



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

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In lieu of a decent editorial this month, I would simply like to enter my nomination for the most under-appreciated bird in New England. It is the fall Bobolink. By contrast with the almost clownish flamboyance of the breeding birds, fall individuals epitomize the season like no other species. They are a rich and subtle buffy-golden color, with boldly striped backs, featuring an intricate array of dark feathers with golden edges. While non-birders are desperately searching for the perfect leafy vista, we in the know have only to find a weedy field.

If you want to be on the Rare Bird Alert phone tree, please send in the form from the September newsletter before October 17, or submit it to Sue Emerson at the October meeting. Spare forms will be available at the meeting, and are also on the web at www.hampshirebirdclub.org.

Attached to this online version of the newsletter are the **Field Trip Policy** and **Field Trip Guidelines**. This is to save you navigating back and forth between links. The **ABA Code of Birding Ethics** is available at the website, but I was unable to attach it to the newsletter.

PROGRAMS

This Month

Andrea Jones takes us to Namibia

Monday, October 17 at 7:30 PM

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Andrea took a sabbatical leave in Namibia during the fall of 2004. She worked with a US-based conservation organization named "*Round River*" which brings college students overseas for a semester to work with locally based conservation initiatives to provide research, gather ecological information, and assist with conservation planning. In Namibia, *Round River* works with *Save the Rhino Trust* whose mission is to curb the poaching of the desert Black Rhinoceros in the Kunene region of northwestern Namibia. In the fall of 2004, the students studied the effects of increased tourism on the rhino, collected valuable information on the abundance and density of large mammals in the area, and developed a bird survey and birding brochure for the area. Andrea will present a slide show of the plants and animals of Namibia, the results of their research, and photos of adventures to remote areas such as the Skeleton Coast and encounters with desert elephants.

Andrea Jones has worked at Mass Audubon since 1993. She is currently the director of the Coastal Water Bird Program and coordinator for the Important Bird Areas (IBA) program in this state. She also works on a variety of other avian conservation programs. Andrea received a bachelor's degree in Wildlife Biology and Management from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She then received an M. Sc. after studying Grasshopper Sparrows in Massachusetts. She has worked as a teacher/naturalist for Massachusetts Audubon Society's Drumlin Farm and for the National Wildlife Federation in North Carolina. She spent four months in Kenya in 1989 studying wildlife management and conducting a research project on giraffe feeding behaviors. She has led numerous tours for Massachusetts Audubon Society to East Africa. Recently, she spent 3 months in Namibia on sabbatical working with US college students on a program to teach students how to conduct field research

Coming Programs

November 14, 2005. Blair Nikula. Antarctic Seabirds

December 12, 2005. Members' Slide Show –

FIELD TRIPS

Trip Reports Wanted!!

When a leader's not engaged in his employment (his employment)
When the small brown jobs have all been soundly taught (soundly taught)
He loves to lie a-basking in the sunshine (in the sunshine)
Far from his mind is any trip report (trip report)

(Gilbert & Sullivan, almost)

Field trips are fundamental to our bird club, and documenting them is an important part of keeping people interested and participating. This should not fall to the field trip leaders. It should fall to YOU, the enthusiastic participant! Others need to hear your perspective on the birds seen, and how the trip contributed to your love for and understanding of birds. Please volunteer to write a trip report next time you venture out.

Race one off when you get home and email it to me at newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org.

Thanks. Editor

Coming Trips!

See also the Fall Field Trip Schedule from the September edition

Please register with the trip leader(s) and check this schedule's information when a phone number is given. The Hampshire Bird Club recommends carpooling whenever possible, and suggests that all riders share equally the per-car cost of \$0.40 per mile, as well as tolls and parking. See also the "Field Trip Guidelines for Participants" (in the October newsletter or on the website).

Trips have been coded as Easy (E) or Moderate (M) to give an indication of the pace and/or terrain, but check all information with the trip leaders. An asterisk () denotes a trip that is particularly good for beginners.*

Please contact the Field Trip Chair (Michael Locher-413-585-5864 or via email at the club website) with either feedback or ideas for new trips, and please volunteer to write a trip report for the newsletter.

