



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.
Amherst, Massachusetts
www.hampshirebirdclub.org
Volume 28, No. 4
December, 2011.

I am taking a moment away from the Occupy Clark Street sit-in to bring you some news from HBC. This edition is almost entirely given over to the club membership list. It is a valuable resource to help us keep in touch, and the sheer size of the document (despite the Lilliputian font size) attests to the healthy number of folks who call us their bird club. **Thanks to Mary Alice Wilson and Sue Emerson** for the painstaking work of bringing it to print.

Remember: the membership list is to be used exclusively for birding-related communications amongst our members, and is not to be shared outside the club, or used for any other purpose.

There is also room this month to tell you about:

- The **program for December**, and the upcoming schedule,
- Some **field trip reports**, and a description of the lone trip in January,
- **Christmas Count** reminders, and
- A call for help with the **Christmas Count Potluck**.

I hope you find some of it useful.

NEXT PROGRAM

Monday, December 12 at 7:30 PM

HBC Members Share Images and Tales from the Past Year

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Should bad weather force a cancellation, it will be announced on WHMP 1400 AM radio.

This month the entertainment is US!!

Please bring some sort of snack to share.

Sally and Helga are taking a well-earned break this month. If we don't bring stuff, we will go hungry!!

AND

Please bring some slides to share.

They can be of birding exploits, other adventures in natural history, or even just some scenic wonders you visited during the year. As in past years, please limit your show to 15 or fewer slides and you must be prepared to narrate your own stuff. Please contact either **Jaap van Heerden** (jvanheerden@hampshirebirdclub.org) or **Geoff LeBaron** (programs@hampshirebirdclub.org) by 6 p.m. on Sunday, December 12. Let them know:

- Are your slides digital or 35 mm format?
- If digital, are the images in Powerpoint format or just stand-alone images?

If you bring digital images, please have them on a memory stick or CD-ROM disk.

COMING PROGRAMS

January 9, 2012. Geoff LeBaron. Panama and Costa Rica.

February 13, 2012. Scott Sumner. Birding Alaska.

March 12, 2012. Jeff Boettner. Birds & Bugs.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Champlain Valley, Vermont. Saturday, November 5, 2011.

Geoff LeBaron accompanied Harvey Allen, Peter Allison, Nidhin Joseph, Andrew Magee and Josh Rose to Addison County in Vermont on a sunny, calm day. Intelligence reports indicated that good numbers of geese were present at Dead Creek WMA this year and that there were both Ross's and Greater White-fronted individuals with them.

To our relief, there were many geese within close range of the parking area (albeit in corn stubble) when we arrived, and we were able to find the young **Greater White-fronted Goose** among them, though it was frustratingly hard to find amid a sea of Greater Snow Geese. After a brief look the White-front disappeared into the flock, and before we were able to locate the Ross's Geese, the group moved too far off for us to have any chance at finding them. We did, however, find an unexpected smattering of shorebirds including four (4) **American Golden Plovers** and four (4) **Pectoral Sandpipers**. There were a number of other visitors from the tundra including **Snow Buntings**, **Lapland Longspurs**, **American Pipits**, and **Horned Larks**, as well as an impressive young female **Peregrine Falcon**. We had a great day with all these, and especially with the Snow Geese, capped off with a spectacular flight of Snows at sunset from the surrounding fields to the ponds of the refuge.

Geoff Lebaron



Berkshire Lakes. Sunday, November 6 with Bob Bieda.

Moran WMA: **Northern Shrike** (1), Snow Bunting (1).

Cheshire Reservoir: American Wigeon (1), Northern Pintail (2) and Bufflehead (3).

Pontoosuc Lake: American Wigeon (1), **Northern Shoveller** (3), Greater Yellowlegs (1).

Onota Lake: **Red-breasted Merganser** (3), Horned Grebe (5), and **Red-necked Grebe** (2).

Richmond Pond: American Coot (206).

Stockbridge Bowl: **Ruddy Duck** (36)

No mention of the donuts at Bartletts.

Thanks to Jacob Drucker for record keeping.

Bob Bieda



Quabbin 2. Sunday, November 20 with Larry Therrien.

Our trip on the east side of the Quabbin began at the meeting spot at Winsor Dam. I arrived around 6:30 and was quickly joined by a few other early participants. The breeze was already up a bit but didn't stop us from seeing a few species of waterfowl here including a group of four Common Goldeneye flying by as well as a few Common Mergansers. A couple of flyby Pine Siskins including one doing an odd display type flight added some excitement, as did several hundred American Robins leaving their roost in the early AM. A few other lucky participants saw a **Barred Owl** pass by on their way into the driveway at Quabbin.

Once everyone else arrived we entered the restricted area at Gate 45. Checking the interior small ponds gave us a nice view of a **River Otter** on top of a beaver lodge. This stop also heralded the start of our contest to see who could pick up the most ticks! The competition continued hot and heavy throughout the day with several people exceeding the 20-tick mark. The birds were few and far-between at times, but the ticks never wavered! We picked up some good birds at the fishing area, including a Belted Kingfisher, a late Yellow-rumped Warbler and an adult male Northern Harrier heading south in spite of the strong southerly winds. We managed a few other new species around Dana Common including an American Tree Sparrow and Eastern Bluebirds.

continues on the next page ►

Quabbin 2. November 20. (continued)

We then stopped at Pottapaug Pond and found a group of Black Ducks on the water with a few Mallards mixed in. A little additional scanning turned up a distant **Pied-billed Grebe** and a few more Hooded Mergansers, but not the binoculars one of us had lost earlier.

We continued our journey north coming out along the Gate 35 road and found several Horned Grebes, a few Common Loons and a cooperative adult Bald Eagle perched on a small tree. The winds had lightened up considerably by late in the day and the water was fairly calm. Despite the lower-than-normal number of waterfowl around, we had a very enjoyable day with pleasant weather for late November. The totals for the trip included 46 species of bird, five species of mammal, and one species of butterfly, as well as a basking turtle taking advantage of the warmth! This was the first November trip to Quabbin in many, many years that Tom Gagnon was unable to make but I'm sure he will be back for next year's trip.

Larry Therrien.

COMING TRIPS

The Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule will be coming out with the January newsletter.

Saturday, January 7. North Shore: Cape Ann to Plum Island. All day. Bob Bieda leads his annual New Year's pilgrimage to the coast in search of wintering specialties like Eared Grebes, Barrow's Goldeneyes, Harlequin Ducks, Purple Sandpipers, and much more. Dress for cold weather. For meeting information call Bob at 413-527-2623. (E)

CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Northampton: Sunday, December 18.

Jan Ortiz, 413 549 1768, jtortiz@aol.com, OR

Janice Jorgensen, 413 585 0145, janicejorgensen@charter.net

Quabbin: Saturday, January 1.

Scott Sumner (413 253 5999; ssurner@aol.com)

Northampton CBC Pot Luck

Hitchcock Center, Amherst. December 18 at 4:00 PM

Contributors Needed!!

Those who have been reading this rag for a while will be familiar with my theory that the whole Christmas Count thing is simply an excuse to enjoy a potluck dinner in good company on a cold winter's day! True to form, Sue Emerson and her elves will be putting on a pot-luck this year at the Hitchcock Center on count day, immediately prior to the compilation of count results.

Please contact her if you can bring a **main (hot) dish**, a **salad**, or a **dessert**. You can arrange with her to drop it off somewhere before-hand if you plan to be out in the field till 4.

You can reach her as follows:

Sue Emerson: 413 584 6736, or via email at spe33@charter.net

That's all for now.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org