

the osprey

Monmouth County Audubon Society

www.monmouthaudubon.org

Over **50 Years** of Birds and Conservation

Volume 54, #1 Fall 2018

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► *Unraveling the beach debris problem*

by Lisa Fanning

There was a stretch of time this summer where every time I turned around, there was news of an entangled creature, even a Humpback Whale.

Improperly discarded fishing line and hooks are a big problem for wildlife. Entangled lines wrapped around a bird's wings or legs can cripple or amputate them, and birds run the further risk of being caught on something (particularly tree branches). Line tangled on an animal can tighten and rub against the skin, creating abrasions that can easily become infected and ultimately result in death. Also, fish hooks caught in the mouths of an animal can result in starvation.

It really hit home in early July, when an immature American Oystercatcher at the Monmouth County colony where my husband and I are "Bird Ambassadors" became entangled in some sort of braided line. The bird, who hatched in late May, was able to fly by this point, which made recovery efforts difficult. The team from the Beach Nesting Bird (BNB) Project

headed into the colony and, armed with a blanket, the Oystercatcher was caught after several tries while its parents and sibling looked on. The bird remained surprisingly calm while in the hands of the staff. Slowly and carefully, the line was cut away so that the team could assess the bird's condition. This particular bird was VERY LUCKY. It showed signs of some abrasions which had already begun to scar over. After consultation with a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, it was determined this bird could be released back into the wild. It is the preferred outcome for the bird to remain in the wild rather than be taken to a facility for intervention.

Clear fishing line can be lost on rocks or dropped in the sand very easily by someone with good intentions, but it is all our responsibility to help discard them when we find them. After that episode the team performed a beach sweep, picking up A LOT of discarded line and fish hooks (in addition to the usual plastic debris that litters our coast). It is there if you look.

It is also necessary to think beyond fishing line when it comes to protecting wildlife. According to balloonsblow.org, Beach litter surveys have shown the amount of balloons and balloon pieces found on the beach have tripled in the past ten years. Personally, I see it when I am walking the beach, especially after peak "party times" such as holidays, graduations, etc. The BalloonsBlow website states, "Dolphins, whales, turtles and many other marine species, as well as cows, dogs, sheep, tortoises, birds and other



Two workers from the Beach Nesting Bird Project work to remove fishing line that is wrapped around the leg of an American Oystercatcher. Photo by Lisa Fanning.

(continued on Page 5)



Monmouth County Audubon Society

Officers 2018-2019

- President*
Colette Buchanan
- Vice President*
Robert Henschel
- Treasurer*
Howard Mason
- Recording Secretary*
Dena Temple

Committees

- Conservation*
(vacant)
- Education*
(vacant)
- Field Trips*
Lisa Fanning, Chairman
- Hospitality*
Alyssa Scheffer, Cathy Weich
- Membership*
Colette Buchanan, Chairman
- Programs*
(vacant)
- Publicity*
Dena Temple, Chairman
- Social Media*
Lisa Fanning, Chairman
- Website*
Dena Temple, Chairman

**Elected Directors /
Directors at Large**

- Scott Barnes, Rob Fanning, Robert Henschel, Linda Mack, Nano Mardones, Janice Mason, Debra Stewart, John Temple, Dena Temple, Ken Thoman

Newsletter Staff

EditorDena Temple

The Osprey is published 3x per year 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: info@monmouthaudubon.org

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➤ **Items of note - local tidbits of interest**



Map above shows new meeting location.

BIG NEWS - New meeting location!

We are happy to announce that our meetings will now be held at a new location: the Tower Hill Church, located at 255 Harding Road in Red Bank. With an excellent sound system, larger room and comfortable chairs, our new "home" should be a welcome change for our members and speakers alike. See you there!

World Series of Birding results... The MCAS team, Cheep Trills, competed in the 34th annual World Series of Birding back in May, and the winner is... Monmouth County Audubon Society! Our team spotted a total of 121 species of birds in the 24-hour competition. This is slightly lower than last year, but the team was down to just three members, which impacted the totals. A driving rain in the early morning hours made looking for birds nearly impossible.

