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'Western Scrub Jay, Walnut Creek, Calif.' by Sharon Beals

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'Western Scrub Jay, Walnut Creek, Calif.' by Sharon Beals



By Keith Powers / Correspondent

Posted Feb. 3, 2016 at 10:01 PM  
Updated Feb 3, 2016 at 10:02 PM

GLOUCESTER  
By Keith Powers / Correspondent

Posted Feb. 3, 2016 at 10:01 PM  
Updated Feb 3, 2016 at 10:02 PM

GLOUCESTER

#### If you go...

**WHAT:** "Nest," at Trident Gallery; "For the Birds" at Cultural Center at Rocky Neck

**WHERE:** Trident, 189 Main St., Gloucester; Cultural Center, 6 Wonson St., East Gloucester

**WHEN:** Both exhibitions run through March 6

**ADMISSION:** Both show are free.

**INFO:** Trident Gallery: 978-491-7785; [www.trident.gallery](http://www.trident.gallery); Rocky Neck Art Colony: [www.rockyneckartcolony.org](http://www.rockyneckartcolony.org); 978-515-7004

Many of us come to Cape Ann for the natural resources and the beauty. Not all of us are humans. It's not a stretch to say that birds discovered this granite outcropping along the Atlantic Ocean before humans did. That they still come — diverse species, colors, and numbers — is a source of ongoing joy. And an inspiration to multiple artists, in multiple media.

Two new gallery exhibitions insert a sense of appreciation for birds, and their habitats, into the winter season.



## 'Nest' at Trident

At Trident Gallery, "Nest," a terrifically curated show of modest size but expansive thematic possibilities, is the third annual presentation in partnership with the Museum of American Bird Art at Mass Audubon.

The exhibition borrows from that museum to show famous works by John James Audubon, his son John Woodhouse, and his associate Isaac Sprague; it also includes striking contemporary works by Trident artists Gabrielle Barzaghi, Nadine Boughton, and Winston Swift Boyer; and a dramatic series of nest photographs by Sharon Beals.

On the whole, the gallery visits the complexities and signifiers that flow from the visual appreciation of nesting.

Not all is snug comfort and warmth. The preying black-footed ferret, the alarmed family of Bob-whites fleeing a hawk attack, and the extinct species like passenger pigeons and Carolina parrots, are ample evidence that nesting also includes danger and death. Boyer's still-life "Coyote, Tangerine and Eggs" drives home the point if you were inclined to miss it.

The stylized nest portraits by Sharon Beals, carefully arranged with natural accuracy and delicacy, sit on black backgrounds. Beals captures unusual architectures, creating her own sense that birds build not only for sensible function and safety, but as creators of sublime symmetries — conscious or not.

The works by Audubon — from the historic "Birds of America" — his son, and Isaac Sprague get viewed in this heightened context with new appreciation. Audubon's Carolina parrots, his son's ferret as well as his "Ursus Americanus," and Sprague's homey white-winged scoters seem much more than historical documents when posited alongside these contemporary works.

There will be presentations on Saturday, Feb. 6 in the Trident Gallery at 7 and 8:30 p.m. The public is invited to bring objects, drawings or words answering the question, "What makes you feel safe?" Curated by Sarah Slifer Swift, live performances will follow featuring Slifer Swift as well as Kate Tarlow Morgan, cellist Kristen Miller, and Matthew Swift. The performance is free. Reservations for these performances can be made on [www.trident.gallery](http://www.trident.gallery).

Information about additional events accompanying the "Nest" exhibition is also available on the site.

## 'For the Birds' at Rocky Neck

The juried show at the Cultural Center of Rocky Neck is, like most group shows, an amalgam of media and technical levels. Filling both the upstairs and downstairs galleries, "For the Birds" was juried by Amy Montague, director of the Museum of American Bird Art, who was also instrumental in choice of the historic works at Trident Gallery.

A stained glass and birch piece by Hilary Harrison, a colorful multi-paneled work by Rokhaya Waring, a digital creation by Otto Laske, and an unusual pen-and-ink work by accomplished watercolorist Marilyn Swift are among the highlights at the Cultural Center.

RNAC plays hosts to numerous events during the course of the exhibition's run, including a lecture on Audubon by renowned birding expert Chris Leahy, an auction of artist-created birdhouses, and a presentation about the birds of Cape Ann by photographer Kim Smith. (Visit [www.rocknectartcolony.org](http://www.rocknectartcolony.org) for details.)

*Keith Powers covers music and the arts for GateHouse Media and WBUR's ARTery. Follow @PowersKeith; email to [keithmichaelpowers@gmail.com](mailto:keithmichaelpowers@gmail.com)*

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Thursday, February 4, 2016						
<b>Free adult education classes</b>						8:30 am
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<b>Income Tax Advice</b>						1:15 pm
Town Hall						
<b>QuickBooks Seminar: A Refresher Course</b>						5:30 pm
Gloucester High School						
 <b>"FROM OUR EYES / The Brown Sisters"</b>						7:30 pm
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