



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

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Sorry about the late timing of the newsletter. This month's program is this coming Monday!

PROGRAMS

This Month

Monday, November 8 at 7:30 PM

Don Kroodsma recounts a birding adventure in “**Bird by Bird by Bike**”

(The program was originally scheduled for February, 2004)

This program will be held at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 867 North Pleasant St. in Amherst. Should bad weather force a cancellation, it will be announced on WHMP 1400 AM radio.

Someday I'd like to..... For me, “someday” arrived during the summer of 2003, when my son and I biked the TransAm trail from coast to coast. We covered ten states: (Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, and Oregon) between early May and mid-July. We were on the road for 70 days and covered 4500 miles (nearly 4,000,000 turns of the wheel). And why? To hear this continent sing, to listen to the birds tell their stories every inch of the way (except when it was raining, or hailing, or blowing big time). From the Atlantic to the Pacific, we listened to stories by grebes and geese and owls and goatsuckers and flycatchers and wrens and sparrows and vireos and thrushes and blackbirds and so many more. Come listen to some of their stories, and renew your commitment to make your someday happen sooner rather than later.

Don Kroodsma

Don Kroodsma was a chemistry major at Hope College, and discovered birds during his last semester there. Don attended the University of Michigan field station the following summer, taking “baby birds” and “big birds” courses simultaneously from the famed Sewall Pettingill. Thirty-five years ago, while in graduate school at Oregon State University, a singing wren in his backyard got Don started on what would be a life-long passion: listening to birds. Until recently, he was a professor in the biology department at UMass, but he's now out to pasture, listening full time.

Coming Up

December 13. Member's Meeting. (Members Slide Show)

January 10. Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll. “Birds of the Blackstone National Corridor”

February 14. Daniel J. Klem. “Glass: A Bird Conservation Issue”

FIELD TRIPS

Reports

Sunday, October 3 proved to be fall birding at its best on **Prescott Peninsula** in the Quabbin. Those of us who passed through the gates onto this hallowed spit of land under the tutelage of **Tom Gagnon** found ourselves in a wonderland of clear ponds, stupendous old-field views, and breathtaking sunlit beaches. The turning trees, some just beginning to kindle with the coming of the long dark days, and some just plain disheveled after the excesses of summer, were hosts to sporadic waves of birds. Amongst the hordes of Yellow-rumped Warblers were the numerous Blackpoll, Palm-, and Black-throated Green warblers, with a few gems thrown in. A **Tennessee Warbler** flashed its pastel beauty at us for a few moments. We also found a few Pine Warblers and a Redstart. Andrew found a **Cape May Warbler** which would allow only one witness. Amongst many other birds were both Kinglets, Solitary- and Spotted Sandpipers, a Winter Wren, and plenty of Eastern Towhees. Under the eaves of the Five College Observatory, we found nineteen Keen-, and Small-footed Myotis bats. Butterfly highlights were the Ocala Skipper, Variegated Fritillary, and seven other common species. So, as twilight approached, we drove toward the entrance. It would have been a good day, and it wanted only a glimpse of the true wilderness quality of the place to make it special. Sure enough, striding down the road toward our cavalcade came a male **moose** with two enormous antlers. It quickly shied away into the trees, and vanished before we could get more than a glimpse, leaving naught but its impressive spoor in the sand of the road.

dpj



Geoff LeBaron, Chris Ellison, and Jim Marcum (where on earth were the rest of us?) toured coastal **Rhode Island** on **October 16**. Napatree Point and Watch Hill were windswept and scenic but that was it. For the first time, the trip visited Avondale farm in Westerly, Rhode Island. They found fabulous thickets, and recently ploughed fields replete with American Pipits. Misquamicut beaches yielded Greater Yellowlegs and Horned Larks. At Ninigret N.W.R. in Charlestown, Field- and White-crowned-Sparrows sheltered amongst more common fare in the thickets. Charlestown Breachway, Richmond Turf Farms, and the Carolina management area were pregnant with possibilities but nothing surprising came to light. At Trustom Pond in Charlestown, a raft of Ruddy Ducks graced the pond along with a Red-necked Grebe in surprisingly full plumage. Finally, Point Judith provided a great sunset.

