In the spring of 2019, I turned my family’s small postage stamp of a back yard into a cottage garden, chock full of colorful and fragrant bee and butterfly-friendly pollinators. My effort to add a little beauty to our property would soon become so much more. Little did I know when I positioned my first plant, that in a year’s time I would be spending nearly every day in that little garden. This spring, as the pandemic imposed more time at home, I turned to that little corner of my world. It has become my sanctuary of sanity.

I have watched the flowers poke their heads up out of the soil in early spring. I have beheld the kaleidoscope of color during the summer. Now I am witnessing the second showing for some of my perennials and the full blast of color from my chrysanthemums and asters. But the real beauty of my little garden is that it has become a magnet for birds, bees and butterflies. I enjoy sitting on our patio watching the host of birds that visit my small space, listening to them as they chirp and call out to each other. In this simple pleasure of enjoying birds in my back yard, I see a way to introduce Buffalo Audubon to a broader WNY audience.

Increasing the membership of Buffalo Audubon is important to our growth and longevity. Introducing more families to birding — whether it be in their back yard, at the local park, or at Beaver Meadow — is key to our success. Since I joined Buffalo Audubon, I have found that our neighbors throughout the region have a widely varying degrees understanding of what it means to be a member, and they are unsure of the birding skill required to join. Many think that Buffalo Audubon is primarily for hardcore ornithologists. Not true, I happily tell them. Buffalo Audubon welcomes anyone with a love for birds, a passion for the environment, a drive for conservation, or even a curiosity about any of these things. Even with the strange Covid summer, Ed and staff have done a great job of adding more members to our roster.
Volunteer with us

Every Wednesday is volunteer day at Beaver Meadow! Join us from 9am-2pm for coffee and donuts and then help maintain the trails, work in the office or take on the “project of the day.” There’s no need to register but bring a lunch. Everyone is welcome – even first timers! Please call us if you have any questions. Volunteers make all that we do at Buffalo Audubon and Beaver Meadow possible! Thanks to all those who give so generously of their time and talents. Face masks are required to be worn by all volunteers.

It seems that once you share with them what we are about and the wide array of what we have to offer, they are sold.

It has not been all gardening for me this summer. In mid-September, the draft of our by-laws was completed and sent to the board for review. The New York Council of Nonprofits (NYCON) helped us to improve the by-laws, and the updated document includes the addition of laws and policies required by the state of New York. After the by-laws are accepted by the board during the October meeting, they will be shared with the Buffalo Audubon membership for full adoption.

We have also been taking a fresh look at the Buffalo Audubon strategic plan. A lot has changed since we completed the latest plan, and it is important that we review our goals to make sure that they are still relevant to the organization. The review process will include board members, the executive director, and the Buffalo Audubon staff. It will be key that at the end of this process we have a roadmap to success, with a clear understanding of tactics and deliverables.

“2020” is in many ways becoming shorthand for Murphy’s Law: if something can go wrong, it probably will. At least that’s the way it often seems. But we all know that the pandemic will pass, and that we will come out on the other end much stronger and more focused on what makes Buffalo Audubon and Beaver Meadow great and how we can improve the connection between the two. The pandemic has forced us to take a hard look at the property, our programming and how we are going to be able to meet the goals of the organization in a changing world. I am excited that we have an executive director and staff that are exploring what it is going to take to operate in this new environment and driving the changes we need to make today in order to be ready for whatever tomorrow may bring.

Bluebird Nesting Boxes at Knox Farm

Buffalo Audubon members, Brad Felton and Jerry Thurn have been surveying (in Spring & Winter) the Eastern Bluebird populations in Knox Farm State Park for several years. This effort is part of Audubon’s national Climate Watch program, that studies several species for climate-induced habitat changes. During those surveys, it became apparent that Knox Farm State Park’s Bluebird population was in need of additional nesting boxes to support increased reproductive success. On March 12th, six newer Bluebird nesting boxes were installed in the Park, after suggested locations were agreed upon by Park Superintendent Andrew Hillman and Buffalo Audubon members. The nesting boxes were the generous donation of Audubon member M. Heckel. If you would like more information on Buffalo Audubon activities, please visit their website at https://www.buffaloaudubon.org
Recently, while hiking Buffalo Audubon’s private nature preserve called Rose Acres, I was surprised to find a group of beehives carefully surrounded by an electric fence. It was unusual to see because Rose Acres is pretty remote. I figured the electrified fence helped to keep bears out since very few people venture into one of our most beautiful and pristine preserves. There was a story here, and I had to find out.

