

The Tanager



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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Shirley Shaw

The sun is shining more often, daylight lasts longer, and the COVID vaccine is becoming more available. Spring is near. What a wonderful world we live in!

BANC's Program Committee has been doing a fantastic job. We've had record attendance at our Zoom members' meetings. The committee met in February and planned activities for the next three months. We'll have a members' meeting program March 12 about the conservation efforts to protect New Zealand's birds, and we've added a members' meeting program on Thursday April 15. Tina Stevens, Monroe County's Waste Diversion and Education Coordinator, will talk about recycling in Monroe County. That's such a good topic because we all recycle, but often we have questions about the appropriate way to do so. Thanks very much to Jutta Dudley, who has done double duty arranging both the March and April talks.

The Program Committee has decided to focus on outdoor activities from late March through the fall. Weather permitting, we will have a field trip centered on the American Woodcock's courtship display on March 31, our Habitat Restoration and Clean-up Day April 11, a wildflower walk on May 1, and Sanctuary Open Houses on May 15 and June 13. More information about these activities can be found on page 6 and our web site. Preregistration is required for all in-person activities, attendance is limited by COVID restrictions, and mask wearing and social distancing are musts. Please check our web

site for the most up-to-date information. Registrants for activities will be notified of meeting places and any changes that occur.

Once again, I want to remind you how important your dues and donations are to BANC. Every dollar is vital as we need to keep our building and grounds in tip-top shape. There is much boardwalk repair work to do, the building must have repairs and upgrades, and the future holds the big expense of a new roof! We appreciate your generosity.

Speaking of money, a huge thank you goes to Sue Robertson, who is investigating grant opportunities and gathering information about the application process. The work needed to secure grants is time consuming. Many organizations rely on a paid staffer whose job is to seek out and apply for grant money.

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BANC is all volunteer, and Sue's efforts on our behalf are welcomed with our utmost gratitude. Dean and Julie Clayton, Steve Melcher, Ellen Prill, and John Shaw have committed to helping Sue.

Next, I'd like to mention a project co-sponsored by the New York State Ornithological Association and six other partners. It's New York's third survey of our state's breeding birds. If you are a bird watcher, I hope you'll consider entering breeding bird data from our Sanctuary at <https://ebird.org/atlasny>. Pat Martin has agreed to be our "official" contributor for the BANC property, but obviously the more eyes and ears that survey, the better. Our thanks to Pat for volunteering. Most breeding activity happens in June

and July, but springtime scouting is helpful. Spring provides opportunities for sightings of birds before the leaves make finding them more difficult, not to mention gives a chance to reacquaint ourselves with their songs.

These last few paragraphs indicate again that BANC is able to continue our 107+ year existence only because of the many members who volunteer in some capacity. Go to our web site (bancny.org), and click on the "About Us" tab. You'll see a list of committees. If you think you'd like to work on one of them or would like to have information about what the committee does, call the people listed to find out. We would love to have your help.

Wildlife from New Zealand

Jane Eggelston spoke to us via Zoom on March 12, 2001 about the wildlife in New Zealand, Here are a few of the pictures she had.



Kiwi with eggs in nest



Takake



Weta

Producing Our Food

By Carol Henkelman

Since World War II, U.S. agriculture has evolved from 4.8 million small and medium family farms into a \$200 billion industry dominated by huge farms with 20% of those farms using 70% of our agricultural land. In the 1950s, businessmen proposed repurposing wartime chemical and explosives factories to address global hunger and increase the food supply. Farming was “modernized” using chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides to increase yields. More use of machinery, fossil fuels, and specialization of crops made farming more efficient. Improved irrigation allowed farming on more marginal land, and farmers were encouraged by the USDA to eliminate hedgerows and plant all of their land from fencerow to fencerow.

Meat production also became specialized and was moved off farms into concentrated feedlots. USDA policies shifted to using subsidies and crop insurance to promote the production of cheap grain, the corn and soybeans that the meat and processed food industries relied on. Those two crops are now grown on one third of all U.S. agricultural land. Much of the grain is used for animal feed and making the corn syrup found in so many of our processed foods and beverages, but 40% of the corn crop has been diverted to producing ethanol for fuel in recent years.

