Rochester Birding Association, P.O. Box 92055,1335 Jefferson Road, Rochester, NY 14692-9998

## January 2022 Events and Birding Field Trips

Please Note: Pre-registration is now required for all field trips (see the COVID-19 field trip guidelines in the revised field trip schedule or on the RBA website). Registrations via Eventbrite open 7 days before the date of the field trip. Bring your own binoculars and scopes if available, as there is limited sharing of equipment

### Jan 1 Saturday

### Irondequoit Bay Outlet and Durand-Eastman Park – Year List Jump-Start

Get started on your annual list! We'll look for winter waterfowl on the Bay, then move to Durand-Eastman Park where we will stroll Log Cabin Road and Zoo Road looking for finches, waxwings, and resident birds. This trip is mostly on paved roads. No restrooms available. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot on the west side of the Irondequoit Bay outlet. Dress warmly! Spotting scopes would be very useful.

**Leaders:** Norma Platt and John Boettcher 585-671-9639

## Jan 8

### Webster Park - Campground Area

Saturday

In mature forest and scrubby areas we'll look for overwintering resident birds, lingering migrants such as Hermit Thrush and special winter visitors such as Evening and Pine Grosbeaks, White-winged and Red Crossbills and Bohemian Waxwings. This is a mostly level walk, partly on dirt road, partly on wooded dirt trail that can be uneven in places. Wear boots with good traction and dress warmly as we may be outside for 2-3 hours, although you are free to leave at any time; trip length will depend upon trail and weather conditions. No rest rooms available. Meet at **8:00 a.m.** in the parking lot on the south side of Lake Road across from Kanatota Lodge. **Leaders:** Pat Martin 585-301-5485 and Sheryl Gracewski and Tom Nash 585-261-6975

### Jan 13 Thursday

\*Date Change: Annual Meeting and Elections—7:00 pm via Zoom. See Page 2 for more details.

### Jan 15 Saturday

### **Beginner Birder Trip** – Mendon Ponds Park Songbird Trail

This trip will be a leisurely winter walk along rolling trails (approx. 1-1/2 miles) featuring some very close looks at our winter passerines! Bring your binoculars, some sunflower seeds, and your camera! This is a family-friendly field trip. Meet at **9:30 a.m**. at the visitor center on Pond Road near Clover Street. Restroom available at the visitor center.

Leader: John Boettcher 585-671-9639 and co-leader Cathy Ballard 585-322-2621'

**January 15–23 (with January 16, 2022 as the target date)** is the time for the **New York State Waterfowl Count** organized by the New York State Ornithological Association, Inc. *Bob Spahn* (585-671-5690) coordinates several local teams and would be pleased if other birders would join up. Go to <a href="https://nybirds.org/ProjWaterfowl.htm">https://nybirds.org/ProjWaterfowl.htm</a> for more information.

### Jan 22 Avon and Lima Rural Tour

Saturday

We'll search the Nations Road area, looking for Northern Shrikes, hawks, Snow Buntings, and other birds of the fields and farmland in winter. We'll be mostly driving, with frequent stops along the road. If COVID-19 guidelines allow, please carpool! Meet at **2:00 p.m.** at Tops Plaza (restroom) in Avon on Routes 5 and 20, two miles west of I-390. **Spotting scopes would be very useful.** 

**Leaders:** Jim Kimball 585-519-9211 and Rick Stevens 585-425-7849

### Jan 30 Lakeshore Plains West

Sunday

A driving tour of the farm fields and open lands to the west of Rochester, this trip will search for Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs, Northern Shrikes, falcons (possible Merlin or Peregrine) and hawks (hoping for Rough Legged and Northern Harriers) in western Monroe and possibly into Orleans County. **Dress warmly** in layers; bring snacks (lunch if you wish to continue on into the early afternoon with us) and a thermos filled with a warm beverage. We will drive along backcountry roads for a few hours, stopping where we see bird activity. No restrooms available until we reach Hamlin Beach SP. Meet at **9:00 a.m.** at the Braddock Bay Park main parking lot. Use the East Manitou Road exit from the Ontario State Parkway. Plan on coordinating carpooling, if possible, as this is a driving tour. Fewer cars are better as we pull over on roads potentially with snowbanks. **Bring your own FRS radios and spotting scopes, if you have them.** 