A few days later, a man arrived at Beaver Meadow in a well-used pickup. I watch as he pulls a cardboard box out of the cab and heads toward the entrance. “Good morning,” he says with a little sparkle in his eyes, “I’m droppin’ off your honey.” He was a mountain of a man, and by the looks of his robust features and tanned but gently weathered face, he had spent most of his life working in the outdoors. I was confused because we hadn’t ordered honey for the gift shop.

“Well, thank you.” was my reply. Then, still curious, I said, &“um, not that I’m ungrateful for the donation, but why are you giving us the honey?” “Well,” he said politely, “you get 25 pounds of honey a year, that’s the deal.” I smiled and said, “Wow, thank you, so much.” “What deal?”

It turns out; the honey I found at Rose Acres has a history that began in Belgium more than 200 years ago. The beekeepers are the Seewaldt family, and their love of farming and beekeeping has been passed down through 6 generations. When they arrived in America, the family made Wyoming Co. their home more than 100 years ago. It was near Rose Acres that the family continued in the tradition of farming and beekeeping. Charles Seewaldt’s grandfather set up the hives, and when Buffalo Audubon purchased the property, Mr. Seewaldt’s “deal” was to keep the hives on Rose Acres in trade for 25 pounds of honey a year.

The importance of bees cannot be underestimated, yet the threats to them are real. Buffalo Audubon and the Seewaldt family, are doing all we can to help bees survive and thrive. The next time you reach for a spoonful of sweet golden nectar, remember this story. There is so much you can do to help protect our bees and our environment. And the next time you visit the Audubon Center gift shop, grab a jar of rare, Rose Acres Honey, it’s delicious.
All programs require pre-registration and space will be limited to a maximum of 10 people per program including the instructor(s). Face masks are required. To register and pay in advance, please call (585) 457-3228.

Saturday October 10th
North Tonawanda Owl Prowl
7PM - 8:30PM - North Tonawanda Audubon Preserve
Join us for a nocturnal hike through the woods in search of the Eastern Screech-owls that make their home in the Klydell Wetlands of North Tonawanda. We’ll learn about the habitat these Screech-owls need while we listen for their calls and look for them flying through the night. Meet at the corner of Birch St. and Raymond Ave. Space is limited and registration fills quickly! Pre-registration is required. $10 Non-Members/$8 BAS Members.

Saturday, October 24th
Rose Acres Mushroom Walk
10AM - 12PM - Rose Acres Audubon Preserve
Join a Fun Gal (Director of Education, Lauren Makeyenko) and a Fun Guy (Volunteer Joe Dabrowski) for a leisurely walk around Rose Acres Audubon Preserve in Java Center to look for Fall mushrooms. We will not be foraging, but taking photos is encouraged. Pre-registration is required. $10 Non-Members/$8 BAS Members.

Saturday October 17th
Bring a Friend Birding
10AM - 12PM - Beaver Meadow Audubon Center
Bring a friend and join us for an introduction to Birdwatching at Beaver Meadow! We’ll go over everything you need to get started, from binoculars to field guides, and then take a short hike around the preserve to look for as many birds as we can find. Pre-registration is required. $10 Non-Members/$8 BAS Members.

Saturday October 24th
Beaver Meadow Owl Prowl
7PM - 9PM - Beaver Meadow Audubon Center
Join us for a nocturnal search for the Eastern Screech-owls and Barred Owls that make their home in the Beaver Meadow Preserve. After a short presentation with Zelda, our Screech-owl ambassador, we’ll learn about the habitat these nocturnal predators need as we listen for their calls. Space is limited and registration fills quickly! Pre-registration is required. $10 Non-Members/$8 BAS Members.

Friday, October 30th
Blue Moon Walk
7PM – 8:30PM – Beaver Meadow Audubon Center
Join us the night before Halloween for the second full moon of October on the trails at Beaver Meadow. Every month has a full moon, but because the lunar cycle and the calendar year aren’t perfectly synched, about every three years we wind up with two in the same calendar month. It might even be kinda spooky! Perfect for a Date Night! Pre-registration is required. $10 Non-Members/$8 BAS Members. Adult Program.