Monsanto and other chemical companies bought up seed growers so they now control what varieties are planted, losing much of our crop diversity in the process. Then they introduced genetically modified crop strains that could tolerate the herbicides that they make. Just a few large corporations now control every step of the planting, processing, and marketing of crops and sell farmers the supplies and equipment they need. These corporations raise costs and lower prices for farmers while reducing choices and raising

prices for consumers, keeping more of the profits for themselves.

Industrial agriculture has brought the U.S. consumer a supply of cheap food, but at great costs to our environment, climate, public health, and rural economy.

Less than 30% of fertilizer applied to fields is actual-

ly absorbed by the plants and the remainder washes off into waterways causing pollution of water supplies, toxic algal blooms, and a huge dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico where no marine life can survive. The use of herbicides is now 15 times what it was before the introduction of crop strains genetically engineered to withstand them and pesticide use has also increased dramatically. Newer types of pesticides are killing

off the bees and other pollinators that many food crops depend on as well as the crop pests they were intended for. These chemicals are very hazardous to the farmworkers who have to work with them, and they leave toxic chemical residues on our food.

The livestock on factory farms produce huge amounts of waste that pollute the air and run off into waterways, and agriculture is now a leading source



Photo from <https://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/sustainable-agriculture-0>

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of Greenhouse Gas emissions of methane and nitrous oxide that contribute to climate change. Large quantities of antibiotics fed to livestock are contributing to the development of antibiotic immune strains of disease-causing bacteria.

Industrial agriculture has changed our diets. Heavy consumption of meat and processed foods full of saturated fat and corn syrup have increased the prevalence of heart disease, obesity, and diabetes. Rural areas have been devastated because the large industrial farms don't support their local businesses like the millions of small farmers did. These big corporations make big profits on industrial agriculture because they are not paying the full costs of their farming methods. Taxpayers are left paying for the hidden costs of the environmental, public health, and rural economic damage that this system of farming causes.

There is a movement to go back to more sustainable ways of farming to ensure a supply of healthy food and to protect our water, soil, and climate. Sustainable agriculture allows farmers to decide what they plant and promotes crop diversity and residence instead of disease prone monocultures dependent on herbicides and pesticides. It improves soil fertility and uses natural methods of weed and pest control without all the fertilizers and chemicals. When farmers sell their crops and buy their supplies locally,

they don't need so much expensive and air polluting transportation, and they help to support their rural economy.

Sustainable agriculture is a closed loop cycle where farmers raise livestock humanely without antibiotics and return nutrients to the soil, increasing fertility without polluting streams. It is healthier for farmers, consumers, and wildlife. Locally grown food is fresher and has less waste from handling and transportation. We can help support the movement toward more sustainable agriculture by buying locally grown food from Community Supported Agriculture farms and local farm markets.



Photo from <https://www.usda.gov/>



Creek During Winter

Photo by Julie Clayton

New Members March 2021

The following new members have joined. We welcome them to BANC:

Nina Piazza	Rochester
Nick David	Rochester
David Gipner	Fairport
Judy Spring	Rochester
Liz Magnanti	Rochester
Bernadette Guzzardo	Fishers

John Burroughs, Literary Naturalist

By Marigrace Piazza

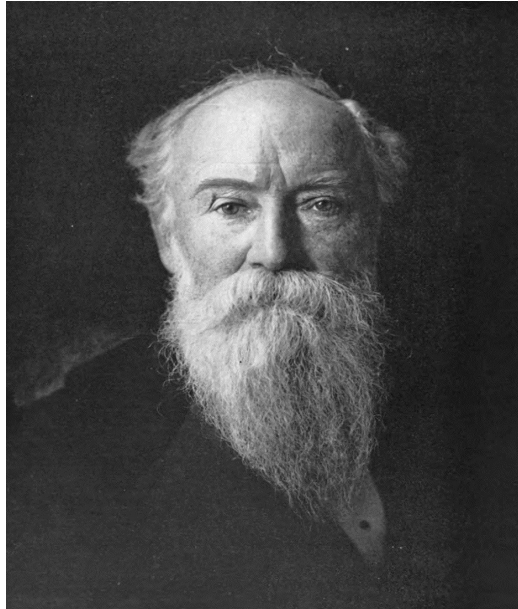
This month marks the 100th anniversary of John Burroughs' death. Our club's namesake died on March 29, 1921. He is buried in Roxbury, New York in the Catskills just down the road from where he spent his childhood years and later where he spent the last years of his life.