The group found a total of 79 species including **Brant, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Bonaparte's Gull, and Rusty Blackbird.**

Geoff LeBaron



On **October 20**, **Harvey Allen** toured the **Connecticut River Valley** with a band of the faithful. They had good looks at an adult Bald Eagle, a first year Northern Goshawk, and a tremendous stream of migrating Common Grackles. Common Loons and Common Mergansers dominated the waterfowl.

Mary Alice Wilson

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Donna L. Rickerby: Granby, MA	Dan & Linda Marchant: Ware, MA
Paul & Ellen Mintzer: Southampton, MA	Carla Palmer: Amherst, MA
David C. McLain: Easthampton, MA	Peggy Macleod: Florence, MA
Paul Sievert: Greenfield, MA	Sally & Andy Fairfield: Shutesbury, MA
Jacob Morris-Siege: Amherst, MA	Alice Wilder: Amherst, MA

Coming Field 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, fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) is always looking for new trip ideas and leaders. The Hampshire Bird Club recommends carpooling whenever possible, and suggests that all riders share equally the per-car cost of \$0.30 per mile, as well as tolls and parking. See also the "Field Trip Guidelines for Participants" (in the September newsletter or on the Website).

Sunday, November 7. Berkshire Lakes. All day. Tom Gagnon leads his annual trip to the lakes and ponds of the Berkshires in search of migrating waterfowl. Bring snacks, warm clothing, and a lunch. Meet at the Super Stop and Shop on King St. (Routes 5 and 10) in Northampton at 6:30 a.m. Call Tom (413-584-6353) to register or for further information. (M)

Wednesday, November 17. Mid-week Sweep of the Connecticut Valley. Meet opposite Atkins Farm, corner Rt. 116 and Bay Rd. in Amherst. Call Harvey Allen: 253 7963, for meeting time.

Sunday, November 21. East Quabbin. All day. Tom Gagnon ventures to the far side of the reservoir for birds and perhaps a few porcupines. Due to Quabbin policy, this trip is open only to members of the Hampshire Bird Club. Bring snacks, warm clothes, and a lunch. Call Tom (413-584-6353) to reserve a place and make arrangements for meeting. (M)

Friday, November 26. Turkey Trot to Cape Ann. All day. Bob Bieda heads to the north shore looking for wintering sea ducks, Purple Sandpipers, seabirds, and perhaps a Snowy Owl. Bring snacks and warm clothing. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register and get meeting information. (M)

Hampshire Bird Club Evening at WFCR

The HBC will shamelessly promote itself as we spend an evening answering phones at WFCR during their November fund drive. We will be taking calls, chatting and eating at the station (in the studio with the on-air hosts) on Saturday, November 20, from 6-10 PM. It's easy (training is provided – you just answer the phone). It's fun (sometimes there is live music in the studio and you get to see radio behind-the-scenes). Dinner is provided; all you need to do is bring yourself (and friend if you wish) and answer pledge calls as they come in. If you'd like to join the fun, sign up by calling or emailing **Dave Gross at 253-2897 or dgross@biochem.umass.edu**.

Date: Saturday, November 20

Time: 6-10 p.m.

Location: WFCR studios, Hampshire House, UMass campus

Not Too Late for the Rare Bird Alert!

Members can still sign up for the on-line Rare Bird Alert, but the telephone tree is now fixed for the balance of the membership year. To sign up for the Rare Bird Alert, either:

1) download and send in the Rare Bird Alert sign-up sheet from www.hampshirebirdclub.org or

2) contact Membership Secretary, Sue Emerson: 584 6736; membership@hampshirebirdclub.org

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS!

Rain or shine, snow or sleet, ready or not, it's time for the 104th National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count! Take this opportunity to contribute to the longest running database in ornithology! Join more than 50,000 volunteers in the US, Canada, the Caribbean, Latin America and Pacific Islands as they take to the field to count birds! You don't have to be an expert and you don't have to devote the entire day to this effort. You can also contribute from the warmth and comfort of your own home by being a feeder watcher. Everyone is welcome!

