



# Quarterly Reporter June 2020

## Message from our Board President



Greetings!

I hope this message finds you and your family safe and healthy. Many of our families have had personal tragedies and losses of friends. Because CU is a community as well as an environmental group, we have been reaching out to our members to say hello and see how people are doing.

We have not laid off any staff and we have continued to fulfill our mission. In fact we are likely busier than ever. Adapting the way we serve our members has been a challenge, but it has also been fun to learn new communications techniques. Well, okay, sometimes the technology has had issues and sometimes the users have too. But it's been fun. We fully intend to use some of the lessons learned and techniques acquired even when the "normal times" return, although I'm not fully adjusted to the idea of "a new normal." We have had greater attendance at many of our virtual functions than at their former counterparts. We hope to continue to institute some of our programs in tandem with virtual techniques, as well as maintaining a virtual platform when appropriate.

We have tried to keep the programming similar to the 2020 calendar's intent. Some of our activities lent themselves to modification while for others we have had to apply greater inventiveness. In all cases we have offered more. The staff's adaptability is incredible.

Our greatest programming losses have been Wild About Cumberland, volunteer activities, clean-ups, garden groups, festivals, and presentations in conjunction with other organizations. It is also hard to write about up-coming events with clarity as we amend things in accordance with COVID-19 recommendations and leaders' adaptiveness. Some folks are comfortable with presenting in a virtual format, though paddles and walks have required adjustment for daily restrictive changes and leader preferences. As we make amendments it is hard to keep details current. But by golly we are trying. I ask for your patience and participation when you feel able.

The World Series of Birding team actually beat the 13K goal set by last year's donations and exceeded \$14,500! There is an astonishing thing to note here. We were missing a few high roller donors, which we attributed to their businesses being affected by the pandemic. To meet our goal that would mean on average about 25-30 more participants... and participate you did. Thank you! And thank you to the 2020 Fish Hawks CU Team that had their highest number of birds counted to date: 151 under the most unusual conditions ever. The team consisted of Tony Klock, Kathy Michel, Laurie Pettigrew, James Blumenstein, and their captain Mary Watkins.

I am filled with hope for brighter days and heartened by the fact that our members, board, and staff have kept our light burning brightly. I know not what tomorrow brings but when so many other organizations have faltered, thus far we have shown ourselves to be incredibly resilient. That being said it is wonderful to see many more of you in person.

Each day shows our nation's vulnerabilities, be it in the areas of healthcare or systemic racism and oppression. But it also reveals our strengths, compassion, and innovation. We cannot be painted with a single brush. I will say I am proud to serve you and we continually strive to do better.

May your days be filled with health and greater stability going forward.

Sincerely,

*Jane Morton Galetto*

Jane Morton Galetto  
Board President

## UPCOMING EVENTS 2020

**THE ANNUAL CHILI BOWL FUNDRAISER**  
**The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual World-Famous Chili Bowl**  
**Tickets are selling swiftly!**  
**Please get your tickets NOW!**

**Saturday, October 10th at 6:00 p.m.**  
**Rosary Hall, Saint Padre Pio Parish, Dante Avenue in**  
**Vineland**



Our Chili Bowl fundraiser has been postponed to October 10<sup>th</sup>. Everyone with tickets was notified of the change and once again the resiliency and generosity of our membership prevailed. As you know COVID-19 derailed the event, but we still have tickets to sell and we need auction items. Everyone was offered a refund and everyone said he hoped to attend the rescheduled event. We may need to make some alterations to the usual style of the event as restrictions and recommendations keep changing. But we surely **hope to pull it off in some fashion**. We hope this won't involve another postponement. Two aspects remain critical: the CU magic camaraderie and, yes, our budget fulfillment.

If you have any thoughts please share them with our Events Committee by [emailing](#)

For tickets or to donate auction items please [contact Doreen Homan](#).