Leader: Lynn Bergmeyer 585-576-0422 and co-leader Robert Buckert 585-269-4206

### Feb 13 Winter Waterfowl and Other Possibilities

Sunday

Starting at Irondequoit Bay Outlet, we will look for beautiful Long-tailed Ducks, mergansers, scaup and other ducks. We will also concentrate on locating wintering gulls like the occasional Lesser Black Backed, Iceland and Glaucous gulls. We will then drive over to Summerville and Charlotte to see what might be in the Genesee River. If redpolls or winter finches are being seen, we will stop at Durand-Eastman Park along the way. Flat walking on pavement. Restrooms are available in the Charlotte area. Meet at **9:00 a.m.** in the large parking lot on the west side of Irondequoit Bay Outlet. **Dress for the weather**. **Spotting scopes would be useful. Leader:** *Lynn Bergmeyer 585-576-0422 and co-leader Robert Buckert 585-269-4206* 

## 2022 Annual Meeting Information

Happy New Year Everyone!

We had hoped our January Annual Meeting and elections could be held in person, but out of an abundance of caution, considering the high rates of COVID-19 in our area, our meeting will be held via Zoom. A silver lining to this, however, is we will have an encore presentation by Paul Bannick, who was so well attended last month that we quickly reached our Zoom capacity and many people could not get in to watch his presentation. This will <u>not</u> be a repeat of his December talk, but a new presentation, "The Owl and the Woodpecker." It will be informative and again feature his amazing photos. The meeting will take place on **Thursday, January 13, 2022, at 7:00 PM.** (Note: This is a change from the previously advertised date.) Please mark your calendars! Look for the Zoom link in your email a few days prior to the meeting. The Zoom Room **will open at 6:45 PM**. Don't wait until the last minute to sign on, you might be left out!

It has been my pleasure to serve as Vice President and Chair of Programs for the past five years. I've enjoyed the research and discovery of so many people in the bird world who have presented to RBA! In January, I will hand over the reins to a new Vice President. You will be in good hands going forward!

#### Jeanne Verhulst

Vice President and Chair of Programs

## President's Corner—Liz Magnanti

Its hard to believe that two years have passed, but alas, my tenure as RBA President is coming to an end. These past two years have not been what I imaged, but, as birders we know sometimes you have to adapt to survive. My biggest regret is that I didn't get to meet more of you on a personal level, but that has proven difficult when we are not meeting in the same room. During these past two years I led two membership meetings in person, and the second happened to be on the same day the first case of COVID was reported in Monroe County.

The COVID pandemic has been a challenge for sure, but with it came some very positive changes that have affected the birding world and, hopefully, the RBA. First, has been the increase in interest in birds and nature. Many people working from home found the joy that backyard birding can bring. All across the country sales of birding products and bird seed soared. Parks and trails were filled with people looking for safe recreation activities outside of their homes. The pandemic also made way for another innovation- online meetings. The attendance of monthly RBA meetings is trending higher than it was when it was strictly in-person. Using Zoom for meetings has allowed people who are out of town or unable to attend to see or hear the great speakers that Jeanne lined up each month. Once in-person meetings begin again, we plan on continuing to have this online option available.

Although each year there is transition in leadership roles in the organization, I am happy to say that most of the Board and Committee Chairs have volunteered to stay in their positions. Some key Board and Committee members, however, will be stepping down or phasing out of their roles. Andera Patterson, who sits on the Board as Past President, will no longer be serving as I will fill that role. Andrea's knowledge of nonprofit structure and organization as well as the RBA bylaws will be missed! She was always there when I had a random guestion or needed help. She continues to be involved in the Records Committee as well as the Young Birders program. Jeanne Verhulst is stepping down from her Vice President role. Jeanne definitely deserves a standing ovation not only for her work in getting our monthly speakers but for navigating the new online meeting format. She has put

many hours of work into programming as well as other endeavors over the last few years and she will be missed! Jeanne will remain active in the organization as the Field Trip Committee Chair and don't be surprised if you run into her when birding! Cathy Ballard, who has been our Field Trip Committee Chair, is stepping down from her role. Cathy and the rest of the Field Trip Committee had the difficult task of organizing field trips for members safely, while juggling the ever-changing State mandates over the last two years. If you have enjoyed an RBA field trip over the last couple of years Cathy and her team worked very hard to make it possible! This year we also had a transition in editors. Jay Greenberg, editor of the Little Gull over the last 12 (yes 12!) years stepped down and his role it has been filled by Leah Mould. The RBA is lucky and thankful to have such wonderful long-term volunteers!