Those of you who are long-time BANC members may know that our club founder, William B. Hoot, purchased a set of books of John Burroughs' writings in 1913. Inspired by these writings, Hoot formed our club that year with a group of fellow nature lovers who also owned the books. It is interesting to think of our organization as having been founded as kind of a fan club to this writer.

The naturalist movement was becoming very popular at the turn of the 20th century, and Burroughs was one of the inspirations for this movement. His 27 books of nature and philosophical essays influenced millions and opened the eyes of his readers to the wonders of the natural world. He was a friend of Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, and Teddy Roosevelt.

While best described as a literary naturalist, he was not an environmental activist. Although his writing style may be a bit dated for modern tastes, his warnings of the dangers of unchecked development and resource consumption continue to have relevance today.

The Monroe County Library System has many books about and by John Burroughs in its collection. There are several free electronic sources of his works online. eBay and Amazon sell the collection of his



John Burroughs

*Photo by Ernest Walter Histed through
Wikipedia*

writings from 1913 that must have been so popular with the founding BANC members.

BANC is currently going strong in 2021, 100 years after Burroughs' death and 108 years after the club's formation. It is the oldest conservation organization in Rochester. Although our current members have many different interests and backgrounds, we have a common love for nature.

Next time you visit the BANC clubhouse, head to our library. Open the glass door of a cabinet marked "These books may not be removed from the clubhouse" and notice the set of books containing the complete writings of John Burroughs. Although according to eBay, these books are not very valuable in price, this set is a club treasure. There are about twenty books in the set printed on fine paper with lovely illustrations. They each have engaging titles like "A Year in the Field" or "Wake Robin".

On one of the first warm days this spring, I plan to spend it on the clubhouse porch reading from one of the volumes of our namesake's books. I will be thinking of William B. Hoot and the nature lovers past, present and future who are privileged to call themselves members of Burroughs Audubon Nature Club.

**"The lesson which life constantly repeats is to
'look under your feet.'**

**You are always nearer to the divine and the true
sources of your power than you think.**

**The lure of the distant and the difficult is decep-
tive.**

The great opportunity is where you are.

Do not despise your own place and hour.

Every place is under the stars.

Every place is the center of the world."

— John Burroughs, *Studies in Nature and Literature*

Coming BANC events

March 31, 2021 7:00 pm

Woodcock Walk

The American Woodcock spends the daylight hours hidden away in woodlands. By night, it comes out into open fields where males dance high in the sky, with “chipping, twittering, bubbling sounds,” according to renowned bird expert Kenn Kaufman. Its aim, of course, is to attract females. In between dances, it makes a sound that Kaufman describes as a “beeping call,” while other sources call it a “peent” sound.

Join Shirley Shaw and Chita McKinney in Webster, weather permitting.

Due to COVID restrictions, participation is limited, and advanced registration is required. To sign up, go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0b4caca828a5fe3-banc1> or by telephoning (585) 204-0812.

Registrants will be notified of meeting place and any postponement due to weather. Dress warmly. Masks required. Bring a folding chair and flashlight. A short walk will take place before the woodcocks begin to display.

April 11, 2021 2:00 - 5:00 pm

Habitat Restoration and Cleanup Day

We will be pitching in to help get out club house and Sanctuary grounds ready for spring activities. Some housekeeping chores will be needed, as will clean up of the outside area, including trails, boardwalks, and parking lot. An important focus will be on our ongoing habitat restoration work as we continue our mission to remove invasive plants and restore native ones to our property.

Bring your mask, work gloves, and a rake as well as your own snack and water. If you are not able to do the labor, feel free to come and enjoy our beautiful surroundings, visit with friends, and cheer the work-

ers on. Masks, social distancing, and sign-in for contact tracing will be required.

To sign up, go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0b4caca828a5fe3-habitat> or by telephoning (585) 204-0812.

April 15, 2021 7:30 pm

Recycling in Monroe County

What happens to the trash you place at the curb? Where do the items you place in the recycling bin go and what happens to them? Are they all recycled? What can you recycle at the Ecopark? For answers to these questions and more, join us for a presentation by Tina Stevens, Monroe County Waste Division and Education Coordinator. You may learn some surprising information as you get a close-up view of how county recycling works.

