



Cayuga Bird Club

September 2020

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Calendar

For the foreseeable future, CBC presentations and meetings will be virtual on Zoom. These events remain free and open to the public. Register at cayugabirdclub.org/webinars

Sep 14 (Mon) 7:30pm:
Webinar: Journey to Antarctica (Marie Read and Peter Wrege), followed by CBC meeting.

Oct 3 (Sat): NYSOA Virtual Meeting.

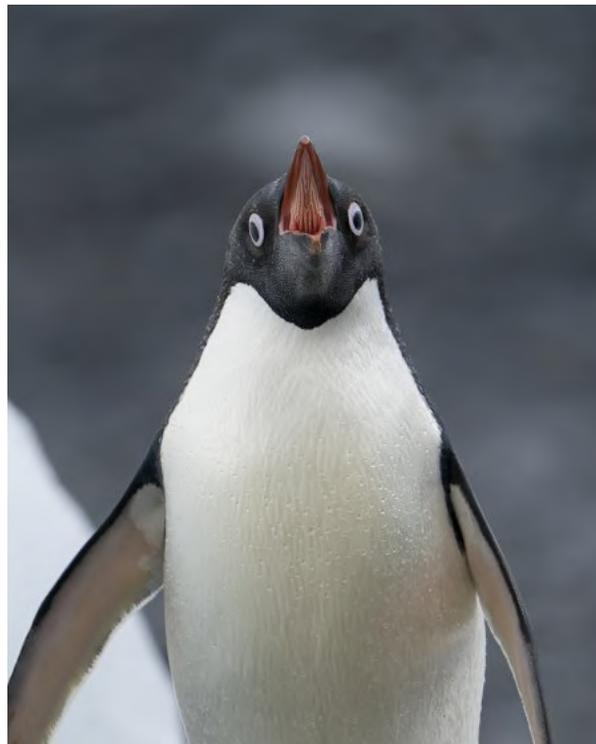
Oct 12 (Mon) 7:30pm:
Webinar: Bosque del Apache (Muhammad Arif), followed by CBC annual meeting and officer elections.

Nov 9 (Mon) 7:30pm: Webinar: Social Lives of Bornean Babblers (Sara Kaiser), followed by CBC meeting.

November CBC Trip to Colombia is canceled. Contact Jody (jodyenck@gmail.com) for information about a possible trip to Colombia in December 1-10, 2021.

Cayuga Bird Club Meeting

Journey to Antarctica, the White Continent



Speakers: Marie Read and Peter Wrege

Monday, September 14, 2020, 7:30pm

Register for Zoom Meeting at cayugabirdclub.org/webinars

Join Marie Read and her husband Peter Wrege for the journey of a lifetime exploring Antarctica aboard the cruise ship National Geographic Explorer. We'll meet swarms of pelagic seabirds, get up close and personal with the region's adorable penguins, enjoy encounters with whales and seals and be awed by the stark and dramatic beauty of the White Continent.

About the Speakers: Marie Read is an award-winning nature photographer and author of numerous magazine articles and several books about birds and their behavior. Her most recent book is Mastering Bird Photography.

Peter Wrege is Director of the Elephant Listening Project at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Dec 14 (Mon) 7:30pm:
Webinar (Melissa Groo),
followed by CBC meeting.

Jan 11, 2021 (Mon) 7:30pm:
Share Your Photos Night
(hosted by Kevin McGowan),
and CBC meeting.

*Please check our web calendar
for up-to-date event information,
including schedule changes, at
cayugabirdclub.org.*

Cayuga Lake Basin First-of-Year Birds Reported

June-August, 2020

6/2 Whimbrel
6/2 Stilt Sandpiper
6/2 Franklin's Gull
6/7 Barn Owl
6/30 Red Crossbill
7/23 Sedge Wren
8/1 Sanderling
8/10 Hudsonian Godwit
8/10 Baird's Sandpiper
8/10 Little Blue Heron
8/17 Long-billed Dowitcher
8/17 Marbled Godwit
8/25 Dickcissel
8/28 American Golden-Plover
8/28 Red Knot

2020 year count: 269 species

*Thanks to Dave Nutter for com-
piling these records. Complete
lists can be found on the [CBC
website](#).*

Muckrace 2020 Cancelled

To all you loyal participants of
the Montezuma Muckrace:

After considering our options,
and various ways we might run
the Muckrace this year with
changes to accommodate
recommended safety issues,



*Cayuga Bird Club meetings start at 7:30pm on the second
Monday of each month, September through June, and are open
to the public. Each virtual meeting will begin with the speaker's
presentation, followed by club business.*

From the President

Diane Morton



Over the past few months I
have become very familiar with
the birds that nest in oaks,
hemlock, holly and maples in
our city yard. Watching the
family groups come to the
feeder or teach their young to
forage has been delightful. But

I do miss getting together with
other people who enjoy watching birds just as much as I
do.

While we still cannot gather together in person, we will
be starting up our Cayuga Bird Club meetings again this
month, online. We are delighted to have Marie Read as
our first presenter for the season, sharing with us her
experience traveling to Antarctica to photograph birds
with her husband, Peter Wrege. Marie is a lifetime
member of the Cayuga Bird Club, and most of you are
familiar with her stunning bird photography. I have had a
small preview of Marie's gorgeous photos from her
Antarctic journey — you won't want to miss it!

We have a terrific line-up of speakers for the coming
months (thanks to our programs chair, Laura Stenzler).
Information about upcoming CBC webinars, including

we have concluded that it seems both prudent and reasonable to cancel the event this time around.

We will miss the fun of this annual event, but we will be putting together plans for 2021.

As always, we appreciate any and all donations in the continuing support of the wetlands complex, but we know everyone has a lot on their plate this time around.

Happy Birding!
Steve Benedict
Treasurer
FOTMWC

Proposal to contribute \$750 for an interpretive panel for the Fuentes Overlook at Stewart Park

Diane Morton

Louis Agassiz Fuentes, a highly regarded artist, ornithologist, and architect, was a founding member of Cayuga Bird Club and served as the club's first president, from 1913 until Fuentes's death in 1927. Fuentes had designed a plan for a bird sanctuary at Stewart Park, to include a waterfowl viewing platform. With funds raised by Cayuga Bird Club under the leadership of Arthur A. Allen, the pond for waterfowl viewing and the stone platform were built in 1934, and named in honor of Fuentes.



registration links, will be posted each month at www.cayugabirdclub.org/webinars. We've also provided some tips for navigating Zoom webinars on there.

In a departure from our usual CBC meeting order, on September 14 Marie will give her presentation first, followed by the business portion of the meeting. We will vote (using Zoom polling) on whether to approve the proposed [2020-2021 annual budget](#), which is presented by our treasurer, Ken Kempfues, in this newsletter. Members will also vote on whether to approve a proposal to allocate \$750 for an interpretive panel to be mounted at the Fuentes Overlook at Stewart Park. This panel would provide information about Louis Agassiz Fuentes, renowned artist and ornithologist — and Cayuga Bird Club's first president — for visitors to the overlook. [More about this club proposal is in this newsletter.](#)

The club has undertaken some exciting initiatives in the last couple of years, particularly on projects related to bird conservation. We are in a position of being able to consider expanding our conservation projects or developing new outreach projects in the area of education about birds. The club is in excellent financial shape, with a cash reserve of approximately \$30,000. The executive committee has discussed using some of these funds for new club initiatives, and would like to get ideas for possible projects from club members. What would you like to see the Cayuga Bird Club do? Pursue further conservation action projects? Build an observation platform at a spot for viewing shorebirds or migratory birds? Partner with other organizations to provide educators, locally or internationally, with binoculars or teaching materials? Collaborate in radio-tagging migratory birds for studies of their movements? There are lots of other possibilities. Please send your Cayuga Bird Club project ideas to me at: cayugabirdclub.president@gmail.com.

Good birding,

Diane

Looking Back to Plan Ahead

Jody Enck, Conservation Action Committee

The year 2020 will always be one of those years with an

Friends of Stewart Park is raising funds to repair the overlook and has also proposed adding an interpretive panel with historical information about Louis Agassiz Fuertes and the history of this small bird sanctuary at Stewart Park. The panel would be mounted on the railing of the overlook. The CBC Executive Committee recommends that CBC's membership vote on a proposed \$750 contribution to be used for such an interpretive panel about Fuertes and the development of the sanctuary and overlook, which are an important part of Cayuga Bird Club's history.

We will have a discussion and vote on the proposal to contribute to the interpretive panel at our September 14 meeting. If you are unable to attend this virtual meeting but would like to register your vote, please email Diane Morton at cayugabirdclub.president@gmail.com.

You can read more about Louis Agassiz Fuertes and Cayuga Bird Club's early history in a series of articles by club historian Jane Graves on our website:

cayugabirdclub.org/history.

Officer Nominations for 2020 Election

At the October 12 Cayuga Bird Club Meeting, we will be voting for Club Officers and one Director. Nominated officers are listed below. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor, but if you'd like to nominate someone, please make sure that person wishes to be nominated!