## 2020 Calendar

Is updated on our website but it is continually modified because of COVID-19

## CU Socials

We will host an *Evening with Professor Dan Duran* on Thursday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. He will present on Tiger Beetles as a model organism for biodiversity, exploration, and conservation. This will not be specific to this year's Byway theme but rather will offer us an evening of looking at a creature in our region. We anticipate it to be fascinating.

Lisa Garrison's presentation in June is postponed until Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>. The venue will depend on COVID-19 precautions. Meghan Wren will present in October: see upcoming newsletters and emails. The location of the socials will be either in person or on-line as dictated by health precautions.

## ReTurn the Favor

ReTurn the Favor horseshoe crab rescues began the end of May and into June. Only returning volunteers were able to participate this year. On Monday May 18<sup>th</sup>, returning volunteers participated in an online refresher course of sorts. Protocols and data collection were reviewed and new guidelines regarding COVID-19 safety were explained. Group walks have been forbidden. Special considerations were made for this conservation activity and everyone was willing to adhere to the precautions. Household units of four or less were able to participate together. There were at least 33 individuals volunteering their time. Thank you for your heartfelt support.



## CU Saturdays



Consistent with the newsletter, Karen Williams will be hosting a Flora for Fauna Day on June 6<sup>th</sup> in Woodbine, NJ. Attendees will explore native plants and be able to make purchases at the property. An email was distributed outlining the spacing of small groups and face mask requirements. Karen will explore possibilities for native plants in your landscape. If you're considering planting a meadow Karen can offer expert advice on selection and its establishment.

On June 20<sup>th</sup> Bert Hixon will be leading a walk that explores birds and their relationship with trees. At this point the walk will include social distancing, a limit on group size, and masks. Registration is required. See email to sign-up.



## 4th Saturdays



Jane Morton Galetto at Menantico Ponds boat ramp, a video.

The Paddle on June 27<sup>th</sup> will be held at Menantico Ponds, formerly scheduled for Maurice River Bicycling and Hiking Trail's wetland area, we made this change to offer the ability to spread out more.

We anticipate that Tony Klock and Jane Morton Galetto will be leading the paddle.

We would ask that people get a Boat Ramp Maintenance Permit or affix a copy of your fishing or hunting license to the lower corner of the *driver's side rear window*. If you're over 70, affix proof of age such as copy of license. You can log in to the NJ Division of Fish and

Wildlife's website, then under "purchase licenses" select WMA User Permits, where you can buy a \$15 Boat Ramp Permit. You should also be able to buy at a licensed agent. A senior resident fishing license is \$12.50; that could be a more economical choice for people 65-69 years of age.

## Volunteer Opportunities In the 3rd Street Wildlife Garden



On June 24<sup>th</sup> we will have a personal distance event in the garden. People will be given quadrants in which to work. We anticipate requiring masks, and work hours will be from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Also mark your calendar for a tentative July 1st follow up garden work day.

See details in emails to follow.

## July and August's Details

We have to work out with our naturalists and presenters how we can collectively adapt their programs to whatever precautions are then in place. We may have June's campfire in July with no buffet and with the required space between chairs – cozy households together. The number of participants will be limited based on current recommendations. We have to work with each presenter on our collective video conferencing skills and the like. We hope to do a stationed walk July 25<sup>th</sup>. We also anticipate another book circle this year. At any point we may need to pull back or expand with caution. But we will venture to serve our members with the best of intentions and our best efforts.

## Past Activities

The March 11<sup>th</sup> Bi-Monthly Meeting featured speaker Joe Russell from Summersweet Nursery



which went very well. All the available spots for the germination workshop were filled. Over 50 participants planted a sampling of seeds that should grow and bloom from mid-March to October in an effort to provide for pollinators throughout the seasons.