To sign up, go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0b4caca828a5fe3-banc2>.

Registrants will be sent a link to join the Zoom meeting the day before the meeting.

May 1, 2021 10:00 am to noon

Wildflower Walk

Join us to celebrate May Day among a profusion of spring wildflowers, in a little-known park in Penfield. This small gem of a park is home to many of our local wildflowers. On a slow-paced easy walk, we will take the time to enjoy the flowers up close, learn about their life histories, and get tips on how to identify them. There is an easy woodland trail with one hilly section, and an optional more level loop. The woodland is also home to several species of woodpeckers, so bring along your binoculars.

Join Carol and Dave Southby in Penfield on May 1 at 10 a.m., weather permitting. Due to COVID restrictions, participation is limited, and advanced registration is required. To sign up go to <https://>

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(Coming BANC events, Continued from page 6)

www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0b4caca828a5fe3-wildlife or by telephoning (585) 204-0812.

Registrants will be notified of meeting place and any postponement due to weather. Dress warmly. Masks required. Binoculars or a magnifier will enhance your sightings.

May 16, 2021 1:00-5:00 p.m.

What's Blooming and Singing at BANC. Spring Open House

May is a wonderful time of year to be outdoors. Wildflowers are blooming and birds and frogs are singing. It is the perfect time to visit the BANC grounds along Irondequoit Creek. Join Marigrace Piazza and others for a leisurely guided walk along our trails, bring your binoculars to look for migrating spring birds, or sit on the porch to watch birds at the feeder and visit with others. Masks, social distancing, and sign in for contact tracing required. Bring your own beverages and snack.

To sign up go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0b4caca828a5fe3-maybanc> or call (585) 204-0812.

June 4-6, 2021

63rd Annual Allegany Nature Pilgrimage

See www.alleganynaturepilgrimage.com

June 13, 2021 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Open House at BANC Sanctuary and FAMILY NATURE HIKE

Explore the beauty of the BANC Sanctuary, Irondequoit Creek, and our many trails and gardens. Join us for a guided walk around our trails, play some nature games, do some crafts and sit on the porch and watch the birds at the feeders. Children are encouraged to attend!

To sign up go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0b4caca828a5fe3-june> or call (585) 204-0812.



Durand Eastman Park in Winter

Photo by Lura Kelley



Ducks on Lake Ontario

Photo by Lura Kelley



Ellison Park during the winter

Photos by Julie Clayton



Ducks in Durand Beach creek

Photo by Lura Kelley



Durand Beach in Winter with ice on lake

Photo by Lura Kelley

BURROUGHS AUDUBON NATURE CLUB (BANC) 2021 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership runs from January 1st through December 31st.

Please send your check, payable to BANC, along with this form, to:

BANC
 c/o John Shaw, Treasurer
 374 Cromwell Drive
 Rochester, NY 14610

Or, to pay online by credit card, use the form at <http://bancny.org/membership.html>.

Check one: New Member _____ Renewal _____

Name(s) _____

Children's Ages (optional) _____

Street Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Date _____

How did you learn of us? _____ Birth Month (Optional) _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY	DUES	AMOUNT PAID
Individual	\$25	\$
Couple	\$35	\$
Family, including children under 18	\$40	\$
Supporting Membership	\$75	\$
Life Membership	\$500	\$
Add \$10.00 for Tanager hardcopy mailed	\$10	\$
Add \$4.00 for outside restroom key	\$4	\$
Extra Donation Appreciated	\$	\$
		Total \$

In order to maintain sound finances, there was small dues increase for 2021.

Irondequoit Creek in the Sanctuary during the winter

Photos by Tony Piazza



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are holding our monthly members' meetings online. Hikes and open houses are held in person, however attendance is limited and registration is required. See the information inside about signing up.

March 31, 2021 7:00 pm

Webster

Woodcock Walk

April 11, 2021 2:00 - 5:00 pm

BANC Sanctuary

Habitat Restoration and Cleanup Day

April 15, 2021 7:30 pm

Online

Recycling in Monroe County

May 1, 2021 10:00 am to noon

Wildflower Walk

May 16, 2021 1:00-5:00 pm

BANC Sanctuary

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Open House and FAMILY NATURE HIKE