Saturday, November 7th
Backyard Birds and Birdfeeders: Part 2
10AM - 12PM - Beaver Meadow Audubon Center
Join Naturalist Tom Kerr for an introduction to your feathered neighbors! This month we will learn about ways to create a bird friendly backyard where birds visit for nesting, feeding, and migratory stopovers. Pre-registration is required. $15 Non-Members / $12 BAS Members.
Saturday November 14th
Buckhorn Island Birding
9AM - 12PM - Buckhorn Island State Park
Join us for a walk along the Niagara River at Buckhorn Island State Park. Gulls, Ducks, Geese, and Swans are all starting to arrive for the winter in the Niagara River, forming one of the biggest congregations of wildlife in the world! Learn about why our region is so important to their survival. Pre-registration is required. Donations gratefully accepted.

Tuesday, November 17th
Toddler Time – Turkey Tales!
10AM – 11:30AM – Beaver Meadow Nature Center
Join us for an outdoor trek with your little one(s). We'll take a short hike to look for turkey tracks, make a simple turkey call under the picnic shelter, and end with story time and small snack. Space will be very limited. Pre-registration is required. $10 Non-Members/$8 BAS Members. Ages 2-4.

Saturday November 21st
Tonawanda Turkeys
10AM to 12 PM - Elmlawn Memorial Park
Join Naturalist Tom Kerr for a walk through Tonawanda’s Elmlawn Memorial Park in search of their resident Wild Turkey Flock. We’ll learn all about this iconic American bird and other wildlife that are doing their best to adapt to life in suburbia. Binoculars are available. Meet at Brighton Road entrance. Pre-registration is required. Donations gratefully accepted.

Saturday November 28th
Niagara River Gulls
10 AM to 12 PM - NYPA Fishing Platform
Join Buffalo Audubon Naturalist Tom Kerr at the NYPA Fishing Platform below the Robert Moses Dam. Every fall, thousands of Bonaparte’s Gulls congregate in the Niagara River. Watch them catch and fight over fish up close before they head further south. Binoculars are available. Pre-registration is required. Donations gratefully accepted.

Saturday December 5th
Backyard Birds and Birdfeeders: Part 3
10AM - 12PM - Beaver Meadow Audubon Center
Join Naturalist Tom Kerr for an introduction to your feathered neighbors! This month we will learn about ways you can help your backyard birds make it through the cold winter months. Pre-registration is required. $15 Non-Members / $12 BAS Members.

Saturday December 12th
Outer Harbor Snowy Owl Search
9AM - 11AM - Buffalo Outer Harbor State Park
Every winter, nature lovers are mesmerized by the handful of Snowy Owls that arrive in our area. Join Naturalist Tom Kerr on a search for Snowy Owls along the Outer Harbor. We'll discuss what brings them to Western New York, and what challenges they will face while they are here. Binoculars are available. Pre-registration is required. Donations gratefully accepted.

Saturday December 19th
121st Annual Christmas Bird Count
8AM - 12PM - Beaver Meadow Audubon Center
Join us for the longest running community science project in the world! The tradition of the Christmas Bird Count has provided scientists with over 100 years of data on bird populations across North America. We'll kick off the count with coffee and donuts before we get started!
Monday, December 21st
Winter Solstice – Make a Twig Star Wreath
7PM - 9PM – Beaver Meadow Audubon Center
Participants will create a one of a kind wreath suitable for hanging indoors or outdoors. On this day, the sun travels the shortest path through the sky, and the winter solstice has the least daylight and longest night. Join us as we welcome the sun, the star closest to earth, back into our lives! Pre-registration is required.
$20 Non-Members/$16 BAS Members.
Program includes all supplies. Ages 14 and up.

Saturday December 26th
Goat Island Gulls
10AM - 12PM - Niagara Falls State Park - Goat Island
Join Naturalist Tom Kerr for a morning birding walk at one of the best hot-spots to see winter gulls and waterfowl in North America. The Three Sisters Islands are closed for the season, but New York State Parks has given us special access to view the gulls and ducks that spend their winter in the rapids above Niagara Falls. Binoculars are available. Pre-registration is required. Meet at Parking Lot #3. Donations are gratefully accepted.

