President’s Message

From Jeff Beich

Dear Members and Friends

This will be my final column since my term as President ends in early May. I certainly did not expect to be writing it while I was “sheltering in place” from a communicable disease pandemic. In my 66 years, I have not experienced anything approaching this crisis. Once the magnitude of the disease became apparent, we cancelled all public programs, leaving the trails open to allow our members to find some temporary relief from sheltering in place. However, for those who wish to use our trails, it is imperative that you maintain proper social distancing and other recommendations from the health department. We will continue to monitor the situation and adjust our programs accordingly.

On the positive side, I am very pleased to announce that the Board has hired a new Executive Director, Mr. Edward Sirianno. While we were fortunate to receive applications from several very well-qualified candidates, Ed stood out from the crowd and was the unanimous choice of the Board. He has extensive experience in marketing, communication and fund raising, and has worked with multiple non-profit organizations, including the Roger Tory Peterson Institute. We are lucky to have him.

Buffalo Audubon has a lot of things going for it and there is much potential for the future. We have accomplished many things during the last two plus years including an updated strategic plan, revisions to the Board committee structure and bylaws (in progress, but nearing completion), updates to our accounting and fundraising systems, upgrades to the visitor center and other outbuildings, and completion of our natural playground. I certainly will not take credit for all these achievements. The lion’s share of credit should go to the Board members, staff and volunteers.

I would be remiss if I did not note that Buffalo Audubon face some real challenges. We have relied too heavily on our endowment funds to subsidize our operations. While we have benefitted from our generous endowment, it is not an endless well. We will need to look for new sources of revenue through a combination of new programs, grants and fundraising.

Finally, I would like to welcome my successor, Steve Eden, who will be taking over as President in May. I have been very impressed by Steve’s knowledge, his willingness to take on tasks and his positive, enthusiastic attitude. I am confident that Buffalo Audubon will be in good hands with Steve.

So, in signing off, I would like to thank the Board members, volunteers, members and staff for your support over the last two and a half years. It has been a challenging but rewarding experience. Stay safe and healthy. Onward and upward!

Audubon Welcomes New Executive Director Edward Sirianno

I am honored to be selected to lead the Buffalo Audubon Society at a time of tremendous growth and opportunity. I look forward to working with the talented and dedicated staff of Buffalo Audubon to further their impressive work in conservation, nature education, and environmental action. I am also eager to meet the extraordinary volunteers and members who support Buffalo Audubon’s vision and mission to connect with and protect the natural world through bird-focused activities, advocacy, and habitat restoration.

Changes and threats to the natural environment and ecosystems are apparent throughout our region. Our new strategic plan is a bold, inspiring call to action to take responsibility for and improve conservation efforts in our region, which is an essential part of the Atlantic Flyway.
I look forward to joining such a prestigious organization with a long history of conservation and helping to preserve and protect the areas that provide vital spaces for the birds, fish, wildlife, and people of Western New York.

I want to thank the Board of Directors for their vision, leadership, and confidence in me. At such a challenging time in our region and world, I am excited to contribute to accomplishing the critical work ahead.

**Director of Education**

*From Lauren Makeyenko*

Hello!

I have been the Director of Education since October 2014. In 2018, I served as Interim Director for four months and here I am again as Interim Director since this past January. As I sit in my dining room, writing this column working from home during the Coronavirus shut down, I, like many of you, am wondering what the new normal is going to be.

Instead of focusing on uncertainty, I’d like to focus on what I am looking forward to. I am looking forward to spring wildflowers – when Coltsfoot blooms, my heart is happy. Spring beauties peeking out amidst other plants. So delicate and perfect.

I can’t wait for more migration! I plan to really focus on bird behavior this year. I’m not a birder that needs to know everything, but I am finding myself more and more curious about courting behavior and nest making. I can read all I want to about nests, but I want to see it. How does the Baltimore oriole weave that basket? Its bananas! Have you ever looked really closely at an oriole nest? It is a work of intricate art. An Eastern Phoebe nest? The moss and materials they use! I want to take a nap in a phoebe nest. Some of my hobbies are in the fiber arts – crocheting and weaving, so I guess it makes sense that I want to know how they do it by seeing it firsthand. HOW???

