

# THE OSPREY



Newsletter of the

Monmouth County Audubon Society

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

Over 50 Years of Birds and Conservation

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## ► Announcing the Winners of the 2022 Monmouth County Audubon's Ted Engberg Conservation Scholarships

by JoAnn Molnar



Monmouth County Audubon Society is pleased to announce the 2022 Ted Engberg Wildlife Conservation Scholarship winners.

Mehr Kotval of Matawan-Aberdeen Regional High School and Olivia Reiber of Marine Academy of Science and Technology were selected from a pool of qualified candidates. Both graduating high school seniors will receive a \$1500 scholarship to assist them in pursuing their college degrees. Mehr Kotval and Olivia Reiber demonstrated excellent academic work, extracurricular pursuits, community service, and an intent to pursue careers that will benefit wildlife conservation.

Mehr Kotval recently graduated from Matawan-Aberdeen Regional High School with Honors. Mehr co-founded a volunteer initiative called "Sea the Future," a town-wide initiative that participated in a state-wide data collection program that played a role in environmental policy. As a result of his outstanding achievements, he was appointed as the youngest member of his town's Environmental Board. Mehr will continue his studies at the University of Southern California as part of the entering class of fall 2022.

Olivia Reiber took her Marine Research MAST Capstone to the Jersey Shore Science Fair, placed 3rd, and then on to the Delaware Valley Science Fair, and won first place! Olivia will enter the University of Rhode Island in the Fall to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Marine Biology.

MCAS congratulates Mehr and Olivia and wishes them success in their college careers!



Autumn migration is not just for the birds. Here, Monarch butterflies gather for the next stage of their journeys to Mexico. Read more about them on page 4

Photo by Lisa Ann Fanning

## Monmouth County Audubon Society

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### Newsletter Staff

Lisa Ann Fanning, Editor

The Osprey is published by the Monmouth County Audubon Society, local chapter of the National Audubon Society. Our mission is to promote the awareness, appreciation and conservation of natural resources through activism and educational outreach, and by representing the National Audubon Society in Monmouth County, NJ. Inquiries concerning the organization, newsletter, letters to the editor or material submitted for consideration are encouraged and may be sent to: P.O. Box 542, Red Bank, NJ 07701 E-mail: monmouthaudubon@gmail.com

## ► FROM THE EDITOR

*“Autumn is the mellower season, and what we lose in flowers we more than gain in fruits.”*

- Samuel Butler

And so begins another autumn. Some consider it an end to summer, and others enjoy the energy of movement that comes with it. Migration is happening, butterflies are gathering, and leaves are changing colors, temperatures are dropping to comfortable levels for many to name a few examples. This is a dynamic time, and a great time to get out and observe it all!

Autumn also kicks off a new year here at Monmouth County Audubon. We have had some office changes. I have been proud to serve as Field Trip Coordinator for the past 11 years and I now pass that baton to Paul Mandala who is an amazing naturalist with some incredible experiences on his resume.

As such, I have been able to assume the positions held previously by Michael Davenport who has moved from Monmouth County. He has done an incredible job as editor of the Osprey, webmaster as well as our Conservation Chair, and is responsible for the creation of our Conservation Grants which will live on, helping to fund important projects around the county. Rob Fanning who has dedicated his life to sharing the wonders of nature will step in to assume the role of Conservation Chair.

An organization is defined by its people, and MCAS is lucky to have a collection of a wonderful group of passionate people who care. But we could also use some help! Please consider joining our team by volunteering. There are so many ways you can, just reach out to us and let us know what you are interested in.

Wishing you a wonderful autumn, with good birding and clear skies.