I'm struggling with some epic last words to say as outgoing President. I pictured myself having some great, possibly long-lasting, impact on the organization but in strange and difficult times I suppose sometimes you just have to row the boat forward. I am thankful for all the new friends I have met at meetings, Birds & Brews, and on field trips. I love that Rochester has such a strong birding community and I am so thankful to be a part of it. I look forward to continuing to serve the RBA and I am excited to do so under the proposed new leadership of Randi Minetor. This isn't really a goodbye but a see you soon, and I hope we do just that.



Harlequin Duck - Round Pond—© Alan Bloom - Dec 04, 2021

### Welcome to the Flock!



Join us in welcoming these 8 new members who joined in the last month (6 new memberships):

Kathy Hill

I Davies Nagel

William & Linda Bayer

I Nancy & Jay Willer

Beatrix Almer Martin

■ Debra Florio

Current RBA Membership as of December 14 is 472 (Wow!):

454 Household memberships

2 Young Birders

1 Corporate (The Bird House)

1 Little Gull membership

14 Complimentary

If you have renewed for 2022, thank you! The 3 month membership renewal campaign is coming to an end with about half of the members who are up for renewal not having renewed yet! This is pretty much the same as in previous years. In mid-December a renewal form and return envelope were USPS-mailed to all members (around 230) who have not renewed for 2021. Thanks to Sheryl Gracewski and the Circulation Committee for helping with this substantial mailing. Sometime in the middle of January, we will update the database and remove all those who have not renewed. This means no more Little Gull. Don't let this happen to you. Renew NOW!

Jo Taylor Membership Data

Adrianna Anderson
Membership Outreach



# RBA in the Field Conesus Lake

December 4, 2021

A hardy crew of about 16 met at Vitale Park for the RBA trip around Conesus Lake. It was cold and breezy and got breezier as the morning went on. There were good numbers of waterfowl and gulls at the north end at sunrise, but these were soon chased off by hunters' gunfire, leaving, among others, a number of Tundra Swans, a few Pied-billed Grebes and four Coots – the latter huddled up behind a concrete slap near the park. South of Old Orchard Point we had wonderful sunlit looks at more Tundra Swans (we counted 158 for the trip) as well as a couple Common Loons and a few others well out on the lake. Birds of special interest at the south end included a number of Hooded Mergansers and the Great Egret, which has been reported over the past week. Back at Vitale park at the end of the trip, we could see a distant raft of mostly Redheads, which at one point were put up into a cloud of 1000+. Last bird of the day was a Merlin, perched nicely by the park parking lot. We had 32 species total.

Jim Kimball and Christina Hoh

### Nominations for the 2022 RBA Board

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the slate of officers who are nominated and have agreed to serve on the RBA Board for 2022:

President Randi Minetor
Vice President Jules Wagner
Secretary Greg Lawrence
Treasurer Brian Rohrs
Director Lynn Bergmeyer
Director Kevin Farrell
Director Wanda Thistle
Director Rosemary Reilly

The election will take place at the January 13, 2022 Annual Meeting (via Zoom). A quorum consisting of at least 10% of current members eligible to vote is required.

The Committee unanimously recommends the election of the entire slate of nominees.

Dominic Sherony (chair), Tom Verhulst, and Robert Buckert

**Nominating Committee** 











### Editor's Corner— Leah Mould

With the new year upon us, I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself! My name is Leah Mould and I am excited to have taken over the position of *Little Gull* Editor from the illustrious Jay Greenberg this past fall. I grew up in the Rochester area and learned birding with my mom. After graduating from the University of Rochester in 2015, I travelled across the country serving in AmeriCorps, our national service organization. I

have lived on Cape Cod, in the San Francisco Bay area and Watkins Glen doing environmental education. Currently, I teach agriculture to high school students in Wyoming County. My favorite places to bird are the East Spit near Braddock Bay, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge and Letchworth State Park.

I am looking forward to my first full year as Editor, but I will need your help! I would love feedback on what YOU think is important for the Little Gull going forward or new ideas for content. My email is editor@rochesterbirding.org — I also hope to have more member content in the Little Gull, so please watch out for requests in the coming months.