Common Yellowthroat #250037978 | Tom Kerr

One of the highlights of our bird banding survey at the Beaver Meadow Arboretum this summer was the recapture of a Common Yellowthroat that was banded in the summer of 2013. 2013 seems like ages ago right now, as I did not even work at Beaver Meadow at the time. When this male Yellowthroat was banded, it was determined to be in its second year. We band and recapture a lot of birds that are in their second year at Beaver Meadow, but we rarely recapture a bird that is in its ninth year.

I know what you are thinking, if it hatched in 2012, then it is only 8 years old, but birds in studies like this are aged differently. The year that they are hatched is referred to as their first year. As soon as the calendar flips to the next year, we consider that bird a second year bird.

This 8 year old Common Yellowthroat that is in its ninth year has survived this long against all odds. Nesting at Beaver Meadow each summer has helped it by giving it a stable nesting habitat and a summer home. The Beaver Meadow Arboretum is full of insects to eat, free from house cats, safe from window collisions, and far enough away from busy roads packed with speeding cars. When this tiny bird leaves Beaver Meadow in the fall to head to its winter home in Central America, its life could become much more difficult.

We spend a lot of time talking about how we can help birds around our homes and neighborhoods, but how can we help birds like Common Yellowthroat #250037978 survive their migration south, their time spent on their winter habitat, and their journey back to the forests of North America? Here are a few suggestions to think about while we wait for the return of the Warblers, Flycatchers, Tanagers, Vireos, and other songbirds that have left us for the winter.
Plant Native Plants

This cannot be stressed enough, so it is brought up in every conversation about helping birds. Almost all of our migratory songbirds are insectivores, and for insects to flourish, they need native plants as their host plants. Most of our insects have co-evolved with a host plant to feed on. If that plant is not available, the insects that feed on it will disappear and so will the birds that rely on them.

Support “Lights Out” Initiatives

City lights can confuse migrating songbirds and cause them to become lost or trapped between buildings. Many of these birds die from exhaustion or collisions with buildings and windows. Support Lights Out programs in your community. For more information, visit https://www.audubon.org/con-servation/project/lights-out

Buy Shade Grown Coffee

When buying coffee, look for labels that say “Shade Grown” or “Bird Friendly.” Coffee can be grown in a way that promotes a healthy ecosystem for wildlife. It is a little more expensive, but it’s a small price to pay to protect the habitat that tropical and neotropical migrant birds rely on. For more information, visit https://nationalzoo.si.edu/migra-tory-birds/where-buy-bird-friendly-coffee

Avoid Products that use Palm Oil

Palm Oil is a product used in many common products like candy, shampoo, detergent, lotion, and peanut butter. Palm Oil comes from African Palm trees, but they have been planted in large plantations in tropical regions all over the world. Palm Oil plantations are one of the leading causes of tropical deforestation and is threatening thousands of species with extinction.

Eat Less Meat

Ranching is another one of the leading causes of tropical deforestation. Many of the wildfires in the Amazon Rainforest over the past two years have been caused by clearing land for cattle grazing. Reducing the demand for meat, especially beef will help conserve this land. Deforestation of tropical forests is also contributing to the acceleration of climate change, another serious threat to birds across the world.

Support Ecotourism

Billions of dollars are spent on ecotourism every year. Instead of booking a cruise to a resort on a beach somewhere, spend a vacation enjoying the amazing habitats and wildlife this planet has to offer. To many of us, birds are priceless, but much of the world doesn’t think like that. If you travel to see birds or wildlife, write letters to the local governments in the communities you will be visiting, and let them know you are spending your money to enjoy birds and the unique habitats that community has to offer. Planning a trip in 2020 is very difficult now, but keep this in mind for your first trip when we get through this pandemic.
Thank You to our Donors

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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 FALL 2020 BIRD SEED SALE

PLEASE mail or email this form with your order NOW.
Or call 585-457-3228 or email kate@buffaloaudubon.org

Order Deadline is Noon, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16th. All orders must be pre-paid. Please be sure to include your address, email and phone number for confirmation of your order.

SEED PICKUP DAY is Saturday, October 24 from 10:00 am to 3:00 PM at Beaver Meadow

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<td>Premium Bird Seed: A great variety for backyard birds and songbirds. Excellent mix with no milo or wheat fillers. Contains peanuts, safflower, millet, corn, sunflower and sunflower hearts.</td>
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585-457-3228

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8% Sales Tax _____________
Please donate to help fill Beaver Meadow’s feeders _____________
TOTAL _____________

Pick up Saturday, October 24, 2020 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT