocious age of 10, I had no idea there was such a thing as a “birder.” The only person on television I ever saw looking at birds was [Miss Hathaway](#) from *The Beverly Hillbillies*.

(Continued on Page 2)

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**Next club meeting: Wednesday, November 13  
Virtual Bird Walk: Thursday, January 16, 2025**

(Continued from the little box on page 1)

Of course there was this mythical figure Roger Tory Peterson, who somehow between publishing countless bird guides had managed to find the time to write the foreword to practically every bird-related book in my elementary school library. But otherwise, I was on my own. Frankly, I was a bit afraid the other kids would make fun of my new hobby. So I came up with an idea. I decided to start my own bird club. I thought if I birded with several other kids, it wouldn't seem so unusual. My original plan was to recruit the strongest boys in my grade. This way no one would dare make fun of us—and if they did, they would pay the price.

Turns out, nobody ever tried to make fun of us. In fact, my love of birds gave me a bit of notoriety. I became the “bird kid.” It was actually kind of fun to have such a unique hobby. We even got our gym teacher, Mr. Stamey, to act as a sort of informal faculty advisor. Turns out he was also really into birds—and we would often go out in the woods behind our school before school and report our findings to him in gym class, while “[Chicken Fat](#)” blared on the record player as we performed calisthenics. Those of a certain generation will certainly remember that song.

This past April, I went back to visit that tiny patch of woods behind Edward V. Walton Elementary School in my hometown of Springfield, NJ. Like many things from childhood, it seemed considerably smaller now. Hard to believe we actually once called this a “forest.” Yet, the birds were still there. Yellow-rumped warblers were busy feeding high up in the oaks, and I got some really great looks at several rose-breasted grosbeaks. The size of that “forest” was irrelevant—much like that box Sandy squeezed his editor's message into while editing each issue of the Broadwing.



I just did the math, and while it's hard to believe, about 50 years have now passed since I first picked up a pair of binoculars and started birding behind my elementary school. In that half century, I've gone from being the founder of a bird club consisting of just three fourth-grade boys, to being the president of one of our country's oldest bird clubs, with more than 500 members and friends. It reminds me of that old saying, “it's not the size but what you do with it that counts.” While this club has more members than ever, we'd love to see more people actively involved and contributing to the club in some way, no matter how big or small. Join a committee. Come up with an idea for a field trip. Suggest a speaker. Hopefully, by the time our in-person meeting rolls around, we'll all have plenty of ideas to share. Looking forward to seeing you all on November 13!

Evan

It's nice that our new president thinks outside the little box.

# Celebrating 105 Years

**November 13, 2024, 7:30 pm, at Union Congregational Church,  
Montclair, NJ**

**Through the Looking Glass: Reflections of a Grateful Birder  
by Kevin Karlson**



*Costa hummingbird, Kevin Karlson*



# Celebrating 105 Years

**Join us, live and in person, to celebrate the 105th anniversary of the Montclair Bird Club. There will be food, pictures, games, and good fellowship all around.**

The Montclair Bird Club is proud to welcome Kevin Karlson as the featured speaker at the celebration of our 105th anniversary . Kevin's lighthearted presentation will explore why so many people enjoy the study of birds and the unique camaraderie that characterizes our hobby. Forty-five years of birding has shaped Kevin's life in so many ways, and this lecture shares his appreciation for that journey. Come along for a ride through time, with birds, people, and special places the stars of the show.

*Kevin Karlson is an accomplished birder, author, professional tour leader, wildlife photographer, and educator. He is a regular at bird and nature festivals, where he gives keynote presentations, workshops on bird identification, and photo instruction. Kevin's books include The Shorebird Guide (2007), Birding by Impression (2015), Birds of Prey (2017, with Pete Dunne), Gulls Simplified (2018, with Pete Dunne), and Bird Families of North America (2021, with Pete Dunne). His Shorebirds of North America: A Natural History and Photographic Celebration, also with Pete Dunne, was released earlier this year.*

*Kevin's photography books include The Birds of Cape May and Visions: Earth's Elements in Bird and Nature Photography. He has also produced a number of photographic identification guides for Quick Reference Publishing. Though he is officially retired, Kevin continues to lead tours and photo workshops for his company, Jaeger Tours, and for Wildside Nature Tours of Pennsylvania.*

## From the Archives

Ruth Webster was a generous benefactor of the club.

### *Montclair Bird Club*

April 24, 2006

Dear Ruth,

Your \$20 check to the Bird Club reached me as Treasurer and it was deposited. However, you are an Honorary Member of the Club in recognition of your many contributions over the years and we cannot accept any dues payments from you. Accordingly I am enclosing the Club's check to you in refund.

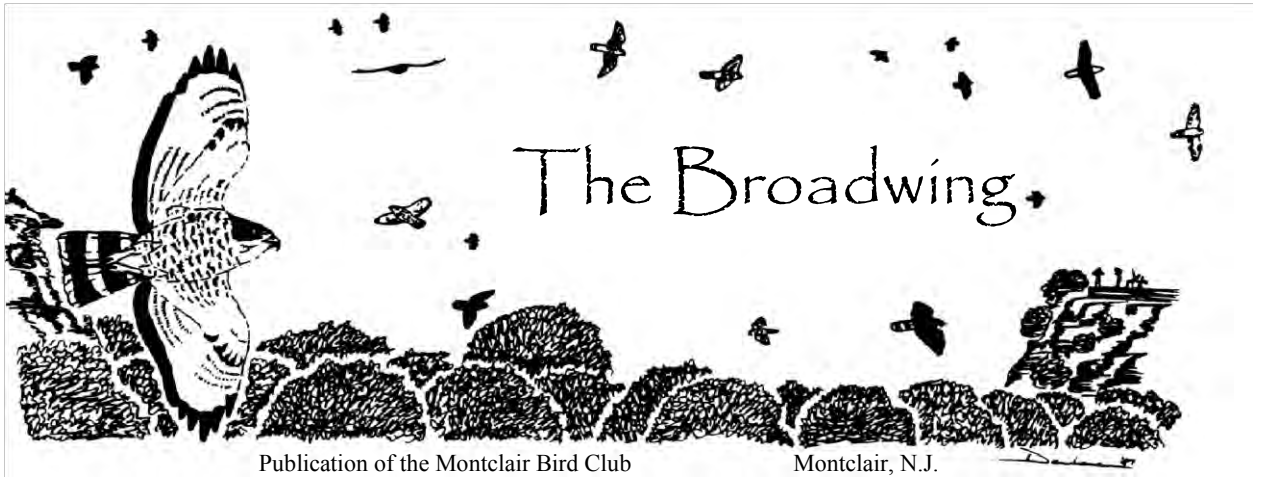
The Club is proud and honored to have you as an Honorary Member.

