



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

<http://hampshirebirdclub.org>

Volume 19, No. 8

May, 2003

PROGRAMS

Programs are held at Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant St., Amherst at 7:30 pm

This Month

Monday, May 12

Kenn Kaufman on Migration from the Birds' Point of View.

Many studies have been done (and are continuing) on bird migration, often focusing on the route, distance, timing, or physiology of this miraculous event that takes place twice each year. These studies have tended to shed light on how and why birds migrate, and conservation implications for bird species and populations.

Kenn Kaufman will present a new take on migration—the “birds’ eye view” if you will. Few people have equaled Kenn’s time in the field, and if any person can understand the mind-set of the creatures undertaking these near-miraculous voyages it is he. Most people tend to focus on field identification of birds, but Kenn leads the way in taking the leap to understanding their behavior (and perhaps thoughts) as well. Please join the Hampshire Bird Club as we seek to experience bird migration in the first person.

Kenn Kaufman is one of America’s best-known naturalists and a legend among birders. A longtime friend and disciple of the late eminent birder and naturalist Roger Tory Peterson, Kaufman embodies the traditions Peterson embraced throughout his life. He is, without a doubt, the heir to Peterson’s talent for making the natural world accessible to all people

Kaufman is the author of *Kingbird Highway*, *Lives of North American Birds*, and *The Peterson Field Guide to Advanced Birding*, the first “expert” guide to North American birds. He has written numerous articles in the most prestigious birding and nature magazines, including *Audubon*, and is the youngest person ever to receive the highest honor of the American Birding Association. In 2000, Kenn launched the Kaufman Focus Guide series with the best-selling “*Birds of North America*.” “*Butterflies of North America*” (the second book in the series) has recently been published, and will be followed by *Mammals of North America* in Spring 2004.

Copies of “*The Wild Canary*” (a compendium of bird records from Western Massachusetts during 1999 and 2000) will be on sale at the meeting. In addition, copies of Kenn Kaufman’s various books will be available for sale and signing. Rumor has it that the fabled “*Bird Finding Guide to Western Massachusetts*” is close to making its appearance.

Last Month?

Owing to “The Storm that Came Late,” and the subsequent cancellation of the April program, **Tom Litwin’s** talk on “**The Harriman Expedition Retraced**” has been rescheduled to **October 20, 2003**.

Coming Up

June 9: Geoff LeBaron sails to the Galapagos

RUD STONE

Rud Stone, an Honorary Life Member of the Hampshire Bird Club, died recently. He came to the valley after growing up in upstate New York and is remembered as one of the finest naturalists of his time. Most remember that he could identify any sound made by any bird, under almost any conditions. Most also remember his unique way of doing things. After rolling his car off River Road in South Hadley, Rud carefully passed a Wood Turtle he had in the vehicle out to rescuers before extricating himself.

As he got on in years, Rud enlisted local birders and friends to help him get out birding, and when he could no longer walk, he birded from a car. Andrew Magee has been kind enough to share the following tribute.

Rud Stone: A Memorial

“There once was a birder named Stone,
Who got lost in the woods all alone,
Not a problem existed,
For he nicely subsisted,
On pea juice and extract of bone.”

The above limerick, unremembered till I set to work on this tribute, was thought up by one John Briotta around 1960, when he and I were on the cusp of our adolescences. It epitomizes well our wit and affection concerning our magnificent, irreducible birding mentor and driver, Rud Stone, who brought us to exotic towns and feeders all over the Commonwealth in search of fabulous birds.

Rud Stone was a hoot, a kook, a fabulous birder-naturalist, and a joyful mentor. He was also a truly erudite and liberally enthusiastic man who, way back when, drove his interminable old clunkers with fabled imprecision. By the time I was ten, in 1957, Rud was already picking me up in the dark to go all-day birding, often with one or two other boys in tow, such as my friend Jim Cavanaugh of Springfield. We were often accompanied by a venerable doyen of Valley birding: the famous, and by then quite elderly, Professor Eliot, co-author of the idiosyncratic and anecdotal *“Birds of the Connecticut Valley.”* Sam Eliot never did learn to drive, so we boys got the continuous benefit of his enthusiasm, knowledge, and eccentricity on top of Rud’s. Further, we all benefited from Sam’s absolute need to get his bird, and Rud’s (terrible) driving to get to it.

Forty or fifty years ago, there were a mere handful of “hot” local birders who were consistently out and avid. Our relationships, and the birding growth they engendered, seemed especially intimate, and each sighting attained a context within these relationships. Rud, with all his oddness and generosity, was right in the middle of this love and gamesmanship. I think Rud was able to channel early adversity into remarkably benign choices of interest and mentorship, of which I was only one beneficiary. He was, for me at least, making it happen.

I could relate countless Rud Stone stories, involving Purple Sandpipers wheeling in over the waves at Halibut Point, Long-eared Owls roosting on a suburban Boston lawn, infamous concoctions of tuna fish and black bananas (completely inedible to the rest of the world), or the first utterance of “Woody? Hoody? Goody!” but the hour is late. Knowing that these are only my own experiences with Rudd and that we have days and years to share them, I find it time to say, “Rud, fare thee well and goodnight. You were so attentive to life’s burlings, and your ear was so good, I think that perhaps right now, even now, you are out there in the night, listening to the music of the stars.”

Andrew Magee

FIELD TRIPS

Reports

For **Harvey Allen's** mid-week sweep of the valley on **Wednesday, April 9**, new HBC field trip participants joined some old hands for Wilson's Snipe (East Hadley Road), over 200 Ring-necked Ducks (Hadley Cove), a flock of American Pipits and at least 40 Double-crested Cormorants seen from the bridge at Arcadia. They also watched gulls stealing food from not-terribly competent immature Bald Eagles. Every pond in the farm fields at the East Meadows had American Black Ducks and Mallards.

Mary Alice Wilson



Betsy Higgins' "More Migrants" trip took place on **Saturday, April 26**. A select group of birders walked through Look Park, Northampton, in steady rain. Our chief targets were early migrants, specifically waterthrushes. Despite the abundance of their signature resource, waterthrushes were conspicuously absent, or perhaps simply putting their feet up someplace dry. So were virtually all the other birds we might have expected. Our highlights were an indomitable Ruby-crowned Kinglet zipping about with crest raised in defiance of the dreary day, and a vocal Carolina Wren. We also strained through the patter of falling water to identify each of many trills emanating from the sodden heights of the White Pines. It's always tough to distinguish Pine Warbler, Dark-eyed Junco and a common sparrow in this type of habitat. Well, after comparing tone, frequency, speed and volume, we have come up with a surprisingly simple conclusion: **DON'T WORRY FOLKS, THEY'RE ALL CHIPPIES!!**

David Peake-Jones

Coming Trips

Please register with the trip leader(s) and check this schedule's information when a phone number is given. The Field Trip Chair (Michael Locher-413-585-5864, mlocher@yahoo.com) is always looking for new trip ideas and leaders.

Cost Sharing

The club requests that all participants share costs with those who travel in the same car. Please discuss this when you start out and make sure everyone understands the system and is OK with it. The recommended system is as follows:

- 1) *Estimate the total travel cost (in \$) of the trip using a rate of \$0.30 per mile. (Calculate number of miles traveled multiplied by three, then divide the result by ten).*
- 2) *Divide the total travel cost (calculated in step one) by the number of participants in the car, INCLUDING the car owner. This will be the amount owed by each passenger to the car owner for MILAGE.*
- 3) *Add a share of any tolls and parking fees paid, to arrive at the total contribution of each passenger.*

We also request that someone volunteer or be co-opted to write a trip report for the newsletter, and forward it to the editor.

Wildwood Walks

Boston has Mt. Auburn, New York has Central Park, and we have our very own urban bird oasis at Wildwood Cemetery in Amherst. Migrating songbirds are drawn to this little island, and each May the club hosts morning bird walks, each led by a club member. This year walks are scheduled for the following:

Tuesdays: May 6, 13, and 20

Thursdays: May 9, 16, and 23

Each begins at **6:30 am** and runs until **8 am**, though of course you may freelance a little longer if you wish. Meet the leader at the main cemetery entrance off Strong St., Amherst. Make sure you park in the designated parking areas and not on the lawn, remain on the roads and paths in the cemetery, and respect the solemnity of the site.

Thank you.

Coming Trips (continued)

Saturday, May 10. The Quabbin Reservoir: Spring migration. All day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) will go in search of neotropical migrants at this regional hot spot. You must be a member of the Hampshire Bird Club to go on this trip. Register by calling Tom. Quabbin may not be open when the trip is scheduled.

Wednesday, May 14. Midweek half day in the Connecticut River Valley. Harvey Allen (413-253-7963) will look for warblers and other migrants. Meet at 7:00 a.m. on the corner of Route 116 and Bay Road, Amherst, across from Atkin's Farms. Call for details.

Saturday, May 17. Mt. Auburn Cemetery. All day. David Peake-Jones (413-529-9541) will lead birders into this historic cemetery near the Charles River. Anything can show up here, so be prepared for some unusual species. Call ahead for details.

Saturday, May 24. Poor Man's Monhegan: Plum Island and vicinity. All day. Bob Bieda (413-527-2623) and Al Richards (413-665-2761) take the rest of us to Massachusetts' own little gem. Past trips found Wilson's Phalarope, Piping Plover, Seaside Sparrow, Orchard Oriole, and Evening Grosbeak. Call to register.

Announcing Cape May, 2003.

Danny Ziomek and Scott Sumner will be leading the fall Cape May trip this year on **Columbus Day weekend (October 10-13)**. This trip fills up fast. This is an overnight trip and you must be a Hampshire Bird Club member to go. If you are interested in going this year, please contact Scott at 413 253 5983; or ssurner@aol.com

Field Trip Schedule Changes

Dates have been changed for two of the trips listed in the Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule published earlier this year. These are:

Bartholemew's Cobble (previously scheduled Saturday, June 14) with Harvey Allen. The trip is rescheduled for the following day: **Sunday June 15**. The revised information will be published again in next month's newsletter.

New South Beach, I (previously scheduled for Saturday, July 26) with David Peake-Jones will be rescheduled for one week later: **Saturday, August 2**. The revised information will be included in coming reminders.

HELP FITZGERALD LAKE!

The **Broad Brook Coalition** needs **volunteers** to help eliminate invasive plants from the Fitzgerald Lake area in Northampton. Meet at the **North Farms Road** entrance at **9:00 a.m. on May 3**. Please bring shears, mattocks or any other equipment suitable for the digging of both woody and herbaceous weeds, especially multiflora roses. Gloves are a must. For more information, please contact Bob Zimmerman at 585 0405 or (zimmermann@biochem.umass.edu)

PROPOSED BY-LAW CHANGES

The club runs according to a series of By-Laws, first adopted in 1988, and variously amended since then. The Board is proposing several By-Law changes. Members have the opportunity to vote to approve or reject the proposed changes at the June program meeting (Monday, June 9 at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst).

There is a link from the HBC Homepage to the document, "Proposed By-Law Changes: June 2003," where the changes are described.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Hampshire Bird Club, Incorporated, will take place on **Monday, May 12**, at the **Immanuel Lutheran Church: 867 North Pleasant St., Amherst, commencing at 7:30 p.m.** At this meeting, the Board of the HBC for 2003-2004 will be elected by the members present.

Leaving the Board at the end of the present year are Sally Hills, Jan Ortiz, Sally Venman, and Mary Alice Wilson. The Nominating Committee (Sue Emerson, Scott Sumner, Mary Alice Wilson) presents the following proposed slate of officers for 2003-2004. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.

President: Dennis McKenna

Program Chair and Vice President: Geoff LeBaron

Membership Secretary: Sue Emerson

Corresponding Secretary: Jan Howard

Treasurer: David Gross

Members-at-Large:

Lisa Bertoldi

Betsy Higgins

Mike Locher

Marcia Merithew

Leslie Scott

Bob Zimmerman

LIBRARY

HBC has a substantial library, located at the Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst. **Henry Lappen** maintains a collection of birding resources including field guides, bird-finding guides to almost every major birding destination in the U.S., and some overseas locations, natural histories, periodicals and videos. Why *buy* for that once-in-a-lifetime trip to the Rio Grande valley, when you could *borrow*? Hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday through Friday, and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Items can be signed out and borrowed for a period of up to one month, or longer by arrangement. Henry is happy to bring items to meetings, if you give him a few days in advance. You can reach him at **(413) 549 3722**.

That is all for this month.

Until next time, talk softly and carry a big scope!

David Peake-Jones

Editor

(413) 529 9541; davidpj@the-spa.com