-Lisa Ann



*An Autumn Meadowhawk Dragonfly  
pauses for a rest on a fallen leaf  
Photo by Lisa Ann Fanning*

## ► Noteworthy Bird Sightings in Monmouth County

by Rob Fanning

- American Golden Plover: UT Trail near Assunpink 9/6 thru 9/12; Colts Neck 9/11;  
+ several reports @ Sandy Hook including one report of eight at Sandy Hook on 9/26
- Baird's Sandpiper MREC 8/21 to 8/25
- Black Tern: Conaskonk 6/23; 4+ at Manasquan Res (MREC) on 9/7
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper: 8/25 MREC: 9/8 + 9/16 Sandy Hook; Reeds Sod Farm high of 3 on 9/10
- Cape May Warbler: 4+ Sandy Hook 9/15; 2 @ Huber 9/15
- Clay-colored Sparrow: Sandy Hook 9/16, 9/25 + 9/26; Freneau 9/20;
- Common Nighthawk: Huber 9/15
- Connecticut Warbler: approx. 15 reported @ Sandy Hook on 9/14; Sandy Hook 9/22 + 9/26
- **\*\*GARGANEY\*\*** Found 6/1 Sea Girt remained for several weeks.
- Glossy Ibis: 10 at Conaskonk 7/26
- Grasshopper Sparrow: Dorbrook 6/3×
- Gull-billed Tern: 2 at Monmouth Beach Cultural Center on 6/11
- Hudsonian Godwit (2) Sandy Hook 9/26
- Lark Sparrow: 9/9; (2) Sandy Hook 9/21 thru 9/23;
- Little Blue Heron: 5 (1 ad) MREC 8/16
- --MONK PARAKEET: Sylvan lake late July thru at least August.
- Mourning Warbler: 6/6 Thompson
- Nashville Warbler: SH 9/15
- Olive-sided Flycatcher: Assunpink 9/10+
- Pectoral Sandpiper: 4+ at MREC 8/25; Freneau 9/26 - at least 9/27
- Philadelphia Vireo: Huber 9/9
- Pileated Woodpecker: 7/28 Thompson; 9/7 Huber Woods
- Red-breasted Nuthatch: various reports throughout county (flight year)
- Roseate Tern: 4 at Conaskonk point 6/23
- Rusty Blackbird: Colts Neck 9/22
- Solitary Sandpiper: Freneau 9/27
- Sora: Freneau 9/21 - at least 9/27
- Stilt Sandpiper MREC 8/18+
- Tennessee Warbler: 3 @ SH 9/15
- Western Sandpiper: several MREC 8/23
- Whimbrel: Sandy Hook 9/17 + 9/18
- White-rumped Sandpiper: several at MREC 8/21+
- Wilson's Phalarope MREC 9/11
- Wilson's Snipe: 3 at MREC 9/2
- Wilson's Warbler: Huber 9/15
- YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Huber 9/15
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 3 at Thompson 7/28; Freneau 9/26
- Yellow-throated Warbler MREC 9/8



*This Garganey found 6/1 Sea Girt (MH) at the National Guard Base wetland by Mike Heine. 3rd record for NJ (Last 2005) 1ST for Monmouth co. Stayed for several weeks enjoyed by hundreds. Photo by Lisa Ann Fanning*



*This Monk Parakeet was seen at Sylvan Lake late July thru at least August. This single bird was observed at/building nest and represents a third Monmouth County record of the species. Photo by Lisa Ann Fanning*

*Most of these sightings were posted to the Monmouth Audubon GroupMe text group.  
To be added contact Rob Fanning (bobolink0210@yahoo.com)*



## ➤ Migratory Monarch Butterfly Now Listed As Endangered

*IUCN Press release | 21 Jul, 2022*

<https://www.iucn.org/press-release/202207/migratory-monarch-butterfly-now-endangered-iucn-red-list>

*Gland, Switzerland, 21 July 2022 (IUCN)* – “The migratory monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus plexippus*), known for its spectacular annual journey of up to 4,000 kilometres across the Americas, has entered the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ as Endangered, threatened by habitat destruction and climate change.”

