



# The Osprey

Our 45th Year!

Newsletter of the Monmouth County

Audubon Society

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## Message from the President

by Bob Henschel

As some of you already know, our long relationship with Trinity Episcopal Church will be coming to an end next year. For more than three decades the Church's leaders have graciously let us make their wonderfully spacious and convenient meeting hall our home base. The reason why we need to leave is simple. Its religious community is doing so well that it requires more space for programs and services... Contrary to speculation; it has nothing to do with what the penguin may have left on the floor. (*Ed. note: reference to a Family Night program some years back with a very gregarious penguin strolling through the meeting room.*)

Thankfully, we have been offered several alternate meeting sites that meet our needs, all of which are within a few miles of Red Bank. They're all available immediately, so we may be moving as early as January. We'll let you know as soon as possible. To be sure, check the website. No computer? No problem. Just give us a call.

Trinity Episcopal has been a great meeting place and we'll be sad to leave, but there is a silver lining... It's fairly safe to say; no matter we go, Tom Jones (or whoever is performing at the Count Basie) won't be taking over our parking places any more!

As a rough guess, I'd say we've held close to 300 meetings at the Church; most featuring a guest presenter. Many stand out in my memory—some for the better, some otherwise.

Visit us on the Web!

In the interest of kindness, I won't mention any of the "clunkers" by name—except maybe for one, for which I take total responsibility since I was the program arranger that year.

When I spoke to Davis Finch months before the meeting date, he emphasized that his program on "Gull Identification" was a bit long and detailed. But I assured him that our members could handle an in depth presentation and would especially appreciate insight on how to differentiate those ubiquitous birds.

Having not seen his presentation, I was understandably apprehensive that night. But my worries were quickly extinguished. Davis Finch was a great speaker with excellent visuals; and after about an hour or so I was amazed by all the information I had "uploaded." Feeling fulfilled, at that point I began looking forward to his final comments so members could get to the refreshments and I could get home at a reasonable hour... Plus, the little "memory chip" between my ears was pretty much full. However, a half hour later Davis was still going strong, and there were quite a few gulls to go. It was around that point when many members began to covertly head for the exit. I, of course, couldn't join them since not only was I the program arranger, but also president that year. If I ducked out no one would be there to lock up the church; not to mention the fact that it would most certainly jeopardize my

chances for reelection. Somewhere around the two-hour mark we were learning how to differentiate second from third winter Great Black-backed Gulls—or was it the first winter from the second—I forget. In any case, the audience was less than half of what we started with. By 10 pm, most of them were on their way. I drifted over to the cookie table. Finally, with 11 pm just a few ticks away, Mr. Finch wrapped it up. It had been, as advertised, a comprehensive, expertly presented, enlightening program. But as one of the handful of remaining "larid-lovers" whispered to me on the way out, "I think it was a little too much of a good thing."

Indeed, some second-Wednesday nights have been quite memorable; and hopefully at our new gathering place we'll enjoy many more.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving.

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[www.monmouthaudubon.org](http://www.monmouthaudubon.org)



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P.O. Box 542, Red Bank, NJ 07701  
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Sen. Lautenberg Secures Funding for White Nose Syndrome Research

Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg (D-NJ) announced recently that funding to protect bat populations in New Jersey and throughout the region has been increased from \$500,000 to \$1.9 million for Fiscal Year 2010. The senator successfully fought to increase the funding for research into a mysterious and deadly illness called White Nose Syndrome (WNS) that is destroying bat populations in New Jersey and the Northeast region. The legislation will now head to the White House where it is expected to be signed into law.

WNS is named for white fungal growth around the noses and on the bodies of affected animals. It first appeared in caves near Albany, New York, in February 2006 and was confirmed in New Jersey in 2009. Over the last two winters, more than one million hibernating bats have died.

The Great Backyard Bird Count 2010 needs your input

Bird watchers coast to coast are invited to take part in the 13th annual Great Backyard Bird Count, Friday, February 12 through Monday, February 15, 2010. Participants in the free event will join tens of thousands of volunteers to count birds in their own backyards, local parks or wildlife refuges.

Each checklist submitted by these “citizen scientists” helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how the birds are doing, and how to protect them. Last year, participants turned in more than 93,600 checklists online, creating the continent’s largest instantaneous snapshot of bird populations ever recorded.

“Taking part in the Great Backyard Bird Count is a great way to get outside with family and friends, have fun and help birds, all at the same time,” said Audubon Education Vice President, Judy Braus. “Everyone who participates will get a chance to hone their observation skills, learn more about birds, and make a great contribution to the future.”

Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from novice bird watchers to experts. Participants count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the event and report their sightings online at [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org).

As in past years, MCAS members will be counting birds on all four days at the Manasquan Reservoir Environmental Center in Howell. Counter Dena Temple remarks, “It’s a great place to observe the birds of the reservoir in complete comfort. In February, that’s pretty terrific.” You can participate by spending time with the counters, adding your sightings to the “tote board,” and sharing your appreciation of nature with casual observers.

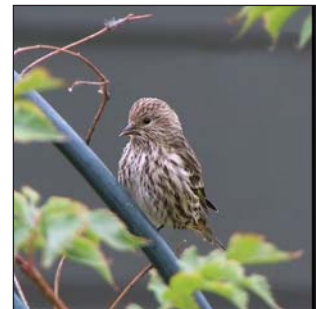
For more information about the GBBC, visit the website at [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org).

The Great Backyard Bird Count is made possible, in part, by generous support from Wild Birds Unlimited.

We hope to see you there!

Special Thanks

We would like to take a moment to thank these special sponsors, whose donations are greatly appreciated: John Luthin, Alice Rounds, Debbie Grob, David Saidnaway of Wild Birds Unlimited, Jane Eigenrauch, and Katharine McCleary.



*Pine Siskins appeared on most states’ GBBC totals in 2009.*



by Harden Fowler

## Green Acres Clean Water Act

In September MCAS joined with other environmental groups ([www.NJKeepItGreen.org](http://www.NJKeepItGreen.org)) in support of Ballot Question #1, the Green Acres Clean Water Act. In hard economic times, we had concern that after 50 years of support for Green Acres preservation, funding had run out. Voters were asked to approve \$400 million in bonds, costing only \$10 annually per household, dedicated to protection of lands and waterways for conservation and recreation. We believed that defeat of the funding would be a short-sighted disaster, because once important open lands are developed, habitat suffers forever. The statement below from New Jersey Audubon Society cites the importance of approval and the consequence of defeat on a source for funding open spaces.

“By voting Yes on Public Question #1, we will continue our state’s support for the Green Acres program, which helps protect our drinking water sources, preserve natural areas for wildlife and our enjoyment, and create new parks. If New Jersey’s voters deny the renewal of these programs on November 3rd, state-assisted land preservation will grind to a halt. Property containing valuable habitat around the state will be more likely to be sold to developers.”

Ballot Question #1 is up for a vote as we go to press. Keep your fingers crossed. (*Editor’s Note: Congratulations members -- we saved NJ’s open spaces!*)

## Beauty in nature is where you find it

One day at the end of June, I came across some parsley sprigs discarded on my driveway by my neighbor. She had a pot of it growing on her balcony. When I picked it up, I noticed a plump, colorful caterpillar on it and thought from the green, black and yellow stripes it might be a “good” caterpillar rather than a pest, as she thought. Getting out my handy little *Golden Guide to Butterflies and Moths*, there was a picture of this same larva. It was a black swallowtail butterfly.

This little gem of a book even told me how to raise them into beautiful butterflies by putting them with a few twigs into a tightly sealed plastic bag and feeding them parsley. The only other care needed - clean out any droppings.

After a few days I had accumulated ten of these larvae, and after telling my neighbor what they were, as I begged some parsley to feed them, she decided to leave her pot of parsley with a few more caterpillars remaining on her balcony.

