

back to Delaware County. Barb quickly tired of that and instead opened her own hearing aid business.

She was often approached by fellow birders asking about help with hearing loss. The most common hearing loss is high frequencies which are critical for birding. At an audiologists' convention, she was introduced to a new piece of hearing aid technology called the K-Amp. Unlike most hearing aids, this receiver emphasized higher frequencies. Most hearing aids are aimed at moderate frequencies for speech recognition. So, she got one of the hearing aid manufacturers that she worked with to create a custom hearing aid using that technology. She called it The Birder. She sold this to many birders all across the country until they stopped making the K-amp and switched to digital technology in the mid-2010s.

In 1991, we co-edited the second edition of *A Guide to the Birds of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania* (Lancaster County Bird Club 1991). And in 2005, co-edited the second edition of *Annotated List of the Birds of Pennsylvania* (Pennsylvania Biological Survey, Ornithological Technical Committee 2005).

When a Hoary Redpoll visited our feeders in March 1994 and birders flocked to our house to see it, Barb suggested putting out a box for donations for bird conservation. We raised over \$300 which we donated to the Nature Conservancy. Likewise, when the Black-backed Oriole showed up in 2017 (about 20 minutes from where we live), Barb suggested to the homeowners, Tom and Linda Binder, that they also put out a

donation box. They raised over \$1500 which was also donated to conservation organizations.

We were awarded the Earl Poole Award from the PSO in 2001.

We conducted numerous Breeding Bird Surveys, Christmas Bird Counts, Migration Counts, Big Days, Big Years, Roundups, and BBA blocks over the years.

We traveled extensively around the country and Barb had an ABA life list of 724 and a Pennsylvania list of 393.

Since 2005, we have traveled annually to Adak, Alaska, adding many new records for the island, including the first North American record of Eurasian Sparrowhawk.

She was very gregarious and could strike up a conversation with anyone. In addition to birding, she loved playing golf, following the Phillies and Eagles, and doing the New York Times crossword puzzle.

She was diagnosed with late-stage ovarian cancer in early November and died two months later.

The Pennsylvania birding community owes much to her efforts.

She will be missed.

Frank Haas
Narvon, PA

Bill Stewart — Stewardship, Legacy & Legend 1952–2019

When Bill Stewart died in November 2019, he left a legacy of conservation behind and a footprint of shoes quite large to fill. Bill was a DVOC Member, who won the Rosalie Edge Award in 2014 for his mark on conservation initiatives in Delaware. But Bill made his biggest mark on the Delaware Ornithological Society (DOS), where he wore many hats through years of dedication, including as President. Bill had an unrivaled drive to make things happen in conservation and education. His departure has left

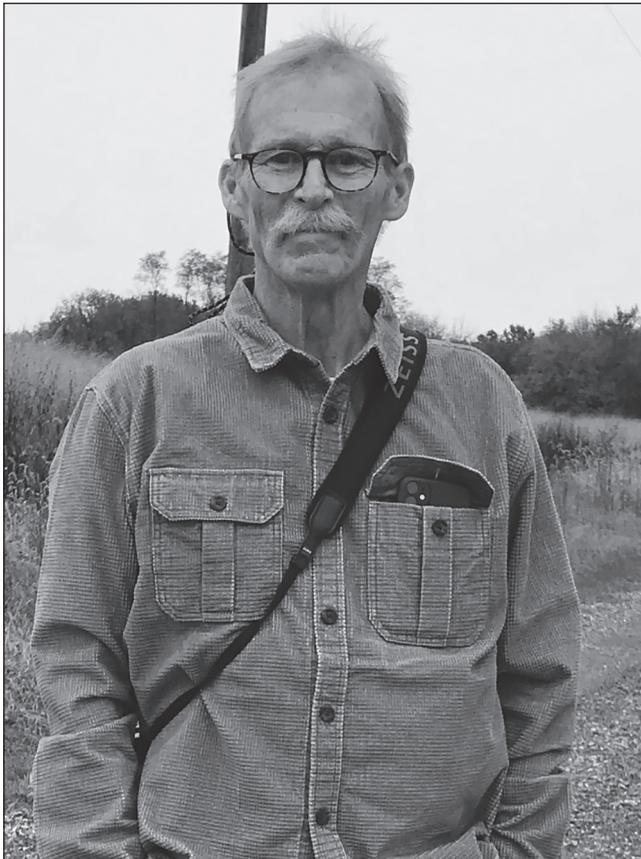
a hole in our community, but his light shines forth through the examples he set of what it is to be a steward and give birds and birders a voice through action and advocacy.

Bill was a native Delawarean, and proud of the First State and all it had to offer people and birds. He graduated from West Chester University with a degree in Education starting his lifelong work as an educator. Specializing in Physical Education, he taught in many

Bill Stewart — Stewardship, Legacy & Legend *(continued)*

schools, and held an early career as a professional gymnastics coach, where he led many gymnasts into competitions at the national and international level. In 1986, he started a career with Hunt Country Furniture, and rose to the role of Executive Vice President, where he focused on marketing, development, and room design. These talents would later be an invaluable asset to the birding communities he served.

Bill credits the fostering of his love and passion for birds with the gift of a field guide, given to him by his former father-in-law, an avid naturalist. The answer “If you look for them” in response to his question “I can see all of these birds?!” after flipping through the colorful guide and seeing warblers, orioles, and tanagers, sent him on a quest not only to see these birds but to save them.