Wednesday, October 12. Connecticut River Valley. Half day. Harvey Allen looks for migrants on his monthly midweek sweep. Meet at 7 a.m. across the street from Atkins Farm, at the corner of Route 116 and Bay Road in Amherst. Call Harvey (413-253-7963) for further information. (E)

Saturday, October 15. Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area, Vermont. All day. Al Richards heads to southern Lake Champlain, looking for one or two Ross's Geese among thousands of Snow Geese, and searching out other seasonal specialties. Call Al (413-665-2761) to register. (E)

Saturday, October 22. Coastal Rhode Island. All day. Geoff LeBaron explores the coast of Rhode Island. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) for details and meeting information. (M)

Sunday, November 6. Berkshire Lakes. All day. Tom Gagnon leads his annual trip to the lakes and ponds of the Berkshires looking for migrating waterfowl. Bring snacks, warm clothing, and a lunch. Meet at the Northampton Stop 'n' Shop on King Street at 6:30 AM. Call Tom (413-584-6353) to register and for further information. (M)]

CHRISTMAS COUNTS, 2005

Mark These Dates!

Northampton Count: Sunday, December 18

Quabbin Count: To Be Announced.

Now that you can tell a Downy from a Hairy in driving rain (or not!), here is an opportunity to contribute to one of the longest-running databases in ornithology. Birders all over the U.S., Canada, the Caribbean, Latin America and Pacific Islands contribute to an annual census of birds in their local areas, the results of which are collated internationally.

The Northampton and Quabbin circles are divided up into smaller areas, each counted by an experienced leader or leaders, with assistants. To take part, all you really need is a willingness to cope with the vagaries of December birding, and a willingness to count everything in a scientific manner. The coordinators can hook you up with a team that needs members in your area. Both local counts culminate in a compilation session during which those still standing come together to pool results. The sense of camaraderie and shared purpose is palpable and rarely equaled in birding!

For further information, watch coming newsletters, or contact Jan Ortiz (413 549 1768; jtortiz@aol.com, Northampton Count) and Scott Surner (413 253 5999; ssurner@aol.com, Quabbin Count)

REMEMBERING VERA CRANE

Vera Crane, a longtime birdwatcher and member of the Hampshire Bird Club died on August 30th after an illness of several months. Many of us knew of her fondness for the ocean. Periodically she would call me and ask urgently, "When is the next bird trip going to Plum Island? The Rhode Island shore? The coast of Maine?" She would then ride with us, excited to be at her favorite place. Jan Ortiz recalls that Vera would take her bathing suit, ask her if there was time for a swim, and say that she could quickly change into her suit behind the bushes so as not to hold up the group. Field trip leaders remember Vera's rather disconcerting habit of mysteriously vanishing, then reappearing during a trip. It was all part of her mysterious and highly personal reverence for place and solitude.

A memorial service for Vera took place at 2:30 on October 8th at the Unitarian-Universalist Church in Northampton.

Anne Lombard

WHERE ARE THE BIRDS?

For a synopsis of the birds being seen statewide, organized by region, call:

Voice of Audubon

1-888-224-6444

Seth Kellogg maintains the Western Massachusetts voice. He tries to create a comprehensive picture of what is being seen in the region, meaning all reports are welcome. Seth asks that you include the numbers of birds seen in your reports, not just the species list. He can be reached by email at skhawk@comcast.net. Alternatively, you may call him at (413) 569 3335, or leave a message in the Western Mass. section of The Voice.

For Rare Birds, the **Rare Bird Alert** is an email/phone tree run by HBC. Please see the cautions on the RBA form (enclosed) if you are considering being part of it.

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**.

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** and **Bob Zimmerman** make up our **Conservation Committee**. The club is looking for ideas on how we can contribute to habitat conservation in our area. Contact Anne at **(413) 586 7509**, or Bob at **(413) 585 0405**. The committee email is conservation@hampshirebirdclub.org.*

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

SUSTAINABLE SUNDAYS: THE QUICK SUSTAINABILITY CLINIC: *Paul Lipke, Jo Comerford, Sunday, October 30, 1 - 3 p.m.*

CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE ARCTIC: *Steve Roof, Tuesday, October 11, 7 p.m.*

FRAMEWORK TREES OF NEW ENGLAND: *Brian Hawthorne*
Classroom Sessions: Wednesdays, October 5, 12, 19, 7 - 9 p.m., Hitchcock Center
Field Sessions: Saturdays, October 15 and 22, 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

SHRUBS OF THE CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY: *Roland "Boot" Boutwell, Saturday, October 22, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.*
Held in Northfield and Gill. Directions given at registration.

LOCAL GEOLOGY TOUR: *Joe Kopera, Saturday, November 5, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

NATURE'S PERFECT PREDATOR, MOUNTAIN LIONS IN NEW ENGLAND: *Bill Betty, Sunday, November 6, 7 p.m.*

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.

Backyard Birds

17 Strong St., Northampton (near Eastside Grill). Phone 586 3155

Your local source for birding and bird-feeding supplies, including feeders, optics, gifts, written and audio-materials. Ten percent discount for members of the Hampshire Bird Club. Remember, with local merchants, your dollar stays here!

ARCADIA PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY: *Robert Floyd*
Fridays; Oct.14, 21, Nov.11, 18, Dec. 9, 16, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

AUTUMN AT HIGH LEDGES: *Ron Wolanin*
Sunday, Oct.16, 10 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

INTRODUCTION TO LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY: *Marty Klein, Tom Lautzenheiser*
Sunday, Oct.23, 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

COMPOSTING AND HEALTHY LANDSCAPING: *Ann McGovern*
Saturday, Nov.5; 10 a.m.-12 noon

*For more details of these and other programs go to www.massaudubon.org (select "Sanctuaries", then "Choose a Sanctuary: Arcadia") or call the sanctuary at the number below. To register for programs contact **Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary**, 127 Combs Rd., Easthampton MA 01027. Telephone **(413) 584-3009**.*

GREAT FALLS DISCOVERY CENTER PROGRAMS

Celebration of "Waterfowl Population Surveys: 50 Years & Still Counting"
Friday, October 14. 10am - noon

Project WILD Teacher Workshop: *Pam Landry*
Environmental Education Ideas for K-12 educators.
Saturday October 2, 9am-5 pm. Please register by calling 413-683-3221.

Great Falls Discovery Center is located at 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA
Open Fridays and Saturdays from 10AM to 4 PM
Phone (413) 683 32212

Welcome New Members!

Nancy & Denny Baker: Greenfield
Rachel Greenwood: Williamsburg
James P. Smith & Susannah Lerman: Amherst
Cynthia and Donald George: Amherst.

Matthew & Sally Galman: Belchertown
Stephen LaValley: Haydenville
Laura Wetzler: Cummington
Ed McCarron: South Hadley

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

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

The (unabridged) Hampshire Bird Club Directory for 2005-2006 is on the back page

HBC Directory: 2005 - 2006

President: David Gross; (413) 253 2897; president@hampshirebirdclub.org

VP/Program Chair: Geoff LeBaron; (413) 268 9281; programs@hampshirebirdclub.org

Membership Secretary: Sue Emerson; (413) 584 6736; membership@hampshirebirdclub.org

Communications Secretary: Marcia Merithew; (413) 584 8874;
communications@hampshirebirdclub.org

Treasurer: Janice Jorgenson; (413) 585 0148; treasurer@hampshirebirdclub.org

Board Members

Elissa Rubinstein; (413) 549 5078; erubinstein@hampshirebirdclub.org

Betsy Higgins; (413) 586 7585; bhiggins@hampshirebirdclub.org

Dennis McKenna; (413) 256 8439; dennismckenna@hampshirebirdclub.org

Jaap van Heerden; (413) 253 5569; jvanheerden@hampshirebirdclub.org

Mike Locher; (413) 585 5864; mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org

Bob Zimmermann; (413) 585 0405; zimmermann@hampshirebirdclub.org

If you would like to contact the entire board in one fell swoop, try board@hampshirebirdclub.org

Field Trip Chair: Mike Locher; (413) 585 5864; fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org

Conservation Committee: Anne Lombard (Chair); (413) 586 7509; Bob Zimmermann; (413) 585 0405
conservation@hampshirebirdclub.org

Boutique Proprietor: Betsy Higgins; (413) 586 7585; boutique@hampshirebirdclub.org

Librarian: Henry Lappen; (413) 549 3722; library@hampshirebirdclub.org

Publicity Chair: Jan Ortiz; (413) 549 1768; publicity@hampshirebirdclub.org

Webmaster: David Gross; (413) 253 2897; webmaster@hampshirebirdclub.org

Newsletter Editor: David Peake-Jones; (413) 529 9541; newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org

Refreshments: Sally Hills; (413) 549 5550; Helga Beatty; (413) 253 2410
refreshments@hampshirebirdclub.org

Rare Bird Alert: Bob Bieda; (413) 527 2623
Geoff LeBaron; (413) 268 9281
Jan Ortiz; (413) 549 1768
Scott Sumner; (413) 253 5983
alert@hampshirebirdclub.org

FIELD TRIP POLICY: 2005-2006
HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB, INC. 10/7/2005

1. Field trips are an essential activity of the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. (HBC). They are an important way to increase members' interest in and knowledge of birds, birding, and bird habitat. Field trips are announced in the HBC newsletter, on the website and at monthly meetings.
2. Each year, all HBC members are asked to sign the HBC Release Form. Minor children (under 18) must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or another adult who has written authorization to be responsible for the child's care and conduct. Please request a form from HBC if you want to authorize another adult to accompany your child.
- 3 The HBC conducts two different types of field trips: Day Trips and Overnight Trips.

Day Trips are planned by the Field Trip Committee, who prepare the schedule and select leaders. Day Trips generally do not require extensive planning by the trip leader. No costs other than travel (see #4 below), meals, and incidental fees will be involved. If requested to do so in the newsletter, participants must call the trip leader in advance to express interest in the trip. This allows the leader more flexibility and the opportunity to change the trip itinerary should that seem desirable. Day trips are open to both HBC members and non-members unless restricted to members by the host site.

Overnight Trips (2 or more days, reasonable driving distance) are planned by the Field Trip Committee and approved by the HBC Board at least 3 months in advance (see #5 below). Such trips generally require more planning by the trip leader, including, for example, arranging for lodging and travel. Participants will be charged an amount equal to actual predetermined costs (including liability insurance) plus a prorated amount to cover reimbursement of the leader's expenses (see #5 below). All fees, including the trip deposit, shall be paid to the HBC Treasurer. If a participant needs to cancel, fees (less a 10% processing fee) will be refunded subject to the conditions outlined in the trip description. Any excess fees remaining after costs have been met will be refunded, unless they are less than ten dollars per person, in which case they will revert to the HBC treasury. Overnight trips are open to only HBC members who have signed a release form and who have completed a medical information form.

4. The HBC Board recommends that passengers reimburse owners of vehicles used on HBC trips for costs associated with vehicle operation. The maximum recommended reimbursement is the federal government employee mileage reimbursement rate, rounded down to the nearest 10 cents, plus tolls and parking to be shared equally by all persons in the car including the driver. The participants (not the leader) are responsible for making carpool arrangements.
5. Leaders of Overnight Trips shall:
 - a. Submit a trip plan to the Field Trip Committee, which must be approved by the Board at least 3 months in advance of the trip. The plan should describe in writing the nature of the trip as completely as possible. Include an itinerary, estimated cost, conditions of lodging and lead time needed for reservations, roughness of terrain, pace of the trip, extra costs not covered by the fee, date of deposit and final payment, date after which fee is not refundable, and provide a list of any specialized items that participants should take on the trip. Repeat trips lead by the same leader need only submit necessary changes to the previous plan. The Board can waive the 3-month planning time if there is a special birding opportunity.
 - b. Consult with the membership secretary before the trip to make sure that all participants have signed the HBC Release Form.
 - c. Be reimbursed for all costs associated with planning (i.e. long-distance calls, postage), lodging, and transportation during the trip. The maximum reimbursement for automobile travel shall be one quarter of the costs incurred by a single vehicle under clause 4 of this policy.
 - d. Upon return, provide the HBC Board with an itemized account of all income and expenses related to the trip including receipts for major expenses.
6. The Field Trip Chair will send all participants in overnight trips the Field Trip Evaluation Form. The completed forms, to be returned to the Field Trip Chair, will help the Field Trip Committee plan future trips and provide feedback for leaders.
7. Leaders of both Day and Overnight Trips are asked to submit a Trip Highlights Report to the newsletter editor for publication in the next HBC newsletter.
8. HBC may ask professional bird touring organization to organize trips further away than the Overnight Trips. All responsibilities for planning the trip and all liability will be assumed by the touring organization. Such trips must be approved by the Board at least 6 months in advance.
9. Trips not sponsored by the Club: As a courtesy to its members, HBC will announce birding trips organized by members or other organizations, but not sponsored by the club. Such announcements will be made in the newsletter (on a space available basis) and at meetings and HBC will assume no other responsibility for such trips.

**Field Trip Guidelines for New Field Trip Participants and Drivers: 2005-2006
Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.**

Field trips are one of the best ways to help the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. (HBC) achieve its purpose: "to help its members and the general public enjoy birding and to educate them about birds, bird watching and bird habitats."

While these Guidelines are written primarily for new HBC Participants and Drivers, we hope that everyone will review this document, the ABA's Principles of Birding Ethics, the HBC Field Trip Policy, and the HBC Release Form.

All Participants:

1. Most trips described in the newsletter ask you to call the trip leader in advance. Please do so. It helps the leader plan the trip and you learn about any special arrangements or any change of plans.
2. Check with the leader before bringing children on a trip. Many of the trips are not appropriate for children. (All minor children (under 18) must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or an adult who has written authorization to be responsible for the child's care and conduct. See the Field Trip Policy for more information.)
3. All HBC members are asked to sign the HBC Release Form each year. If you did not receive a copy, please contact the Membership Secretary.
4. Be on time at the meeting place. If you plan to leave the trip early, you must inform the leader in advance.
5. Be prepared with binoculars, appropriate clothing (including protection from ticks), food and water. Assume the weather will be more extreme on the trip than at home and prepare accordingly.
6. Do not bring pets.
7. HBC encourages participants to carpool, both to reduce the environmental impact of the trip and to make the trip as safe as possible for all participants. We ask that the cost (presently \$0.40/mile plus tolls and parking) be shared equally among the driver and all passengers. You should estimate the probable cost of the trip so that you will be able to reimburse the driver at the end of the trip. The participants (not the leader) are responsible for making carpool arrangements.
8. HBC always encourages new birders to participate in trips. It is the responsibility of all trip members, leader and participants, to help new birders learn both identification techniques and bird observing skills.
9. All participants are responsible for their own safety. Use common sense if you feel that any part of the trip is too arduous for you. Always check with the trip leader if you have any questions or medical concerns about the trip.

Drivers:

1. It is the responsibility of the car owner to meet all registration, insurance, and inspection regulations.
2. Please fill up your tank before the trip and set your odometer at the beginning of the trip.
3. If the trip is going to caravan, follow common sense rules to make sure no one is put in danger or lost.

Stay in the same order so that you know which car is in front of you and which car is behind you.

If the car behind you is stopped by a light, pull safely to the side of the road so that you can wait until that car catches up.

If you are driving the car or cars catching up with the group, slow down so that the lead/stopped cars can pull in front of you.

It is a good idea for all caravan drivers to have their lights on.

4. Always have a description of the next major stop from the trip leader so that, should the caravan become separated, you can join the group at the next major stop.