## January Meeting

## The Owl and the Woodpecker presented by Paul Bannick

Paul's presentations on owls and woodpeckers take audiences on a visual and auditory exploration of habitats of North America through the owls and woodpeckers that most define and enrich these places. This photographic field report celebrates the ways the lives of these two iconic birds are intertwined with one another, and their role as keystone and indicator species for their environment. Audiences are immersed



in the sights and sounds of forest, grassland, arctic, and desert, and in the entertaining and informative details of Paul's narrative. The hidden life of these birds is obvious for those who know how to find it. Paul knows how to find it, and how to bring it to life for his audiences through photos, sound, and story.

### About the Speaker

Paul Bannick is an award-winning author and wildlife photographer specializing in the natural history of North America with a focus on birds and habitat. Coupling his love of the outdoors with his skill as a photographer, he creates images that foster the intimacy between viewer and subject, inspiring education and conservation.

Paul is both the author and photographer of two best-selling bird books, his most recent book, Owl: A Year in



A female Pigmy Owl pops up to fill the nest cavity entrance where she calls for her mate to deliver food. Northern Pygmy Owls nest predominately in woodpecker-created cavities, especially those excavated by Hairy Woodpeckers.

the Lives of North American Owls garnered a gold medal in the 2017 independent publisher book awards. His first book, The Owl and The Woodpecker, Encounters with North America's Most Iconic Birds (Mountaineers 2008) resulted in Washington's State Museum, The Burke, creating two traveling exhibits.

Paul's photography has won awards from several prestigious photography contests, including those hosted by *Audubon Magazine* and the International Conservation Photography Awards and appears in numerous field guides and publications among them Audubon, and the Handbook of the Birds of the World, The New York Times, Birds and Blooms and Sunset. He has appeared on NBC Nightly News and on dozens of NPR stations and programs, including Travels with Rick Steves and <u>BirdNote</u>.

After graduating from the University of Washington, Paul worked successfully for 15 years in the computer software industry beginning as one of the original 75 employees of the Aldus Corporation. He later served as a Director for Adobe Systems, and also worked as a senior manager at Microsoft. Wishing to combine his passion for wilderness conservation with his career, Paul turned his attention to non-profit work and currently serves as the Director of Major Gifts for Conservation Northwest, an organization dedicated to protecting and connecting wild areas and recovering native species from the Pacific Coast to the Canadian Rockies.

## **Records Report**

- 1. A mostly normal fall month. Temperatures averaged 40.6°F, 0.9° below normal. Days below normal beat days above 2 to 1. The first widespread frost hit on the 4th. The span from the last below freezing date in the spring was 194 days, 19 days above average. There were no temperature records set. Precipitation totaled 1.72", 1.04" below normal. Snowfall at 3.9" was 4.2" below normal. The first light snowfall was on the 3rd, with the first major lake effect event on 28-29 November dumping 1-1/2 ft. to our south and lesser amounts at higher elevations in the southern edge of the region. The last two weeks of the month were benign, with minor dips becoming more frequent near month's end.
- 2. Again, the general birding picture is interesting. The big species count of last November dropped back to below the 10-yearaverage this year at 146 species. Most of the expected species were reported, but fewer than often the extras in various categories; e.g. almost no winter finches and very few later warblers. The Northern Saw-whet Owl incursion of last fall did not repeat, with only one individual reported from the Owl Woods site and one other report for the region. The download of eBird records at about 20,566 was down about 30% from last year, reversing nearly all of the increase from 2019. This may well be due to that lack of winter finches or large numbers of lingering half hardies we had last year, with the combination bringing lots of birders out searching.
- 3. As usual for recent years, all the waterfowl species with any serious expectation of being reported were recorded. Again, only Ross's Goose, Bluewinged Teal, and Eurasian Wigeon, all on the border relative to being "expected", were missed. Most peak counts were again modest to low. Exceptions were good numbers of swans and Mallards, Northern Pintail and Green-winged Teal in the Montezuma NWR complex, with occasional high counts from our NMW-MA of this in Wayne County. With few exceptions, counts of waterfowl passing our Hamlin Beach lakewatch were low. A nice bonus was a pair of Harlequin Ducks taking up temporary residence at the Round Pond outlet. Peak grebe numbers were relative low for all species, but a couple of Eared Grebe reports were additions. There were no rail reports, a nice flock of American Coot on Irondequoit Bay, and a

