



# The Osprey

Our 44th Year!

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Newsletter of the Monmouth County Audubon Society

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Volume 44, Issue 6 June / July 2009

## Message from the President

by Bob Henschel

While learning the intricacies of Monmouth County's highways and byways during my early years with the Park System, I became somewhat adept at determining the "scenic routes." Some of these slightly longer detours provided ways of enjoying the spring and summer countryside. A few also provided a means of avoiding traffic. But others have become efficient ways of adding to my yearly bird list. And since nowadays we should be even more concerned with time and fuel conservation, I thought I'd share a few of those places with you.

Essex Road in Tinton Falls, for instance, is between Middletown and Neptune, so I often stopped there each spring to find my first-of-season Pine Warbler, towhee and Ovenbird. My two children, often patiently in tow, referred to my little bypass as the "Birdie Road." Sad to say, Essex Road has changed over time, and my "long-cut" home has become a speedway for senior citizens and patrons of the new outlet mall.

Happily most of my other quick visit habitats remain largely unchanged.

My favorite is probably the state-owned land along Riverdale Avenue East in Tinton Falls - a short distance away from Red Bank. I remember having twenty-warbler visits there back in the 80s, and it's still the only place in Monmouth County where I've seen a Golden-winged Warbler. Just follow the dead end road to the bridge, park where the roadside is wider, and explore the public access land. If short on time, take

the trail that goes uphill beyond the bridge - it leads to a great overlook. If opportunity is even more limited, walk back towards Hance Avenue, keeping an eye and ear out for Virginia Rail, Wood Duck and the ubiquitous Yellow Warblers. The oaks along the east side of the marsh can be great for migrants.

In Middletown, try a detour through the hardwood forest along Cooper Road, a route parallel to Navesink River Road. The land on either side is private, but you don't have to venture off this little-used, dusty, unpaved bypass to find grouplets of migrant warblers, vireos and other species. Be alert for Pileated Woodpeckers, and if you visit on an evening in June enjoy the melodious voice of the Wood Thrush.

Although Monmouth County isn't really known for its shorebird habitats, there are a couple of great, quick, in and out locations that can net you a collection of feathered goodies. At the intersection of Front and Dock Streets in Union Beach, park in the fisherman's lot and walk a hundred feet or so to where the marsh and bay intersect. In late spring scope the landscape for Dunlin, Black-bellied Plovers, Ruddy Turnstones and maybe even Red Knots. Keep an ear out for Sharp-tailed and Seaside Sparrows, and watch for Willets and American Oystercatchers that nest there.

The sandbar in Wreck Pond, between Spring Lake and Sea Girt, is like a Quik Chek for shorebirds. Park on the side street and look from the First

Avenue bridge, or go around the corner to Brown Ave. to view the birds. In spring and again later in the summer it's one stop shopping. I've seen everything here from Red-necked Phalaropes to Black-necked Stilts, including almost all the common sandpipers and terns.

Western Monmouth residents have an array of interesting places to explore; but for late spring quickie birding, try the fields at the intersection of Polhemustown and Walnford Roads. Bobolinks, Meadowlarks and Grasshopper Sparrows can be seen and heard from the road. Vesper Sparrows, Dickcissels and other less common grassland species have made occasional appearances there, too. For people like me in eastern Monmouth, naturally, the pastures of Upper Freehold Township are at least a half-day excursion, but for those of you lucky enough to live there, some of your "Birdie Roads" are on your way to pick up a quart of milk.

Have a good summer!

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*The Osprey* is published bi-monthly 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. Inquiries concerning the organization, the newsletter, letters to the editor or material submitted for consideration are encouraged and may be sent to:

Monmouth County Audubon Society  
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*Audubon Adventures available for  
Monmouth classrooms*

The Monmouth County Audubon Society is offering the Audubon Adventures kit to 5th grade classroom teachers for the 2009-2010 school year. This program is an environmental curriculum supplement that engages the next generation of Americans who will be the stewards of America’s natural treasures - our streams and wetlands, forests and prairies, rivers and oceans.

Audubon Adventures helps 3rd through 5th graders form positive attitudes about nature. Audubon Adventures covers topics and themes that are important to Audubon’s mission in a way that supports teachers.

The 2009-2010 kit is available free of charge to participating teachers, courtesy of the Monmouth County Audubon Society.

In September, Audubon will release an all-new edition of Audubon Adventures entitled “Action for Planet Earth.” This is a standards-based classroom curriculum supplement that focuses on conservation action. “Action for Planet Earth” contains four study units:

- Action for Planet Earth: Water
- Action for Planet Earth: Energy
- Action for Planet Earth: Habitats
- Action for Planet Earth’s Species - Pennies for the Planet!

Audubon Adventures Classrooms receive a Resource Kit featuring student handouts, background information for teachers, and hands-on activities for inside and outside the classroom. In addition, “Pennies for the Planet” features a large classroom poster, teacher’s guide, and student handouts. Other items include advice on journaling, a classroom resource manual, online assistance, access to the Audubon Adventures Webstore, and a gift of Audubon membership in the teacher’s name.

Since its inception, more than 150,000 teachers and over 7 million students have participated in the Audubon Adventures program.

To enroll, teachers can contact Laura Hardy at (732) 741-9332 or e-mail info@monmouthaudubon.org. New participants must enroll before June 30, 2009 for the 2009-2010 school year.

