



GREAT BIRDING PROJECTS



An approach to bird-related editing, education, tourism, and marketing

24 August 2016

Snowy Winter Birds in August?



Can you imagine winter birds in the snow in late August?

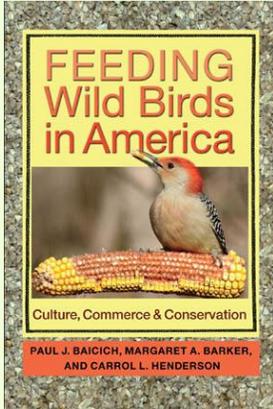
Perhaps you can, at least if you think about the release earlier this month of a quartet of U.S. Postal Service "forever" stamps. The stamps are available in booklets of 20, with each of the four stamp designs repeated five times. They feature Golden-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwing, Northern Cardinal, and Red-breasted Nuthatch. Illustrator Robert Giusti painted the original designs in acrylic on canvas board, depicting each bird perched on a snow-covered branch.

"The Postal Service has a long tradition of putting birds on stamps - to celebrate and raise awareness of these amazing creatures," said U.S. Postal Service Vice President of Sales Cliff Rucker. And, frankly, the public seems to love the image of birds on stamps. These sorts of stamps are quickly snapped up.

The most memorable set of USPS stamps was the famous 1982 array of 50 state birds and flowers created by bird artist Arthur Singer and his son, Alan. That series, is believed to have been the largest-selling special issue in the history of United States postage.

The new set of stamps with birds in snow is available now at post offices across the country.

Appreciating the History of Backyard Bird Feeding



Appreciation for the book, *Feeding Wild Birds in America: Culture, Commerce and Conservation* (by Paul Baicich, Margaret Barker, and Carrol Henderson), continues.

In late May, two of the co-authors - Baicich and Barker - gave a presentation at the Library of Congress in Washington DC on the lessons to learn over 120+ years of bird-feeding history. The almost-one-hour presentation was posted on the [Library of Congress website](#) at the start of this month, and you may want to view it.

Also the current issue of the much-respected ornithological journal, *The Condor*, contained a review of the book. The review was written by Dr. David J. Horn, from Milliken University, and he had a number of keen observations to make, including the following:

If the past 100 years of bird feeding history are any indication, there will continue to be significant opportunities to innovate feeder and food products in the 21st century. Is there a perch style that dissuades House Sparrows from feeding while allowing others to perch? Are recycled plastic feeders more attractive to birds than wood feeders? What new seeds will change the bird feeding industry as black-oil sunflower and Nyjer have done in the past few decades? Is the use of industrial hemp as a food source going to make a resurgence?... Thanks to Baicich, Barker, and Henderson, the tens of millions of people who feed wild birds in the U.S. now have a book that richly describes the history of one of America's favorite hobbies. Bird feeding often has been considered a way to bring nature closer to us and a way to help birds. This book shows us how we have done so in the past, and will continue to do so far into the future.

We authors continue to line up talks, interviews, and book-signings with bird and garden clubs, nature centers, festivals, parks and refuges, stores and more, plus media outlets for available dates through the remainder of 2016 and into 2017. For these sorts of activities, and more information, please contact [Margaret Barker](#).



Hemp: *Cannabis sativa*

Our presentations cover a wide range of bird-feeding history topics, linked with practical lessons for today. For example, we can address the following:

- Why extremely popular **hemp seed** lost favor as a birdseed. (And the possibility of it being on the verge of a comeback!)
- The origins of **black-oil sunflower seed**. (And the involvement of what could be considered Cold War agricultural espionage.)
- How **hummingbird nectar and feeders** came to be. (And the efforts to devise "just the right sugar-formula.")
- How the plastic **tube-feeder** was invented. (And its connection to modern art-design.)
- Why **coconuts** became the foundation for many feeder designs in the past. (And how the source goes back to the end of the 19th century.)
- How **nyjer seed** came to America as a backyard birdseed. (And how it has been used in south Asia.)

Of course, there is so much more to the remarkable story of backyard bird feeding in this country, including its link to the earliest of our bird conservation efforts.

Thanks to our friends and readers for continued ideas, support, and connections. Some of these concepts have worked out quite well! Please keep them coming!

~ Paul, Margaret, and Carrol



From the Federal Cartridge Corp. in the 1930s

A FEW CONTACTS AND IDEAS FOR YOU

- If you want to order a supply of the book for your own store, nature center, or organization, contact [David Neel](#) at Texas A&M University Press: 979-458-3988
- For talks, book signings, festivals, interviews, etc. please contact [Margaret Barker](#).
- To order an individual copy of the book, use this [order-form](#).

It's time to get your Duck Stamp



Not just for ducks

Buy a \$25 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp every year and support habitat acquisition in the National Wildlife Refuge System

Click here for information

The latest annual Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp went on sale at the very end of June. This year's \$25 stamp shows a pair of Trumpeter Swans, painted by famed artist, Joseph Hautman.

The stamp program has been around since 1934, and the stamp itself essentially functions as a federal waterfowl-hunting license. But perhaps more importantly, it serves as a funding mechanism for valuable fee-title and easement acquisitions for wetland, bottomland, and grassland habitat in the

National Wildlife Refuge System. (It's also a free pass for entry to all National Wildlife Refuges that may charge.) For more information on the importance of the stamp and its role in conservation, you can click on the image above and also refer to the [Federal Duck Stamp Office website](#).

Cuba Nature, Cuba Birds, Cuba Travel



Cuba is in the process of some significant changes, many of which will impact birds, wildlife, and wild places. These are unique and very interesting times for the people and resources of Cuba. This has been the subject of [previous issues](#) of *Great Birding Projects*. Under these circumstances, the engagement of U.S. citizens with Cubans on the island may turn out to be very important.

One such activity will be the scheduled [BirdsCaribbean](#) meeting in Cuba next summer. This could represent another real breakthrough in dialogue and cooperation. In the meantime, BirdsCaribbean is offering two tours in 2017: an 8-day trip in January and an 11-day trip in March. A portion of the proceeds from [these trips](#) supports BirdCaribbean conservation programs in Cuba and the Caribbean.

Words to Consider:

"There is nothing so American as our national parks.... The fundamental idea behind the parks...is that the country belongs to the people, that it is in process of making for the enrichment of the lives of all of us."

- President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1936)

GBP Bulletin Archives

Great Birding Projects is a vehicle to promote a creative approach to bird-related editing, education, tourism, and marketing. GBP functions as a bridge to an innovative engagement between people and birds. You can access all previous issues of the *GBP* bulletin on the GBP website [here](#).