- peak count of 95 Sandhill Cranes in the general NMWMA (Van Dyne Spoor Rd.) area, which will be eclipsed by counts in December as well as by even higher numbers reported from nearby.
- 4. There was a decent variety of lingering shore-birds, all in very low numbers (mostly 1) other than a good count for Dunlin passing Hamlin Beach. Apparent departure dates were all within historical norms, and several have already been replaced by dates for December individuals. Purple Sandpiper was on the late side arriving, with few reports to date.
- 5. Moving to the mainly larid grouping, we note one more Parasitic Jaeger at Sodus Point on the 1st, another Razorbill passing off Greece on the 2nd, one Black-legged Kittiwake, two passing Little Gulls, and the arrival of Iceland and Glaucous Gulls. Again, Bonaparte's Gulls were scarce other than decent flocks at a few locations. Two distant smallish terns well off Sodus Point on the 10th was an interesting report.
- 6. Loons were disappointing, with low peak counts. A consolation for persistent lakewatchers was a passing Northern Gannet off Hamlin Beach on the 19th. In contrast with the somewhat negative picture, there were late Great Egret and Cattle Egret reports to the end of the month and the 9th and 20th, respectively.
- 7. Among the diurnal raptors, we find a late Osprey on the 2nd, though there is another report now in December; Bald Eagle numbers were good; there were no Northern Goshawk reports; only two different Red-shouldered Hawks were noted; and about 10 Rough-legged Hawks were reported. There were 19 reports for about 11 Snowy Owls beginning on the 19th. Short-eared Owl reports continued in small numbers, though the first DEC survey out of Avon was delayed into December. Northern Saw-whet Owl was back to the more normal few reports. Our three regular falcons, American Kestrel, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon showed typical changes year to year, with American Kestrel numbers up quite a bit, Merlin down some, and Peregrine Falcon little changed. At about 10 individuals reported, Northern Shrike was off to a typical winter showing.
- 8. The passerines displayed just a relatively bland, normal picture across the board. Just about all the truly expected species were reported and there was a good collection of half hardies lingering. But across all

families there were almost none of the usual special sightings that perk things up. Nothing to cause great excitement, but also nothing to cause great concern. The sparrows and warblers probably are show the biggest blank spaces that often have a report here and there. Some reports for Common Redpoll, Whitewinged Crossbill, and Pine Siskin gave a presence to winter finches, though no sign of irruption. The wide open bare fields precluded much thought of finding winter field species. It will be interesting to see what the Christmas Bird Counts turn up.

9. Please submit reports to eBird, post them on geneseebirds, and/or send by the 5th of the month to Andrea Patterson, 144 Greystone Lane, #24, Rochester, NY 14618.

|                       | 2021 | 2020 | 10-year |
|-----------------------|------|------|---------|
|                       |      |      | Average |
| Species for Nov.      | 146  | 165  | 156.2   |
| New for the year      | 1    | 7    | 4.6     |
| Total for the year to | 296  | 195  | 290.8   |

#### Observers:

Osvaldo Araya, Jessie Barry, Jim Barry, Mitchell Barry, Doug Beattie, Frederic Beaudry, Don Bemont, Linda Clark Benedict, Steve Benedict, Lynn Bergmeyer, Barry Bermudez, Alan Bloom, John Boettcher, Terry Bohling, Lynn Braband, Braddock Bay Bird Observatory (Andrea Patterson), Janet Brooks, Robert Buckert, Sara Burch, Bruce Cady, Brad Carlson, Robert Cicotta, Madison Cleveland, Kelly Close, Richard Cohen, Doug Daniels, Gregg Dashnau, Richard De-Coster, Gordon Dutter, Cindy Edwardson, Diane Egan, Kevin Farrell, Debra Florio, Annabelle Foos, George Ford, Kenny Frisch, Jim Fry, Kyle Gage,