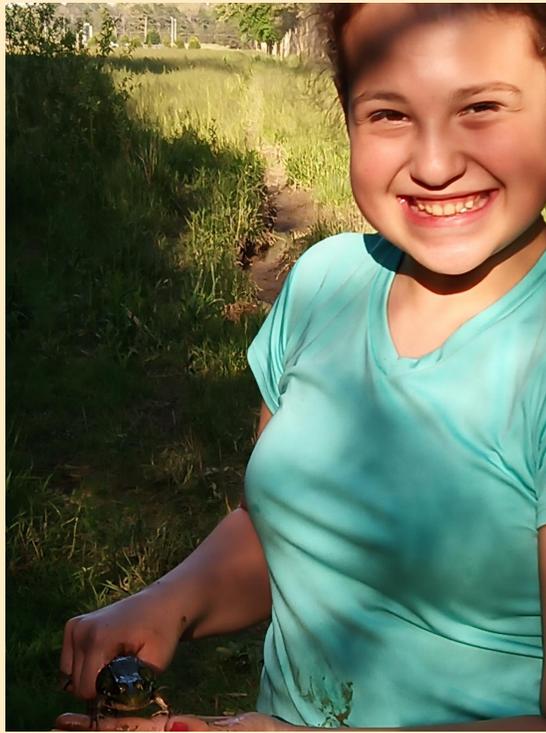
Our May 6<sup>th</sup> Bi-Monthly meeting on Reducing Plastic Use was adapted to a virtual setting. The feedback received was positive and enthusiastic. Loretta Pregartner of Cumberland County Improvement Authority shared the importance of cutting back on the amount of plastic utilized. Participants asked questions via the Zoom chat option and offered various resources and concerns regarding plastic use and recycling. We had approximately 40+ people attending the discussion.



## Annual Frog Slog Virtual Success



Our Annual Frog Slog was held virtually with approximately 50 people in attendance via Zoom. Though not the normal in-person adventure, we did get some crowd participation with handmade frog headbands and some on-the-spot outdoor nature and picture sharing by attendees and naturalists. “Different but fun” has characterized these events. We encouraged folks to take time to go outside for the ‘real deal’ with those with whom they already have continual contact and listen for some frogs singing.



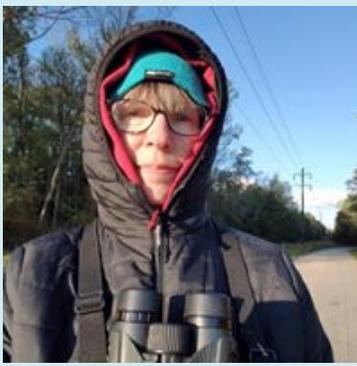
Kendall Cooney was one of the participants that sent photos of herself with frogs!  
Nice job Kendall.



## Annual World Series of Birding



The 2019 Fish Hawks Team



The CU Fish Hawks were once again amazing with 151 species, beating the previous year's total of 144 species. CU hosted 2 online events to **Meet the Fish Hawks**. The first one attracted 27 people and the second attracted 25 attendees. During the sessions, attendees learned about various bird species and habitats, participated by asking questions about birds and how to begin birding, and even played a game created by Tony Klock: "Birding by Butt." Overall, this was a lot of fun and very well