Some of the HBC December meeting is devoted to allowing area leaders and volunteers to get together and begin planning their efforts for the Northampton count. The Quabbin Count happens in the first week of January, and is always blessed with clear, balmy weather! For most, the day starts at dawn, but for the die-hards, the owling can start at midnight. There is typically a compilation of results, which commences in the late afternoon.

The **Northampton Christmas Count** (in its 71st year) will be held on **Sunday, December 19**. For information contact Jan Ortiz (413) 549-1768; jtortiz@aol.com or Mary Alice Wilson (413) 548-9078; mwilson@k12s.phast.umass.edu. A potluck supper will be held at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst the evening of the count.

The **Quabbin Count** will be held on **Saturday, January 1**. Contact Scott Sumner (413) 253 5983; ssurner@aol.com.

Potluck!!

Now, at the risk of belaboring the point, the potluck is the real reason for doing this! We really need people to prepare dishes for the famished participants and to help with set-up. At press time the potluck coordinator has yet to be determined. If you can help, please contact Mary Alice or Jan at the numbers above.

PROJECT INSPIRE!

There will be an **Accessible Birdwatching Open House at Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary in Easthampton on Thursday, November 11, 9:30-11:30am**. This is a free indoor open house introducing birdwatching as a multidimensional activity, with accessibility options for people with disabilities. Everyone is welcome! There will be special emphasis on winter bird feeding and crow behavior. Weather permitting, short excursions on sanctuary trails will take place. **Advance registration required, please call All Out Adventures at 413- 527-8980**

Birding Plum Island, Saturday, November 13, 8am – 5pm.

Join an expedition from the Amherst area to one of the best birding places in New England with Ted Watt, Hitchcock Center naturalist, in search of bay ducks, sea ducks, and winter raptors. Enthusiastic birders of all levels are welcome. Bring binoculars, a bag lunch, and be prepared for any weather. **Hitchcock members \$25, non-members \$35**. For information and to register, call 413-256-6006.



That, with the exception of the following information on behalf of our good friends at Arcadia and Hitchcock, is it for this month.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor
(413) 529 9541
newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

THE BOILING POINT (Global Warming): Ross Gelbspan, Journalist and Author
Sunday, November 14, 1 - 3 p.m.

MOOSE MEANDER: Alan Emond, Little Cree Spy Excursions, Tracker
Sunday, November 7, 1 - 5 p.m.

BIRDING ON PLUM ISLAND: Ted Watt, Hitchcock Center Naturalist
Saturday, November 13, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

A NIGHT OF STARS ON MT. POLLUX: Tom Whitney, President, Amherst Astronomy Association and
The Astronomy Association
Wednesday, December 1, 7 - 8 p.m.

GEOLOGY TOUR: Joseph Kopera, local geologist
Saturday, December 4, 1 - 4 p.m.

SENIOR HIKES: Jennifer Wiest and Guest Leaders
Last Tuesday of each month (except Dec.), 10 a.m.
September 28, October 26, November 30, December 21

For details and registration for all Hitchcock programs, please contact the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant St., Amherst MA 01002. Telephone (413) 256 6006, or on the web at www.hitchcockcenter.org.

ARCADIA PROGRAMS

Big Trees and Old Growth: Bob Leverett
November 6: 10 AM – 3 PM

Road's End Wildlife Sanctuary (Worthington, MA): Ron Wolanin
November 7: 10 AM – 12 NOON

West Nile Virus: What You Should Know: Claudia Sarati
November 9: 7 PM – 9 PM

Introduction To Digital Nature Photography (co-sponsored by Robert Floyd Photo Gallery) Robert Floyd
November 12, 19: December 10, 17, January 14, 21
All sessions 7 PM – 9 PM

Trees Without Leaves: Patti Steinman
November 13: 1 PM – 4 PM

Understanding and Mapping Natural Communities: Tom Lautzenheiser
November 14: 1 PM – 4 PM

Introduction To Nature Photography (co-sponsored by Robert Floyd Photo Gallery):
Robert Floyd
November 16, 23, 30. All sessions 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM