

The Tanager

Published quarterly by the

Burroughs Audubon Nature Club

c/o John Shaw

374 Cromwell Drive, Rochester, NY 14610



Volume 50, Number 1

March 2020

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Shirley Shaw

It is my honor to have been elected to serve as BANC's president in 2020. I will be working with a fine group of people in the Executive Council, all of whom have been in various leadership positions for quite a while, except Martha Zettel, whom we welcome to the position of vice president. I'd also like to thank the committee chairs and members who work to make activities happen or who undertake tasks that are essential for the functioning of the club. Without all our volunteers, BANC would stand still.

I am so excited about our program of activities for this year. We have an array of interesting speakers on a variety of topics, regular Sunday afternoon Family Nature Hikes, and field trips to observe and learn about all aspects of nature. Check the list of programs in our booklet or at www.bancny.org, and mark your calendars. Whether it's learning how to keep the great in our Great Lakes at our banquet, visiting Muller Field Station at Honeoye Lake, going birding in Powder Mills Park and at the Sanctuary, or savoring the fascinating environment of Zurich Bog, our events are must-attends to connect you with our marvelous natural world!

I hope you read the 2019 Annual Report of our past president, Marigrace Piazza, in the December *Tanager*, where she explained the strategies that BANC is using to continue to thrive. She did a wonderful job in the last two years keeping track of all the work needed.

Time moves on and changes are happening as a new generation has come of age with different expectations than those of our long-time members about

joining organizations and helping with whatever tasks need doing. They are busy with their careers and families, lacking adequate time to be as actively involved as in the past when there were fewer families with both parents working outside the home and fewer activities to consume the time of their children after school and on weekends. These changes have affected many organizations, not just BANC, as they try to fulfill their goals with fewer volunteers.

As Marigrace pointed out, BANC is unique among our area's nature clubs because we own property that we must maintain. Our club house was built in 1981. Homeowners recognize that a building that is 40 years old needs repairs and refurbishing. Property owners know that grounds require constant maintenance—trees fall or die, areas become overgrown if not trimmed, walkways need attention as they age, etc. Our Council has a long list of the maintenance projects, and we are undertaking them in a systematic manner, based on an evaluation of our needs by an engineering firm's inspection in 2018. However, we no longer have enough member volunteers to do the

(Continued on page 2)

(President's column - continued from page 1)

necessary work. Even if we did, many items on our list require a professional. Under the leadership of Ellen Prill, we have enlisted the help of Scouts for some projects, and where the hiring of a professional is necessary, the Council makes its decisions based on cost and reputation of the professional. We are pleased that we have found wonderful workers who have completed projects well below the anticipated cost the inspection report estimated.

In addition to Scouts, high school students in the Victor Key Club have been regular helpers with Clean Up Day projects. Through social media and more traditional means of outreach, we recruited adults, families, and teens to help us with our first ever Habitat Restoration Day in October. Thanks to Becky Olson, who will continue to maintain our Facebook page, and Ellen Prill, who will undertake publicity through various other electronic media, we hope to reach more community members to work on projects or tasks from time to time, even if they aren't club members. And of course, with the help of members like Dean Clayton, Joe Hurley, Joe Laszkowski, Becky Olson, Daniel Rinn, Jutta Dudley, Marigrace Piazza, Carol Southby, and David Southby, who work on mowing, trail maintenance, invasive species removal, gardening, and club house chores, much is accomplished.

What can you do to help? Can you volunteer your skills and labor? Just contact me, and we'll get you started. Do you know a young family that might

want to spend an occasional weekend afternoon pulling privet? Tell them about BANC's ongoing need for workers to remove this invasive plant and let me know how to contact them if they're interested. Do you have connections with a student group or adult organization that does community service? Put them in touch with Ellen Prill or me. Spread the word about our need for volunteers.

If you can, donate to help cover the cost of maintenance and upkeep. We recently bought two Shrub Busters for popping out the invasive privet, had dead trees cut down, and planned for gutter work in the spring. You'll notice that thanks to the creativity of Lura Kelley, we now have a donation box at our events to help raise extra dollars and remind us of our financial needs.

Despite all this responsibility, we love our Sanctuary. Slowing down, going for a stroll rather than a jog, quietly observing the structure of a wildflower, listening to the rattle of a Belted Kingfisher or the lyrical song of a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, delighting in the beauty of a Red Admiral butterfly, or watching glittering dragonflies flitting over the marsh enrich our lives. Autumn leaves and the icy beauty of Irondequoit Creek enchant us. Our property is a sanctuary in more than just name where we find a place to relax, learn, and share our experiences with friends. Nature provides so many gifts and pleasures. Enjoy!



BANC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2020

Front, left to right: Lura Kelley, Jon Dombrowski, Carol Klinger, John Shaw.
Rear, left to right: Jane Stock, Frank Crombe, Shirley Shaw, Sabrina Commisso,
Marigrace Piazza, Ellen Prill, Richard Ashworth.

Martha
Zettel

Photo by Richard Ashworth

Bridging the Gap

By Carol Hinkelman

Climate change is an existential threat to our planet, and there are only a few years left to take preventive measures. We need to drastically cut our carbon dioxide emissions and convert to 100% renewable energy, but the fossil fuel industry has promoted the idea that we need a “bridge fuel,” a reliable and economical fuel source like natural gas, to use temporarily until we can reach our renewable energy goal. Natural gas is cleaner than coal, producing half as much carbon dioxide as coal when burned, but that is only part of the story.

Natural gas is mostly methane, and at every stage of the process of extracting the gas, refining and compressing it, and transporting it through pipelines to consumers, some of the methane leaks into the atmosphere. Methane is a greenhouse gas 80 times more powerful than carbon dioxide at trapping heat in the atmosphere, and a new scientific study has found that methane emissions are 60% higher than had previously been known. Methane is now causing 25% of global warming. Placing stricter methane emission regulations on the fossil fuel industry would help to reduce future global warming, but the

industry has always lobbied to block government regulations to curb methane emissions.

The energy picture has changed very rapidly in the last decade. With the widespread use of fracking in recent years, the United States has become the world’s largest producer of oil and gas. Now we have a glut of natural gas that has brought the price of gas down so low that it has become unprofitable, but the fossil fuel industry is not giving up on their plans to get every bit of oil and gas from the ground. They are on a massive building spree, constructing

(Continued on page 4)



Natural Gas Power Plant

Photo from TVA.org

(Bridging the Gap, continued from page 3)

new drilling sites, refineries, pipelines and other infrastructure insuring future demand for oil and natural gas. In order to drive natural gas prices back up to a profitable range, they need markets for all that gas, so they have plans to build many more gas fueled power plants and massive plastic and petrochemical plants, and to export natural gas in its liquefied form (LNG). All of these plans are problematic.

Gas fueled power plants along with pipelines, compressor stations, and other gas infrastructure are expensive to build, so once completed, they will be used for a long time, locking us into the use of natural gas far into the future. Installing pipelines necessitates cutting down large swaths of trees and crossing many rivers and streams, and pipeline leaks of explosive and flammable natural gas can cause huge environmental disasters.

We are just becoming aware of the enormous problems plastic is causing, and plastic never goes away. Plastic trash is now found everywhere, even in the deepest parts of the ocean, and tiny plastic bits are being ingested by fish and shellfish and up the food chain to humans. Dead dolphins and whales have been found with their stomachs full of discarded plastic items. Petrochemical and plastics plants are usually located in areas where the poor and people of color live, so they will take the brunt of the plants' toxic emissions and safety hazards. We must eliminate single use plastics and find alternatives to plastic, not build more plastic plants.

Exporting LNG to other countries delays their conversion to the renewable energy they need in order to meet their Paris Climate Agreement goals. Transporting LNG across the U.S. to coastal ports by train using tank cars not designed for this use is extremely dangerous. These trains will cross rivers and streams and go through cities where a derailment with explosion and fire would be a major disaster. LNG burns with a fire so hot that it cannot be extinguished.

To avoid climate catastrophe, we must eliminate fossil fuel use and rapidly decarbonize the global economy. The cost of renewable energy has dropped to competitive prices more quickly than expected and continues to fall, so switching directly to renewable energy with battery storage is possible now and is a much faster way to reach our climate change goals. That makes more economic sense than building infrastructure so we can use natural gas as a "bridge fuel" that locks us into many more years of fossil fuel use and methane emissions.

2020 Dues

If you haven't already renewed your membership, please send your dues check or renew by credit card on line at <http://bancny.org/membership.html>

\$20 - Individual membership

\$30 - Couples membership

\$35 - Family membership

Add \$5 for the Tanager hardcopy by mail.

Add \$2.50 for keys to the outside restroom.

To renew online, go to <http://bancny.org/membership.html>, fill out the online form, click "submit," and enter your credit card and information on the PayPal page which comes up.

If renewing by check, please send check and the form in this issue to:

BANC

c/o John Shaw

374 Cromwell Drive

Rochester, NY 14610

The Forest Unseen – A Year’s Watch In Nature by David George Haskell

A book review by Dave Southby

(ISBN : 978-0-670-02337-0)

Have you ever wondered why birds like Cardinals and Scarlet Tanagers have evolved to be so successful at evading predators in the woodland, even though they are bright red and stand out to us at the bird feeder? Well, that and a host of other questions, are explained by this author in a wonderful book I received as a Christmas gift back in 2012 and that is still a favorite. This book elegantly links science with nature observations and explains these events in inventive ways.

The author marks out and then visits a one-meter-square area (his Mandala) in the old growth, forested hills of Tennessee each week throughout a year. He uses his observations made in this small area to describe broader aspects of life in the forest from soil to sky. It is an award-winning natural history book that also has great relevance to gardeners.

Each chapter is relatively short and takes facts we may first have learned in a drier academic way, and explains them clearly by using clever examples. For instance, in a January chapter on winter plants he explains how plants change the composition of their cells to survive in cold climates, and in April he shows us different strategies trees use to ensure the flow of sap in the spring.

The book also has interesting chapters on spring ephemerals and (my favorite) a great chapter on ticks. Not one to read at bedtime! You can even find out why insect larvae kept in containers lined with pages from the *NY Times* fail to reach adulthood whereas when kept with pages of the *Times of London* they do just fine.

The author is a professor at a Tennessee university and also a poet and that shows in his lyrical writing style. All round it is a fun read.

Help Wanted

VOLUNTEER TO COORDINATE BANC
EXHIBIT AT ADK EXPO

&

VOLUNTEERS TO STAFF EXHIBIT

Saturday, June 13, 9:30-3:30

Mendon Ponds Park

Coordinator Responsibilities:

- Collect tent, table, chairs, display items from Club House and transport to park
- Set up BANC exhibit at Mendon Ponds Park
- Greet visitors to exhibit, promote BANC membership and activities
- Take down exhibit and return items to Club House

HAVE JUST AN HOUR OR TWO TO
VOLUNTEER FOR THIS EVENT?

Can you greet visitors to our exhibit and promote
BANC membership and activities?

The more volunteers, the shorter the shifts to staff the
exhibit.

*RSVP, Shirley Shaw, 385-3907,
BANCrsvp@gmail.com*

New Members

The following new members have joined Burroughs:

Miriam Gross, Rochester

Christopher Winburn, Fairport

Cynthia Leidal, Victor

Laura Ouimette, Canandaigua

Greta Stephany, Irondequoit

Thanks for the donations

By Ellen Prill



MANY THANKS TO THE INDIVIDUALS AND CLUBS WHO DONATED A TOTAL OF \$1,577.50 IN 2019.

DONATIONS HELPED PAY FOR...

- new boardwalk materials for Scouts
- necessary removal of five trees
- materials for cleaning and staining of the porch
- wood for new trail signs
- chimney inspection
- new fire extinguishers

CURRENT EXPENSES INCLUDE...

- three new Scout projects including one new boardwalk
- new gutters
- removal and disposal of wooden outhouse
- purchase of privet-poppers for ongoing Habitat Restoration work
- ongoing maintenance projects

FUTURE EXPENSES...

- new roof
- additional lighting in clubhouse
- ongoing maintenance projects

Many members have a long history of physically contributing to the upkeep of the clubhouse, sanctuary, and programs. For a number of reasons that is no longer possible for some. However, members can continue helping in other ways. Please consider a monetary donation to BANC today. Contributions can be sent to John Shaw, Treasurer, 374 Cromwell Drive, Rochester, NY 14610.

Thank you for all you do.

Help Wanted

Two hosts for our annual picnic

September 19

Responsibilities:

- Arrive 4:30 p.m. and open building
- Set up tables and chairs
- Stock restrooms with paper towels/toilet paper (provided)
- Provide and set up beverages (coffee/tea provided)
- Set up buffet table and dessert table
- Put food out
- Clean up kitchen
- Sweep/vacuum floors
- Take trash home for disposal
- Close and lock building

Volunteers, please e-mail Shirley Shaw,
BANCrsvp@gmail.com or call 585-385-3907.

HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Burroughs Audubon Nature Club
301 Railroad Mills Road, Pittsford, NY 14534

Sunday, April 19, 2020

(Rain Date: April 26, 2020)

1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.



Your help is greatly needed to remove privet and other invasive species from this beautiful nature sanctuary on the banks of Irondequoit Creek.

Equipment, training, and refreshments provided. Please bring your own work gloves.