Sincerely,

W. J. Hunziker, Jr.

Mrs. Ruth Webster  
459 Passaic Avenue, Apt. 221  
West Caldwell, NJ 07006

September 2019 – The MBC Celebrates Its 100<sup>th</sup>



September 2019

Volume LXV, Number 1

MBC celebrates 100 years!



American Robin at Mill Creek Marsh, by Sandy Sorkin

## President's Message, September 2019

I am a relatively new birdwatcher. I started around 2008 and joined the Montclair Bird Club in 2010. Two months later I became the treasurer, not knowing entirely what I was getting into. The Bird Club has given me an exceptional educational experience. I also credit birdwatching with expanding my photography horizons. At first, I only took pictures of birds so that I could identify them later in my Golden Nature Guide. However, I quickly found that there were better reference guides than the ones I grew up with in the 1950s. At the same time, I enjoyed learning to be a better photographer. In retrospect, I wonder if I would have made the same decisions knowing how expensive these hobbies can be. It seems that there are always new field guides, new trips, brighter binoculars, fancier scopes, and bigger cameras beckoning.

It is still difficult to pigeonhole (pun intended) what I appreciate the most about being outdoors birding. There are several possibilities, and I am aware that there is no requirement that I decide on the best or even rank them. In no particular order they include: the exhilaration of finding something you have never seen before; opportunities to observe the beauty, agility, and grace of the smallest to largest birds and all of the other nature we encounter; knowledge gained by just listening to birding companions; the pleasant people you meet in the field or on a trail who share their day's walk, discuss what they have seen, and offer recommendations. This list is not intended to be complete, because birding experiences continue to improve over time, but maybe they can be summarized as having interesting conversations with interesting people about shared experiences, all while enjoying nature.

Being the new president is a bit daunting, especially with our 100th anniversary this year. Fortunately, I have the experience of watching our past presidents conduct meetings and "take care of business." Hopefully, I will be able to do as well as they did.

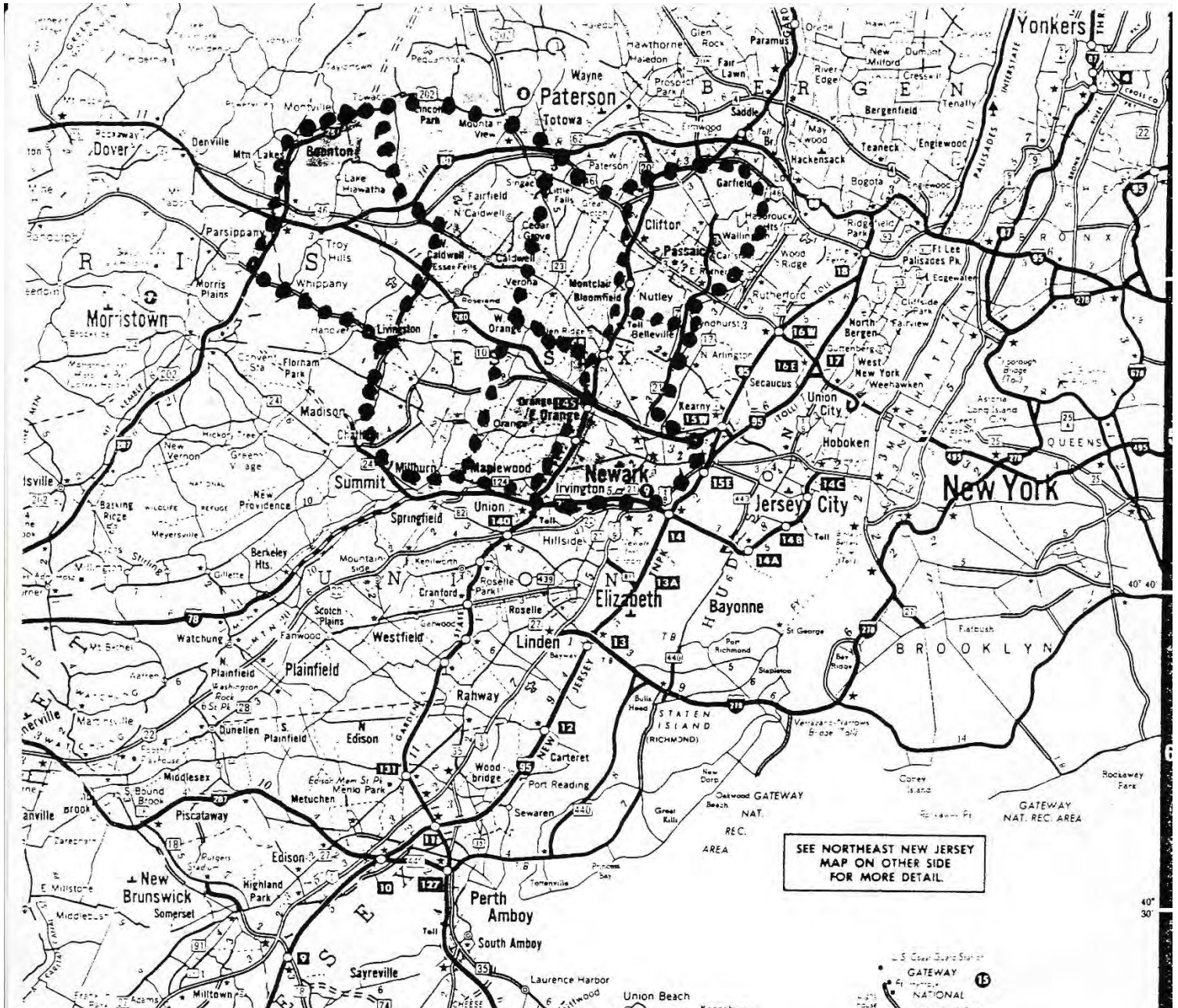
The club faces some challenges going forward, and the executive committee and I are completely open to all suggestions. One of these challenges is membership. Membership has decreased over the years, and we face the same issues as other clubs. While attracting new members is the primary objective, our concomitant concern is the average age of the group. There is nothing wrong with being older, but younger members bring additional energy to the club and strengthen the foundation for the future.

