



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

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In this edition:

- this month's **program** and the coming schedule,
- a field trip report and the coming trips,
- **LAST CALL** for **Monhegan Island** this year,
- scandalous revelations about the Nominating Committee and the AGM,
- **Hitchcock Programs**,
- **kudos to one of our youngest members, and**
- Atlas exhortations.

I hope you find some of it useful!

The newsletter will close with a tribute to **Deedee Minear**.

NEXT PROGRAM

Monday, April 11 at 7:30 PM

Shawn Carey shows us **Scenes from the Gulf Oil Disaster**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Haven't you wanted to hear about the Gulf oil disaster from someone who's actually been there? Wildlife photographer Shawn Carey shares firsthand accounts, images and video from two recent trips to the Louisiana Coast to witness and document the effects of the nation's largest oil disaster on the region and its wildlife. Find out what he observed regarding the impacts of this environmental disaster and efforts underway to fix the damage. Carey also discusses the risks facing large numbers of migrating birds heading in and out of the Gulf region each year.

Originally from Pennsylvania, **Shawn Carey** moved to Boston, MA in 1986, and has been photographing birds and other wildlife for over 20 years, including 12 years teaching photography for Mass Audubon. He serves as Vice-President for the Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch, and is also on the advisory boards of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, and the Massachusetts Visual Arts Center. Shawn is a past-president of the Brookline Bird Club and served on the board of the Nuttall Ornithological Club.

COMING PROGRAMS

May 9, 2011. John Kricher. Speciation of Birds in the Neotropics.

June 13, 2011. David Spector and John Van de Graaff. Words and Birds.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Connecticut River Waterfowl

Sunday, March 20

Mike Locher led a group to visit some of the varied wetlands in the Connecticut River Valley seeking ducks and other puddly wonders.

We had an auspicious start at Cowpath Road in Hatfield when a **Northern Goshawk** lumbered over our heads while we looked at Ring-necked Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, and Eastern Phoebes in (or over) the northern reaches of Great Pond. On the northern outskirts of town, we frightened off the riff-raff with strategic slamming of car doors, leaving some beautiful Green-winged Teal and a few other things. In flooded fields toward Deerfield, we found Wood Ducks and Killdeer. Proceeding to the Rod and Gun Club, we beheld a plethora of mergansers of every kind, hordes of distant Ring-necked Ducks, some Bufflehead, Goldeneye, and a couple of very ratty young Bald Eagles.

Becoming tired of this mundane fare, Bruce and David decided to stand suggestively on a street corner in Turners Falls, to see what action they could rustle up. Most of the local folk had the good taste to look the other way and distract their offspring. In the end, our only interested motorist was Scott Sumner, and even we were not that desperate.

The day ended in spectacular fashion with a superb male **Redhead** (no relation to David or Bruce) at the boat ramp.

David Peake-Jones

COMING FIELD TRIPS

(see also the **Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule, March revision**)

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

***Sunday, April 10. Ashley Reservoir. Early Warblers.** Half Day. Mike Locher (413 585 5864) looks for early migrants like Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Northern Waterthrushes. Meet in the Friendly's parking lot, near the Holiday Inn, close to Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7 a.m. (E)

***Sunday, April 17. Bullitt Reservation.** Half Day. In a new trip for the HBC, Mary Alice Wilson explores a reservation along the Conway/Ashfield line. Contact Mary Alice (413 548 9078) as the date approaches for meeting information. (E)

***Sunday, May 1. 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 Road in Northampton. (E)

Saturday, May 7. East Quabbin Reservoir. All Day. Larry Therrien leads the HBC's annual trip to the eastern side of the reservoir, looking for spring migrants. You must be a Hampshire Bird Club member to go on this trip, which is limited to 15 people plus the leader. Call Tom Gagnon (413 584 6353) to register, no later than April 15. (M)

Sunday, May 8. Return to Greylock Glen. All day. Mike Locher cleans up the two blocks the HBC busted last spring, looking for nesting waterfowl and other species we did not get before. Contact Mike (413 585 5864) as the date approaches for meeting information. (M)

LAST CHANCE!!
REGISTRATION CLOSING!!
HBC MONHEGAN ISLAND OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIP
Memorial Day Weekend (May 27-30), 2011.

OK, folks, you've read the glossy descriptions of this fabled birding paradise, perhaps you've had a lot on, perhaps you've been waiting to see what the tax refund looks like. You've procrastinated. Well, if you're going this year, it's time to bite the bullet.

Registrations for the trip CLOSE on APRIL 15.

Still have questions? Well, Betsy, Andrew and Mike will be glad to give you any information you need, but the decision is really rather simple.

If you have not been to Monhegan Island birding, you need to go, so SIGN UP!

If you have not been in the last ten years, then you need a refresher, so SIGN UP.

Just to recap: the only people who have any conceivable excuse NOT to sign up are those who have been to the island in the last ten years, and even you guys are nuts if you don't go again.