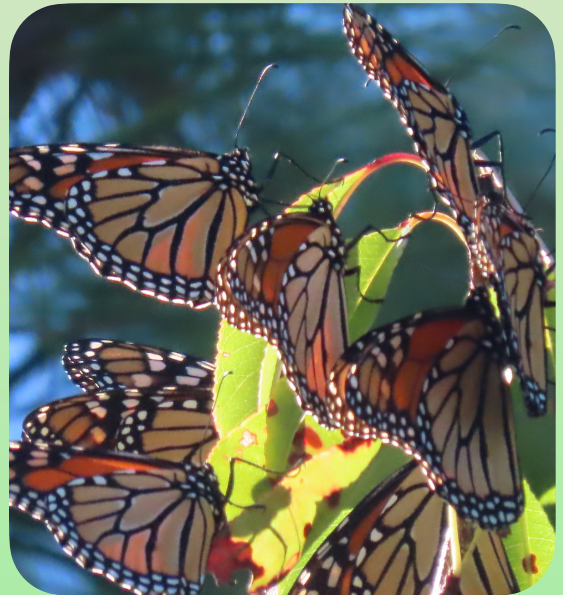
“Today’s Red List update highlights the fragility of nature’s wonders, such as the unique spectacle of monarch butterflies migrating across thousands of kilometres,” said Dr Bruno Oberle, IUCN Director General. “To preserve the rich diversity of nature we need effective, fairly governed protected and conserved areas, alongside decisive action to tackle climate change and restore ecosystems. In turn, conserving biodiversity supports communities by providing essential services such as food, water and sustainable jobs.”

The Endangered migratory monarch butterfly is a subspecies of the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*). The native population, known for its migrations from Mexico and California in the winter to summer breeding grounds throughout the United States and Canada, has shrunk by between 22% and 72% over the past decade. Legal and illegal logging and deforestation to make space for agriculture and urban development has already destroyed substantial areas of the butterflies’ winter shelter in Mexico and California, while pesticides and herbicides used in intensive agriculture across the range kill butterflies and milkweed, the host plant that the larvae of the monarch butterfly feed on.

Climate change has significantly impacted the migratory monarch butterfly and is a fast-growing threat; drought limits the growth of milkweed and increases the frequency of catastrophic wildfires, temperature extremes trigger earlier migrations before milkweed is available, while severe weather has killed millions of butterflies.

The western population is at greatest risk of extinction, having declined by an estimated 99.9%, from as many as 10 million to 1,914 butterflies between the 1980s and 2021. The larger eastern population also shrunk by 84% from 1996 to 2014. Concern remains as to whether enough butterflies survive to maintain the populations and prevent extinction.

“It is difficult to watch monarch butterflies and their extraordinary migration teeter on the edge of collapse, but there are signs of hope. So many people and organisations have come together to try and protect this butterfly and its habitats. From planting native milkweed and reducing pesticide use to supporting the protection of overwintering sites and contributing to community science, we all have a role to play in making sure this iconic insect makes a full recovery,” said Anna Walker, member of the IUCN SSC Butterfly and Moth Specialist Group and Species Survival Officer at the New Mexico BioPark Society, who led the monarch butterfly assessment.”



*Migratory Monarch butterflies gather before crossing the Delaware Bay on their journeys to Mexico.  
Photo by Lisa Ann Fanning*

## ► Remembering Laura Hardy

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of longtime MCAS board member Laura Hardy. Laura was Education chairperson 2002-3 and 2009-2011. She was also Field trip chairperson from 2009-2011. She was a very active volunteer around her beloved New Jersey and Georgia where she later moved before returning to New Jersey.

Her obituary, which was printed in the Asbury Park Press, captures who she was, and her passion for nature:

“Laura C. Hardy (née Whary) 52, passed away peacefully August 7th at JSUMC, Neptune NJ surrounded by close family, culminating a wonderful and fulfilling life of service on behalf of New Jersey’s endangered shore and woodland birds and plants. Her love of the outdoors was infectious, and her remarkable dedication to our state’s endangered shore birds such as the Piping Plover, lead her to important positions as a Lifetime Member and Program Monitor for the NJ Audubon Society, the Monmouth County NJ and Atlanta Georgia Audubon Societies, as well as volunteer posts with the Monmouth County Parks System and the Atlanta Beltline Arboretum. Laura was fond of gardening, taking great pride in caring for her African Violets and her black Labrador Retriever Blackberry. She received her Master Gardener certification from Rutgers University Cooperative Extension in 1999. She was also a talented nature photographer and authored the highly regarded blog “Somewhere in New Jersey.”