Donna Traylor, our new treasurer, also engages speakers. Over the years, the programs have been excellent, with concentrations on birds, conservation, nature and travel. These objectives will continue going forward. This should be a very special year, and I appreciate the opportunity to be the club president.

— Sandy Sorokin



Four pages from a 1930 bird survey:





Preliminary list of the birds of the Essex County Region prepared by the Montclair Bird-Club, Jan. 1, 1930.

#### Introduction.

In order to understand clearly the area involved a definition is required not only of the total area but of the various sections within this area which are referred to in the text in abbreviated form. Roughly we include the whole of Essex County together with small contiguous sections of the adjacent counties Morris and Passaic. Field work has been intensive for many years especially recently in six sub-divisions as follows:-

I. The Boonton area known as B. Includes the Boonton Reservoir, the town and the high ground of Sheep Hill east to Hook Mountain, bounded on the south by a line from Parsippany to Cook's bridge including the Troy meadows and the Rockaway Valley from the Reservoir to the Passaic.

II. The Caldwell area known as C. Bounded on the west by the Passaic River, including the old townships of Caldwell, Livingston and Millburn south to the County line, east to the crest of second mountain, north to Singac and Mountainview and west along the crest of Hook Mountain to include the Passaic River Valley.

III. The Montclair region known as M. Bounded on north by line from Singac to Totowa to Garret Rock, including towns of Little Falls, Cedar Grove, Verona, to Pleasantdale, Montclair, Great Notch and Brookdale, Bloomfield and Glen Ridge.

IV. The Passaic region known as P. Includes all of Passaic and the old town of Franklin especially, Allwood Swamp, Delawanna and Nutley, bounded on the east by the Passaic river but including the little swamp at Lyndhurst.

V. The Newark region known as N. This area is really subdivided. The whole includes Belleville and all of Newark and Irvington south to Union-County but most of the field work has been done in Branch Brook Park or on the marshes of Port Newark. P. N. These are defined as north of the county line at Bound Creek, west to the Penn. R. R. tracks and north to the city and the Passaic river.

VI. The Oranges known as O. Includes the Oranges and Maplewood north to the Montclair section west to the crest of the second mountain and especially the magnificent Orange Reservation.

This report is obviously not complete, in fact it never can be but at least will serve as a guide both to those who go afield regularly and to those who are strangers to his part of New Jersey. In order to make it possible to check the accuracy of dates the names of the observers are included or are shown as initials. The key to the initials is presented below and it is to these persons that most of the credit and thanks for their effort belongs.

Mrs. C. S. Hegeman	(Mrs. CSH)	T. D. Carter	(TDC)
James L. Edwards	(JLE)	Edwin I. Stearns, Jr.	(ES)
Charles A. Urner	(CAU)	William Rusling	(WR)
Robert Clausen	(RC)	Lester L. Walsh	(LLW)
R. F. Haulenbeck	(RFH)	Laura E. W. Abbot	(LEW)
Warren F. Eaton	(WFE)	Montclair Bird Club	(MBC)
R. H. Howland	(RHH)	George Yerbury	(GY)

We have endeavored to indicate the earliest and latest migration dates, whether or not a species is a permanent resident, a summer resident or breeder and where known have included typical nesting records. If a bird winters regularly it will be listed and any unusual notes for a given area are included. Fall records are not nearly as complete as spring data and there is undoubtedly a great deal to be added to our information about common species. No attempt has been made to compare present and past abundance and there is a vast amount of interesting and miscellaneous material which cannot be included. Records of several species not included in the list have been excluded because of insufficient data but undoubtedly future investigation will transfer them from the hypothetical list.

It is hoped that people will find records to fill the many gaps and that any substantiated data be forwarded either to Mrs. C. S. Hegeman, Field Secretary or Warren F. Eaton, President of the Montclair Bird Club. Additional copies may be obtained at a charge of 45 cents each from Mrs. Walter Mueller, Treasurer, 35 Godfrey Road, Upper Montclair, N. J.



ANNOTATED LIST.

1. Holboell's Grebe  
 B April 1 1916 - R C Murphy  
 C A few shot on the Passaic below Summit H R Hann 1905  
 PN March 25 1928 - JLE
2. Horned Grebe  
 B In fall to Dec. 31 1928 WFE  
 March 17 1921 TDC to April 21 1929 CAU  
 PN Common in winter on Bay at times Dec 23 1927 JLE
3. Pied Billed Grebe  
 B April 21 1929 CAU Breeds on Troy meadows Oct 31 1925 RFH  
 C April 17 1927 JLE  
 M April 5 1925 - Sept 25 - Nov 5 1922 Mrs. CSH Verona Lake  
 P March 26 1910 JLE - April 17, 1927 GY  
 PN Migrant formerly bred May 30 1906 5 nests found by Hann, Callender and Abbot Oct 13 1928 JLE
4. Loon  
 B March 17 1921 - May 26 1925 TDC  
 July 24 1927 WFE - Oct 12 1927 Mrs CSH & Dec 21 1929 TDC  
 M April 21 1916 RHH & April 24 1927 JLE  
 P April 29 & May 5 1928 JLE
5. Red Throated Loon  
 B May 17 1925 TDC - RHH & L Criscom  
 FN May 17 1925 TDC
6. Brunnich's Murre  
 D Dec 24 1899 Babson
7. Glaucous Gull  
 PN Feb 5 1928 CAU
8. Iceland Gull  
 FN Frequent records at mouth of Bound Creek  
 Jan 15 1922 - April 10 1927 CAU
9. Kumlien's Gull  
 FN One on Bay just south of county line Feb 5 1928 CAU  
 and also Dec 22 1929 CAU & TDC
10. Great Black backed gull  
 PN 3 records Jan 23 1925 - Mar 5 1923 CAU
11. Herring Gull  
 B March 12 1921 TDC - April 21 1929 WFE Jan 2 1921 TDC  
 C Jan 8 1929 WR - March 31 1928 ES - Dec 22 1929 ES & WR  
 M Feb 7 1924 LEW - Feb 14 1921 Mrs CSH - Mar 15 1928 RC  
 Dec 16 1928 WFE - Dec 22 1929 WFE  
 P Jan 14 1928 - April 16 1927 - Aug 1927 RC  
 N Jan 24 1921 RFH  
 PN Abundant in fall & winter less so in spring & early summer
12. Ring billed Gull  
 PN Often abundant in fall & winter  
 Aug 14 1927 - May 12 1929 WFE
13. Laughing Gull  
 PN Aug to Dec - Abundant in late summer  
 June 8 1929 WFE
14. Bonaparte's Gull  
 B April 19 1924 TDC  
 PN Aug 14 1927 - May 12 1929 WFE Dec 22 1929 JLE
15. Little Gull  
 PN May 12 1929 JLE WFE & John Thompson May 14 1929 CAU



## **A SLIGHT HISTORY OF THE MONTCLAIR BIRD CLUB 1920—1955**

John Kieran says if you are going to watch birds you are going to be laughed at, but you have to remember you are having more fun than those who are laughing at you.

In July 1920, a band of out-of-door people met and formed the Montclair Bird Club. The constitution says the aims are to stimulate a general interest in birds, promote the study of them, assist in enforcing federal, state and local laws, and establish sanctuaries and feeding stations. Annual dues: fifty cents.

Mr. Rowland was the first president. One hundred members joined and paid dues the first year. Mr. Rowland showed stereopticon slides. From these slides to the wonderful colored movies we have now measured the progress in other fields.

Howard Cleaves was the first outside speaker. He showed pictures and gave bird calls. There were six walks through the fall, and at Christmas, the first census. Four hundred attended a meeting in Hillside School. 186 species of birds were seen in the vicinity.

The cat ordinance was brought to light. Twelve members requested traps set on their grounds, and the animal warden promised co-operation.

Prizes were offered to children to build feeding stations, and one was put up in Glenfield Park. Thus ended the first year, and the following ones were like unto it, with minor changes.

The next year, prizes were offered for those occupied. Fifty were submitted, and one wonders what wiles enter the head of a small boy to induce occupation of his house perforce.

In 1923 steps, were taken outside the town. Messages were sent to senators and assemblymen to support a bill to protect bobolinks. The bill was defeated.

Also in '23, National Audubon asked the Club to raise its small voice, asking that a large tract of land in Louisiana be made into a sanctuary instead of a hunting club. Joint trips with Green Mountain Club were started.

In 1924, Dr. Barbour was elected president. Professor Hugh Monroe invited the Club to his camp at Moonachie. Howard Cleaves spoke again. The first trip to Troy Meadows was noted. Donald Carter of the Museum of Natural History spoke on banding. He was introduced as a mammologist who loved birds. Mr. Rowland spoke of handling one song sparrow 160 times. Bill Rustling comes into the picture at this meeting showing his collection of 54 nests. Also, Mrs. Hegeman did outstanding publicity work.

1928: Allan LeVoe, the Montclair naturalist, who came to national fame and whose recent death seemed untimely, spoke at the annual meeting and led two walks that year. Miss Woodward became president.

1929: Ralph Holmes was the speaker, reporting the fiftieth annual meeting of the Linnaean Society. He said when it was started, members went birding with a gun, and no report of birds seen was counted unless a specimen was brought in. Informal talks at schools were planned.

Warren Eaton became president and remained so for seven years, until his untimely death. His unbounding vitality and love of devotion to the out-of-doors will never be forgotten. He started the fight on the pole trap bill. He also compiled a list of birds of Essex County.

In 1930, the Club gave its approval of the bill to protect bald eagles.

For several years meetings and trips were routine. Support was given to a bill to protect duck hawks.

1934: The sum of \$30 was used to purchase six quail. They were banded and released in Upper Montclair in hopes they would increase, but they quickly disappeared and were heard of no more.

1935: Roger Peterson spoke, showed pictures, and gave his famous bird calls. Wires were sent to representatives sponsoring protection bills, among them one to oppose turning Troy Meadows into a flood control lake. Bill Rustling showed pictures of Cape May Point.

After Warren Eaton's death, Lee Edwards became president. All who are privileged to follow him on field trips appreciate his quiet way of pointing out not only birds but ferns, flowers and trees.

1938 meeting: Richard Pough spoke on hawks. Carol Davis became president. Living in Madison, she had to run things by remote control and had many a hard trip through inclement weather. Allan Cruikshank spoke again and showed pictures of the Gaspé.

A never-to-be-forgotten evening was when Harry Trippett spoke on snakes—not only talked but brought them, crates full of them, and passed them around to anyone who would touch them. Shortly afterward, a rattlesnake struck, and Mr. Trippett's life was saved with difficulty. After that meeting, a thorough search under furniture was made.

1941: Carl Buchhheister spoke, and one wonders if he has yet lived down his reference to double-breasted cormorants. He showed pictures of the Audubon camp in Maine and of birds of the east coast.

1942: At the Art Museum, Cleveland Grant showed strikingly beautiful pictures of birds of the western plains. In June, the annual meeting was held in the lovely home and garden of Mr. and Mrs. Walther, and it has been an outstanding event ever since.

1943: Alec Sprund showed pictures of the southern sanctuaries. At another '43 meeting, Dr. Cynthia Westcott spoke of plant pests and the part birds play in keeping down these bugs.

1945: At a meeting in Montclair Heights Church, Bert Harwell of California showed slides of western birds and gave their calls. It was voted to send an annual \$5 membership to the National Audubon. Later in the year, Mr. Sottrell showed pictures of the Pine Barrens. Mrs. Davis had a supper at her home in Madison. Mrs. Morison told of a trip to Fortescue for snow geese.

A severe snowstorm prevented many members from attending a 1947 meeting, but those who made it were richly rewarded by the wonderful pictures of a black bear hunt in Florida by Mr. VanDeusen. Mr. Brown was elected president. His leadership of field trips and the philosophy that went with them were much appreciated.

1949: Mr. and Mrs. Van Deusen entertained the Club in their home, and Hobart showed pictures of his long scientific trip to Australia and told interesting highlights of it. The sharing of his wide, scientific knowledge was truly educational. Mr. Van Deusen was elected president.

In a December meeting, Mr. Shaughency showed his wonderful pictures of birding in Ontario.

1951: D'Arcy Northwood became president and gave freely of his time and efforts. His knowledge of birds of many lands is extensive. Mrs. Army reported of a newly acquired Mountainside Park, and a request was sent to the authorities to keep it in its natural state and not use it commercially. Boy and girl scouts have helped clear trails and put in bird baths and feeding stations. This may prove to be a happy hunting ground for those who cannot go farther afield.

In 1953, the Northwoods left town to live in Audubon, Pennsylvania, and restore Audubon's first home in America. Their going was a loss to Montclair. Charles Lincoln was the next president and gave freely of his time.

Now the mantle falls upon Jay Morison. We pledge him our support and best wishes.

Tribute should be paid to many for building the Club into the informal, congenial group it is. Too many to mention but all outstanding: the presidents and other officers, members of hospitality committees, Sue Haupt for her long and faithful planning of field trips, Mary Army for the delightful glimpses of the out-of-doors, the Edwards for their open house at Sparta, and the Walthers for the lavish hospitality at the annual meetings.

Thirty-five years have passed. This has been a somewhat monotonous chronology intended to show how the Club has grown in membership, interests, and, it is hoped, influence—and also how many noted naturalists have considered it worth their while to visit us.

What of the next 35? Wouldn't it be interesting to attend a meeting in 1990? Perhaps specimens of bird life from the moon will be shown.

9-55

Notes: 1) most of the original punctuation and formatting remains, 2) A few names were difficult to decipher, but I believe we are close and cross referenced where possible, 3) duck hawks are peregrine falcons, 4) pole traps were tall poles with traps on top to catch and kill raptors, 5) apologies for any misspellings, but in many cases we had to guess at missing letters.



It is time to start thinking about what bird you will nominate as the Montclair Bird Club's 2025 Bird of the Year.



**The final featured appearance of the Montclair Bird Club's 2024 Bird of the Year, photographed by Ardith Bondi.**

# MONTCLAIR BIRD CLUB OFFICERS 2024–2025

Evan Cutler	<b>President</b>
Deb DeSalvo	<b>Vice President</b>
Ric Cohn	<b>Treasurer</b>
Donna Traylor	<b>Recording Secretary</b>

## **Executive Board**

Bill Beren  
Ardith Bondi  
Wayne Quinto  
Don Traylor  
Rick Wright

## **Recent Montclair Bird Club meetings on YouTube**

Colombian Andes

[youtube.com/watch?v=Piv9On6RX90](https://youtube.com/watch?v=Piv9On6RX90)

Whimbrels

[youtube.com/watch?v=6-P2rT5Txg4](https://youtube.com/watch?v=6-P2rT5Txg4)

## New Members

### 2023

#### October

Jimma Byrd TX

#### October

Tom Mulligan Montclair, NJ  
 Sulima Elemam Montclair, NJ  
 Saeid Amiri Montclair, NJ  
 Susan Amiri Montclair, NJ  
 Becky Meister Woodcliff Lake, NJ  
 Warren Harper Montclair, NJ  
 Tsiona Butvinik

#### November

Diane Holsinger VA  
 Lauri Carlotti Belleville, NJ  
 Lisa Kroop Berkely Heights, NJ

#### December

Eva DeAngelis Franklin Lakes, NJ

### 2024

#### February

Samuel Crespo Clifton, NJ

#### March

Peter A. Axelrod Berkeley Heights, NJ  
 Sharon Gill Bloomfield, NJ

#### April

Howard Spaeth Glen Rock, NJ

#### May

Todd Sloane Little Falls, NJ

#### June

Dena Ressler Teaneck, NJ

#### July

Molly Cody Montclair, NJ

#### September

Christina Gilham Montclair, NJ  
 Becky Meister Woodcliff Lake  
 Danica Stitz Montclair, NJ  
 Mike Cucka Montclair, NJ

This list includes new members,  
 returning members, and additions  
 from our Friends roster.



## Field Trips

### The Montclair Hawk Watch Sixty-eighth Season Daily Through November 30

This autumn season's counting begins September 1 and runs daily through November 30. Come meet this year's counter, Andre Golumbeski, and enjoy migration in action. Now in its 68th year atop the First Watchung Mountain, this New Jersey Audubon sanctuary is the second-oldest hawk watch site in the United States.

For directions and more information, visit [njudubon.org/watches/montclair-hawk-watch](http://njudubon.org/watches/montclair-hawk-watch).



Peregrine Falcon. Photo Wayne Quinto

**Saturday, October 31, 2024**  
**(rain date November 1)**

**Bee Meadow Park**

111 Reynolds Road, Whippany, NJ 07981

Meet at 8:00 am in the parking lot.

The various habitats of this 89-acre town park provide great birding opportunities throughout the year. Bee Meadow is a multiuse park with playing fields, pools, an “open” pond and a “hidden” pond, and lots of parking. The two ponds are evidence of the area’s past use for brick production (which means the clay soil can be slippery when we wander off the newly constructed path). The park includes a front exposed pond, a second pond surrounded by a wet woodland, a powerline cut, numerous edge habitats, and an attempt at native plantings. As an aside, Bee Meadow Park was a favorite birding haunt of Pete Dunne when he was a child. We hope to see a variety of ducks, sparrows, and other late migrants.

The trails are flat, and if wet, muddy and slippery. Walking off-trail is allowed. There are no bathrooms at this location. Write [mbcoutings@gmail.com](mailto:mbcoutings@gmail.com) for more information.



**Saturday, November 16, 2024**  
**(rain date November 17)**

## **Photography at Mill Creek Marsh**

***with Sandy Sorkin and Ric Cohn***

Meet at 8:00 am at Mill Creek Marsh Trailhead, Secaucus.

Join us for a Montclair Bird Club photography trip to Mill Creek Marsh. Meet at the entrance gate by Bob's Discount Furniture with your preferred equipment—cameras, tripods, scopes, and smartphones. We'll take our time along the trail, keeping the sun over our shoulders as we concentrate on photographing birds, landscapes, woodchucks, and any other slice of nature we encounter. If you are new to photography, or just like to watch photographers, you are welcome to come along. There will be plenty of opportunities for sharing tips, helping each other with equipment, or reviewing shots.

For further information, call or write Ric Cohn at 917 414-3392 or Sandy Sorkin at 973 698-7900. Driving directions are [here](#).





**Tuesday, December 3: Sandy Hook  
(canceled in the event of bad weather)**

***with Rick Wright and Alison Beringer***

Meet at 9:30 am in Lot B, on the right side of the road just past the entrance booths.

An hour and a half from Bloomfield and Montclair, the long peninsula of Sandy Hook is irresistible in late autumn to seabirds and terrestrial species alike. We will explore the beaches, ocean waters, holly forests, and thickets in search of waterfowl, raptors, and migrant and wintering passerines. Among the birds we can hope to see are all three scoter species, common eider, horned lark, snow bunting, and Ipswich sparrow. Sandy Hook is a great place to look for glaucous and Kumlien gulls, snowy owls, and other scarce winterers, too.

Expect to walk a total of about three miles today, some of it on loose sand. If you have a spotting scope, you will want to bring it. Dress for cold weather, and bring a snack, a lunch, and a warm drink. Weather permitting, we will have lunch at North Beach, then bird our way slowly back out of the area, arriving at home around 3:30 pm. Driving directions are here.



## Trip Reports

### Montclair Hawk Watch

September

Andre Golumbeski

#### Parasitic Jaeger Over Montclair

As you are all aware, the Montclair Hawkwatch is noteworthy for the thousands of Broad-winged Hawks that pass over in September on their way south. Unfortunately, this spectacle seems like it will have to wait another year, as a result of relentless east winds throughout the entire month of September likely blowing the Broad-wings well west of here. This was a disappointment to be sure, but there have to be some consolation prizes, right? Well, on October 1, I may have had just that. A little bit after 2:45 on that Tuesday, I was scanning the skies in the hopes of finding just about any raptor when I landed on a very strange-looking bird. I first thought it was a gull, but within a second, I knew it was something much better. This bird was quite dark for a gull, had angular and pointed wings, a very acrobatic flight style, and, the clincher, a distinctive white flash at the base of the primaries. I was awestruck. I was looking at a jaeger over Montclair!

It was so high and fast that I didn't dare take my binoculars off of it in case I couldn't find it again. I stared this bird down, white-knuckling my binoculars, trying to pick up any field marks. It was high over Mills heading southeast, and I watched it cruise off the ridge over Clifton, thinking that would be the end of my sighting. But then it abruptly changed direction and headed straight back for the hawkwatch, and I could finally see it with the naked eye. I reached down for my camera and tried to focus on the bird as it approached. The jaeger arrived over the platform and was directly overhead when it banked and started heading to the southeast again when I finally found it in my viewfinder. I rattled off dozens of photos, mainly to help me identify this bird, but also as proof that I did in fact have this encounter. The bird tore straight off the ridge and headed right over Upper Montclair, apparently making a beeline for New York Bay. I quickly sent a message out to the Urban NJ Birds GroupMe and to Evan Cutler in the hopes that someone might be able to intercept the bird to the east, or perhaps had seen it before it got to me, but unfortunately it evaded further sighting.

I knew right away that this was an immature jaeger, meaning identification would prove to be quite a challenge, especially so given its altitude, and my relatively little experience with these birds without context. I'd seen Parasitic Jaegers many times in the fall from Cape May, but those were over the ocean. And there, you have a relatively good sense of when and where to expect each species (Long-tailed and Pomarine are often found 50 miles offshore, but very rarely from land). But over Montclair, this bird was in a vacuum and unprecedented, so all bets were off. Given its size, flight style, and wing length, I knew in the moment that this couldn't be a Long-tailed Jaeger. Separating Parasitic and Pomarine would be much more challenging. After

reviewing the photos myself and sending them to various people (including Alex Bernzweig), it was determined that this was a Parasitic Jaeger based on its somewhat narrower wing base, smaller head, and generally less bulky body. This represents the first record of this species (or of any jaeger for that matter) not only from the Montclair Hawkwatch but from all of Essex County. And according to what's in eBird, it is the first Parasitic Jaeger sighting anywhere inland in northern New Jersey!

I have no idea why this bird decided to appear in front of me on that day. My best guess was that the bird was somehow blown off course by the rain and outer hurricane bands over the weekend before, and was looking to find its way back to the coast now that the weather had cleared. This was my assumption based on sightings of both Long-tailed and Pomarine Jaegers on lakes in Pennsylvania over that weekend which were temporarily grounded by the weather. On the other hand, these birds are thought to migrate over land, but just too high for us to see them, and maybe Montclair's position on the ridge gave me just enough altitude to pick one up. There's no real way to know, but I am so incredibly thankful to have been able to be there for that sighting. I've been birding for a long time and that without a doubt is one of the most memorable experiences I've ever had, and it's not one that I'll soon forget. Just goes to show that even on a slow day, you never know what you may find.



## Hilltop Reservation

October 5, 2024

Evan Cutler

No autumn in Montclair is complete without a trip to Hilltop Reservation. While technically not in Montclair, much of our time at the Montclair Hawk Lookout is spent looking out over Hilltop, just across the valley atop the second ridge of the Watchung Range. Years ago, I'd go up there and not see a single person all morning. Those days of having the place to myself are long gone, thanks to the development of several large townhouse communities which now surround the reservation. Nevertheless, it is still a terrific place to enjoy a morning walk—especially after a cold front in October.

Unfortunately, our latest walk with the Montclair Bird Club was not after one of those cold fronts. While this fall has been lovely, bird-wise these southeast winds and mild temperatures have been fairly unproductive. Still, the birds have to head south sooner or later, and we were blessed with a decent volume of songbirds, especially White-throated Sparrows. A minute into our walk, I got my FOTF (first of the fall) White-throated. Eventually we'd end up with 80, which was a VERY rough estimate. They were everywhere. Our group of 12 (the perfect size, may I add) started at the dog park and then worked our way up to the official entrance to the reservation. Fred Pfeifer was extremely helpful in pointing out the distinctive call of the Golden-crowned Kinglet—which was outnumbered by Ruby-crowneds 30 to 3. He was also extremely helpful in pointing out the differences between Hilltop and Garret Mountain—which he did on many occasions. It was good to see Fred get out and explore somewhere BESIDES Garret.

We got to the large meadow atop the reservation and then took the path that cuts across past the enormous blue water tower. Just off in the distance, we spotted an American Kestrel atop a large tree. We got great looks at it, when suddenly a second raptor entered the picture. This was a Merlin. It was a great opportunity to see the difference between the two birds. The Merlin was obviously much bigger and darker than the Kestrel. But what struck us was how much beefier and more muscular the Merlin was compared to the Sparrow Hawk (as Fred still likes to call it). The Merlin took a dive at the Kestrel, and then for the next minute or so the two birds were engaged in an aerial battle. We were afraid the Kestrel might not survive the fight, but eventually the Kestrel disappeared, and the Merlin perched nearby, victorious.

For the next two hours we got some great looks at other raptors, including a sole Broad-winged Hawk as well as three Sharp-shinned Hawks and a single Cooper's Hawk. We then spotted a warbler that I quickly identified as a Blackpoll—possibly. It was a textbook “confusing fall warbler.” Distinct wingbars, some yellow across the belly, yellow legs. Several of us took photographs, and the more we looked at this bird, the more it started to look like a Bay-breasted Warbler. And then it magically transitioned into a Blackburnian Warbler. We're still not 100% sure what it was: if there were a species on eBird called the Bay-burnian-poll, I would have gladly added that one to our list.

By the time we returned to our cars at the dog park, we had 46 species and nearly 500 individual birds. Not bad for three hours on what we thought would be a fairly quiet morning. Hilltop is a great place to visit, no matter how many birds happen to be there. The history of the location is incredible, and it is impossible not to feel the presence of the people who resided there when it was a tuberculosis sanitarium—which relatively speaking, was not that long ago. Many people say the place is haunted. Dozens of articles in [Weird NJ](#) have been written about the place, as well as the terrific photo book "[Essex Mountain Sanatorium](#)." Here's our list for the morning:

Canada Goose 14	Carolina Wren 1
Mourning Dove 12	European Starling 30
Turkey Vulture 6	Gray Catbird 12
Sharp-shinned Hawk 3	Northern Mockingbird 1
Cooper's Hawk 1	American Robin 32
Broad-winged Hawk 1	Cedar Waxwing 2
Red-tailed Hawk 5	House Sparrow 2
Red-bellied Woodpecker 12	House Finch 10
Downy Woodpecker 5	American Goldfinch 1
Hairy Woodpecker 1	White-throated Sparrow 80
Northern Flicker 10	Song Sparrow 20
American Kestrel 1	Swamp Sparrow 8
Peregrine Falcon 1	Red-winged Blackbird 14
Eastern Wood-Pewee 1	Brown-headed Cowbird 2
Eastern Phoebe 2	Common Grackle 60
Red-eyed Vireo 3	Common Yellowthroat 12
Blue Jay 40	Magnolia Warbler 1
American Crow 2	Blackburnian Warbler 1
Common Raven 1	Blackpoll Warbler 1
Black-capped Chickadee 1	Black-throated Blue Warbler 1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet 30	Palm Warbler 15
Golden-crowned Kinglet 3	Yellow-rumped Warbler 20
White-breasted Nuthatch 2	Northern Cardinal 4
House Wren 2	





## Virtual Bird Walks

### 2020

July	1	Local Birding
August	2	Backyards and a Marsh
September	3	Backyards and Trips
October	4	Member Birding
November	5	Member Birding
December	6	Member Birding

### 2021

January	7	International Birding and New York City
February	8	International Birding
March	9	Member Birding
April	10	Shore Birds
May	11	Local Birding
June	12	Member Birding
July	13	Birding Costa Rica
August	14	Identify a Bird by Its Eyes
September	15	Birds and Water
October	16	Birds with Masks
November	17	Winter Birds

### 2022

January	18	Personal Choice
February	19	Color
March	20	Signs of Spring
April	21	Birds Eating or Black & White Birds
May	22	Local Birds
September	23	My Summer
November	24	Bird Pairs
December	25	A Trip

## 2023

January	26	Winter
February	27	A Month in a Birder's Life
March	28	Egrets, Herons, and Wading Birds
April	29	Woodpeckers
May	30	Small Birds
June		Members Meeting, no Virtual Bird Walk
September	31	What I Did on My Summer Vacation
October	32	Black & Orange

## 2024

January	33	Cold
February	34	Water
March	35	Beyond the Bird
May	36	Pick-a-Place
September	37	Summer Birding
October	38	Fall Color

## Upcoming VENT Tours

[ventbird.com](http://ventbird.com)

<b>Nebraska</b>	Sandhill Cranes and Prairie Chickens	March 17–24, 2025
<b>Nebraska</b>	Niobrara River Extension	March 24–27, 2025
<b>Germany</b>	Birds and Art in Berlin	September 19–28, 2025
<b>France</b>	Brittany in Fall	October 1–9, 2025
<b>Texas</b>	South Texas in Style	January 5–18, 2026
<b>Texas</b>	VENT 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration	April 19–24, 2026
<b>Italy</b>	Birds and Art in Apulia	April 28–May 8, 2026
<b>France</b>	Birds and Art in Provence	May 9–17, 2026
<b>Scotland</b>	Scotland in Style	May 26–Jun 7, 2026
<b>Nebraska</b>	The Sandhills and Pine Ridge	June 11–21, 2026
<b>Spain</b>	Birds and the Solar Eclipse in Asturias	August 8–16, 2026
<b>France</b>	Brittany in Fall	October 1–9, 2026

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## Montclair Bird Club Meeting History

### 2020

May	An Online Quiz, with Rick Wright.
June	A Walk on Pipeline Road, by Sandy Sorkin.
July	The Real James Bond, by Jim Wright.
August	An Online Quiz, with Rick Wright.
September	Manakins and Microbes, by Jennifer Houtz.
October	Bizarre Breeding Behaviors of Tropical Cuckoos, by Christine Riehl.
November	Dispersal in Young Peregrine Falcons, by Elise Morton.
December	An MBC Story Slam, by Pamela Olsen.

### 2021

January	Modern-Day Exploration in the Tropics, by Dan Lane.
February	Winter Raptors, by Giselle Smisko.
March	Damselflies and Dragonflies: The Other White Meat, by George Nixon.
April	Wolf Natural History and Tourism in Yellowstone, by Paul Brown.
May	Sandhills and Saw-whets, by Matthew Schuler.
June	Magnificent Namibia, by Linda Woodbury.
September	Raptors, by Wayne Quinto.
October	Watershed, by Hazel England.
November	Build-a-Bird, with Rick Wright.

### 2022

January	A Tale of Many Penguins, by Ardith Bondi.
February	Oh! Canada, by Chris Sturm.
March	Tracking the Migration of New Jersey Birds Using the Motus Network, by Cailin O'Connor.
April	Spotlighting Voices in Bird Conservation, by Mardi Dickinson.
May	101 Great Birds from Around the World, by Mark Garland.
June	Members Meeting.
September	Exploring the Big Bend in Southwest Texas, by Donna Traylor.
October	Build-a-Bird II, with Rick Wright.
November	On Safari: Botswana and South Africa, by Ric Cohn.

## 2023

January	America's Iconic Birdman: Frank Chapman, by James Huffstodt.
February	A Bird Club in San Diego, by Rick Wright.
March	The Peregrine Project, by Wayne Quinto.
April	Piping Plovers on the Rockaway Peninsula, by Chris Allieri.
May	Basic Ornithology, by Phil Echo.
June	Members Meeting.
September	Build-a-Bird III, with Rick Wright.
October	Finding W. H. Hudson, The Writer Who Came to Britain to Save the Birds, by Conor Mark Jameson
November	Attracting Screech Owls, by Jim Wright
November	Birding and Conservation in Italy, by Marcos Valtriani

## 2024

January	Panama, by Rick Wright
February	The Spectacular Staging of the Whimbrel on the Texas Coast, by Sam Wolfe – <a href="#">YouTube</a>
March	Looking for the Goshawk: The Lost Raptor, by Conor Jameson
April	The Life of the Whooping Crane, by Paityn Bower
May	Birds of Colombia, by Deborah Bifulco
June	Members Meeting
September	History of Woodcocks, by Peter Axelrod
October	Birding While Indian, by Thomas Gannon
November	Through the Looking Glass: Reflections of a Grateful Birder by Kevin Karlson

## Birds In This Issue

- Page 1: Feral Pigeons, by Sandy Sorkin (SS)
- Page 19: Bee with pollen (SS)
- Page 21: Kumlien gull, by Rick Wright
- Page 23: Parasitic jaeger, by Andre Golumbeski





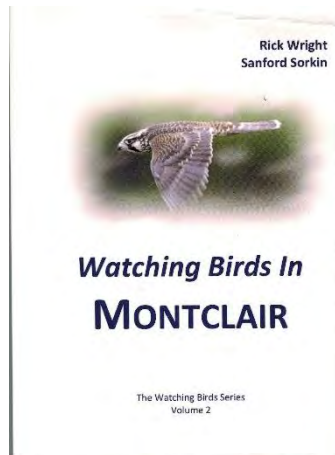
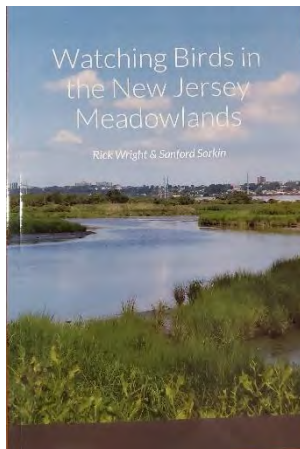
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# The MBC Bulletin Bird

## Montclair Bird Club Officers for 2024–2025

President .....Evan Cutler  
Vice President .....Deb DeSalvo  
Treasurer .....Ric Cohn  
Recording Secretary ....Donna Traylor

### Committees

Field Trips .....Beni Fishbein  
Programs .....Donna Traylor  
Publicity .....Wayne Quinto  
Refreshments.....Difficult with Zoom

**The Broadwing Editor  
and Photographer** .....Sandy Sorkin

## THE BROADWING

The *Broadwing* is published nine or ten times a year. We usually vacation during July and August, and stay home in December.

Send photos, field notes, or articles to Sandy at [MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com](mailto:MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com).

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