To sign up, and/or for a cost estimate, contact Mike Locher (fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org; 585 5864). For general questions, contact Betsy Higgins (hignik@comcast.net; 586 7585) or Andrew Magee (andrewfmagee@gmail.com; 586 1509).

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Each year a small group of conscripts puts together a list of nominees for the Board for the following year. Despite the fact that Board membership is a breathtaking thrill-ride through intrigue and non-profit politics, there are usually a few members who elect not to return for another year.

This year, the indefatigable **Bruce Hart** (brucehart@hampshirebirdclub.org) is the chairperson of the Nominating Committee. Please let him know if you, or anyone with whom you have a blood feud, would like to serve on the board. Bruce will put together a proposed slate of Board members for the coming year, in time for the May newsletter, and the membership will elect the new Board for 2011-2012 at the Annual General Meeting in May.

Ok, there was really no scandal in this report, but for what legitimate reason would you have read it?

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. for 2010-2011 will occur on **Monday, May 9, at the Immanuel Lutheran Church, 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst, MA at 7:30 P. M.**

The meeting serves as the opportunity for the membership to elect the **Board of Directors** for 2011-2012. A slate of proposed directors (nominees) will be published in the May newsletter, and presented at the meeting. Nominees will also be accepted from the floor.

BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

The final year of the Breeding Bird Atlas has begun with a lively workshop, new HBC webpage information, and birds arriving daily hoping they will be counted. If you are not already involved, contact Mary Alice Wilson, mwilson@umassk12.net to participate.

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

Birding by Ear: *John Green*

Saturdays, April 23, May 21, June 25, 7-10 a.m. Fee.

Introduction to Birding: *Jan Ortiz*

Classes: Wednesdays, April 27, May 4, 11, Thursday, May 19, 6:30-8 p.m.

Field Trips: Saturdays, April 30, May 7, 14, 21, 7 a.m.-noon

Members: \$90/Non-members: \$105

Bark: Get To Know Your Trees: *Michael Wojtech*

Saturday, May 7, 9 a.m.-noon. Fee

The 2nd Annual Amherst Sustainability Festival

Held on the Amherst Town Common and around town

Saturday, April 23, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

The Dynamic Landscape: Creating Powerful Photos: *Michael Zide and Peter Chilton*

Thursday, April 14, 7-8:30 p.m. No Fee.

Low Maintenance Design with Native Plants: *Owen Wormser*

Saturday, April 30, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Held at the New England Wild Flower Society's Nasami Farm in Whately. Fee.

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

Pledge for Galen!!

We congratulate club member **Galen Frank-Bishop**, who has been selected to participate with the American Birding Association's young birders team, the **Tropicbirds**, in the **Great Texas Birding Classic** this month. In this big-day type tournament, teams of elite birders from nation wide compete to locate the most species in a defined period.

Teams raise money through sponsorships, and the proceeds go towards the ABA's educational programs, which aim to help developing birders of all ages nation-wide.

To find out more about the Great Texas Birding Classic, use the search engine of your choice (the only links I could find are incomprehensible).

To find out more about the Tropicbirds, go to www.aba.org/yb/tropicbirds.

You can proceed from there to the Pledge link, for an online pledge process or to download a paper form.

GO Galen!!

That's all for now!

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

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Our tribute to **Deedee Minear** follows.

In Memory of Deedee Minear

Deedee died in March after a long illness. Though she would strenuously oppose this effort to acknowledge her contribution to our community over many years, we believe her passing cannot go unremarked.

Deedee was born in Northampton, and graduated from Smith College. Though her work and interests took her all over the country and the world, it is her presence here in the valley that birders will remember. She participated avidly in both the Christmas Count over many years and, recently, in the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas. She participated in ornithological research at Savoy State Forest, and especially loved the Sugarloaf, Lawrence Swamp, and Puffer's Pond.

Deedee did not simply spend time in the natural world. It was, truly, her element. Birds, wildflowers, salamanders, butterflies, moths, trees, mammals: no living thing escaped her keen interest, and she loved all of them.

For one who so treasured nature on her own terms, she touched more people with her willingness to share her knowledge and love of wildlife than she would have realized. So many of us remember her sharing observations we had either missed altogether, or the true significance of which we had failed to grasp. Some folks remember her astride her bike on the bike path, "pointing out the best ones." Others recall her appearing mysteriously to some startled birder, and whispering the tip of the day in conspiratorial undertones, before vanishing along the by-ways of her unique and private world.

We shall leave it to Jan Ortiz to close this tribute,

"I do not know of anyone who was a more conscientious or ethical birder. Often starting out in the earliest hours of the morning, usually alone, she walked quietly, pausing often to look and listen. It was not unusual for friends to find a note from her on a car, in the mailbox or wedged in the door, sharing with us a special sighting – be it bird, butterfly or wildflower. She was a gentle woman, a solitary presence with an exceptional knowledge and appreciation of the natural world. She will be missed by her many friends in the birding community."

Hampshire Bird Club