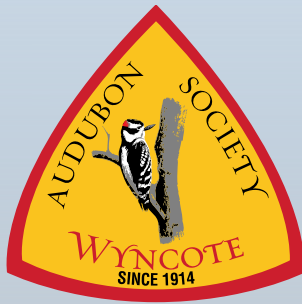




Naturally

The Newsletter of the Wyncote Audubon Society

Wyncote Audubon Society
1212 Edge Hill Road
Abington, PA 19001
wyncoteaudubon.org

The Wyncote Audubon Society is a Chapter of the National Audubon Society serving Audubon members who reside in major portions of Montgomery County and in Philadelphia including Chestnut Hill, East Falls, Manayunk, Mt. Airy, Roxborough and North, Northeast, and Northwest Philadelphia.

EXCITING BIRDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WYNCOTE AUDUBON!

Join Us! Wyncote Audubon is pleased to invite members and friends to join us for new opportunities! There are new extended field trips to exciting domestic and international destinations. Apply your birding expertise to citizen science initiatives. Translate your appreciation of birds and birding as an **ADVOCATE** for birds and the places they need today and tomorrow. Here is a sampling of opportunities:

Travel With Us to Colombia! Santa Marta, Colombia – February 15 to 22, 2020: for Wyncote Audubon's first international trip in partnership with Rockjumper and the National Audubon Society! (See page 2)

Participate in the Adirondacks Birding Weekend: June 21 to 23, 2019: Follow any of our spring migrants to see them on their breeding grounds! This exciting opportunity is in partnership with the Briar Bush Nature Center! (See page 3)

Give Us Your Thoughts and Ideas: Please take a few minutes to give us your feedback and ideas to help us with our future plans. (See page 6)

Help Us With Audubon Climate Watch May 15 to June 15, 2019: Learn more about this special citizen science program by Audubon to provide data on the impact of climate change on birds. (See page 7)

Become a Wyncote Audubon Advocate: Keep informed and join others to support initiatives at the Federal, state, and local levels that result in the protection of birds. Stay involved to learn and act! (See page 8)

In This Issue

**JOIN US IN
COLOMBIA!**

Join the Wyncote Audubon Society to see spectacular birds on this special trip.

**A SPECIAL
BIRDING
WEEKEND**

Follow many of our spring migrants northward!

**BIRDING
BACKPACKS
FOR KIDS!**

Support Wyncote Audubon's 2019 Birdathon

**CALLING
YOUNG
BIRDERS!**

"Frontiers in Ornithology: A Symposium for Youth"

**TAKE OUR
SURVEY!**

We invite your suggestions and ideas to help us plan!

**AUDUBON
CLIMATE
WATCH**

Help us with the Audubon Climate Watch Project

**OUR CBC
REPORT**

Check out the results of our 2018 Christmas Bird Count

**JOIN OUR
ADVOCATE
GROUP**

Join others in an active role to protect birds and the places they need!

Keep in Touch With Wyncote Audubon!

Check our Website and Facebook Pages and Sign Up to Receive our Monthly Wyncote Audubon "UPDATES"
<http://wyncoteaudubon.org>

Join Us In Colombia!

Santa Marta, Colombia – February 15 – 22, 2020

By now many of you have heard the exciting news: WAS and Rockjumper Birding have paired up to offer Wyncote Audubon's first international trip, an 8 day mega-diverse birding adventure to Colombia!

Our first international trip will be to the most biodiverse region on the planet, the Santa Marta Mountains of Colombia! This snow-capped mountain range along the Caribbean coast (the highest coastal mountain range in the world) is home to no less than 36 endemic birds. Throughout this adventure we will be birding at nearly every altitudinal band of habitat, from the coastal Caribbean and dry forest into the lush heights of the mountains.

Stops include Isla Salamanca on the coast, El Dorado Reserve in the cloud forest, and high-elevation birding atop the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta.

This adventure is an "Impact Adventures" collaboration between Rockjumper Birding Tours and The National Audubon Society. Audubon has been a key player in the establishment of the Northern Colombia Birding Trail, providing on-the-ground resources to train local bird guides and support habitat conservation. We'll be lead by an Audubon-trained local guide as well as a Rockjumper guide.



We can expect to find the Vermilion Cardinal on our spectacular trip to the Santa Marta Region!



Join Robin Irizarry on Wyncote Audubon's First International Adventure and see this White-tailed Starfrontlet.

