



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

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There is no time for an editorial this month. The warblers are on our doorstep. Take a look inside this voluminous publication for a field trip that is of interest, grab the binoculars, hat, bug dope, field guide, trail mix, hearing aid, and whatever other aids you need and get going. Create your own editorial!!

Also inside: notice of this year's Annual General Meeting, opportunities for citizen scientists from MassWildlife, a changing of the guard at the Boutique, and a ton of other news. Please read on!

PROGRAMS

This Month

Monday, May 9 at 7:30 PM

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Susan Roney Drennan speaks about **Albatrosses and their Interactions with Longline Fisheries.**

Susan will introduce us to the beauty and grace of albatrosses that inhabit the Southern Ocean, the practice of long-line fishing, how it affects albatrosses, and some possible solutions to minimize these effects.

Susan Roney Drennan enjoyed a lively career, for many years, as Editor-in-Chief of Audubon's ornithological publication, *American Birds*, and Vice President for Ornithology. She is a recipient of the Bushnell Distinguished Birder Award and the prestigious Arthur A. Allen Medal, awarded to individuals who have dramatically advanced ornithological knowledge through their writings, publications, teaching, and inspiration. She is the author of numerous papers, scientific/popular articles and books, including "*Where to Find Birds in New York State: The Top 500 Sites*," "*The Birder's Field Notebook*," and "*The North American Birder's Library Lifest*." Currently she is a full-time author and tour leader, naturalist, and lecturer for National Audubon's "*Nature Odysseys*" program. She lives in Vermont with her husband, Paul Meyer.

Coming Programs

June 13. Frank Gill. "The Power of Citizen Science"

Situations Vacant: Boutique Proprietors

Janice Doppler and **Peg Army** are retiring as proprietors of the HBC Boutique. We need at least one person to volunteer to take over.

The boutique is a collection of HBC designer sweatshirts and T-shirts which not only complement the wardrobes of most of us to some degree, but also allow us to publicize the club when we are out and about. In addition, the boutique stocks field trip checklists, field guide labels, and other miscellaneous items. The proprietor/s order replacement items from our suppliers as necessary, bring the collection to meetings, and attempt to sell items to the somewhat reticent HBC membership. *If you can help, please contact any member of the Board.*

Thank you so much, Peg and Janice for your service to the club over the past few years!

FIELD TRIPS

Reports

On **April 3**, **Mike Locher** led himself to look for **woodcocks in Hadley** on the most shamefully under-attended HBC trip in my tenure as editor. Mike walked in along the Mill River floodplain, locating 45 Wood Ducks, a Fox Sparrow, and what he believes is the same Song Sparrow the trip found last year, distinguished by a unique and atypical song. Retiring disconsolately* to his deck with a glass of wine, Mike witnessed two American Woodcocks challenging each other in a frenzy of display activity.

* OK, this is anthropomorphization. We cannot possibly know what passes through the mind of a dedicated Field Trip Chair when not only does no-one show up for a field trip, but when it one of HIS! Observers, had there been any, would have seen Mike leaping about and yelling, "Yeah!! Wine on the deck! Finally!! YEEHAH!!" We are, however, unable to objectively assign any emotional context to this behavior.



On **April 16**, **Mike Locher** took a group to **Ashley Ponds in Holyoke**, looking for early migrants. Mike describes the list as "sorry." However, they found Pine Warblers sporting in the pines, Red-breasted Nuthatches cavorting, well, in the pines, Brown Creeper (probably in a piny environment of some sort), a Winter Wren (perhaps in a fallen pine*), a Ring-necked Duck (pining for the breeding grounds), and plenty of Ruby-crowned Kinglets (yep, pine again). It is a very pine-laden place. A sorry day of birding is better than a good day contemplating the winner of the NCAA basketball tournament.

*Please do not misconstrue the term "fallen" when applied to pines. They are not, as you might be imagining, pines which have fallen to exploiting their physical characteristics in order to make a living, as would be the case with the archaic term "fallen woman." No, fallen pines are merely those whose (shallow) root systems have given up the relentless struggle with gravity, and have allowed the above-ground portions of the plant to recline on the forest floor. There are no moral overtones attached to the term at all, though it makes it indecently easy for chipmunks to satisfy their lust for pine nuts.

I had a secret desire to one day create a footnote that was longer than the trip report from which it arose. Now I have done it! Ed.