RSVP: BANCrsvp@gmail.com



www.bancny.org



Come to our ANNUAL BANQUET

At Glendoveer's

2328 Old Browncroft Road

Thursday, April 23

6:00 Cash Bar and Hors D'oeuvres

7:00 Delicious Buffet Dinner

8:00 Remarks by President, Shirley Shaw

8:10 Presentation by Jim Howe of The Nature Conservancy

Keeping the Great in our Great Lakes

Even a system as great as The Great Lakes can be vulnerable. JIM HOWE, director of The Nature Conservancy in Central & Western New York, will present on the value of fresh water and the importance of protecting The Great Lakes and Finger Lakes from threats. It will be our honor to see Jim and have him participate in our Annual Banquet.

Join friends from BANC for a great buffet and a fascinating program. Don't miss this opportunity! See you there!

Tickets are \$35 per person. Please mail your checks to: Chita McKinney
198 Parkview Dr.
Rochester, NY 14625

Please make checks payable to: BANC.

Names of attendees: _____

Amount enclosed: \$_____

Any questions? Call Julie Clayton 704-5588 or Chita McKinney 482-2588

Meet A Member – John Shaw

By Richard Ashworth

BANC relies on the dedication and efforts of many volunteers to maintain our Sanctuary and run the club, carrying out a large number of tasks, large and small, on behalf of our members. Our guest this time fulfills not one but two of the largest roles in the organization.

John Shaw was born and grew up in Raleigh, NC. He graduated in Electrical Engineering from NC State and subsequently spent five years working for a power company in Charlotte. In 1975 he moved to Rochester to take a job with Taylor Instruments, where he worked for twenty years, mainly on design strategies. After leaving Taylor Instruments, John did consultancy work in both New York and North Carolina before retiring in 2016.

John met his wife, Shirley (the current BANC President) in high school. Their daughter Katie, after studying in Geneva, Switzerland, is presently working on land mine clearance for an NGO in South Sudan. Shirley and John visited her in Geneva, but are not sure about traveling to Sudan!

John's early interest in nature was focused on reptiles and amphibians, and he recalls playing with lizards (and occasionally snakes) on the family's back porch. He spent time studying frogs and, in particular, their mating rituals. An interest in birds followed later, but primarily in observing their behavior, not their identification.

Having attended a number of BANC events with Shirley over the years, John became a member in 2017. He enjoys both the social interaction and the opportunities for learning provided by the Club.



John Shaw

Photo by Richard Ashworth

John had considerable experience in the role of

Treasurer for various organizations: an amateur radio club, political campaigns, and an international engineering association, so when John Gordon stepped down as BANC Treasurer two years ago, John took over and is doing an excellent job as our current Treasurer.

Earlier in his career John created publications for his company and also served as the Editor for the Raleigh, North Carolina Sierra Club newsletter. He has also managed websites for other organizations, as well as his own. Recently John took over the big job of editing the BANC Tanager newsletter.

In thinking about environmental challenges, John is particularly concerned about the effect of global warming and development on bird populations locally and worldwide.

All things John Burroughs

By Marigrace Piazza

In the last issue of the Tanager, Carolyn Ragan wrote an article about her visit to Slabsides and the John Burroughs Nature Sanctuary as part of her weekend attending the 2019 New York State Ornithological Society's Annual Meeting and Conference in Kingston, New York.

I had been intrigued about the Hudson River Valley area and its connection to John Burroughs when I first read the NYSOA newsletter from July, 2019 describing the events that were going to take place during the conference. The newsletter stated that an organization called the John Burroughs Natural History Society (JBNHS) was going to lead field trips that weekend. This took me by surprise. I had no idea that there was a club downstate that was named for John Burroughs. I immediately searched online for this Society and was thrilled to see from the website that they are a kindred spirit club to BANC.

The JBNHS website listed the calendar of programs for the year. Unlike BANC, JBNHS does not have its own property in which to hold events. The club calendar listed many events that were going to take place at the John Burroughs Nature Sanctuary. This was the second surprise of the day. I had no idea that there is a nature sanctuary dedicated to John Burroughs less than 5 hours from here. I learned that this property was the inspiration for many of Burroughs' writings and that the cabin where he did much of his work, Slabsides, was located here.

To add to my excitement, from my web search I learned about a third organization related to John Burroughs. The John Burroughs Association is the organization that maintains the John Burroughs Nature Sanctuary and Slabsides. Joan Burroughs, the great-granddaughter of John Burroughs, is an active member of this association's board. According to the website, this organization sponsors three literary awards: The John Burroughs medal, the John Burroughs Nature Essay Award and the

Riverby Award. These awards are presented at a ceremony in New York City each April to the authors, illustrators and publishers of the best published works in nature writing each year.

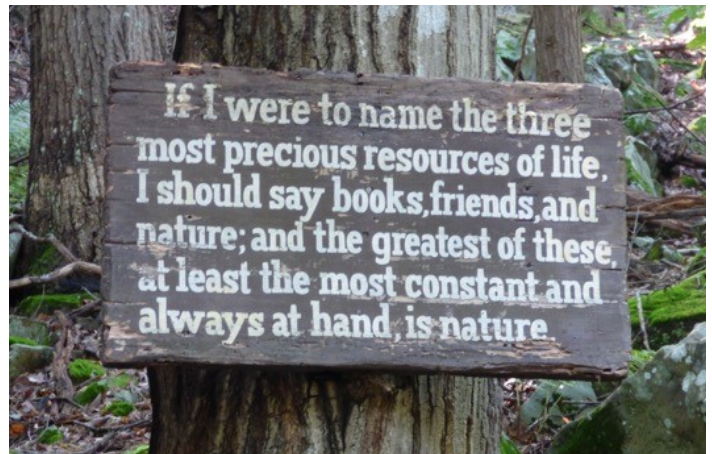
Carolyn Ragan described the beauty of the John Burroughs Nature Sanctuary in her December article, and she mentioned that she and Chita McKinney actually ran into Joan Burroughs on the trail near Slabsides. It is very exciting that a physical connection has been made between our two organizations.

Bringing Joan Burroughs to BANC would be a wonderful way for our Club to learn firsthand about Burroughs' legacy. I would like to encourage BANC members to learn more about our namesake by visiting the following websites:

<http://jbnhs.org>

<http://www.johnburroughsassociation.org>

So far, I have enjoyed my virtual visit to the John Burroughs Nature Sanctuary. Hopefully, in the near future, I can visit in person, perhaps with some other enthusiastic BANC members.



John Burroughs quote

Photo by Carolyn Ragan

New York Breeding Bird Atlas III Update

By Julie Hart, Project Coordinator

Wow! We are only two months into the atlas and already 12 species have been confirmed breeding! Bald Eagles have been confirmed breeding in 50 blocks, and Great Horned Owls have now been reported 'singing' in over 100 blocks. Many thanks to the 432 atlasers who have submitted nearly 6,000 checklists!

Breeding Bird Atlas Kick-off Party

Join us on Saturday, June 6th for the first Atlas Kick-off Party! This all-day event is open to everyone and will feature talks, walks, and workshops led by the atlas team. The event will be held at the Rogers Environmental Center in Sherburne. Field trips on Friday evening and Sunday morning will head out atlasing in priority blocks nearby. Come and learn about the project, get expert tips on atlasing, and meet fellow atlasers. This promises to be a fun event! Check the atlas website and Facebook page for updates.

Photos from Slabsides

Photos by Carolyn Ragan





January Meeting

Photo by Richard Ashworth



February Meeting

Photo by Richard Ashworth



Rose-breasted Grosbeak

Photo by Laurie Dirkx

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, April 19, 2020, 1:00 - 5:00 PM

Rain date April 26

BANC Sanctuary

HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Thursday, April 23, 6:00 PM

Glendoveers

(2328 Old Browncroft Road)

BANC Annual Banquet

KEEPING THE GREAT IN OUR GREAT LAKES

Tuesday, April 28, 7:00 PM

Brickyard Trail

EVENING NATURE WALK

Sunday, May 3, 2:00 - 4:00 PM

Open House at BANC Sanctuary

WHAT'S BLOOMING AT BANC

Friday, May 15, 6:00 PM

Potluck at BANC Sanctuary

ROADSIDE INFESTATIONS OF INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES - THE LATEST NEWS

Saturday, May 16, 7:30 AM

Powder Mills Park and BANC Sanctuary

FINDING MIGRANTS AND NESTERS

Friday, May 22, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

2176 Elton Road, Bloomfield, NY

SPRING BIRDS AT WILD HILL FARM

Friday, May 29 - Sunday, May 31

Allegany State Park

ALLEGANY NATURE PILGRIMAGE

Sunday, June 7, 2:00 - 4:00 PM

Open House at BANC Sanctuary

FAMILY NATURE HIKE

Saturday, June 13, 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Mendon Ponds Park

BANC EXHIBIT AT ADK OUTDOOR EXP

Wednesday, June 24, 6:00 - 8:30 PM

Open House at BANC Sanctuary

FAMILY NATURE NIGHT