Janis George, Jessica George, Michelle Gianvecchio, Candy Giles, Janes Goetz, John & Karla Gordinier, Sheryl Gracewski, Jay Greenberg, Ralph & Georgia Guenther, Michael Gullo, Carmen Gumina, Andrew Guthrie, Chris Guthrie, Danny Guthrie, Bill Haake, Benjamin Hack, Helen & Chris Haller, Ginny Halterman, Kim Hartquist, Megan Hausler, Jim & Allison Healy, Jill Church Heimrich, Christina Hoh, Dick Horsey, Bill Howe, Lynn Howes, Jack Hutchison, IBA Monitoring, Pam Inzinna, Carolyn Jacobs, Alyssa Johnson, C. Kachala, Nicholas Kachala, Laura Kammermeier, M. Kelly, Kenneth Kemphues, Dave Kennedy, Tom Kerr, Jim Kimball, Cindy Kindle, Karl Kunze, Mike Laird, Chris Lajewski, Tom Lathrop, Greg Lawrence, Gayle Lazoration, Tim Lenz, Joan & Vern Lindberg, Peggy Mabb, David Marsh, Pat Martin, Donna Mason-Spier, Lauri Mattle, Jacob McCartney, Daniel McDermott, Jay McGowan, Kevin McGowan, Bob McGuire, Ann McMican, Scott Meagher, Jim Miles, Mark Miller, Kent Millham, Phil Mills, Celeste Morien, Diane Morton, Leah Mould, Allen Nash, Ann Nash, Tom Nash, Raphael Nussbaumer, David Odell, Andrea Patterson, Shelley Patterson, Jo Popma, Norma Platt, Doug & Elizabeth Rabjohns, Carolynn Ragan, RBA Field Trips, Neal Reilly, Rosemary Reilly, Susan Roberts, Brian Rohrs, Wade & Melissa Rowley, Robert Ryan, Rochester Young Birders Club, Jackie Salsbury, Jayden, Jeremy & Abigail Schirle, Karl Schmidt, Julie Shaver, Shirley Shaw, Dominic Sherony, Judy Slein, Roger Smith, Tom & Pat Smith, Robert & Susan Spahn, Dave Spier, Rick Stevens, Allan Strong, David Tetlow, Mike & Joann Tetlow, Eunice Thein, John H. Thomas, Geoff Twardokus, Nathan Ukens, John & Bonnie VanDer-Meid, Jeanne & Tom Verhulst, Jules Wagner, Mike Wasilco, Bridget Watts, Joe Wing, Chris Wood, Jim Wood, Ryan Zucker.

Snowy Owl - Summerville Pier - © David Laiacona - Dec 05, 2021



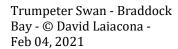
© Dick Horsey - Jan 06, 2021 Irondequoit Bay Outlet— White-winged Scoter -

Braddock Bay East Spit -Wilson's Phalarope -



Yellow-rumped Warbler - Braddock Bay East Spit - © Candace Giles - Apr 27, 2021







Northern Saw-whet Owl - Owl Woods - © Suzie Webster - Mar 01, 2021



Killdeer (Juv) - Braddock Bay East Spit - © Alan Bloom - Jun 06, 2021



Whip-poor-will - Owl Woods -© Rosemary Reilly - May 03, 2021

## **Photographic Year in Review**

Sandhill Crane - Montezuma NWR -© Jackie Baldwin - Jul 10, 2021





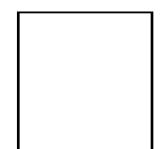
© Jeff Eichner - Oct 11, Buckland Park -Northern Mockingbird -





Nov 09, 2021 © Suzie Webster— Cattle Egret - Webster





### Address Service Requested

### **2020 RBA Board of Directors**

**President** Liz Magnanti **Vice President** Jeanne Verhulst Treasurer **Brian Rohrs** Secretary **Greg Lawrence Past President** Andrea Patterson Director **Kevin Farrell** Director Randi Minetor Director Rosemary Reilly Director Wanda Thistle

### **RBA Committee Chairs**

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lizmagnanti@gmail.com tnjverhulst@rochester.rr.com brohrs@rochester.rr.com glawrence21@yahoo.com ajpforbusiness@gmail.com kmfarrell18@gmail.com randi@minetor.com reilly.rosemary@gmail.com thistlew@yahoo.com

grace@me.rochester.edu lizmagnanti@gmail.com rbaconservation@gmail.com editor@rochesterbirding.org cballard@rochester.rr.com

kmfarrell18@gmail.com rbabirdphotos@gmail.com jhtaylor@frontiernet.net adrianna.m.anderson@gmail.com dsherony@live.com ajpforbusiness@gmail.com thistlew@yahoo.com shelpat22@gmail.com laurakamms@gmail.com

ajpforbusiness@gmail.com

## Did you know?

Some Woodpeckers keep warm in the winter by excavating overnighting shelters—holes in dead snags they will spend the chilly overnights partially protected

peratures.
These are
different from
nesting holes!

from cold tem-

Adapted from "How Do Birds Survive The Winter?" The Cornell Lab, Allaboutbirds.org