On **Saturday, April 23**, **Betsy Higgins** led Peggy Macleod and David Peake-Jones through one of her favorite birding haunts in the region: **Look Park** in Northampton. Despite a dreadful forecast, precipitation limited itself to a light drizzle for the entire morning. We walked the perimeter of the park, pausing to delight in the exuberant ramblings of **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, and to speculate on the interlaced Chipping Sparrow and Pine Warbler calls resounding through the damp morning. The Mill River initially failed give up any waterthrushes, but we did enjoy a pair of Wood Ducks squeaking in proprietary anxiety from the trees along the bank, and similarly residential-looking Common Mergansers. Walking further, we were astounded to hear a **Great Horned Owl** hooting from nearby pines. In searching for the bird we found a collection of dead birds, in various stages of dismemberment under a possible raptor nest. We concluded the GHO was playing fall guy for some nesting accipeter. As if in reward for this sleuthing, we finally detected the ringing notes of a **Louisiana Waterthrush** from the stream, and were treated to wonderful views of the bird foraging amongst the stream cobbles. Several waves of **Yellow rumped-** and **Palm Warblers** moved overhead, sadly free of any rarer species. Returning toward the park entrance, we picked up a **Blue-headed Vireo** singing tentatively, and got a distant look at a **Pileated Woodpecker** for Peggy's life list. The rain began as we drove toward our respective homes.

David Peake-Jones

Coming trips on the next page→

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, 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).

There is one recently-added trip in this list, by comparison with the pink "Winter-late Summer Schedule" published earlier. It has been given its own nifty border so you will notice it.

Wildwood Walks

On a gentle rise in the heart of Amherst lies the Wildwood Cemetery. Migrating songbirds are drawn to this little island, and each year the club hosts morning bird walks here during May, each led by a club member. This year walks are scheduled for the following:

Tuesdays: May 3, 10, 17, and 24

Thursdays: May 5, 12, 19, and 26

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 entrance, off Strong Street. 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.

Saturday, May 7. Hardwick and environs. Chris Ellison (413 477 8326) will lead a new trip to a variety of habitats on the mysterious eastern shore of the Quabbin Reservoir. Meet at 6:00 AM. at the Old Hardwick Town Hall in the center of Hardwick. Expect about a five mile walk and strenuous humor.

From Amherst and the valley:

Go east on Rt 9 through Belchertown. Remain on Rt 9 to Ware, where it merges with Rt 32. Remain on Rt 32 to Gilbertville. Shortly after Gilbertville, make a LEFT onto 32A (North). Continue to Hardwick Center.

From points north:

On Rt 2, take exit 17 for 32 South. Proceed on 32 S to Petersham. Continue south for about 1/2 mile until you meet the intersection with route 122. Turn right onto route 122W and proceed another 1/2 mile until you come to the flashing yellow light announcing route 32A. Turn left onto route 32A and continue for about 10 miles, until you reach Hardwick Center. Bear left as you approach Hardwick Common, passing close by the church on the hill, arriving at the old Hardwick Town Hall.

Parking for the Town Hall is adjacent to the Hardwick Historical Society, and on Common Street. Please call Chris ahead of time to register. (M)

Sunday, May 8. Quabbin Reservoir migration. All day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) leads a trip into the Quabbin to track down its varied avifauna. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call to register. (M)

Saturday, May 14. 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. (E)

Wednesday, May 18. Midweek half day in the Connecticut River Valley. Harvey Allen (413-253-7963) will go where the birds are. Meet at 7:00 a.m. on the corner of Rt. 116 and Bay Road, Amherst, across from Atkin's Farm. Call for more information as the date approaches. (E)

New Trip!

Saturday, May 21. The Birds of Leverett. Half day. Mary Alice Wilson (413-548-9078; mwilson@k12s.phast.umass.edu) takes birders to North Leverett to walk through scrub and up Rattlesnake Gutter Road for both scrub and forest birds. Mid-morning the group will drive south and walk the East Leverett Meadow (which might be muddy). The trip is technically over at 11:00 a.m., but the hardy can continue to Long Hill and Leverett Pond. Meet at 7:00 a.m. in parking lot of North Leverett Co-op. Call or email to register. (M)

Friday-Monday, May 27-30. Monhegan Island. Overnight trip. David Peake-Jones and Andrew Magee will lead birders for a long weekend of birding off the coast of Maine. This trip is currently full. (E/M)

