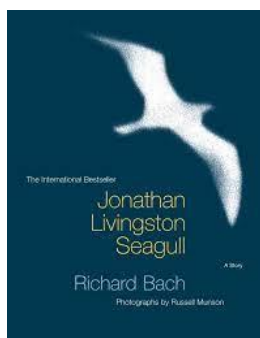


# SOUNDSIDE LEARNING THIS WEEK ON CORE SOUND

## COMING UP AT CORE SOUND

- **August 18:** *Parlor Talk, "The Value of Down East Culture in Arctic Alaska"*
- **September 13:** *Community Night, "Florence Four Years Later," Supper @ 6 PM and Program @ 7 PM*

## Sound Reading Material For You & Your Child



### Jonathan Livingston Seagull

by Richard Bach

This is a story for people who follow their hearts and make their own rules...people who get special pleasure out of doing something well, even if only for themselves ... people who know there's more to living than meets the eye: they'll be right there with Jonathan, flying higher and faster than ever they dreamed.

Grade Level: 7+  
Pages: 112

## Putting It All Together

Just as our name conveys, we embrace waterfowl as an integral part of our heritage. Recently, thirty-three rising 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders attended the Museum's "Waterfowling: The Art and the Science" camp to discover and explore waterfowl around us.

Students learned about local fish habitats and where fish hide for safety from predators. Our shoals, marshes, and grasses provide shelter for fish, but these same areas are also where ducks forage for meals. Saltwater ducks have a diet that includes small crustaceans, bugs, frog eggs, and, yes, small fish. Students visited the shore and cast nets to see what fish were available in our own back yard. The fish we caught, and some caught earlier, were collaboratively identified while students learned more about each species.

Students also explored how ducks naturally swim and scavenge for survival in our area, knowledge that enabled them to place actual decoys in a natural-looking manner in our waters. Participants learned the importance of decoys for today's hunters, as well. They experienced first-hand the importance of decoys' keels, weights, and groupings during placement.



Coming full circle, students spent time with local carvers diving into the history of decoy making and learning the significant role decoys played in the lives of our ancestors. Different wood types, tools, paints, and patterns were shared. Students also enjoyed painting and taking home their own Red Head decoy! Dr. Stanley Rule described the week's waterfowl camp as, "an opportunity to pass along the art of decoy carving and the respect we hold for wildlife and nature ... ripples for impact on decades...."



## Gulls, Gulls, Gulls

Gulls. Whether you love them or hate them, to live Down East you must learn to coexist. Gulls are members of a large family of seabirds. Often known as seagulls (though NO species is actually called a seagull, and many are found far from the sea), they sometimes get a bad wrap for stealing chips and French fries. Gulls, however, are smart, easy-going and often beautiful birds. There are over 50 species of gulls around the world, all relatively similar in appearance and behavior. There are nearly three dozen species of them that enjoy our coast.

Named for their “ha-ha-ha” cry, the Laughing Gulls are typically the kind you see tailing ferries in hopes of a handout from riders. Since gulls are resourceful birds, they tend to be found near a food source. They hangout at the beach for a while, then fly to a restaurant parking lot for more. Laughing Gulls almost always nest on small islands in dense colonies usually hidden in tall grasses. They enjoy our summers but migrate to warmer areas during the winter.

Other common year-round gulls are the Ring-billed Gulls, larger than the Laughing Gulls, with white heads and a distinguishing dark ring on their bills, which spend the year with us but gather especially during our winters. Some other local winter gulls are Herring Gulls. They have white heads and yellow beaks. (Some Herring Gulls will stay around for the summer.) Bonaparte’s Gulls and the Great Black-backed Gulls also spend their winters locally. Bonaparte’s Gull is our smallest with a wingspan of almost three feet. The Greater Black-backed Gulls are our largest with a wingspan of nearly six feet!

Gulls’ plumage changes as they age and there's a great deal of variation within each species. This makes identifying gulls difficult. For instance, Laughing Gulls have black heads during breeding season, but juveniles and non-breeding adults may have grey heads instead. Bonaparte’s Gulls are also black-headed while breeding, but when we see them during the winter, their heads are typically white.

*Gulls. I love them. They are sewn into the tapestry of my Core Sound childhood. Not only do I enjoy feeding them as I did when I was a child, but I also still bask in quietly watching them soar through our salty winds reminding me, as Richard Bach declares in one of my favorite books, “The gull sees farthest who flies highest.”*



Laughing Gull



Ringed-bill Gull



Bonaparte's Gull



Great Black-backed Gulls



Herring Gull

*photos from birdwatchinghq.com*