About a week later, I noticed they had stopped eating and were attaching to the twigs, forming brown pupae. Since I picked them up nearly full-grown I didn’t know how old they were, but assume at least one week old. After nine days they were in the pupa stage and remained so for about 10-12 days before emerging as butterflies. Eventually all ten caterpillars formed pupae, but only 5 emerged as butterflies, three female and one male. The females have more blue dots. Males only have about three dots on the wings. The fifth butterfly emerged, but its wings were deformed and never filled out.

It was raining all day when the fourth emerged, and it wouldn’t fly away. It remained on my balcony with its twig stuck in a pot of plants slightly sheltered from the rain until the next morning, when I finally waded the stick and shook it loose to fly away into the sun. I was disappointed that not all ten caterpillars emerged, but at least I was able to release four beautiful swallowtails to the world instead of having the caterpillars feed some hungry birds.

- Jane Headley

## Greetings Grab Attention with Surprising Sounds

*Fun new cards contain real bird songs and calls*

A woodpecker may hammer, a loon wail, or a cardinal sing. Open a card from a new series of collectible greetings and out pop cheeps, peeps, whistles, and croaks from a variety of beautiful birds. The cards are produced by the U.K.’s Really Wild Cards and their authentic bird recordings come from the Macaulay Library archive at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Each card features an elegant painting selected from the Cornell Lab’s art collection and contains information about the bird.

“The quality of the sound is fabulous not only because of what we’ve done at our end, but because of the editing and engineering work done in the Macaulay Library,” says John Wignall of Really Wild Cards. “You get 13 to 15 seconds of the best sounds of that particular bird. I love the loon - it has a great, haunting call. I love the woodpeckers too. You get the whole range of sounds the birds make.”

A percentage of profits from sales of the cards will fund research and conservation projects at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

For more information visit the manufacturer’s website, [www.really-wildcards.com](http://www.really-wildcards.com).



## Join the MCAS eGroup!

An eGroup is a bulletin board just for MCAS members. You will receive information on upcoming trips, local conservation news, bird sightings, etc. We also use this system to announce the availability of the newsletter online.

To subscribe, send an e-mail to [mcas\\_newslet-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:mcas_newslet-subscribe@yahoo.com).



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## Membership Application

**Please enroll me** as a member of the Monmouth County Audubon Society (Q04) and/or the National Audubon Society. My check is enclosed for:

- \$10 **Regular** Chapter member
- \$20 Chapter **Sustaining** member - all funds stay in our area, helping us to support local efforts and provide services here in Monmouth County.
- \$20 **National Audubon Society** member - includes Chapter membership (rate for new members only; renewable at \$35)
- Please contact me regarding volunteer opportunities.
- Do not add my name to the mailing list; I will read the newsletter online.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

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Please make checks payable to MCAS and return along with application to:  
 Monmouth County Audubon Society, P.O. Box 542, Red Bank, NJ 07701.

*Membership questions? Call us at 732-USA-BIRD.*

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**coming up**

Wed., Dec. 9 . . . . . 8:00 - 9:30 pm  
**"Birds and Birding at Cape May,"** Pat & Clay Sutton

Sat., Dec. 12 . . . 10:00 am - noon  
**Bird Walk: Sandy Hook,** meet in parking lot at Visitor Center

Wed., Jan. 13 . . . . . 8:00 - 9:30 pm  
**"Bats: Denizens of the Night,"** Mackenzie Hall

Sat., Jan. 23 . . . . . 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
**Part I: Barnegat Inlet birding;** meet in lighthouse parking lot, 1 pm  
**Part II: Manahawkin WMA;** meet at Dunkin Donuts, Route 9 North, Manahawkin, 3:45 pm

*(All ending times are approximate.)*

\* Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month Sept.- May at Trinity Episcopal Church, White Street, Red Bank. Meetings are open to the public, and refreshments are served.

Call (732) USA-BIRD for details on field trips, activities or cancellations due to weather. This is a 24-hour message line.