Saturday, May 28. Poor Man's Monhegan: Plum Island and vicinity. All day. Bob Bieda (413-527-2623) leads birders to Massachusetts' own little gem. Past trips found Wilson's Phalarope, Piping Plover, Seaside Sparrow, Orchard Oriole, and Evening Grosbeak. Call to register. (E)

Saturday, June 11. Bartholomew's Cobble. Harvey Allen (413-253-7963) goes to one of Western Massachusetts's most unique habitats. Expect Black Vultures. Call for details as the date approaches. (M)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The **Annual General Meeting** of the **Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.**, will take place on **Monday, May 9**, 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 2005-2006 will be elected by the members present.

The Nominating Committee respectfully proposes the following slate of officers for the coming year. Positions with an outgoing officer, and the name of the nominee for 2005-2006 are shown in **bold**.

President: David Gross

Program Chair/Vice President: Geoff LeBaron

Treasurer: Janice Jorgensen

Corresponding Secretary: Marcia Merithew

Membership Secretary: Susan Emerson

At-large Board members:

Betsy Higgins

Jaap Van Heerden

Elissa Rubinstein

Mike Locher

Bob Zimmermann

Dennis McKenna

Additional nominations for these positions will also be accepted from the floor.

Thank You!

The nominating committee would like to thank **Jan Howard** who has served as Corresponding Secretary and is leaving the Board this year; **Dennis McKenna** who has served as president and will stay on the Board as a member-at-large; and all the officers and Board members for their service past and future. We also thank the Nominating Committee (**Sue Emerson, Betsy Higgins and Mary Alice Wilson**) for locating individuals with the talent and drive to keep the club going.

LIBRARY

Your mom always said “Neither a borrower or a lender be.” Right?

WRONG!!!!!! 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**.

CONSERVATION

If you are interested in conservation of birds and birding habitat, you may like to share information and effort with others in the club. Anne Lombard is our conservation chair. Contact her at (413) 586 7509, or aslombard@comcast.net

PROJECT INSPIRE

Bird Walk at Fitzgerald Lake

Wednesday, May 4: 8-10am. North Farms Road, Northampton, MA

Join Shirley Hilborn and Anne Lombard of the Hampshire Bird Club for a ¼ mile walk through woods and wetlands in search of early spring migrants. We will look and listen for rails and other marsh birds.

Call All Out Adventures at 413-527-8980 to register.

Introduction to Birding – Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary

Thursday, May 5: 7-9pm; **Saturday, May 7:** 7-10am

Fee: \$15 for Mass Audubon members, \$25 for non-members.

413-584-3009

Have you always wanted to learn about birds but never found the time? Here’s your opportunity. Thursday night at Arcadia, we will learn about birds and their identification, calls, and habitat preferences. On Saturday, we will put our new found knowledge to work with a casual stroll at Arcadia or other nearby birding hot spots. At this time of year, we may see both resident birds and migrants. Enjoy a continental breakfast as we review our sightings.

Inclusive Birding Outing – Turners Falls

Saturday, May 7: 8-10am: Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls, MA

Join Jan Ortiz and friends from the Hampshire Bird Club on an outing in search of birds in the Turner Falls area. We’ll carpool to local sites in search of spring migrants. Afterwards view the exhibits at the Discovery Center.

Call All Out Adventures at 413-527-8980 to register.

Herricks Cove, VT - Wildlife Festival

Sunday, May 8

Come northward to Herricks Cove, VT for a wonderful wildlife festival on the banks of the Connecticut River. Bird walks, live birds of prey, and many other activities will be taking place all day at this designated Important Birding Area (IBA) **Call 413-545-5758 for information and directions.**

For an event schedule visit: www.sover.net/~mwalsh/herrick.html

Birding by Ear – Hitchcock Center for the Environment

Tuesday, May 10: 8-10am; 535 S. Pleasant St., Amherst, MA. 413 – 256- 6006

Join Ted Watt and Marcy Marchello for a morning stroll on the accessible boardwalk. We'll be listening for year round residents and spring migrants. This is a good opportunity to learn or practice bird song identification for birds whose habitat is dense shrubs or woodlands. Raindate: Wednesday, May 11

Birding and Biking on the Rail Trail

Saturday, May 21: 8am-Noon. Norwottuck Rail Trail, Hadley, MA

Join All Out Adventures for a 14 mile long biking adventure from Hadley to S. Amherst and back on the rail trail. We'll bike through agricultural fields and woodlands to a beaver swamp. We will stop to view birds nesting or migrating through at this peak time of the birding year. There is a non-bicycling option for those who want to walk to the wetland from Strong St. in Amherst.

Pre-register by calling All Out Adventures at 413-527-8980.

Birding Northfield

Saturday, May 28: 8-11am. Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls, MA

Join Marcy Marchello and Taj Schottland on an outing in search of Indigo Buntings and other easily viewed birds singing on their breeding territories in fields and wetlands. We will meet at the Discovery Center and carpool to Northfield.

Advance registration required, please call Marcy at 413-545-5758.

CITIZEN SCIENTISTS NEEDED BY MASSWILDLIFE

MassWildlife is involved in gathering information for a number of different birds during this field season. We would love to get reports from birders on some specific projects we are working on this year. Below are the birds we are trying to locate and the time period to report on them.

Common Loons

The haunting wail of the common loon (*Gavia immer*) evokes a sense of wild and remote areas which may be why some people are surprised to learn Massachusetts is home to a small, but growing number of nesting loons. MassWildlife Biologists Bridgett McAlice and Carolyn Mostello recently summarized common loon nesting activity for 2004 and will be working with other cooperators this spring to document loon nesting sites across the state. In 2004, 28 territorial pairs on 12 waterbodies were documented with 19 attempting to nest. A total of thirteen chicks were produced and presumed fledged. In 2003, 24 pairs of territorial loons were observed with 19 pairs nesting on 6 waterbodies.

“The Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs are home to the majority of Massachusetts’ nesting loons,” said McAlice. “Other nests have been documented in relatively quiet water supplies and private ponds in Worcester County, but it’s entirely possible there are nests in other parts of the state which haven’t been reported to us.” McAlice noted that cooperators and volunteers played a vital role in gathering field data for MassWildlife. She acknowledged the efforts of the Department of Conservation Recreation, Massachusetts Aquatic Conservation Society, Biodiversity Institute, Forbush Bird Club and other volunteers.

As soon as pond ice melts, loons sporting their striking black and white breeding plumage will be returning to their territorial waters. Egg laying begins at the end of May. The following summarizes the information MassWildlife needs.

Species: Common Loon (especially pairs)

Seen During This Period	Town	Location and/or name of water body
April 15 – May 31		

Report To:

Bridget McAlice

Central District Wildlife Office: (508) 835 3607

Brooding Canada Geese

Be on the lookout for families of geese (adults and young) that number 12 or more birds. MassWildlife staff will be leg and neck banding Canada geese beginning in mid- June through mid-July and they need reports of the locations of goose families to band. Goose banding can take place in many locations: beaches, golf courses, cemeteries, condominium developments and municipal parks.

Species: Canada Goose

Flock Characteristics	Seen During this Period	Address/directions/body of water	Approximate number of goslings	Total birds in flock	Property owner
12 or more birds	June 6 - 20				

Report to :

Mass.wildlife@state.ma.us

Canada Goose Populations: Summer

Keep an eye out for Canada Geese with yellow neck bands. Provide location of the bird and numbers of birds in that flock with the banded bird. These reports can be made until Labor Day when the survey period ends.

Species: Canada Goose (with Yellow Neck Band)

Seen During This Period	Neck band Number	Location/Address/Body of Water	Number of geese in flock with the banded bird
July 15 – Labor day			

Report to:

Mass.wildlife@state.ma.us

Mute Swans

MassWildlife staff will be actively seeking and accepting reports of mute swans as part of a periodic survey. Due to the mushrooming population that has spread west across the state, it's difficult to get staff out to all possible swan locations.

Species: Mute Swans

Seen During this Period	Location/Body of water	Number of Swans
August 1 – August 15		

Report to:

Mass.wildlife@state.ma.us

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

SPRING BIRDING BY THE BOOK

Remaining Field Trips:

Saturday, May 7, 7 a.m. - noon, to Quabbin Reservoir (pg. 251) with Harvey Allen;
 Sunday, May 15, 7 a.m. - noon, to Beartown State Forest (pg. 79) with Myles & Kathy Conway;
 Sunday, May 22, 7 a.m. - noon, to High Ledges Sanctuary (pg. 98) with David McLain;
 Saturday, June 4, 7 a.m. - noon, to Tyringham Valley (pg. 71) with Edwin Neumuth

SINGING LIFE OF BIRDS: Don Kroodsma, Ornithologist & Author

Sunday, May 1, 7 - 9:30 a.m.

MARINE FISHERIES: Francis Juanes, UMass Oceanography Professor

Sunday, May 15, 1 - 3 p.m.

BIRDING BY EAR: Ted Watt, Marcy Marchello

Tuesday, May 10, 8 - 10 a.m. (rain date, May 11)

LIVING WITH WILDLIFE: STURGEON, SALMON & SHAD: Boyd Kynard, Tuesday, May 24, 4 - 6 p.m.

BREEDING BIRD WALK: John Green

Sunday, June 12, 7 - 10 a.m.

MONARCH CATERPILLAR RESEARCH PROJECT: Jennifer Wiest

Saturday, June 11, 1 - 3 p.m.

SISTERS OF THE EARTH: WOMEN WRITING ABOUT NATURE: Rema Boscov

Saturdays, May 7 & 21, 10 a.m. - noon; Thursday, May 12, 7 - 9 p.m.

WOMEN'S NATURE RETREAT WEEKEND

Friday, May 13, 4 p.m. through Sunday, May 15, 1 p.m.

Temenos Retreat Center, Shutesbury

SENIOR WALKS: Jennifer Wiest, Hitchcock Center Staff

April 26, May 31, June 28 at 11 a.m.

WILDFLOWERS OF NEW ENGLAND (Workshop): Ted Elliman

Saturdays, May 14 & 21 from 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Held at the Hitchcock Center for the Environment

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.

I can't resist.....

An embarrassing incident befell the President when he attended the funeral of Pope John Paul 2. He was introduced to a group of cardinals, and graciously congratulated them on beating the Astros!

ARCADIA PROGRAMS

BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS: *Anne Lombard, Peter Redfern, Patti Steinman* Thursday, May 5: 7-9 p.m. and Saturday, May 7: 7-9 a.m.

PONDING FOR FAMILIES: *Rebecca Moretti, Environmental Educator*
Saturday, May 5: 10-11:30 a.m.

SATURDAY MORNING BIRD WALKS: *Guest Leaders*
7-8:30 a.m.

May 7 at Graves Farm. May 14 at Lynes. May 2 at Laughing Brook. May 28th at West Mountain

SPRING EPHEMERALS: *Janet Bissell and Connie Parks, Plant Conservation Volunteers*
Sundays, 9:30a.m. -1:00 p.m.

May 1 at Arcadia, May 8 at Graves Farm, May 15 at Lynes June 5 at High Ledges

EAGLES BY CANOE AT BARTON COVE: *Aimee Gelinas, Naturalist*
Friday June 3, 6-9 p.m

IBA AT GRAVES FARM: *David McLain, Ecologist*
Saturday, June 4; 7-10 a.m.

For details and registration for all Arcadia programs, please contact Mass Audubon at Arcadia at (413) 584-3009 ex 12, or visit the website at massaudubon.org and click on the Connecticut River Valley.

Dead Birds in the Interest of Science

You may have picked up dead birds (mostly window kills) and put them in their freezer hoping that some museum or research collection would be interested in them. Unfortunately, the collections in our area are so under-staffed they cannot accept specimens.

However, there is still one institution in California with a trained volunteer staff preparing skins. Former HBC member, Maureen Flannery, works as a curatorial assistant in the Department of Ornithology and Mammalogy at the California Academy of Sciences. For more information about the museum, go to their website (www.calacademy.org then select research/collections then ornithology/mammalogy).

The Academy will only accept specimens that have both the date and the specific collecting location. They will pay the shipping fee. *For more information on donating specimens, contact Moe Flannery by phone (415-321-8371) or email (mflannery@calacademy.org).*

Welcome New Members!

Sharon L. Bombard - Amherst

Christa Glatter - Amherst

Ed. Neumuth - Washington

Mary Schneider - Belchertown

Patti Steinman - Easthampton

Janice Jorgensen & Karen Rosenbaum - Hadley

Please note that if you join the Hampshire Bird Club for the first time between now and September 1, 2005, your membership will be good till September 2006!!

That's all for this month. Until next month, walk softly and carry a big scope.