NestWatch is going to be my community science project this year. Hey! Maybe even the NY Breeding Bird Atlas III.

I am looking forward to pollinators flitting about in the meadow. Making our world a lovelier place by doing what they do. I am looking forward to the sea of wild ramps on the forest floor. The green is the perfect hue in my opinion.

I can’t wait to hear the chorus of spring peepers and other amphibians. Toads trilling away in vernal pools.

I am looking forward to the Allegany Nature Pilgrimage. I so hope that it still takes place. It’s such a great weekend to spend with family and friends and other like-minded nature loving people. It’s become part of the fiber of my family and work.

I am looking forward to sprucing up our outdoor play areas at Beaver Meadow. Fairy House Lane and Woodland Way are becoming more and more popular! I can’t wait to weave the willow hut some more and tend to the willow tunnel. At first glance last week, both have done well at surviving the winter and have downy catkins emerging.

I am looking forward to students visiting Beaver Meadow for field trips. While this too is uncertain right now, I am still hopeful – exploration hikes, hidden world of the pond, insects and pollinators, so much to see and do!

I am looking forward to seeing Tern Island built this spring. Construction begins in May and will be completed by the end of the summer. In my time away from Beaver Meadow, I will be working on updating our website with full information about his ambitious and quite impressive project that will create dedicated habitat for the Common Tern.

I am also looking forward to meeting and working with our new Executive Director.

**While staff has been working on planning programs for April, May and June, at this time it is uncertain as to when these programs can resume.**

Please continue to check your email, our website and Facebook page, along with your local news, for the latest guidelines on public programming.

For those of you who may want to get out of the house for a relaxing break, the Beaver Meadow grounds will remain open.

Remember, **SOCIAL DISTANCING.**

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**Buffalo Audubon Donations and Memberships can be made online at**

[www.buffaloaudubon.org](http://www.buffaloaudubon.org)
Cost
$15 per person

Credit Card reservations by phone
at (585) 457-3228
or fill out and mail form
with your check by May 5th 2020

Name__________________________________________
Address________________________________________
Phone__________________________________________
Number attending______ Please respond by May 5th
Total enclosed $______________ ($15 per person)

Make checks payable to:

BUFFALO AUDUBON SOCIETY

and mail with this response form to:

1610 Welch Road
North Java NY 14113

BALLOT:

Buffalo Audubon Society elections for the board will
occur at the Annual Meeting on Saturday, May 9th.
Attend to cast your vote or mail in your absentee ballot.
Mail ballots to: Buffalo Audubon Society,
Across the seal, on the back of the envelope, print
“BAS ABSENTEE BALLOT” and your name and
address so we can verify your membership.

Biographies of candidates are available on our website
at www.buffaloudubon.org

*indicates re-election

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<th>Officers:</th>
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<td>Stephen Eden – President</td>
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<td>Caleb Jennings* - Treasurer</td>
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| Director: |     |    |
| (Term is for three years) |     |    |
| Kyle Gorman* |     |    |
Continuing to Enjoy Nature During the COVID-19 Outbreak
From Tom Kerr

With the COVID-19 virus pandemic making its way to Western New York, the next few months will be full of challenges for our community. Social isolation and quarantine are our best chances to slow the spread of the Corona Virus. During this time, many Government health organizations have said it is safe to go outside for a hike, so here are some tips on staying safe while finding a way to enjoy birds and nature.

Go Birding Close to Home

While the rest of the world is being put on hold, birds will continue as they always have. Spring migration will be here in a few weeks. Most of us spend the entire winter dreaming of warm days when the trees are full of colorful warblers. We can still enjoy that this spring, but we might have to rethink how and where we do that. Birding close to home is a good idea for many reasons. Reducing your travel time saves fossil fuels and keeps your carbon footprint low, but also helps you connect with your neighborhood habitats. Find a local park or cemetery instead of overcrowding the hotspots like Forest Lawn Cemetery. Practice common sense, avoid crowds, and do not share binoculars or spotting scopes.

Make Sure Your Birdfeeders are Full

If you can’t go outside to see birds, bring them to you. Attracting birds to your backyard can take time, but many of us are going to have time to spare over the next two months. Try a variety of feeders if you can, including nyjer feeders for Finches, suet cakes for woodpeckers, and fruit feeders for Orioles. If the town or city you live in has a birdfeeder ban, find out which feeders are acceptable. Most will allow for feeders that do not drop seed to the ground, like suet, and will not attract rodents.

Start Growing Native Plants in Your Home

If you are looking to plant native plants at home, now is the time to start growing them indoors. Visit www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds to find out which species of native plants you can grow to help birds in your area. There are many online stores that sell seeds for native plants.

Catch up on Documentaries About Birds

Instead of streaming The Office for the hundredth time, check out some of these documentaries about birds on your favorite streaming service.

Netflix:

*Dancing with the Birds*: From ruffling their majestic feathers to nailing im-peck-able courtship routines, birds in paradise flaunt their best moves in hopes of finding a mate.

*Birders*: Bird watchers on both sides of the US-Mexico border share their enthusiasm for protecting and preserving some of the world’s most beautiful species.

*Bird Brain*: Scientists test avian aptitude and challenge concepts of intelligence with examples ranging from puzzle-solving crows to parrots with a sense of time.

Disney+:

*Planet of the Birds*: From the North Pole to isolated islands, birds can live almost anywhere. How do these resilient animals thrive in such different environments? They have adapted to be tough and versatile through their bodies, feathers, movement, and song. In this global tour of the bird world, we get to know these nomads of the sky.

*Winged Seduction: Birds of Paradise*: Shape shifting, color shaking, dancing, singing, dazzling transformers – the fabled birds of paradise were virtually unknown until two modern day explorers spent the better part of a decade sleeping in tents and dangling from the rainforest canopy to document all 39 species of these flamboyant birds.

Prime Video:

*Hummingbirds*: David Attenborough takes us into the remarkable lives of hummingbirds via stunning slow-motion photography. Everything about these tiny birds is superb and extreme.

*Peregrine Falcon: Lord of the Skies*: While hunting, the Peregrine Falcon can reach speeds of over 90 miles per hour. During its aerial displays, it holds the all-time record of 242 miles per hour. It’s not surprising that this powerful bird of prey has conquered the planet and can be found on 5 continents.

Take care and be safe over the next couple months. Be sure to follow all the recommendations of the CDC and the local health department. Hopefully our spring programs will resume soon and we can all get out and enjoy birds together again.
Beaver Meadow Audubon Center
Summer Camp 2020

EXPLORERS
• For students who have completed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Grade
• July 13-17 or Aug 3-7
• 9am – 3pm
• Fee: $200
Discount for members

Do you want to be a real nature explorer? Discover the fields, forests and wetlands of Beaver Meadow and the plants and animals who live there! Live animals, stories, games, crafts, canoeing the beaver pond and hands-on discoveries of all kinds will be part of the daily fun!

ADVENTURERS
• For students who have completed 4th, 5th or 6th Grade
• July 27-31 or Aug 17-21
• 9am – 4pm
• Fee: $250
Discount for members

Outdoor adventures are key to being a summer wild child! Adventurers will work together to define their daily nature experience! Live animals, games, shelter building, hikes, canoeing the beaver pond and a Thursday night sleepover with an Owl Prowl will round out the week!

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR CAMPERS
$5 per ½ hour extended care available until 5pm

AVIAN EXPEDITIONERS
• For students who have completed 6th, 7th or 8th Grade
• July 20-24 OR August 10-14
• 9am – 4pm
• Fee: $325
Discount for members

Let’s take a deeper dive into the world of birds! Expeditioners will learn the ins and outs of the science of ornithology. Binocular boot camp (each camper will receive their own pair of Vortex binoculars a $130 retail value), use of field guides, bird banding, and field trips will all be part of the fun!

Registration materials available at www.buffaloaudubon.org or call 585-457-3228
A NATURALIST VIEW

The Constant that is Nature!
From Mark Carra

In unprecedented times like these we seem to think of little more than “If only we could go back to the way things were before.” Regardless of the difficulties we face here and now there has always been one constant we could rely on in our lives, namely “NATURE!” Prior to all this recent craziness nature was merely a fallback after a long and harried day, but now we have all been forced to decide what our true priorities actually are. Most of our current needs have evolved around the allure of a fast paced society with immediate gratification as our reward. How can we function with the world shutting down around us? Stop, Look and Listen!

As spring folds into summer we all have a bit more time to walk outside, perhaps even in our bare feet, and experience the wild things in our very own backyard. It may seem that these familiar surroundings will bore you within about two minutes, but it’s not that there isn’t enough to keep us interested, it’s simply a matter of looking a bit closer.

We all assume that we need big flashy all-consuming stimulus to hold our attention, but there is more than meets the desensitized eye. If we were to take all the known species of animals and line them up, separating them into two simple categories, those larger than a bumblebee on one side and those smaller on the other side, it might surprise you to know that smaller than a bumblebee makes up more than 99% of all animals!

Up close and personal takes on a new meaning when what you can discover under foot makes up the vast majority of living creatures. Besides just stopping, closing your eyes, listening and trying to sift out the natural from the man-made sounds will open up another world to you as well. I’m a true believer in the power of observation to lessen or erase much of the tension that has crept into our daily lives. Challenge yourself to really look and listen to the world around you and see what benefits will be heaped upon you. Watch the children around you and re-discover the best most enjoyable way to learn. Back to basics.

Each of us has the unique opportunity to use this unexpected time to re-center our world on what truly makes us happy and whole, love of family and a respect for the constant that is nature.

Don’t you deserve a weekend in the woods?
62nd Allegany Nature Pilgrimage
May 29 – 31, 2020

This annual outdoor learning experience is organized by a committee of volunteers from Buffalo, Jamestown, Presque Isle, and Burroughs Audubon Societies. It combines fun with a variety of nature-oriented activities. This traditional weekend of natural history welcomes both the seasoned naturalist and the inquisitive beginner.

This year's event will be May 29-31, 2020 at Allegany State Park.
Program and registration information can be found online at www.alleganynaturepilgrimage.com.

There are two excellent evening tent programs. Friday night brings River Snorkeling Adventures: An evening with underwater naturalist and river adventurer Keith Williams.

River snorkeling provides a new way to experience discovery and adventure in our freshwater rivers.

Saturday evening, we welcome Meet Your Neighbors: Environmental conservation starts in our backyards, with “Backyard Naturalist,” Twan Leender. Twan’s stunning images will have you appreciate your backyard plants and animals and the natural connections they represent anew.

More details on these programs and the many others to be presented can be found online.

Participants must secure their own lodging for this event. To reserve a tent site or cabin at the park call 1-800-456-CAMP or visit their website at www.reserveamerica.com
Our Sincere Thanks to Our Recent Donors

Legacy Society Members:

Anonymous (4), Mary Canfield, Barbara Delenkitis, Judith Hoffman, Dorothy Rapp, Susan and Allen Ott Sr., Amy Choboy and Pamela Rossetto, Dr. Scott W. Phillips and Ms. Mary C. Carroll, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Stevenson, Annette & Richard Komroy, David M. Rote and Gloria Merritt Rote.

The Legacy Society recognizes individuals who have made a bequest or other estate plans to benefit the Buffalo Audubon Society, and who have let us know of their intent. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to these individuals for the wonderful commitment they have made to the long-term success of the Buffalo Audubon Society.

If you have made such a gift and would like to be recognized in this and other listings, or if you would like information about how to make such a gift, please contact us at (585) 457-3228 or email info@buffaloaudubon.org

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“Buffalo Audubon leads and inspires Western New Yorkers to connect with and protect the natural world through bird-focused activities, advocacy, and habitat restoration.”

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Phone: 585-457-3228 Fax: 585-457-1378
Email: info@buffaloaudubon.org
www.buffaloaudubon.org

Audubon Center Open Year-Round
Tuesday – Saturday 9 AM – 5 PM
Sunday 1 PM – 5 PM
Closed on Mondays & Major Holidays
Trails are always open
Sorry only service dogs allowed

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