Robin Irizarry serves as our Wyncote Audubon host, helping organize this trip. In the link below you'll find the full trip itinerary, pricing information and the Rockjumper booking form. We are looking for a party of 8-12, so space is limited. Any additional questions can be directed to robin@ttfwatershed.org,

Links to the Itinerary & Booking Form!

<https://conservationtours.rockjumperbirding.com/tourinfo/colombia-megadiverse-santa-martas>

**Check out Rockjumper's
On-Line Booking Form Here:**

<https://conservationtours.rockjumperbirding.com/online-booking>

Adirondacks Birding Weekend: June 21 – 23, 2019

Follow Many of Our Spring Migrants to See Them on Their Breeding Grounds!

Join Wyncote Audubon and Briar Bush Nature Center for a two-night, three-day trip to the Adirondacks, led by Wyncote Audubon Society members Dennis and Pedro Miranda. The trip will depart from Briar Bush at 9:00 AM on Friday, June 21st and arrive in the Adirondacks by 4:00 PM. The trip will depart from the Adirondacks at 2:00 PM on Sunday, June 23rd and arrive back at Briar Bush by 9:00 PM. We will be staying at the Best Western at Saranac Lake. The trip is limited to 12 participants.

Over 100 bird species can be seen and heard in the Adirondack Park. We'll travel from the vast floodplain boreal forest of the St. Regis River Plains to the pinnacle of Whiteface Mountain, looking for such seldom seen birds as the Spruce Grouse, Olive Sided Flycatcher, Bicknell's Thrush and Three-toed Woodpecker. We'll also visit Bloomingdale Bog, Adirondack Loj Road farmland, Lake Oseetah and many others tucked away places. Dennis Miranda and his son Pedro have a combined thirty years of birding in the Adirondacks. Dennis is an expert guide to the Adirondacks and has previously led many successful birding trips in the Adirondacks. Participants must be able to walk several miles on rough terrain. The trip will include some nighttime birding and a journey to the summit of Whiteface Mountain.

The trip cost is \$370 for double occupancy or \$545 for single occupancy. 50% down is due upon registration with the balance due 30 days in advance of the trip. Price includes park fees, transportation, guide, two hotel nights, two breakfasts and one lunch. Reservations are through Briar Bush Nature Center at 215-887-6603, or on the Briar Bush website at: www.briarbush.org.

Adirondacks Birding Weekend Itinerary

FRIDAY

4:00 PM: Arrival at Best Western Saranac Lake

4:00 - 5:30 PM: Personal Time

5:30 - 7:00 PM: Location TBD Dinner. Birding at Dusk: Lake Oseetah - Extensive marshland and boreal wetlands surrounding Lake Oseetah with Scarface Mountain as a backdrop is a great opening salvo. Expect to see Sora and Virginia Rail, American Bittern and a number of northern species.

10: 30 PM: Return to Hotel

SATURDAY

6:00 - 6:30 AM: Breakfast TBD

7:00 AM - 2:00 PM: Travel to Keese Mill Road in Paul Smith and begin tour of the St. Regis River Plains. This tour is ideal for multiple stops and seeing the varied habitats and extensive species variety of the Adirondacks. Here we expect 15 species of warblers, Boreal Chickadee, Lincoln Sparrow & Gray Jay.

Options - Arrange for a boxed lunch or go to End of Trails Restaurant between 2 - 3 pm.

3:00 - 4:00 PM: Return to Hotel.

4:00 - 5:30 PM: Personal Time

5:30 - 7:00 PM: Dinner Location TBD

7:30 - 10:00 PM: Visit Bloomingdale Bog (Whip Poor Will, Common Nighthawk, Barred Owl, Wilson's Snipe)

10: 30 PM: Return to Hotel

SUNDAY

6:00 - 6:30 AM: Breakfast

7:00 AM: Checkout and Board Vehicles

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Whiteface Mountain – Auto tour to summit for Bicknell's Thrush, Common Raven, Pine Siskin, Blackpoll Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Winter Wren, Golden Eagle (possible).

12:00 - 1:00 PM: Lunch Location TBD

1:00 PM: Depart for home.

Please Support the Swifts – Wyncote Audubon's 2019 Birdathon Team!

What is a Birdathon? A Birdathon is a fun and friendly competition. Teams of birding enthusiasts cover a specific geographic area to identify as many bird species as possible within a specific time period. Teams use a checklist to record their sightings. The team lists number of species observed and the locations they were observed. The team that “wins” identifies the most bird species during the Birdathon. However, every team “wins” because the Birdathon is also a fundraiser. Teams compete to raise the money for bird conservation.



Photo: Camilla Cerea/Audubon

When and where is Wyncote Audubon's Birdathon team competing? We will be birding in selected areas throughout the Wissahickon Watershed in Philadelphia and Montgomery County from 5:00 PM on Friday, May 10th to 5:00 PM on Saturday, May 11th, 2019. (*International Migratory Bird Day*)

Why support your Wyncote Audubon Birdathon team? *With your help*, we are raising funds to engage young people in bird watching and bird conservation. Our 2019 Birdathon team hopes to provide young people access to **Birding Backpacks** and the opportunity to learn about birds with fun and informative kits. **Birding Backpacks** contain binoculars, field guides and local birding information. These **Birding Backpacks** will be donated to the libraries in our Audubon Adventures Schools, area nature centers, and other places. Young people can borrow and “check out” the **Birding Backpacks** as they would books or other items.

What is Wyncote Audubon's Birdathon Team's Fundraising Goal? Our team's goal is to raise \$4,500 to create **30 Birding Backpacks** to be distributed to school libraries and nature centers across our region to be used again and again by young people interested in birds. We encourage our Wyncote Audubon members and friends to support our effort and to help us realize our project goal.

Your contribution to Wyncote Audubon's 2019 Birdathon will support these efforts!

Make checks payable to Wyncote Audubon Society and mail to 1212 Edge Hill Road, Abington, PA 19001 OR make your donation on-line at wyncoteaudubon.org.

DONATE NOW!



The cost of each Birding Backpack is \$150, so please contribute what you can to help us reach our goal!

An Opportunity for Our Young Birders

“Frontiers in Ornithology: A Symposium for Youth”

Saturday, September 28, 2019

The **Wyncote Audubon Society** is a supporter of the “**Frontiers in Ornithology: A Symposium for Youth**.” We join other partnering and sponsoring organizations including Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, The Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania Ornithological Societies as well as other bird clubs including the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club. **Zeiss Sport Optics** is the **Lead Sponsoring Partner** and the **Delaware Ornithological Society** is the **Lead Partnering Organization**. Support for this event helps go towards speaker travel stipends, keynote fees, supporting attendance of young people by a low attendance fee, catering, etc. The **Delaware Nature Society** is the **Host Organization** for this wonderful event for high school and college age youth with a serious interest in the field of ornithology. This is shaping up to be a big event, and one which we hope will be life-changing for today's young people who are 13 to 22 years of age interested in avian research and conservation. The Symposium will be held on **Saturday, September 28, 2019, at the Ashland Nature Center in Hockessin, Delaware**. It will feature a full day of seminars and keynotes that highlight the symposium's mission. The following day, Sunday, September 29, there will be an optional opportunity for attendees and guests to join various field trips, sponsored and led by multiple supporting organizations.

The primary mission of this event will be to focus on ornithology and conservation science. The symposium will not focus on birding, bird identification techniques, or listing birds, but instead on cutting edge technologies being used in avian research and study, careers in ornithology and how to pursue that focus in either higher education or vocationally. The symposium will also provide opportunities toward understanding and promoting involvement in conservation science initiatives. Our current list of presenters and keynoters include: Scott Weidensaul, Keynote; Patrick Newcombe, Youth Keynote; Claire Wayner, Youth Keynote; David LaPuma, Radar Ornithologist, CMBO; Michael Lanzone, CTT tracking; Christina Davis, NJDEP; Ashley Kennedy, University of Delaware, "What Birds Eat" project; Matthew Halley, Academy of Natural Sciences, and Drexel University; Kitt Heckscher, Delaware State University; Catherine Hamilton, Artist, Amur Falcon project, Zeiss; Jim Whatten, Smithsonian Feather Lab; Dr. Emily Thomas, Penn State DuBois, Wildlife Biology; Marshall Iliff, eBird, Cornell Lab of Ornithology; David Barber, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Broad-winged Hawk Project; Paul Heveran, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Broad-winged Hawk Project; Bracken Brown, freelance biologist, Delaware Shorebird Project, Montana Golden Eagle tracking; and others.