Back on dry land, Laura worked most recently as a Technical Account Manager for Yardi Systems Inc., and National Housing Compliance, Tucker GA, reporting on housing compliance. She also worked as a social worker for the Monmouth County Public Housing Authority and served as a Human Services Specialist, Bilingual, for Monmouth County Division of Social Services. She was a gifted teacher at Georgia Piedmont Technical College, Brookdale Community College and taught Spanish and Mathematics K-8 for Middletown Township and the Lavallette Boro schools. Laura received her MA in Education from Monmouth University, W. Long Branch, NJ in 1999, as well as a BA in Spanish, Cum Laude, from Montclair State University, Upper Montclair, NJ in 1992. She graduated Raritan High School, Hazlet NJ in 1988. Laura was predeceased by her parents Neil and Claire and her brothers Neil and Steven. Laura is survived by her brother Kevin Whary, his wife Michele, Jackson, NJ, and her brother Brian Whary, his wife Jeanette Morris-Whary, Old Bridge, NJ. She is also survived by two beautiful nieces, Julia Toner, Howell, NJ and Elyse Whary, Jackson NJ”

“The Jersey Shore is the land in my bones. Set me in some other landscape, one of rolling hills, towering evergreen woodlands, or amid busy city streets and I’m reeling and disorientated, wondering from which direction the scent of saltwater will come.”  
- Laura Hardy in her blog “Somewhere in New Jersey”

# ► Winter Finch Forecast for 2022 - 2023 Released

by Rob Fanning

*\*Most of the info contained in the article is gleaned from the annual Winter Finch Forecast, currently done by Tyler Hoar\**

Not many phrases generate more excitement and buzz among birders than the words "Winter Finches" The species referred to are specifically Evening and Pine Grosbeaks, Common and Hoary Redpolls, Red and White-winged Crossbills, Pine Siskins, and Purple Finches. "Honorary" irruptive passerines also include Bohemian Waxwings, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and even our familiar Blue Jay!

Here in Monmouth County, we've been treated to some exciting irruptions in the last few years, highlighted by last year's strong invasion of Evening Grosbeaks. Will we see an encore this year? Here are some highlights from the forecast.

## GENERAL FORECAST:

*"In eastern North America, westward to northwestern Ontario and upper midwestern states, there should be a flight year for several species. There is a good food crop along the coastal areas of Maritime Provinces southward into New England, which should hold many finches this winter. Inland from this area to areas west of Lake Superior, the cone and berry crops are generally poor, with scattered pockets of good crops."*



Red-crossbill  
Photo by Lisa Ann Fanning

## PINE GROSBEAK

"Traditional areas in the upper Midwest states eastward to New England and the Maritime Provinces should see movements of Pine Grosbeaks. Flocks of hungry grosbeaks searching for fruiting ornamental trees and well-stocked feeders with black oil sunflower seeds may be seen in urban areas." NOTE: Pine Grosbeak is now exceedingly rare anywhere in NJ, and documentation is sought for any NJ sighting.

## PURPLE FINCH

Many Purple Finches will migrate south from Eastern Canada this winter. With several large Spruce Budworm outbreaks in the eastern boreal forest, the Purple Finches appear to benefit from an abundant food source during the breeding season. The ash crop is good in many areas of the northeast where ash is dying from emerald ash borer, so some birds could linger, but look for them to be most common south of the eastern boreal and northern tier states.

## COMMON AND HOARY REDPOLLS

There appears to be no bumper birch crop in North America this winter. East of Manitoba, the White and Yellow Birch crop is very poor to poor throughout most of the boreal and southern Canadian forests. The Alder crop across the boreal forest is average. There is a potential for a moderate to a good flight south out of the boreal forest. Watch for redpolls on birches, in weedy fields and at bird feeders offering nyger (aka thistle) and black oil sunflower seeds. Watch for Hoaries (very rare in NJ) in flocks of Common Redpolls.

## PINE SISKIN

In the eastern boreal forest, there are extensive pockets of heavy Eastern White Cedar crops which should hold small numbers of siskins this winter. However, most of the siskins remaining in the east this fall should eventually move southward in search of food. At feeders, they prefer nyger (thistle) seeds in silo feeders.

# ► Winter Finch Forecast for 2022 - 2023 Released

*Continued from previous page*

## WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL

The crossbill pendulum has swung west for this winter. Throughout the boreal forest from Lake Superior, eastward spruce crops are mostly poor, with areas of patchy fair crops and widespread poor Tamarack crops. Later in winter, crossbills might start wandering some as crops are depleted, and any cones, even old cones, should be watched for crossbills and siskins.

## RED CROSSBILL

Red Crossbills are currently quite common in eastern Massachusetts, along the coast of Maine and the southern Maritime Provinces. There are modest numbers in the Adirondacks, Algonquin Provincial Park, over to the upper Great Lakes. In short, the "Northeastern Crossbill" (i.e. eastern Type 10) will be around this winter, but will they migrate down the coast to Cape May, Delaware and points south?, as they sometimes do as cone crops are depleted, as we progress through the winter season. Time will tell.

## EVENING GROSBEAK

This stocky charismatic finch appears to be on the move this winter. Its breeding population appears to be increasing in Eastern Canada westward to Manitoba due to increasing outbreaks of spruce budworm with large outbreaks in Northeastern Ontario and Quebec. Visual count observations by Tadoussac Bird Observatory in Quebec show a movement, with several individuals making it into Southern Ontario and Pennsylvania by mid-September. Expect flights of Evening Grosbeaks into southern Ontario, southern Quebec, Maritime Provinces, and border states this fall. If this species repeats the large, fast-moving, long-distance flights seen in late October 2020 and again in 2021, some birds could be expected to go farther south into the United States than usual. At large platform feeders, they prefer black oil sunflower seeds. Evening Grosbeaks will look for maple and ash trees holding seed away from feeders.

"Honorary winter finches"

## BLUE JAY

This will be a good to strong flight year. Beechnut and hazelnut crops are poor. The acorn crop is generally poor but with pockets of good crops scattered from Manitoba eastward through southern Canada and northeastern states southward to Pennsylvania.

## RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH

This species has been irrupting south since June! With mostly poor cone crops in the eastern boreal forest, expect this species to continue to move southward. This species prefers black oil seeds, suet, and peanuts at feeders.

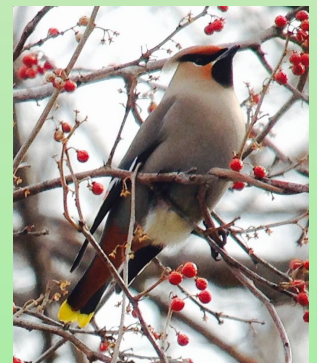
## BOHEMIAN WAXWING

In the eastern boreal forest, the native mountain-ash berry crops are poor to below average, and other berry crops range from fair to good.

Look for this species in traditional areas from Central Ontario eastward into the maritime provinces, northern New England and Great Lake states. As winter progresses and food resources dwindle, flocks may be seen further south of these traditional areas. (Very rare in NJ, but several records for Sandy Hook!)

Bohemians coming south to forage will visit reliable annual crops of abundant Buckthorn berries and urban areas containing planted European Mountain-ash berries and ornamental crabapples.

You can follow Winter Finch wanderings this fall and winter on eBird, the Finch Research Network, and the Finches, Irruptions and Mast Crops FaceBook group for more information.



*Bohemian Waxwing  
by Lisa Ann Fanning*



# MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SPOTLIGHT

## ➤ Freneau Woods Park

**Location:** 360 Monastery Lane, Aberdeen Township, NJ 07747  
732-264-7277  
<https://www.monmouthcountyparks.com/page.aspx?ID=4747>

Porta potties are available when the building is closed.

**Acreage:** 313 acres

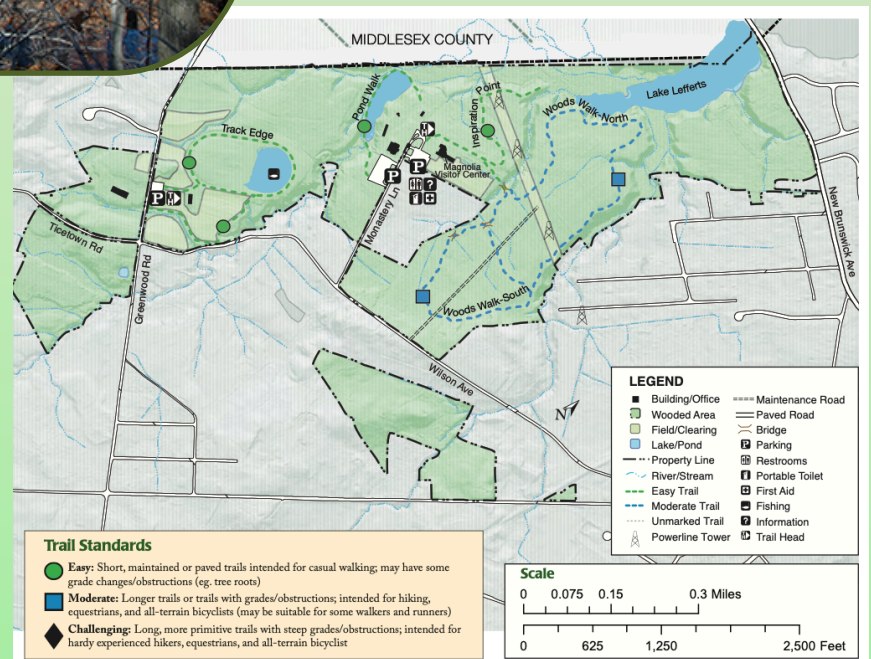
**Habitat(s):** Mostly woodland, pond, Lake Lefferts

**E-Bird Stats\*:** Monmouth County portion - 162 species & 263 checklists. \*as of September 2022

Located along the headwaters of Matawan Creek and Lake Lefferts, this 313-acre park is comprised mostly of woodland and protects critical wildlife habitat and bolsters water quality in the region. Both historically and environmentally significant, the park provides open space in a densely populated area of the county.

Trails may be accessed from the Monastery Lane and Greenwood Avenue entrances. Modern restrooms are available in the Visitor Center when programs are in session. Work is underway on expanding the trail system and making improvements to the buildings.

The park is named after a poet of the American Revolution, Philip Morin Freneau, whose family once partly owned the property. Known for his inspirational poetry and influential political articles in support of the American Revolution, Freneau played an important role shaping the country's history.





➤ **Coming Up (see website for more details)**

**Programs** - All Programs will be virtual on Zoom. Please check the MCAS website for program descriptions and Zoom access details.

Wed., November 9 8:00 pm

**"Project Terrapin:  
Diamondback Research &  
Conservation"**

Michael Haughwout, science teacher at Rumson/Fair Haven High School

Wed., January 11 8:00 pm

**"Marine Mammals of New Jersey"**

Jacalyn Toth Sullivan, Adjunct Professor of Marine Science at Stockton University

Check Facebook and our Website for updates -  
New programs will be added soon!



**Volunteers urgently needed!** There are currently several openings for members of Monmouth Audubon's Board and for other volunteer positions within our organization. Please consider volunteering your time to keep MCAS a vital organization, taking pride in knowing that you've made a difference to the community – and the birds!

**Field Trips -**

*Please see our website or Facebook to learn how to register via Eventbrite.*

*Bring binoculars, water and bug spray.*

Sat., October 15 10:00 am

**Sandy Hook Bird Walk**

Join our 2-hour walk in search of birds migrating south along the coast to their wintering grounds. We will look for waterfowl, hawks and passerines.

Check Facebook and our Website for updates  
New field trips will be added soon!

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