



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.

## Amherst, Massachusetts

### 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

Volume 25, No. 8

April, 2009

[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

April is the official anniversary month of our beloved HBC. In trying to describe the genesis of the club twenty-five years ago, I am going to borrow, with few minor changes, an excerpt from the first chapter of Trudy Tynan's history of the club, which has appeared in installments during this year. If you have not yet done so, I recommend you dip into her lively account.

*It all began with a bird, and what a bird! A Great Gray Owl swooped into Hadley around Valentine's Day 1984 and hung around Huntington Road for six weeks.*

*"Sally Venman and I are standing there (watching the owl) and people are just coming out of the woodwork," Scott Sumner recalls. "We were just chatting. Then we thought, 'Look at all these people. We should be able to start a bird club and have it be viable and last.' Of course, some were non birders, (everyone loves an owl), but there were a lot of birders."*

*Within a few weeks, they had a flyer, and were beating the bushes for members. David Spector recalls being recruited by Sally from the window of her car while he was innocently birding a roadside..... The first meeting took place on May 9, 1984 at the Hitchcock Center, and the first field trip was to Plum Island on May 19. By August, the club had 75 charter members. Dues back then were \$7 per year.*

From so simple a beginning, the Hampshire Bird club has grown to its present status. It remains remarkably true to the simple yet durable vision of the founders. It is still, clearly and unambiguously, a bird club, and a darn good one. We are now 25 years old, and going strong. Here's to the next 25 years!

#### **In This Edition:**

- this month's **program** and the list of programs still to come this year (on page 2),
- **field trip** information, (including an update on the **Wayne Peterson Shorebirding Workshop**, p. 5),
- last call for **Monhegan, 2009** (our flagship overnight trip)
- **anniversary** update,
- programs at **Hitchcock** and some other local organizations,
- a first-hand account by the discoverer of the Valley **Ross's Geese**,
- the new **Education and Outreach committee**, and a few other tidbits.

I hope you find some of it useful!

### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The HBC Nominating Committee consists of **Bill Benner**, **Mary Alice Wilson** and **Dave Gross**. The committee will announce a slate of candidates for the 2009-2010 HBC board in the May newsletter. If you are interested in serving on the board or if you would like to nominate someone for the board, please contact one of the committee members. The election of the new board will be held at our AGM on May 11, 2009.

## NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, April 13 at 7:30 PM**

### **John Van de Graaff** brings us **The Galapagos Islands: A Photographic Celebration**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Charles Darwin (born 200 years ago) visited the Galapagos Islands for a month in 1835. Although his *Origin of Species* mentions them only briefly, his work and thought are a major source of the islands' legendary aura. Beyond their continuing importance for the theory of evolution, the Galapagos have become a premier international travel destination. They are also a paradise for photographers.

This show brings together the best of many, many images from John's trips to the Galapagos in 2006 and 2008, providing visual portraits of key species and habitats. Among those included are the ubiquitous sea lions, birds such as finches, mockingbirds, boobies, gulls, frigate-birds and albatrosses, and reptiles (iguanas, tortoises and sea turtles). Where appropriate John will comment on their evolutionary status. The islands' recent volcanic origins are evident virtually everywhere, but habitats shown range widely, from beaches and scrub to lava fields and tropical areas.

A native of Boston, **John Van de Graaff** has been photographing birds virtually full-time since 2001 and particularly enjoys traveling to do so. He migrated from New York City to Northampton in 2003 with his wife Marylee Bomboy. John has made presentations to a number of birding and photography groups, including several major bird clubs in Massachusetts. A well-attended exhibition of his bird photos appeared at the Burnett Gallery in Amherst in 2007. He has photographed extensively on the Massachusetts coast, capturing images which have been used by Mass Audubon to support their IBA and Coastal Waterbird Programs. He's an active member of the Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists (PVPA) and the North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA). John's website is easily remembered: [www.birdsbyjohn.com](http://www.birdsbyjohn.com).

### Coming Up

**May 11, 2009. Susan Smith.** *Chickadee Research.*

**June 8, 2009. Kenn Kaufman.** *Wings of the Imagination; Why we Need Birds.*

## FIELD TRIPS

### Reports

On **March 21**, **Al Richards** toured the more aqueous sections of the Pioneer Valley with a selection of the more hydrophilic members of the club. We started at Hadley Cove, where five of the **Ross's Geese** were obligingly present. We pronounced one a Ross's-Snow hybrid. Also present there were a pair of Ring-necked Ducks and one or two other things. We then trekked north, pausing to admire the Peregrine Falcons at the Sugarloaf before continuing up to the Rod and Gun Club in Turners. We had a Bald Eagle encounter almost as soon as we arrived, and also enjoyed looking at numerous Common Mergansers, Hooded Mergansers, Ring-necked Ducks, a pair of Common Goldeneye, and some Bufflehead.

Great Pond in Hatfield, was just in the process of opening up, but there were plenty of Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, and Gadwall to add to the day's tally. The most fun I had all day was with an inadvertent remark made by Al, but that must remain undocumented to protect the innocent (which includes neither Al nor me).

David Peake-Jones

## Coming Trips

*Please register with the field trip leader(s) and check this schedule's information when a phone number is given. The Field Trip Chair (Michael Locher – 413-585-5864) 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 50¢ per mile, as well as tolls and parking. See also the "Field Trip Guidelines for Participants" (September newsletter or on the Website).*

*Some trips have been marked with an asterisk (\*), which indicates that they are good trips for beginning birders. All trips have been coded as Easy (E) or Moderate (M) to give a rough indication of the pace and/or terrain. Please check all information with the trip leaders.*

**\*Saturday, April 11. Early Migrants.** Half day. Betsy Higgins (413-586-7585) looks for migrants, starting around Look Park in Northampton. Meet at 6:30 a.m. in the parking lot of the JFK Middle School on Bridge Street in Northampton. (E)

**\*Sunday, April 12. Ashley Reservoir: Early Warblers.** Half day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) hopes to find Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and other early migrants. Meet in the Friendly's parking lot, near the Holiday Inn, close to Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7:00 a.m. (E)

**\*Sunday, April 12. Timberdoodles.** Evening. Mike Locher looks and listens for woodcocks, probably at the Podick Conservation Area in Amherst. Contact Mike (413-585-5864) the week before the trip to get a definite meeting time and place. (E)

**\*Wednesday, April 15. Ashley Reservoir II.** Half day. Tom Gagnon celebrates tax day with a morning walk looking for warblers and waterfowl. The walk will start at 7:30 a.m.; call Tom (413-584-6353) for the meeting place. (E)

**Wednesday, April 22. Goat's Peak.** Half day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) commemorates Earth Day by looking for the first Broad-winged Hawks and butterflies of the spring. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the old Mt. Tom State Reservation park headquarters. Rain will cancel this trip. (M)

**Friday, May 8. South Quabbin Park.** Half day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) birds the southern end of the reservoir for vireos, warblers, and whatever else shows up. Meet at the Quabbin Visitor's Center parking lot at 8:00 a.m. (E)

**Saturday, May 9. Spring Migration in the East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon guides birders through the Quabbin woods in search of its migrants. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members. Call Tom (413-584-6353) well ahead of time for meeting information and to register, since participation is limited. (M)

**When you go on a field trip, please offer to write a dazzling and inventive account for the newsletter. Thank you. Ed.**

## EDUCATION and OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Everyone knows it and very bird club (at least in this part of the world) is seeing it. There are few new birders! This certainly helps make the trips quieter, but the long-term implications are not good for birding, nor for birds. A committee is forming to bring new people to birds and birding. If you are interested, please contact David Gross: [dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org), 413 253 2897.

## OVERNIGHT TRIPS

### Monhegan Island: Memorial Day Weekend (May 22-25), 2009

**Sandhill Crane, White-winged Dove, Prothonotary Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, Pacific Loon, Black Tern.** One or two of these birds would be great on any spring birding trip in the north-east. Last year's Monhegan trip had **ALL OF THEM!!** Monhegan is amazing, unequalled, unforgettable, and there are still vacancies for this year! Only you can rectify this situation, and you will be glad if you do.....

During the Spring, migrant songbirds moving northward up the Atlantic seaboard are sometimes pushed out over the ocean by storms, and have to fight their way back toward the safety of land. Monhegan Island lies about twelve miles off the coast of Maine and is often a haven for exhausted birds to recuperate before resuming the perilous journey northward. We will arrive on the island on the Friday of Memorial Day weekend, without vehicles, and immerse ourselves in the gentle rhythms of island life. We'll find migrant songbirds throughout the tiny village of Monhegan, sheltering in the numerous apple trees, sometimes picking through the sea-wrack on the town beach for sand-fleas, or even hiding in the lobster pots piled almost everywhere. Each day will bring fresh migrants to the island, and a storm could even produce one of the fallouts of birding legend. When the birding slows down, we can venture off on any of the island's numerous walking trails to Lobster Cove, the stupendous seaward cliffs, the Seal Rocks (aptly named), or the Enchanted Forest.

We'll stay at the rustic Trailing Yew, which will lay on breakfast and dinner each day, including a local lobster dinner. This is the perfect opportunity to slow down, REALLY learn the birds, and remember what life *should* be about. This trip is open only to members of the Hampshire Bird Club. Registration is by deposit. For further details or to register, contact **Betsy Higgins** ([hignik@comcast.net](mailto:hignik@comcast.net); 586 7585) or **Andrew Magee** ([andrewfimagee@gmail.com](mailto:andrewfimagee@gmail.com); 586 1509).

## 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

### Anniversary Celebrations at the April Meeting

#### Past Presidents Needed

Prior to the meeting, there will be a photograph taken of all the past presidents we can find. If this description fits you, please plan to arrive by 7:15 PM. Cape and tights optional.

#### HBC Photographs Needed

We are still looking for photographs (digital or actual) for the HBC memories table, which will be at the April meeting. If you can help, please contact Trudy Tynan at [publicity@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:publicity@hampshirebirdclub.org) or 413 534 4770.

#### Raffle Drawing and Cake

Following John's program we will be drawing the anniversary raffle. Three prizes will be awarded, the first being an Audubon print. Once this is done, we invite all members to partake in a slice or two of the HBC Anniversary Cake. Please be prepared to spend a little extra time and consume your share!

#### Other Anniversary News

The HBC Big Sit, previously advertised for May 17, has been cancelled. Instead, the June meeting will be preceded by a potluck supper to celebrate the club anniversary. We will invite Kenn Kaufmann (the speaker for the meeting) to join us, and hope his schedule will permit him to attend. Sign up for the potluck will be at the May meeting.

## Shorebird Workshop with Wayne Peterson

(You can participate in either or both the classroom session and/or the field trip)

The “Classroom” Component will be on **Wednesday, August 12 at 7:00 p.m. at the Hitchcock Center.**

*Cost will be published in the May newsletter.*

The companion **Field Trip to South Beach** (Chatham, MA) occurs on **Saturday, August 15**. The trip (limited to 20 people) will begin from **Outermost Harbor Marine** in Chatham at **8:30 a.m.** We will carpool from the Northampton Bowling Alley at 5:00 AM. Pickups along 91S or the Pike if necessary.

Because we have an outside leader making time for us, it is very important that we fill the trip. Hence, **registration is required** and there will be a *trip fee, to be published in the May newsletter*. The trip fee will be paid before the trip as part of the registration process. To register you may either:

- speak with David Peake-Jones at the May HBC meeting (you should pay the trip fee by check at this time), or
- email/call David beginning May 12: [fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org), 529 9541. Under this option, you will need to mail your trip fee to the HBC Treasurer, Janice Jorgenson. Details when you register.

*(We will repeat this announcement, with the missing details, in May and June)*

## LIBRARY

The **HBC Library** is located at the **Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst.**

Hours are those of the Hitchcock Center:

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. from Tuesday through Friday, and

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

The collection is catalogued on-line at [www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org).

The library contains birding resources in various media, including field guides, bird-finding guides to almost every major birding destination in the U.S., and overseas, natural histories, periodicals and videos. Items can be signed out and borrowed for a period of up to one month, or longer by arrangement. Our librarian, Henry Lappen, is happy to bring items to meetings, if you give him a few days in advance. You can reach him at [library@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:library@hampshirebirdclub.org) or (413) 549 3722.

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

“Mt Toby Poems”: *Wally Swist*

Reading and book-signing.

Tuesday, April 7, 2009, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Proceeds to benefit Clara Gardner

**An Old Growth Forest Excursion:** *Bob Leverett*

Sunday, April 12, 2009, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Mohawk Trail State Forest, Charlemont, Mass.

**Presidentials: An Alpine Wildflower and Birding Trek:** *Pete Westover, Ted Watt*

Friday through Sunday, June 12-14, 2009.

*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](http://www.hitchcockcenter.org).*

## Valley Environmental Education Collaborative Programs

### **Entrepreneurship, Sustainability and Innovation: Stories from the Cutting Edge:** *Chris Lotspeich*

Tuesday, April 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Held at the Holyoke Heritage State Park Visitor's Center, Holyoke, 7:00 p.m.

For more information call 413-534-1723. A \$5 donation is appreciated.

### **Playing With Solar. A Tour of A2Z Science and Nature Store's Solar Array:** *Jack Finn, Owner*

Wednesday, April 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Held at A2Z Science & Learning Store, Northampton at 7:00 p.m.

Sponsored by Massachusetts Audubon/Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary.

For more information and to pre-register call 584-3009. A \$5 donation is appreciated.

### **Distinguished Guests: The Valley Ross's Geese:** *Bob Bieda*

This morning (3/16/09) Lura and I were walking in the Arcadia meadows (page 181, Western Mass. guide), mostly with the idea of checking the increasing number of Great Blue Herons occupying the rookery in Ned's Ditch. As we were returning to Arcadia around 10:30 a.m. we saw hundreds of geese flying into Arcadia marsh. From a distance we could see that a few of these were "white" geese. We decided to try to get a closer look.

When we got to the marsh and got our scope on the first white goose, we saw that it had a round head, small bill with no grin patch and a very white, compact body. The second and third had the same. We decided they were Ross's Geese and called Chuck Horn, who works at the visitor center. He arrived in a few minutes and verified that we were not seeing things. We also discovered that one of the nine white geese was a Snow Goose and when it mixed with the others the contrast was dramatic. In all there were eight full adult Ross's Geese and one sub adult Snow Goose.

More calls resulted in Tom Gagnon, Al Richards and Tom Lautzenheiser joining the group. The nine white geese remained together and were generally surrounded by many, many hundreds of Canada Geese. The geese and the viewers were still there when Lura and I left at about 1:30 p.m.

*Some of these birds were still around a week later and were seen by the HBC spring waterfowl trip at Hadley Cove. At that time, there were four Ross's Geese and one Ross's-Lesser Snow Goose hybrid. Ed.*

## Raptor Release

**Sunday, April 19, 1 PM.**

**East Leverett Meadow, Cushman Road, Leverett.**

Julie Collier, (raptor rehabilitator), will release a first year American Kestrel. Sponsored by the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust.

***Backyard Birds*** (on Strong St. in Northampton) offers a wide range of birding books, audio resources, gifts, feeders, and other paraphernalia. They also offer a 10% discount to Hampshire Bird Club Members. Remember, when you shop locally, your money stays here!

Now for some more HBC history with Trudy Tynan!  
Till next month, walk softly and carry a big scope!

David Peake-Jones, Editor  
529 9541  
[newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)

## HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB HISTORY

### CHAPTER Seven: Red-footed and White-tailed Raptors and We Collar a Dove: 2004-2006

By Trudy Tynan

*With the years of patient peering the knowing gradually increases, incorporated into the brain, and, in more important ways, into the soul. Birding is a journey with no end point. It keeps us coming back year after year.* \_\_\_\_\_ David Peake-Jones, September 2005

Fall **2004** saw Dennis McKenna serve a second term as president, while Geoff LeBaron, Sue Emerson, Jan Howard and David Gross continued as vice president, membership and corresponding secretaries, and treasurer. Elissa Rubenstein and Jaap van Heerden joined Betsy Higgins, Marcia Merithew, Mike Locher and Bob Zimmerman on the board. David Peake-Jones continued to entertain us as newsletter editor.

Shawn Carey, founder of Migration Productions and president of the Eastern Mass Hawk Watch, opened the year's programs with "Birding: A Multi-Media Visual Experience." Popular field guide author and artist David Sibley spoke on birders and conservation in October in a meeting held at the Amherst Middle School.

In November, we heard a continent singing as charter member Don Kroodsma shared some the bird songs he recorded during a coast-to-coast bicycle trip with his son. Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll gave a program on birds of the Blackstone National Corridor, followed by Daniel Klem of Muhlenberg College on the hazards glass windows pose to birds, Connecticut State Ornithologist Margaret Rubega, who teaches at UConn, on the biomechanics of plankton-feeding phalaropes, and Geoff LeBaron on birding the Aleutian Islands and Kamchatka Peninsula.

Susan Roney Drennan, a former editor of *American Birds*, and author of *The Birder's Field Notebook*, spoke on albatrosses and the hazards posed by longline fisheries, and Frank Gill, recently retired chief scientist for the National Audubon Society and past president of the American Ornithologist's Union, concluded the year's programs with a talk on the importance of citizen science.

The year **2004-2005** brought some great birds, including the August appearance of a Red-footed Falcon on Martha's Vineyard, and the first state record of an Eurasian Collard Dove. The latter was discovered May 28 on the HBC's annual "Poor Man's Monhegan" trip to Plum Island led by Bob Bieda. The participants saw more than 100 species, including 11 species of warblers, seven species of flycatchers and both Wilson's and Red Phalaropes in breeding plumage on the coastal trip that followed a three-day nor'easter. They also came upon the remnants of a fin whale that had been buried on the beach years earlier and uncovered by the storm. They reported it still smelled bad.

The birding was also good on Monhegan. The 20 HBC members on the Monhegan trip tallied 128 species on the same weekend. The trip, as David observed in the newsletter, was notable, not for its rare species, which were limited to Dickcissal and Red-necked Phalarope, but for numbers of birds and being *perhaps the most complete representation of northeastern migrant songbirds of any trip in recent memory*.

Closer to home, the snow held off long enough for the Northampton area Christmas Count to tally new highs of Great Blue Herons, Hooded Mergansers, Red-tailed Hawks, Eastern Screech-owls, Red-bellied,

Downy- and Pileated Woodpeckers, Tufted Titmice, White-breasted Nuthatches, Carolina Wrens, American Robins, Northern Cardinals, Long-eared Owls and its first Bufflehead.

In February, Al Richards, Shawn Smolen-Morton and Herman Staengle took in the Great Gray Owl show at Ile Bizard, near Montreal. They tallied six Great Grays, including two in the parking lot, and added a Northern Hawk Owl, a Northern Saw-Whet, and a pair of Great Horned Owls before leaving Quebec.

An August trek to New South Beach produced a Curlew Sandpiper and controversy. As David P-J reported from behind a plate of greasy seafood at the Cream 'n Kone: *Those with long memories will recall a long-standing wager between Shaun Smolen Morton and Al Richards, stipulating that, should Al find/see a Curlew Sandpiper on a New South Beach Trip, Shaun would carry him up the stairs to Morris Island. While Al indisputably saw the bird, the protagonists are deadlocked over whether or not he had to be the finder of the bird. Given that Mr. Smolen-Morton appears several years older and not quite so spry as he was when this virtually suicidal pact was first made, this desperate splitting of hairs is perhaps forgivable.*

In May, we joined the Hitchcock Center in helping charter member Don Kroodsma launch his prize-winning book *The Singing Life of Birds* with a bird walk and book signing. HBC members also helped MassWildlife gather information about nesting Common Loons, Canada Geese, and Mute Swans, and the club began sponsoring accessible bird walks as part of Project INSPIRE. The Peregrine Falcons nesting atop the UMass Library fledged three chicks and the pair on Mount Sugarloaf fledged two chicks.

Dave Gross took over as president in **September 2005** and Janice Jorgensen replaced him as treasurer. Geoff LeBaron continued as vice president and program chair and Sue Emerson as membership secretary while Marcia Merithew was elected communications secretary. Dennis McKenna moved from the past president's spot to an at-large post on the board. Elissa Rubenstein, Jaap van Heerden, Betsy Higgins, Mike Locher and Bob Zimmerman continued as at-large members.