The organizers will launch our website and registration will open soon. The expected cost for young people to attend is estimated to be around \$15. **We advise young people in Wyncote Audubon to sign up as soon as possible.** Attendance will be on a first sign up basis, and we will be capping attendance at around 100 people. Adults hoping to attend must be accompanied by a youth. It is hoped that arrangements can be made to “live stream” the Symposium and archive video for people who cannot attend to view later. **Wyncote Audubon volunteers are welcome!** There are opportunities for any volunteers from Wyncote Audubon interested in helping the day of Symposium with various tasks that include parking, guiding people to and from speaker sessions, helping the caterer, clean-up/set-up, etc.... For more information go to the Frontiers in Ornithology website: <https://www.frontiers-in-ornithology.org>



Ashland Nature Center in Hockessin, Delaware

WE NEED THE ADVICE OF OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS!

Participate in Our Survey of Members and Friends

The Wyncote Audubon Society observes its 105th Anniversary this year. It was founded as the Wyncote Bird Club in April 1914 and became a chapter of the National Audubon Society in 1967 and has continued its mission to protect birds as the Wyncote Audubon Society. While Wyncote Audubon has continued to grow and evolve over the last century, there are a number of practices that have gone unchanged through the years. For example:

- Wyncote Audubon has scheduled monthly programs on the “third Friday of each month, September through May every year throughout its 105 year history.
- Wyncote Audubon has conducted its programs in a fixed venue in eastern Montgomery County with the exception of the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education for a number of years. Currently programs are conducted in Plymouth Meeting.
- Programs continue to feature quality presenters and address a range of natural history, scientific, travel and birding interests.
- Evening programs typically attract an audience of anywhere between 25 to 40 people on average.

During Wyncote Audubon’s strategic planning efforts, it was noted that Wyncote Audubon’s “chapter territory” includes nearly 2,000 members throughout Montgomery County and in major areas of Philadelphia encompassed by the Chapter. Our meeting location is not convenient for many of our members. In recent years, Wyncote Audubon has provided more outreach offering programs to youth in elementary schools through our Audubon Adventures Program and to residents in many of the Audubon Bird Towns in Montgomery County. A recommendation in the strategic plan is to develop a members’ survey to seek the opinions and advice of our members and friends. That survey has been developed and will be distributed to the members and friends who have provided their email contact information. The survey is also available on the website at wyncoteaudubon.org.

**TAKE THE
SURVEY
NOW!**

New Constitution and By-Laws Proposed for the Wyncote Audubon Society!

One of the recommendations in the Wyncote Audubon Society Strategic Plan was to review and revise the Constitution and By-Laws under which Wyncote Audubon has operated. The existing by-laws have been in place for decades and with little change since becoming an Audubon chapter in 1967 and incorporation in 1977. Major revisions have been proposed and continue under review. Changes that have been proposed include term limits for officers and board members, a streamlined list of standing committees, protection and safe guards for investment funds that serve as our endowment, a conflict of interest clause, and other changes necessary to conform with current legal requirements.

The Wyncote Audubon Board has provided the input and feedback to suggest changes. They have reviewed and commented on various drafts that have been developed on a pro bono basis by an attorney who has volunteered his services. That work is now in its final phase. The proposed by-laws will be posted on the Wyncote Audubon website once the revisions are completed. Notice will be provided when they become available and a special meeting will be scheduled to adopt the new Constitution and By-Laws. Our goal is to work to act on the proposed Constitution and By-Laws for them to become effective at the start of our new fiscal year that begins on July 1, 2019. Notice will be communicated via the **“Wyncote Audubon UPDATES”** and the Wyncote Audubon Website: wyncoteaudubon.org.

Audubon Climate Watch: You Can Participate in this “Citizen Science” Project

Audubon Climate Watch is a “citizen science” program to study how North American birds respond to climate change. It is an effort to “ground truth” the predicted shifts and changes to distribution by tracking three species of easily identified birds: The Eastern Bluebird, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and White-breasted Nuthatch. Volunteers conduct a series of five -- minute point counts within Audubon “Climate Blocks.” Volunteers cover a dozen points within an assigned “climate block.” There are two Climate Watch periods scheduled each year with a winter and spring cycle.



Wyncote Audubon participated in the latest winter cycle of Climate Watch from January 15th through February 15th, 2019. This winter, the Climate Watch effort was expanded in coordination with Audubon Pennsylvania, Baird Ornithological Club, Bucks County Audubon Society, Delaware Valley Ornithological Club, Discovery Center, Elmwood Park Zoo, John James Audubon Center, and Valley Forge Audubon Society. We recruited new volunteers, scheduled orientations, and assigned volunteers to cover Climate Blocks in Philadelphia, and the southeastern Pennsylvania counties. **We look to expand participation and coverage in the Summer cycle of Climate Watch scheduled for May 15th through June 15th in 2019. Wyncote Audubon will continue to expand its efforts with this important Audubon initiative. If you are interested in learning more and volunteering please contact wyncoteaudubonsociety@gmail.com**

Wyncote Audubon Christmas Bird Count 2018

The National Audubon Society released the “Birds & Climate Change Report,” a significant peer reviewed study, in 2014. The report profiled the major impact of climatic factors on the distribution of birds in North America. The study based its predictions on range changes based on more conservative forecasts of seventeen climactic factors. The study documented that 314 species of North American birds were climate threatened or climate endangered. The report underscored Audubon’s position that climate change is a major threat to birds and will directly contribute to serious declines in many bird populations and extinction of some species.

Andy Fayer, our CBC Compiler for many years, reported the results of the Wyncote CBC that took place on Saturday, December 15, 2018. The weather on count day could best be described as dreary and our counts reflect that, but everyone’s effort was great. We fielded 18 Teams (we had 15 in 2017) with 53 Participants (we had 42 last year - AWESOME!) and logged 293 Total Birding Hours (an increase of 70+ hours!) These numbers are all well above our average, and may all represent high totals for the Wyncote CBC. **Special thanks to Andy Fayer who has devoted the last fifteen years as coordinator and compiler of the Wyncote Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count!**

The combined effort resulted in 65 species (+3 taxa) - below average (62 + 3 last year) with 7,787 individual birds counted - well below our average of 10,773 this decade. There were no new or really rare birds reported. Unusual birds include Green-winged Teal & Bufflehead (1 each @ Ambler Reservoir) and Chipping Sparrows (3 @ Houston Meadow). We’ve had far more rare birds the past 10 years. New record high counts (or ties) include Cooper’s Hawk (11, tied the record), Hairy Woodpecker (41, the old record was 31), Eastern Phoebe (2, tied the record), Winter Wren (17, tied the record) and Song Sparrow (280, old record was 235). Species well below average included Canada Goose, Blue Jay, Carolina Chickadee and Northern Mockingbird. Two people have asked specifically about Tufted Titmouse. Our count of 101 is about 20% below our recent average, but we have had worse counts not too long ago. Raptors had a good showing with all expected species reported. Misses include Wood Duck, Killdeer, Pine Siskin and American Tree Sparrow. There were no Count Week species reported this year. While the total number of birds counted was significantly below average, can be partly blamed on the weather. Almost half of the difference can be attributed to the low count of Canada Geese. **Thanks to everyone who participated for braving the weather!!!**



Wyncote Audubon Society

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Abington, PA 19001

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BECOME A WYNCOTE AUDUBON ADVOCATE!

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

Endangered Species Act

**Delaware River Basin
Restoration**

**Arctic National Wildlife
Refuge**

**Federal Bird Safe Building
Act**

**Protection of Seabirds and
Forage Fish**

**Climate Change Initiatives
Habitat Protection**

Native Plant Ordinances

Wetlands Protection

**Other Federal, State, and
Local Action**

Last year, the Wyncote Audubon Society initiated an effort to become a more effective voice in the mission aimed at “the protection of birds and the places they need today and tomorrow.” An invitation was sent out to our members and friends to join us in this effort and over 150 individuals signed up to receive the “**Wyncote Audubon Advocate**,” an occasional digital communication inviting recipients to take action on an important bird conservation issue at the Federal, state, or local level like those listed.

This year we are ready to take additional steps to strengthen our advocacy role for birds. Audubon Pennsylvania has awarded the Wyncote Audubon Society with a \$1,000 grant from the Moore Foundation to work toward the protection of foraging fish and the seabirds that rely on them as a food source. In addition, a \$5,000 grant from the William Penn Foundation is aimed for us to support legislation, funding, and conservation initiatives in the Delaware River watershed.

We invite you to learn more about our Advocacy efforts and ways you can help Wyncote Audubon to become a more effective voice for the protection of birds!

**I WANT TO LEARN
MORE ABOUT
WYNCOTE
AUDUBON'S
ADVOCACY
INITIATIVES!**