



Reflections on a Grey January

Dear Connie,

I hope your year is off to a great start! January's gone by in a flash - or should we say a flash-flood? What with the mixed weather we had to postpone our Tree Identification Walk (see below for new date). Now, gazing out at the continued bleak-y bleak, I find diversion in imagining where my birds are while they're away.

"My birds" how now? Ever since I started using [Merlin](#) and [eBird](#) to identify and record my observations, it's my habit to "talk" to them and think of them fondly as friends. I'm not quite so fanciful as to believe I am *always* seeing the same Chestnut-sided Warbler or hearing the same Red-eyed Vireo or Ovenbird, but surely I *must* encounter the birds living close to my home on multiple occasions? And digressing slightly, bird-banders and avian researchers will confirm that plenty of scientists do track individual birds ...

Anyhoo, as I eagerly await my birds' return, it's great fun to check into eBird's robust dataset to see where they might be passing these inclement months ([learn how!](#)). This year, we are privileged to have the additional insight of guest correspondent Alison Robey - who checked in on some of my friends wintering in Costa Rica! Read about her adventures [below](#).

Soon enough, we'll have the help of Kent's local Scout troop to clean out bluebird nestboxes. And Laurie Doss, Marvelwood students, and a growing crew of dedicated volunteers will prepare for the return of Kent's Purple Martins (read more about KLT's grant-supported collaborative effort to engage the next generation of Purple Martin stewards [here](#)). Meanwhile, indoor time offers a great opportunity to brush up on eBird

skills. If you haven't yet engaged, [learn more here](#) about Merlin and eBird and how to be part of this powerful community-science-driven data collection. We'll be hosting several events this spring where you can practice and gain confidence in using these robust tools.

Yet let's not forget about the birds who are still here! Our hardy friends who tough it out year-round in New England. There are advantages to birdwatching while the trees are bare-limbed. You might join the upcoming [Backyard Bird Count](#) (Feb 16-19) from the comfort of your cozy home - or at least within a few-boots distance from a cup of hot tea.

Have questions for us about eBird or our programs? Want to tackle these winter activities in the company of fortifying chocolate goodies? Why not do both by joining KLT staff at next week's Kent Center School Scholarship Fund Valentine's Chocolate Fest, Wednesday February 7th from 3:30 - 5:30pm. A wonderful cause on behalf of which to treat ourselves and our loved ones - hope we'll see you there!

Connie Manes, Executive Director

Checking in with the Snowbirds

Alison Robey



Last week, while my partner Cody and I were out birding, we caught sight of a promising flash of gold in the branches above. Excited exploration around the tree – at first glancing only a flickering tail feather, the flash of a small black eye, a streak of russet along its flank – eventually culminated in a vaguely disappointed sigh. “Just another Chestnut-Sided Warbler...”

[Read on](#) to learn about Alison's discoveries in Costa Rica - and decide for yourself whether Kent's summer neighbors measure up to the Resplendent Quetzal!



Winter Tree Whispering Walk

Tree identifications and forest observations

POSTPONED!
Saturday, March 2nd
10:00 AM

Dr. Ken S... science teacher Mike Benjamin and KLT
... for a ... walk focused on identifying trees in

Sunday, January 28th

10:00 AM

to communicate weather-related changes.

bit.ly/registerforhike

www.kentlandtrust.org or 860-488-9185

KLT's Skiff Mountain South Preserve. Drive to the top of Skiff Mountain Road, the kiosk is before the Marvelwood School soccer fields.

The preserve map can be found at:
<https://www.kentlandtrust.org/anchor-page-for-skiff-mountain-south>



Please wear sturdy, waterproof footwear, warm clothes, and bring a water bottle and your curiosity.

Become a Member!

Within our cherished community the Kent Land Trust safeguards an ecosystem which in turn

supports us all, at the most basic level: integrity of the air we breathe and water we drink. We envision a community where treasured landscapes are protected for today and the future. Where diverse living things continue in healthy coexistence, supported through the challenges of a changing environment. And where iconic outdoor spaces inspire people to connect. Our role is daunting, but compelling. We promise assiduous focus on Kent's distinct needs even as we join colleagues doing the same throughout our region and beyond. Your membership each year directly advances this vision.

Thank you most sincerely for your generous support!

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