Don opened the year's programs with a presentation on *The Singing Life of Birds*, followed by Andrea Jones of Mass Audubon on Namibia and Blair Nikula, former regional editor for *American Birds* and past president of the Cape Cod Bird Club, on Antarctica. In January, Dr. Nancy Weiss spoke on the Bird Conservation Alliance in January, followed by Gregor Yanega, a doctoral student at UConn, on how hummingbirds use their bills to catch insects and charter member David Spector of Central Connecticut State on bird books.

Harry Vogel, executive director of the New Hampshire-based Loon Preservation Committee gave a program on common loon conservation and noted photographer John Van de Graaff on the peregrinations of a bird photographer. Tom French, director of the state's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, concluded the year's programs with a presentation on the recovery of peregrine falcons.

Afranio Torres-Neto completed a major updating of the HBC Web site and John Van de Graaff donated several of his images of local birds for display on the site. In April, Don Kroodsma won the Burroughs Medal for excellence in natural history writing and the report of a Eurasian Collared Dove, discovered during a May 2005 HBC trip to Plum Island, was formally accepted as a first state record by the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee. The HBC members contributing to the record report included

Dave Mako, who first heard the bird, Bob Bieda, who located it, and Al Richards, Janice Doppler, Chris Ellison, Gail Abbott and Deborah Oeky.

Participants in the annual Monhegan Island trip tallied 21 species of warblers and did some warbling of their own. Here's resident bard David P-J:

*In a moment of high drama, we realized that we had forgotten to bring copies of the HBC song. [Editors Note: see Chapter 4 for the worst ... I mean words] It seemed this would be the first trip ever when the graceful strains of this august melody would not send other patrons of the Trailing Yew scurrying for the woods. Rick put his guitar and musical skills to good use in cajoling some new and original verses out of the assembled group on Saturday night. Just when it seemed this jerry-rigged version of the historic song would have to suffice, Marian let it slip that she, as the proprietor of the Yew, had filed a copy away in an earlier year. We were able to sing it after all, much to the delight of the Yew staff, who were some of the most enjoyable folks we have had on any trip in my memory.*

However, the bird of the year appeared on Saturday, April 22, 2006. Here are excerpts from David's story in the May newsletter:

*It begins with Scott Sumner heading past the horse farms on an otherwise-average Saturday morning with his Hitchcock Birding class. As the group proceeded along North Maple Street about 8 AM, Scott stopped to put a scope on what he took to be a cooperative Red-tailed Hawk perched low and close to the road. As Scott noted one field mark after another, he began to realize that this was not, in fact, a Red-tailed Hawk. After some time had passed, the group was able to identify it as a White-tailed Hawk, primarily a bird of Central America, whose most northerly range is the coastal savannahs of Texas. The rest, as they say, is history!*

*As word spread, local birders began showing up along North Maple Street in the rain, and trooping along a track by the field where the bird had been seen...By about 2PM, birders were massed at the end of the road gazing at the bird in a dead tree a few yards from the end of the road.*

*There it sat: a truly miraculous apparition... It had a snowy white tail with a fairly stunning black sub-terminal band... If there is such a color as a rich gray, then that color prevailed across the back, offset by two muted but distinctive chestnut shoulder stripes... When the bird took flight briefly, the full splendor of gray-whitish wing linings was briefly revealed, along with the graceful, elongated hands of this aerial acrobat.*

The bird remained in the same general area for several days until it clashed with a local red-tail. A White-tailed Hawk in the same plumage appeared at the Pilgrim Heights hawkwatch on Cape Cod on April 27 and one was sighted in New Jersey on April 25.

The Massachusetts Avian Records Committee found the Hadley bird was "clearly a White-tailed Hawk," but in a split vote declined to accept the record because of questions about the bird's origin. Instead, MARC placed it on a supplemental list of species that "may have occurred in the state. However, a captive origin cannot be discounted."

And, oh yes, another near breeding plumage curlew sandpiper was spotted during an August HBC trip to New South Beach. *Of course*, P-J noted, *Al Richards reminded us of broken promises by Shawn Smolen-Morten.* Still, it was for naught. For Shawn had successfully defended his doctoral thesis and slipped safely away to South Carolina.