President:
Suan Hsi Yong

asterisk next to it because of the disruptions from COVID-19. The Conservation Action Committee had great plans for this year including: continue our habitat improvement work in Lighthouse Point Woods and Renwick Woods, maintain the nest boxes for Purple Martins and Prothonotary Warblers, continue our public engagement with students from the New Roots Charter School, and expand our public engagement to other local schools with the help of Cornell Cooperative Extension. When I look back at my notebook and committee calendar and see all the tree-planting days, school events, and even our plans for a bird garden tour in June, it is easy to be disappointed about what did not happen.

On the other hand when I look back, I see a lot of work that *did* get done, despite the challenges associated with the pandemic! Our official group work in Lighthouse Point Woods was curtailed by regulation, but because public access still was allowed, we continued with our bird monitoring. We also moved some of our effort to Renwick Woods as the City of Ithaca did not have the same kinds of work restrictions in place. Thanks to tree and shrub donations from Club Vice President, Donna Scott, Ithaca City Forester, Jeanne Grace, and Paul Paradine from NYSEG, we planted many stems of Red Oak, River Birch, Northern White Cedar, Black Cherry, Witch Hazel, and two species of Dogwoods. We also started collaborating with another local group called Trees Up Tompkins, which is clearing city property between the city golf course and Lighthouse Point Woods in advance of tree planting later this fall. We also can report success with our nest box program as Purple Martins used the apartment complex in Stewart Park this summer, and at least one nest of House Wrens was produced in the Prothonotary Warbler boxes.



Collaborating with Trees Up Tompkins.

We also used this year to strengthen other aspects of our networking and outreach efforts. We remain committed to working with David Strieb's science class at New Roots Charter School. As conditions allow, we will try to engage with or lend support to other school kids through Beth Bannister, one of the rural youth educators with Cooperative Extension. Also, I recently helped other volunteers with gardening and planting around that Southside Community Center, with whom



Suan is a software engineer whose interest in the natural world began as a boy growing up in Malaysia collecting butterflies, and shifted to birding and wildlife photography in 2007 after moving to Ithaca. He has regularly lead bird walks for the Cayuga Bird Club, Spring Field Ornithology, and other events at the Lab of Ornithology.

**Vice President:
Josh Snodgrass**



Josh is an active birder and conservation volunteer living between Cayuga and Seneca Lakes. He has benefited immensely from the shared knowledge and passion of the birders in our area. He is a club field trip leader, Christmas Bird Count Area VII compiler, and does breeding or wintering bird surveys for Montezuma NWR, NYDEC, and USGS. He is currently working to remove invasive plant species to improve bird habitat on his property.

**Treasurer:
Ken Kemphues**

we want to engage more in the future.

As I reflect back on this year that has been so different, I am reminded of one thing that has not changed at all. Birds still need our help. Migratory birds still showed up to breed in our area or use it as a stop-over site on their way to the boreal forests of Canada. Resident birds went about their lives, relying on local habitats to try to raise their young. Now in September, migratory birds are feeding voraciously to build the fat reserves they will need for their epic flights to their wintering grounds. Resident birds are faced with their own survival challenges as fall and winter approach.

The worldwide pandemic might have altered the way we interact with our human world, but it has not altered the way we interact with birds. This fall, let's all try to do something tangible to improve bird habitat where we live. If you are wondering what you can do or need help doing it, please contact me at jodyenck@gmail.com.

NYSARC and eBird Working Together

The New York State Avian Records Committee (NYSARC) and eBird are both committed to ensuring the integrity of rare bird records in New York State. eBird, launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, is the world's largest bird-related citizen science project, with more than one hundred million bird sightings contributed each year by birders around the world. NYSARC, established in 1977 as a committee of the New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA), maintains the official Checklist of the Birds of New York State:

<https://nybirds.org/Publications/ChecklistNYS.htm>, evaluates the documentation of significantly rare birds recorded in the State, and renders decisions on the acceptability of rare bird reports submitted via mail, email, or the online NYSARC Reporting Form.

NYSARC focuses on birds that are very rare in much or all of New York State and maintains a review list enumerating them:

<https://nybirds.org/NYSARC/NYSARClist.htm>
It is important to note that many birds flagged as "rare" in eBird are not on the NYSARC review list because NYSARC only looks at the rarest species. Nonetheless, many sightings of species that are on the NYSARC review list are showing up in eBird – but are not being submitted to NYSARC. In fact, many more records of truly rare birds have been submitted to eBird than have ever been reported to NYSARC. This is because so many birders have enthusiastically embraced eBird as their record-keeping tool of choice, while most of them are unaware of the importance (or even the possibility) of submitting rare bird reports to NYSARC, in addition to entering them into eBird.

In order to maintain a complete inventory of verifiable sightings of rare birds in the State, it has become



Ken is a retired Cornell professor and has been a member of the Cayuga Bird Club since 2013. He served as chair of his department at Cornell for six years and has twelve years of experience as treasurer for another local non-profit organization.

**Recording Secretary:
Poppy Singer**



Poppy is a native Ithacan. She has observed birds at a feeder all her life and began identifying birds in their natural habitat 2-3 year ago, when she enrolled in SFO. Besides being a birder, she is, among other things, a mother and grandmother, an upholsterer by profession and a gardener and a potter by hobby.

**Corresponding Secretary:
Colleen Richards**

apparent that NYSARC must take on the task of reviewing eBird records. For our all-volunteer group of seven voting members and a secretary, this is a daunting task. However, slowly but surely, NYSARC has developed a plan and started to wade into eBird review. We will be working with eBird reviewers to add eBird records to the NYSARC database. It is still a work in progress and is likely to continue to evolve in the next few years, but it is underway.

What can eBirders expect and how will NYSARC impact their birding lists? First, birders should realize that eBird supports the work of bird records committees around the world. The eBird administrators understand the importance of maintaining an accurate database of records, whether it is their own worldwide database of all bird sightings or a more restricted database of very rare bird sightings in New York State. As long as NYSARC does its work with competence and respect, eBird is likely to support its decisions.

As NYSARC gradually works through and reviews the many rare bird sightings in New York State since eBird's inception in 2002, you may see a few records that were previously accepted by eBird that no longer appear in public output. We anticipate that this will occur only rarely, for a couple of reasons. One, eBird reviewers are highly competent – NYSARC is unlikely to disagree with the eBird reviewer in the great majority of cases. And two, NYSARC will make every effort to avoid unconfirming a record that was already accepted by an eBird reviewer. We will work with the eBird reviewers to obtain as much as or more information about an eBird record as was seen by the eBird reviewer. For example, perhaps you saw a widely reported Rufous Hummingbird near your home that you entered into eBird. NYSARC will work with the eBird reviewer to obtain as much information as possible about this sighting and to find out why the eBird reviewer confirmed the record. If, after reviewing all of this information, NYSARC determines that the record was not supportable beyond the species pair of Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird, the eBird reviewer would request that eBirders edit their checklists and change the species to Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird.

What can you do to help ensure that your super rare sightings in New York will still appear in eBird output? In many cases you will not have to do anything different at all – just provide as much documentation in your checklist, in the form of photos, audios, videos, and notes, as you always have. However, if you have relied upon your reputation as an experienced birder to have your sightings accepted, understand that NYSARC stresses the importance of verifiable documentation. NYSARC does more than simply place its stamp of approval on a sighting. We archive the documentation for each sighting so that future researchers, who may have more information about a species than we do at present, can look at the documentation and make their



Colleen is willing to continue as corresponding secretary. Besides occasional volunteer acknowledgements, etc., she corresponds with our program speakers each month to assure they have all they need for their engagement. She also organizes the club dinner which honors the speaker and encourages member interaction.

Director:
Diane Morton



Diane has served as president of Cayuga Bird Club since 2018 and previously served as editor of the club's newsletter and co-chair of the field trip committee. Diane enjoys sharing her love of birds with others and has been a field trip leader for Cayuga Bird Club, Spring Field Ornithology, and at Sapsucker Woods. This past spring Diane helped to coordinate the club's new online course, *Spring Ornithology with Steve Kress*.

own decision. Of course, NYSARC considers the experience of the observer when making its decisions, but that is of secondary importance to the documentation at hand.

The reason why including documentation in your eBird checklist is much better than simply sending it to the eBird reviewer is that your checklist and everything in it is permanently archived by eBird. Information you send to the eBird reviewer separately is not archived in the eBird database, because the reviewer cannot make changes to your checklist. Only you can do that. The best way to ensure that all your documentation for a super rare bird will be available to anyone reviewing your sighting is to incorporate it directly in your checklist.

The NYSARC is excited to work with eBird in order to have as complete a picture of the rarest birds in the State as possible. We hope that all birders and eBirders will embrace this relationship as well.

New York State Avian Records Committee,
July 2020:

- Willie D'Anna, Chair*
- Gary Chapin, Secretary*
- Tom Burke*
- Doug Gochfeld*
- Pat Lindsay*
- Derek Rogers*
- Jay McGowan*
- Shawn Billerman*

Email: nysarc44@nybirds.org

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Financial Report

Ken Kemphues, Treasurer

The club is in excellent financial shape with cash assets of \$30,442 and book inventory worth \$1,843. Our cash assets show an increase of \$5512 over last year. As shown in the proposed budget for our 2020/21 fiscal year(below), we anticipate that member dues and donations will cover all of the Club's recurring costs, thus we have flexibility to undertake new initiatives.

In addition to dues and donations from members, the club received income of \$6,387 (\$4,197 from the Kress Spring Ornithology Course, \$1000 from Holbrook travel, \$676 from book sales, a generous donation of \$500 from a non-member, \$13 from sales of t-shirts). One-time expenses included \$1621 for the Motus Tower, \$243 for Archiving of the club's newsletters, and \$180 for a one-time donation to ASHO (Honduran Birding Organization). Our conservation action committee currently has a \$338.12 balance which is included in our bank account balance. Questions or concerns about the proposed 2020-21 budget can be raised at the September meeting, prior to the vote on whether to approve it.

2020-2021 PROPOSED CBC BUDGET

	BUDGETED	YEAR TOTAL	PROPOSED	Notes
	2019-2020	2019-2020	2020-2021	
Income				
Donations Received	\$ 700.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 750.00	donations above and beyond membership
Dues Received	\$ 2,310.00	\$ 2,855.33	\$ 2,760.00	membership dues (217 current memberships - 15% loss = 184 expected to pay dues next year)
Interest Income (Savings)	\$ 25.00	\$ 23.00	\$ 20.00	interest earned savings acct
Income Total	\$ 3,035.00	\$ 3,678.33	\$ 3,530.00	
Expenses				
Conservation Comm	\$ (200.00)	\$ (200.00)	\$ (200.00)	Annual commitment
Donations Paid	\$ (450.00)	\$ (450.00)	\$ (450.00)	Redheads World Series of Birding, FLLT SBQ
Dues Paid	\$ (300.00)	\$ (300.00)	\$ (300.00)	FLLT, Lab of O, NYSOA, & NYSYBC
Gifts Given	\$ (100.00)	\$ -	\$ (100.00)	condolences
Insurance	\$ (519.00)	\$ (499.48)	\$ (524.04)	Arcadia insurance annual premium
Muckrace	\$ (200.00)		\$ (100.00)	entry fees for up to 2 recreational teams
NYSOA Annual Meet	\$ (350.00)	\$ (350.00)	\$ (350.00)	delegate attendance
Paypal Fees	\$ (50.00)	\$ (197.26)	\$ (200.00)	paypal fees from membership and course payments, assume course will be taught again
Posters	\$ -	\$ -		
Speaker Dinner	\$ (250.00)	\$ (144.56)	\$ (250.00)	9 speaker dinners
Speaker Travel	\$ (400.00)	\$ (40.00)	\$ (400.00)	costs for one speaker travel
Supplies	\$ (25.00)	\$ (31.27)	\$ (30.00)	stamps, paper goods
Website/Software Fees	\$ (30.00)	\$ (55.16)	\$ (70.00)	domain name, ibank, publishing software (needed ibank software update)
Zoom Meeting fees			\$ (495.00)	assuming a full year of zoom meetings
Expenses Total	\$ (2,874.00)	\$ (2,267.73)	\$ (3,469.04)	
Net Income	\$ 161.00	\$ 1,410.60	\$ 60.96	

Cayuga Bird Club

Educating and inspiring the birding community of the Cayuga Lake Basin and Central New York since 1914

The Cayuga Bird Club meets on the second Monday of each month, September through June. During the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings are virtual, starting with a speaker presentation at 7:30pm, followed by club business. Meetings are free and open to the public, but registration is required at cayugabirdclub.org/webinars. Membership costs \$15 annually per household, \$10 for

students, payable in September. Payment may be made via Paypal at cayugabirdclub.org/membership or by mailing a check to: Cayuga Bird Club, c/o Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca NY 14850. Please include your email address (or addresses for family memberships) with your membership application to receive the club newsletter. Members receive the monthly Cayuga Bird Club eNewsletter, from September through June. To make sure you don't miss an issue, add newsletter@cayugabirdclub.org to your email contacts.

Send newsletter submissions to cbceditor1@gmail.com by the 25th to be included in the next issue. Please contribute sightings, news, announcements, book reviews, original poetry, art, photos, and anything else that might be of interest to the local birding community.

Cayuga Bird Club Officer contact information is available at www.cayugabirdclub.org/about-us.

Chickadee illustration in masthead by Karen Allaben-Confer.

Don't miss an issue of the newsletter: add newsletter@cayugabirdclub.org to your email contacts.
Stay in touch with the Cayuga Bird Club through our [Facebook](#) page and [Webpage \(cayugabirdclub.org\)](http://cayugabirdclub.org).



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