Bill Stewart

One of Bill's first major DOS projects was as a key member of the steering committee for the development of the Delaware Birding Trail, which helped put the state “on the map” for birds!

It was not long until he was appointed Conservation Chair of DOS (2006). In this role, he was responsible for developing and implementing many of the signature programs of the Society, notably the annual Delaware Bird-A-Thon. Begun in 2007, the Delaware Bird-A-Thon has raised over half a million dollars for Delaware bayshore habitat preservation and protected nearly 2,000 acres and counting for migratory shorebirds and other coastal species of concern. The concept of a bird-a-thon was not new, but Bill's vision for it in Delaware was innovative in several ways. The Delaware Bird-A-Thon was the first to focus the competition on fundraising, rather than just the number of birds seen, and one of the first to adopt a mission that could reach contributors from outside of the state and region.

Bill initiated the DOS funding relationship with DuPont Clear Into the Future (CITF), a lead sponsor of the Bird-A-Thon during its early years. In addition, he spearheaded a partnership with DuPont CITF (and later, Delmarva Power and other sponsors) to install and maintain the Wilmington Peregrine Falcon Webcam, which provides a very popular and educational live feed of the Wilmington Peregrine Falcon nest box and has greatly raised the profile of DOS in the City of Wilmington and beyond. Bill also conceived, funded, and implemented another signature urban program, the Lights Out! Wilmington campaign in 2011, applying for and receiving a State Greenhouse Gas Reduction Grant to get this project, aimed at reducing mortality to night migrating songbirds, off the ground.

Bill was also an active promoter of the Duck Stamp. He served on the Board for the Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp and spurred DOS to contribute significant

funding in 2009 to a successful nationwide marketing campaign designed to encourage birders to purchase duck stamps, thereby extending the reach of this powerful wetland conservation program. For his efforts, Bill was awarded the 2010 Conservation Champion Award from the USFWS and the 2010 Citizen's Award from the US Department of Interior.

Bill had a passion for education, as well as conservation. He was active as a leader for the Delaware Dunlins Youth Birders Club of DOS, and he regularly inspired youth and adult birders alike on field trips that he ran for DOS and for the American Birding Association (ABA). Days prior to his death, he secured a grant for DOS from the Chemours Foundation which facilitated a 5-year funding of multiple conservation initiatives, including a revitalized youth birding program (now called Delaware Red Knot Youth Birders in his honor).

In 2013, Bill stepped down as Chair of the DOS Conservation Committee to assume the role of Vice President (2013–2015), and then President (2015–2017) of the Society. Bill Stewart's leadership has been essential to redefining the conservation role of DOS over the past decade, and through his marketing savvy, his infectious enthusiasm, and his tenacious dedication, he helped position the Society to make an even greater difference for birds in the future. In recognition of his many accomplishments, Bill was elected a Fellow of DOS in 2009, and received the DOS Conservation Award in 2014.

From 2012 to 2018, Bill worked for the ABA, serving first as the Director of Partnerships and Marketing, then as Director of Conservation and Community, where he pursued innovative and collaborative approaches to bird education and bird conservation. While at the ABA, Bill led the Young Birder of the Year program as well as the Spark Bird Project. He was the founder and Director of the ABA's Camp Avocet (recently renamed Camp Delaware Bay) based in Lewes, which brought together two dozen teen birders from around the US and abroad. Under Bill's direction, Camp Avocet was a six-day experience of birding and conservation education along the Delmarva Peninsula, featuring his beloved Delaware as the crown jewel and home base.

In 2011, Bill founded Red Knot Outfitters Birding Guides, a Delaware-based custom tour company that specializes in education-based birding tours. Through this company, Bill was able to share the significance of Delaware as critical habitat for migratory and nesting birds along the eastern seaboard in a more intimate and focused "Bill Stewart" way. Red Knot Outfitters has worked with hundreds of school students and adults each year, in all three Delaware counties.

Bill was extremely proud of his last professional endeavor as a co-founder and Chairman of the highly successful *Frontiers in Ornithology: A Symposium for Youth*, held in late September 2019. The mission of the symposium was to provide middle school through college students with exposure to cutting-edge technologies being used in avian research and study, careers in ornithology and conservation, and advice on how to pursue that focus and take their passion for birds to a higher level. Registration for the event was sold out in 2019 and drew students and presenters from across the United States. At the time of his death, Bill was helping plan the 2020 *Frontiers in Ornithology* symposium (which did not occur due to the pandemic).

In addition to a wide circle of friends that loved him dearly, Bill left behind five children and four grandchildren. His life partner was Kim Steininger, with whom he shared the joy and love of birds, birding, and conservation initiatives.

With his easy, humble nature and infectious enthusiasm, Bill Stewart had a special gift for making people feel welcome in the birding community. At the same time, his focus on conservation and personal responsibility for the well-being of the birds we all enjoy meant that he could also encourage new birders to immediately feel that they had a central role in conservation. He ran meetings, field trips, and programs with a strong sense of purpose, and he recruited all of us to his causes easily, leading by example with his Herculean work ethic. Bill was at the very heart of Delaware's birding community, and the greater Delaware Valley community of conservation and the future of avian science.

Holly Merker (with Matthew Sarver)
Downingtown, PA