Highlights from this year's competition were a Whimbrel at Sandy Hook; Yellow-billed Cuckoo at Manasquan WMA; and a beautiful Yellow-breasted Chat in Freehold.

Special thanks to Tom's Ford of Keyport for loaning us a Ford Flex to use during the event, and to all of the team's sponsors, who helped Cheep Trills raise almost \$2,700 for our scholarship fund.

New ways to communicate with MCAS... MCAS is moving more and more to digital information channels. We provide up-to-the-minute information on our Facebook page and website, and we just launched a brand-new GroupMe text alert service.

If you are interested in receiving up-to-date Monmouth County nature sightings and MCAS event information right to your phone, join our newly established interactive GroupMe alert group. It's easy!

From your mobile device:

1. Download the GroupMe App from your app store.
2. Click on this link to join: https://groupme.com/join_group/42234230/QUOh0L

Since we have established these more timely forms of communication, we will be reducing the production of the print *Osprey* newsletter to three times per year, seasonally. Each issue will still include the list of upcoming programs and field trips, plus other articles of interest. For information or help with the GroupMe app, message us through our Facebook page, or email info@monmouthaudubon.org.

Many thanks... We are happy to have several people to thank this issue for special donations. As you can see, it has been a busy summer! We'd like to thank the Rumson Garden Club, the Garden Club of Fair Haven, Barbara Potter, Ken Jewell, Traci Carr, Lisa Iannucci, Richard Coplon, and Barbara Roguski. Also, a special thank-you to all of the members and friends who supported our team in this year's World Series of Birding. We appreciate your ongoing support!

MCAS Programs 2018-2019

Wednesday, Sept. 12 8 pm
"Falkland Islands and South Georgia," Kevin Watson

Wednesday, Jan. 9 8 pm
"A Year of Birding at Sandy Hook," Jason Denesevich

Wednesday, Oct. 10 8 pm
"Climate Reality and Monmouth County's Path to Clean Energy," Steve and Pat Miller

Wednesday, Feb. 13 8 pm
"The Bog Turtle, New Jersey's State Reptile," Bill Pitts, NJ Fish & Wildlife



Audubon

Wednesday, Mar. 13 7 pm
FAMILY NIGHT: "Penguin Pointers," Jenkinson's Aquarium (Please note early start time - children of all ages welcome)

Wednesday, Apr. 10 8 pm
"The Eastern Bluebird and Nest Box Trails," Dr. Laura Stone

Wednesday, May 8 8 pm
"Monmouth County Nature Trivia," Bob Henschel

Wednesday, Nov. 14 8 pm
"Our Fascination with Woodpeckers," Pete Bacinski

Wednesday, Dec. 12 8 pm
"Sparrows and Sparrow People," Rick Wright



Audubon

Board members urgently needed

As you can see by the list on Page 2 of this newsletter, our Board of Directors is dwindling. Remaining board members are doing their best to fill the gaps, but in order to keep our organization viable, we need people to fill numerous vacancies on the board.

If you feel, as we do, that this organization is valuable and would like to become more involved, contact us at info@monmouthaudubon.org. The board will be happy to help you get started. Here are the open positions at this writing – we would love to have you!

Conservation

In this position, you will monitor local environmental issues, report on them in the *Osprey*, and manage correspondence concerning environmental issues with direction from the president and Board.

Education

The Education Chairman manages our scholarship program as well as Audubon Adventures, a curriculum developed for elementary school students.

Programs

The Program Chairman makes arrangements for our monthly speakers. Programs are already arranged through May of 2019, so this involves collecting info on potential programs and contacting potential presenters for programs starting September, 2019.



Kevin Watson

MCAS Field Trips 2018-2019

Saturday, Sept. 15 10 am
Butterflies and Birds of Tatum Park, meet in the parking area off Holland Road

Saturday, Oct. 13 8 am - 5 pm
MCAS Big Sit, Sandy Hook, visit all day at Spermaceti Cove observation boardwalk

Saturday, Oct. 27 8 am
Bird Banding at Sandy Hook, meet in the grassy field before "M" lot

November - TBD

Sun. Dec. 9 10 am
Winter birds of Sandy Hook, meet in the old Visitor Center parking lot (1.8 miles north of park entrance)

Sunday, Feb. 24 10 am
Winter birds of Sandy Hook, meet in the old Visitor Center parking lot (1.8 miles north of park entrance)

Saturday, Mar. 16 6:30 pm
Timberdoodle walk (to search for American Woodcock) at Big Brook Park, meet in main parking lot

Saturday, Apr. 20 10 am
Spring birds of Sandy Hook, meet in the old Visitor Center parking lot (1.8 miles north of park entrance)

Saturday, May 4 8:15 am
Spring Migration-palooza at Allaire State Park, meet in main parking lot



If you would like to lead or assist the leader at one or more of our field trips, please contact Lisa Ann Fanning at info@monmouthaudubon.org. We would love to have you!

➤ 2018 scholarships awarded

Two worthy Monmouth County students awarded \$1,500 each

Monmouth County Audubon Society is delighted to announce that two Monmouth County high school graduates were awarded 2018 Ted Engberg Wildlife Conservation Scholarships this June for their commitment to conservation and academic success.

This ongoing scholarship, in the memory of a Ted Engberg, longtime supporter and former member of our Board of Directors, is an excellent way for MCAS to carry out our mission, "to promote the awareness, appreciation and conservation of natural resources through activism and educational outreach."

Since 2006 MCAS has awarded a total of 26 scholarships totaling \$36,500 to incoming college freshmen majoring in the field of conservation. Thanks to your donations to our World Series of Birding team, Cheep Trills, MCAS will be able to continue the scholarship in 2019.

Our Scholarship Committee reviewed the applications from throughout the county and agreed that both **Gisela Nucciarone** and **Ian Mawn** demonstrated an outstanding commitment to conservation through activities, goals and academic excellence, putting them at the top of the list of applicants this year. Each

has received a scholarship certificate and a \$1,500 check to be used toward their college education.

Gisela Nucciarone from Wall High School will attend College of the Atlantic this fall, majoring in Human Ecology focusing on Climate Change. Her conservation activities included multiple beach and forest clean ups with the Environmental Club. She states, "We should work as hard as we can to protect the irreplaceable beauty that exists on Earth."

Ian Mawn from Biotechnology High School will attend Bucknell University this fall, majoring in Cell Biology. His conservation activities included volunteering with the Greeter Program each summer to educate lake users of the importance of preventing the spread of invasive species, following it up with a thesis at Biotechnology about the problem.

MCAS hopes the enthusiasm of these two students and the knowledge they gain will help protect our wildlife and natural environment in the years to come. The Board wishes Gisela and Ian continued academic success pursuing a college degree. We look forward to receiving an update on their conservation accomplishments.

Beach debris (continued)

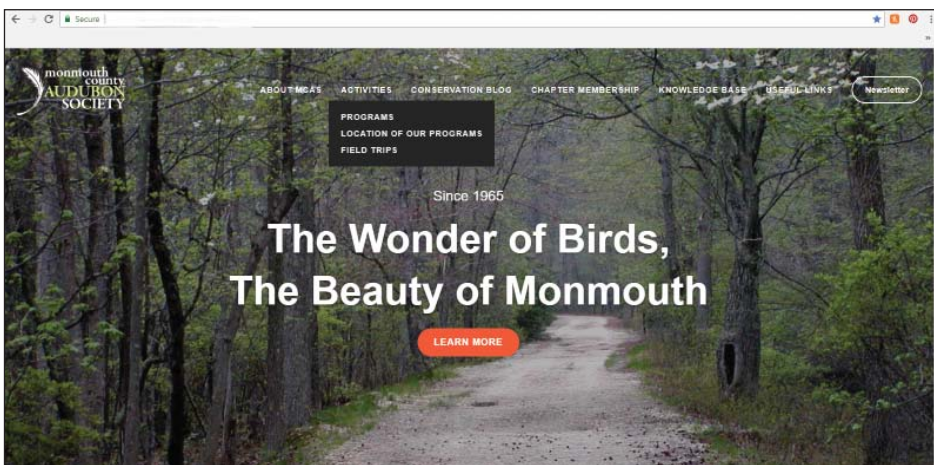
animals, have all been hurt or killed by balloons. The animal is usually killed from the balloon blocking its digestive tract, leaving them unable to take in any nutrients. It slowly starves to death. The animals can also become entangled in the balloon and its ribbon, making the animal unable to move or eat." After learning this, balloons don't bring me much joy anymore.

What can I do?

- Participate in organized beach sweeps (or just go on your own and help pick up debris).
- Do not release balloons!
- Cut plastic six-pack rings from beverages, so that there are no "loops" in which wildlife can become entangled.
- Reconsider the use of outdoor holiday lights and Halloween "spider web" decorations on bushes.
- Frequently check netting that is used for landscape reinforcement or to protect fruit trees to ensure nothing has become entangled.
- Remove sports netting (such as soccer goals) to reduce risk to nocturnal animals.
- Cut used fishing line into large pieces (longer than 6 inches).
- Dispose of unwanted fishing line and hooks in designated "monofilament recycling receptacles" available at many fishing spots.
- Use biodegradable fishing line.

If you come across wildlife that needs assistance, contact a licensed NJ wildlife rehabilitator. A list can be found at https://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/pdf/rehab_list.pdf.

Many thanks to the staff members of the Beach Nesting Bird Project under the direction of NJ Fish and Wildlife and Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ for all you do every day to protect New Jersey's wildlife. And very special thanks to those who help clean the beaches on their own time. You teach us that we can all make a difference!



Watch for our new Website, coming soon!



**Monmouth County
Audubon Society**
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Red Bank, NJ 07701

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CURRENT RESIDENT OR

➤ **Membership Application**

Please enroll me as a member of the Monmouth County Audubon Society. My check is enclosed for:

- Regular Chapter Membership \$10 (\$15 after 1/1/19)**
You get *The Osprey*, the newsletter of the Monmouth County Audubon Society, plus monthly meetings/programs featuring a wide range of speakers, exciting field trips, and volunteer opportunities to help make a difference in our community!
- Chapter Sustaining member \$20 (\$25 after 1/1/19)**
You get all the benefits listed above, but this level allows members to provide additional financial support to the Chapter.
- 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 (_____) _____

E-mail _____

Q04

Please return your check along with this application to:
Monmouth County Audubon Society, P.O. Box 542, Red Bank, NJ 07701.

Membership questions? Email us at info@monmouthaudubon.org.

➤ **coming up**

- Wed., Sept. 12 8:00 pm
"Falkland Islands and South Georgia,"
Kevin Watson
- Sat., Sept. 15 10:00 am
Butterflies and Birds of Tatum Park,
meet in the parking area off Holland Road
- Wed., Oct. 10 8:00 pm
"Climate Reality and Monmouth County's Path to Clean Energy,"
Steve and Pat Miller
- Sat., Oct. 13 8 am - 5 pm
MCAS Big Sit at Sandy Hook, visit all day at Spermaceti Cove observation boardwalk
- Sat., Oct. 27 8:00 am
Bird Banding at Sandy Hook, meet in the grassy field before "M" lot
- Wed., Nov. 14 8:00 pm
"Our Fascination with Woodpeckers," Pete Bacinski

*Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month September-May at the Tower Hill Church, 255 Harding Road, Red Bank. Meetings are always open to the public, and refreshments are served.

Check our website for updates on field trips, activities or cancellations due to weather.