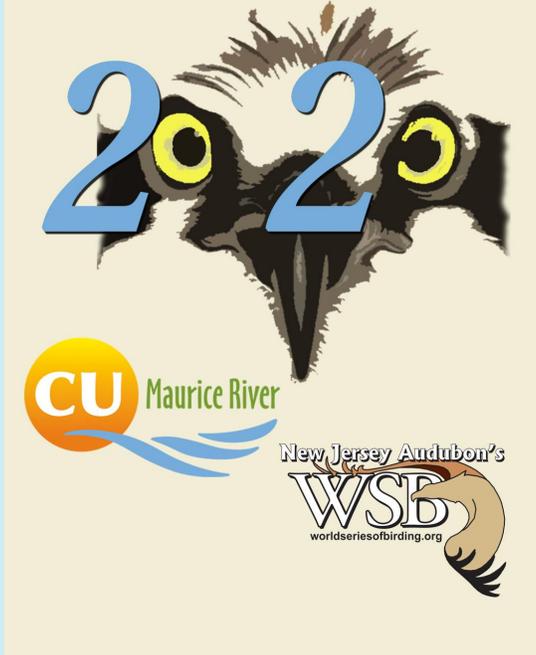
received. Mary Watkins presented on species the team expected to spot on the Big Day. Laurie Pettigrew gave an overview about the Delaware Bayshore shorebird migration stopover. James Blumenstein shared how he and his high school classes from Sterling have visited the Bayshore on fieldtrips. And Kathy Michel, DVM, PennVet mentioned the challenges of teaching, crediting, and graduating veterinary students during a pandemic. She discussed One Health: how PennVet is looking holistically at the way in which all living things are connected - animals and humans and the living environment. One Health studies our similarities and differences to shed light on both human and animal health.

2020 Pics (Above) Laurie Pettigrew decked out for cold weather.

(Below) Part of the team poses in masked for COVID-19.

Jim is in top shot. The 10 mile radius did not allow him to rendezvous with the rest of the team. The other four team members could meet at Sheppard Mill.





## Shorebird Recovery Team



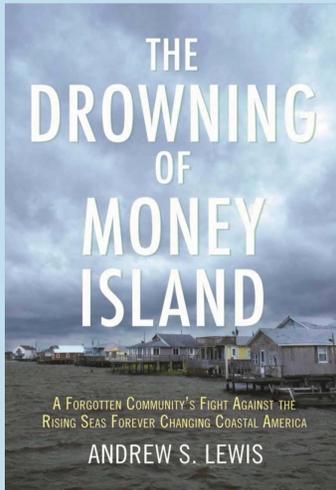
The Shorebird Recovery Team was limited to domestic team members because of travel restrictions. The main house crew that we feed was down to only 8-9 people. Some other crew members worked solo doing resightings of leg bands, and commuted from home. Our CU Hosting Team prepared meals from May 11<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>. Over thirty-four people participated delivering homemade meals with a no-contact delivery service. Amazing! Way to go, CU cooks.

## Tuesday on the Fly



March 3<sup>rd</sup> **Tuesday on the Fly** at Scotland Run Park was a great time, touring the shore of Wilson Lake, birding, and then enjoying a nature walk with Dr. Dan Duran.

# Book Circle



The Book Circle was moved to April 16<sup>th</sup> so that we could give Zoom lessons on April 2 & 9. The CU Circle participants discussed Andrew Lewis's *The Drowning of Money Island*. Suzy Merighi was flexible and allowed us to move this event further into the month of April to allow members to receive the necessary video conference training. About 15 people participated in the reading circle. Each attendee noted specific aspects about the book that struck him as interesting, so it was quite engaging.

## CU Socials

This year's CU Socials have been connected to the Bayshore Heritage Scenic Byway. The presentations are linked to themes presented along that route. On February 27<sup>th</sup> Jane Morton Galetto kicked off the series with an overview of the Byway. On April 23<sup>rd</sup> author and reporter Andrew Lewis presented on his book *The Drowning of Money Island*, which covers the forgotten NJ Delaware Bayshore in terms of social injustice, rising waters, and disappearing shorelines, as the shoreside communities struggle against retreat as well as succumbing to it. Approximately 60 people Zoomed in to hear Lewis speak about his book, and we also had time for interaction with the author. Our knowledgeable members brought up many interesting questions. The event was very well received.



**BAYSHORE  
HERITAGE BYWAY**

# & REGIONAL EXPLORATION



## **Bayshore Heritage Byway Nomination and Discovery**

Jody Carrara and Jane Morton Galetto have been working on a nomination packet for an All-American Road with the NJ DOT, which will be submitted to the US DOT, Federal Highway Administration. If successful our State Byway would become an All-American Road, which could help many organizations and businesses along the byway. This year we have placed great emphasis on the route to build an understanding of its intrinsic qualities which include Natural, Historical, Cultural, Archaeological, Scenic, and Recreational aspects. This complements our mission and our contract work for the National Park Service on the Wild and Scenic Rivers Management Plan, as both seek to protect these outstanding resource values.

## **Bayshore Heritage Byway Exploration SNJ Today Stories/ Tony Klock Videos**

While doing research for the nomination of the Byway as an All-American Road. Jane Morton Galetto took our members with her via Facebook video posts. Hundreds of people checked out these snippets. We also had companion articles and videos with our SNJ Today Stories, posted shared primarily on Sundays in our emails. Tony Klock has also filmed video explorations along the Bayshore and these too were made available. Meghan and Jane have created some short videos as well. One tour featured the Maurice River Bicycling Trail, in which we also offered our check lists and trail map brochure. This tour is available through our website's YouTube link. We have had inquiries for these materials as a result of the interactions. The intent was to encourage people to explore the trail with household members in lieu of our 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday walks which were cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns/restrictions. Our 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday in June is changed to a Menantico Ponds Paddle (see in prior text).

## **Community Presentations**

Each year we get requests for a number of community presentations. Dallas Lore Sharp Nature Club and Seven Oaks Ladies Club were both scheduled for presentations by CU but these were cancelled due to COVID-19.

# Pandemic Cancellations

Regrettably, a number of events that we were very excited about did not take place because of COVID-19. Our annual Ah Why Knot Pig Roast, memorial for Clive Minton, and the Annual Hansey Creek Rd. hike with the World Series Team all had to be cancelled. Wheaton Arts EcoFair was also cancelled, possibly postponed. We hope to reschedule Supawna with Joshua Baker when the US Refuge opens back up. Lady-slippers with Renee Brecht had to be cancelled, due to the seasonal nature of their bloom.

We can't stress enough that most things weren't dropped but were simply done differently, and we added many more options and opportunities to the calendar. In June we plan to do some out-of-door activities that allow for social distancing e.g. paddles and some hikes.

## Ghost Trap Goings-On

Intern Luka Villani was with us for the month of January, working with CU staff in our partnership with the Wetlands Institute. They have hired Luka to continue aspects of his program this summer as an intern. We held a collective workshop with Brian Williamson of The Wetlands Institute whom we met on Egg Island to survey for traps, and where we found at least two.

## SJ Bayshore Coalition

The South Jersey Bayshore Coalition held a video meeting to parcel out assignments for preparation of nomination materials for an All-American Road. Jody Carrara and Jane Morton Galetto are compiling the application. Members secured letters of support and Renee Brecht accompanied DOT marketing consultants on a picture survey. A huge thank you to Cindy Bloom-Cronin of the NJ DOT's Scenic Byway Program for helping with many details of the nomination process.

**[CLICK HERE TO JOIN](#)**

**CU ON THE RIVER!**

[www.CUMauriceRiver.org](http://www.CUMauriceRiver.org)

**CONTACT US**

**CU MAURICE RIVER OFFICE**

[CitizensUnited@CUMauriceRiver.org](mailto:CitizensUnited@CUMauriceRiver.org)

(856) 300-5331

Jane Morton Galetto

President

[ForRivers@comcast.net](mailto:ForRivers@comcast.net)

Doreen Homan

Membership, Events, and Office Manager

[Doreen.Homan@CUMauriceRiver.org](mailto:Doreen.Homan@CUMauriceRiver.org)

Karla Rossini

Programs Manager

[Karla.Rossini@CUMauriceRiver.org](mailto:Karla.Rossini@CUMauriceRiver.org)

Meghan Thompson

Assistant Office Manager

[Meghan.Thompson@CUMauriceRiver.org](mailto:Meghan.Thompson@CUMauriceRiver.org)



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