*Donations needed to rebuild Sandy Hook bird  
blind lost to fire*

We recently learned of plans to rebuild the bird blind at the Nike Pond, which is just north of the Visitor Center on Sandy Hook.

Originally completed in September 2005 with funding from the Sandy Hook Foundation and construction by the National Park Service, the bird blind overlooking Nike Pond off the Old Dune Trail was burned down during the summer of 2008. Arson was suspected as the cause. The blind revived interest in birding on this part of the Hook and reduced disturbance to resting and feeding birds while providing an opportunity for people to enjoy them. Now, we have been approached to help fund the rebuilding.

We at MCAS feel this is a worthy cause, but we want our members behind us, too. For every member donation, MCAS will match it, making your generosity count even more. Since the Park Service does not have the budget or the manpower to provide labor for this project now, our donations are even more critical.

Please mail your tax-deductible donation, payable to the Monmouth County Audubon Society, to: Bird Blind Restoration Fund, MCAS, PO Box 542, Red Bank, NJ 07701. And thank you for supporting this worthwhile project.

by Harden Fowler

## Every day is Earth Day

The headline in USA Today for April 20 read, "In 2009, Earth Day is for everybody, every day." That was a great follow-up to a weekend during which I helped celebrate Earth Day at our Audubon information table at the Manasquan Reservoir Environmental Center. As I spoke with visitors and viewed the other displays the same thought crossed my mind: almost seven billion people, one Earth - we need to work toward environmental stewardship every day.

The USA Today article stated, "Since the first Earth Day in 1970, environmental consciousness has become part of the economic and political mainstream. One example: President Obama's call for investment in renewable energy.... Businesses are participating more because they realize that environmental stewardship equals energy efficiency, impresses customers and thus increases profits."

Earth Day began in 1970, the brainchild of U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson, as a grassroots movement on college campuses across the nation to inspire awareness and appreciation for the environment. Earth Day is widely credited as the beginning of the modern environmental movement. It has been a driving force behind development and growth of recycling; progress improving the environment and controlling pollution; protection of wilderness areas; working against the extinction of species; realizing the need for population stabilization; acknowledging the growing threat of global warming; working toward clean energy; developing scientific research and accepting the input; promotion of the "buy green" program and numerous other important concepts to promote a better environment on our planet, our home...Earth.

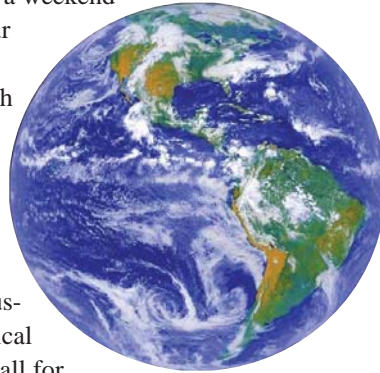
Since 1970 it has grown into a worldwide event celebrated by an estimated half-billion people raising environmental concerns through education and activities each April. We have certainly reached a time when awareness and actions have grown, but we still have a great deal to accomplish, and the time for even more action is now.

Let's make every day Earth Day by supporting and working toward cleaning up the environment. We can each make small changes that can add up: recycle, buy green, look for efficiency when replacing cars, heating/cooling systems, appliances, home repairs and add our support to conservation actions. Also, we can let our government representatives and corporate leaders know we will support their efforts toward the changes that affect global warming and ensure a healthier Earth. We should all do whatever we can to lessen our carbon footprint and promote habitat protection, because Earth Day is every day.

## Enjoy an evening walk on "the Hook" June 11

Join the Monmouth County Audubon Society for an evening bird walk to look for nesters and shorebirds on Sandy Hook. The event is scheduled for 6:00 pm.

Anyone interested in participating in the event can meet in the parking lot of the Sandy Hook Visitor's Center. Participants should bring binoculars and field guides; insect repellent also is recommended. See you there!



## Audubon photo contest

Audubon magazine is launching the 2009 Audubon Magazine Photography Awards: Birds in Focus, created to celebrate the beauty and diversity of birdlife through the art of photography, and to honor the exceptional work of talented professional, amateur and youth photographers from all over the U.S.

Audubon will be accepting submissions online until July 15 in three categories: Professional, Amateur, and Youth. "Think creatively," advises Audubon's design director Kevin Fisher, one of the judges. "Originality and drama rank high at Audubon. Include tight shots, such as close-ups of eyes, feathers. We welcome uncommon perspectives."

Other judges include renowned wildlife photographer Joel Sartore; Kim Hubbard, longtime Audubon photography editor; and Steve Freligh, publisher of Nature's Best Photography.

Award winners will be announced in December and will see their work showcased within the pages of both Audubon and Nature's Best Photography magazines. An impressive array of prizes will be awarded, including top-of-the-line photo and optic equipment from award sponsor, Nikon.

Up to 10 images per entrant may be submitted. For details, visit [www.AudubonMagazinePhotoAwards.com](http://www.AudubonMagazinePhotoAwards.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 ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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

Thurs., June 11 . . . 6:00 - 8:00 pm  
**Evening Bird Walk at Sandy Hook**; meet in parking area by Visitor Center

*Our field trip and program schedule will resume in September.*

*(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.