



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

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May, 2011.

In this edition:

- the monthly program introduction and biography of our speaker: **John Kricher (page 2)**,
- a field trip report and the packed May schedule, including a **newly-announced trip**,
- the always-exciting **AGM announcement** and **board nominations**,
- important news about the **Sally Venman Memorial Fund**,
- a doffing-of-the-cap to **Galen Frank-Bishop**,
- a resource to compare **birding “apps,”** and
- a few other odds and sods.

I hope you find some of it useful!

Since birding “apps” are all the rage, we are proud to announce the imminent release of the Hampshire Bird Club App: **“Pileations,”** available soon for all mobile communication devices. There are many new applications out there that will give you basic data on plumage, distribution, voice etc., but that still leaves you with the cumbersome task of sifting through the aging memory banks for some kind of identification that matches the facts.

Pileations helps avoid all that messy uncertainty. Just point the viewfinder in the general direction of the bird, press the ID button, and the app will tell you what it is. Now, in case that seems a little too cut-and-dried, **Pileations** allows you to calibrate the results for your personality and/or life stage! You may want to start out at the PIS (Play It Safe) level. The device will take the visual data, your GPS, location, and the date, and come up with a nice, common species that will not draw any attention from your local birding elite. As you get more adventurous, you might wish to try the “SMW” (Spreading My Wings) setting, which allows certain more controversial possibilities like McGillivray’s Warbler and Bell’s Vireo into the mix. If you have been diagnosed with a terminal disease or are about to have children, it might be time to consider the FAAP (Fame At Any Price) level, which will actively select for trans-Atlantic accidentals and endangered species.

The fun doesn’t end there! Capture just one chip note with the inbuilt mike and the KROOD function will tell you whether that bird is paired up yet and how the relationship is going. Use the MAW link to get the regional Atlas coordinator involved (for hours of interrogatory amusement). Hit the GAG button, and **Pileations** will tell you how many times Tom Gagnon has seen this individual bird that day, and what his ID was! Scroll through the “Listers Playground” menu to find out whether the bird is yet represented on the local lists of notable local celebrities like Bob Bieda, Al Richards, and Scott Sumner. For added pleasure you can send a text to just one of these folks and snub the rest! And for that rainy day, just click on SPECTRE to find out where that species is represented in the world’s great literature!

Pileations is brought to you over the strenuous objections of Jan Ortiz by the software developers at Hampshire Bird Club: 27 years old and always on the cutting edge!! **In case you are interested in a real (and very useful) comparison of available birding applications for mobile devices, please see the article on page 6.**

Please note: the Monthly Program follows on page 2.

NEXT PROGRAM

Monday, May 9 at 7:30 PM

John Kricher sheds some light on Speciation of Birds in the Neotropics.

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Ecuador is one of the most bird species-rich countries in the world, perhaps second only to Peru and Colombia. This talk will focus on various ideas as to how and why so many species of birds have evolved to inhabit Ecuador and how speciation in the tropics may be unique compared with other ecological regions. From Darwin's first observations in the Galapagos Islands to current research on species from rain forest to high mountains, this talk will provide a broad overview that will help any birder to understand why Neotropical bird guides have so many pages.

John Kricher is a Professor of Biology at Wheaton College, Norton, Massachusetts. A graduate of Temple (B.A.) and Rutgers Universities (Ph.D.), Dr. Kricher teaches courses in ecology, ornithology, and vertebrate evolution.

John has conducted Earthwatch-sponsored research on migrant birds on their wintering grounds in Belize. He is the author of over 100 papers and articles in scientific journals, magazines, and newspapers and several important texts on the neotropics. John is a Fellow in the American Ornithologists Union and has served as president of the Association of Field Ornithologists, president of the Wilson Ornithological Society, and president of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, and has been a member of the boards of directors of the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, the New Jersey Audubon Society, and the American Birding Association. He is currently on the Council of the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

John has led trips to many places including Cape May, Block Island, coastal New England, Arizona, the Pacific Northwest, Belize, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Peru, Ecuador, Galapagos Islands, Panama, and Trinidad. He has lectured for Linblad Tours of the Galapagos Islands, for Society Expeditions trips to Venezuela, Brazil, and Indonesia, and for Glacier Bay Cruise Lines in Alaska.

John and his wife Martha Vaughan divide their time between Pocasset, Massachusetts, on Cape Cod and Sunbury, Georgia.

COMING PROGRAMS

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

Sallymeandering

The Wit and Wisdom of Sally Venman.

“Speaking of which, let me tell you about what I did on my summer vacation (pretty clever segue there, no?). I experienced a migratory fall-out at Point Pelee (an incredible, unforgettable, amazing, goose-bump-raising birding experience); took a journey “home” (discovered why I am FROM my growing-up area and not still living IN it); spent an amazing hour with a good friend trying to remain objective as we silently watched a Fisher pilfer the nesting hole of a Pileated Woodpecker pair, seeing and hearing the parents’ reaction to this beautiful animal; and lastly challenged the stability of a long-time marriage by painting (with husband Bill) a huge area inside the house during the peak of the heat and humidity wave. I think August will find me with a trashy novel, a wine cooler, and a comfortable hammock far away from all things that have any potential for maturing me.”

August, 1997.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

The Bullit Reservation (Trustees of Reservations Property), Ashfield, MA.

Sunday, April 17

Mary Alice Wilson led an adventurous group to this remote gem in the Berkshires. Given the weather prediction (rain and strong wind), the clearing sky and brisk breeze was a gift – but it was cold. Final score was Birders 13, Birds 9 (species) - demonstrating once again that birds have more sense than birders. Special thanks to TTOR/Americorps intern, Layla Hazen, who introduced the group to the property and answered the many questions from participants who went inside for facilities, warmth, and information. While on our walk, Carol Garanski's sharp eyes found a porcupine in a tree stump. Each of us will be back to this great birding spot – on a nicer day.

Mary Alice Wilson

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.*

***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 east side of the reservoir, looking for spring migrants. You must be a Hampshire Bird Club member to attend 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 didn't get before. Contact Mike (413-585-5864) as the date approaches for meeting information. (M)

Newly Added to the Schedule

Sunday, May 15. Lyme, Connecticut. ¾ Day. Arn Krugman will be leading this new trip, involving walks in Hartman Park and Pleasant Valley (a Nature Conservancy property). Target species include Hooded Warbler and White-eyed Vireo. Cerulean Warbler and Worm-eating Warbler are more abundant than in our northern climes. Possible side stops may include Great Island for good looks at nesting Osprey and Marsh Wren, and/or Nehantic State Forest for the almost annual Prothonotary Warbler, if it is reported this year). We will meet at 6 AM at Northampton Bowl, on Rt. 5 just south of Northampton, near the highway interchange. Please call Arn (413 446 9727) to register and for further details. Rain cancels. (E)

Continues over ►

Coming Trips (continued)

Sunday, May 15. MacLeish Field Station, Northampton. Half day. In a new trip for the HBC, Bill Benner explores a newly-opened property run by Smith College. Call Bill (413-320-4422) as the date approaches for meeting information. (E)

Monday, May 16. Mount Holyoke. Half Day. Tom Gagnon hikes up Mt. Holyoke looking for birds (think Cerulean Warbler), wildflowers, and perhaps a few butterflies. Meet at the LOWER parking lot at 7 a.m. Call Tom (413-584-6353) after May 10. (M)

Friday, May 20. Rails and Marsh Birds. Evening. Tom Gagnon looks and listens for Virginia Rails, Sora Rails, and Marsh Wrens. Meet between Stop & Shop and Liquors 44 in Northampton at 6 p.m., then the group will proceed to the Bike Path. The walk ends at dusk. Bring insect repellent. Call Tom (413-584-6353) for information. (E)

Saturday, May 21. Plum Island. All day. Geoff LeBaron looks for migrants and residents at one of Massachusetts' premier birding locations. Call Geoff as the date approaches for meeting time and information. (E)

Saturday, May 28. Mount Auburn Cemetery, Watertown, MA. $\frac{3}{4}$ day. David Peake-Jones will visit this historic and beautiful garden cemetery which is also a fabled migrant trap. Call David (413-529-9541) to register. (E)

***Thursday, June 2. Holyoke Fish Ladder.** Half day. Tom Gagnon reprises his trip to the Holyoke Fish Ladder to look for birds and fish. (Last year the group saw seven species of fish and eels.) To carpool, meet at the Park & Ride parking lot near the Three County Fairgrounds in Northampton at 11:30 a.m., or else meet the group in Holyoke. Bring a lunch, if you want one. Call Tom (413-584-6353) for information. (E)

Saturday, June 4. Westover Air Force Base. Half day. Pending permission, Bob Bieda will lead his annual trip into New England's premier grassland habitat, looking for Upland Sandpipers, Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Bob (413-527-2623) at least two weeks ahead of time to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E)

Sallymeandering

"Was it only a year ago I was ironing bed sheets and bath towels while watching Huey, Louie and Dewey outwit Uncle Donald on the Saturday morning cartoon festival in order to avoid the production of the Hampshire Bird Club newsletter, August edition? Those who have followed my emotional and intellectual development over the HBC newsletter years will be happy to learn that shortly after that letter, realizing I was out of control, I joined a recovery program for Saturday Morning Cartoon addicts and now I only watch the Discover Network and the McNeil-Lehrer Newshour. My one relapse occurred during a George of the Jungle cartoon Festival just before the holidays – always a stressful time of the year."

August, 1994.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee this year consisted of Bruce Hart, Ilene Goldstein, and Joe Wicinski.

Only minimal arm-twisting was required to persuade Josh Rose to stand for election to the board, to replace Joe Wicinski who has done his time (for now). Thank you, Joe!

It's a fair bet that Josh will bring candor (and hopefully refreshments) to the Board. He's also promised to keep his hands off Medicare, which, in the universe of elected officials, is saying something!

Thank you to the Nominating Committee!!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of Hampshire Bird Club Inc. will take place on Monday, May 9, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. The venue will be the Immanuel Lutheran Church, 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst, MA. The AGM will occur immediately prior to the scheduled HBC program for the month.

The primary purpose of the AGM is to elect a Board for the 2011-2012 club year. The Nominating Committee proposes the following slate for next year:

President: Scott Sumner

Vice-President/Program Chair: Geoff Lebaron

Membership Secretary: Sue Emerson

Communications Secretary: Elissa Rubinstein

Treasurer: Janice Jorgensen

Members-at-Large:

Bruce Hart

Mike Locher

Jan Ortiz

David Peake-Jones

Jaap van Heerden

Josh Rose

Other nominations will be accepted from the floor.

Sally Venman Memorial Donations to Fund Hitchcock Camperships!

Hampshire Bird Club members were exceedingly generous in donating funds to our memorial fund for Sally Venman. The board determined that the best way to honor Sally's legacy was to contribute to the environmental education cause which was so dear to her.

With guidance from the Education Committee and approval from her family, we asked the Hitchcock Center in Amherst to fund TWO scholarships in Sally's name for environmental camps at Hitchcock this summer. The center was happy to accept the suggestion, and we forwarded \$800 to them in April.

The funds will extend the unique camp experience at Hitchcock to young folks who might otherwise never experience it. We think Sally would be delighted!!

Sallymeandering

"And a few more reminders for your calendar, compliments of your full-service Secretary. The month of May is National Asparagus Month! May 3- Pete Seegers 72nd birthday. May 8 – the first unassisted triple play in 1898 – AND – Ostrich mating season begins; May 12 – Mother's Day; May 22 – Toothpaste tube was invented just 99 years ago; May 25 – Babe Ruth hit his last home run (#714) in 1935; May 27 – Memorial Day; June 4 – 42nd anniversary of the day that Dick Tracy married Tess Truehart after an 18 year engagement. HAPPY BIRD SEARCH!"

May, 1991.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Birding Applications for Mobile Devices.

If you wish to enhance your birding experience by using one of the many birding applications available for cell phones/blackberries/tablet PCs or iPads, you may be bewildered by the wide variety available and struggling to choose between them.

If so, Janice Jorgensen and the Education Committee would like to extend an offer of help.

There is an extensive comparative guide to the different “apps” available at <http://ibird.com/compare.aspx>.

Why do I feel like I am contributing to the delinquency of a minor? (p'raps that should be “mynah”). Ed.

Accessible Birding

Check out the excellent list of local, national, and international birding spots for those with limited mobility or endurance. Click on [CBC/Inspire](#) on the HBC's opening page, and then follow the directions for the links in Comfortable Birding For All.

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

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

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

Old Growth at Dunbar Brook: *Ted Watt*

Saturday, May 21, 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (Rain Date: Sunday, May 22). Fee.

Sea Lamprey: *Boyd Kynard* (Fort River Discovery Series)

Thursday, May 19. Details at www.fortriverdiscovery.org.

Family River Romp and Clean Up (Fort River Discovery Series)

Monday, May 30th. Details at www.fortriverdiscovery.org.

Natural pest Control: *Jim McSweeney*

Saturday, May 21, 10 a.m.-Noon.

Held at the New England Wild Flower Society's Nasami Farm in Whately. Fee.

Biothon 2011

Any 24-hr period during May 13-15 or May 20-22. Please call 413-256-6006 for participation packet.

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.

Sallymeandering

Three friars opened up a small florist shop to raise funds for the poor. Since everyone liked to buy flowers from the men of God, a rival florist across town thought the competition was unfair. After they repeatedly refused his pleas to close down, the opposing florist hired Hugh McTaggart, the roughest and most vicious thug in town to “persuade” them to close. Hugh beat up the friars and trashed the store, whereupon the terrified friars finally shut up shop, proving that *Hugh, and only Hugh, can prevent florist friars.*

ATLAS

Data is already coming in. Check out the new information on the HBC website. Click on Atlas at the bottom of the opening page, and wander around. But especially, check out the information in #6 – especially the new “Hampshire-Franklin 4th year All Data” – what a stunning document.

Mary Alice Wilson

Galen Soars In Birding Classic!

American Birding Association’s Tropicbirds team won their division at the Great Texas Birding Classic sponsored by the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. HBC’s own **Galen Frank-Bishop** was on the winning team.

Congratulations, Galen!!

You can still support the team and the conservation effort. Go to

<http://www.aba.org/yb/tropicbirds/tropicbirdspledgeform.pdf> to download the form.

OTHER GROUPS WHO ARE ALL ABOUT BIRDS.

This list focuses on groups who provide programs and/or field trips on birds and birding in Massachusetts, and list these on active websites. Addresses given are those for current programs and/or trips. Only monthly programs or special events are listed here (****).

Arcadia Sanctuary. Easthampton, MA. Field Trips/Programs.

Programs/trips at www.massaudubon.org/PDF/newsletters/Arcadia_117.pdf

Allen Bird Club: Springfield, MA. www.massbird.org/allen

Meetings held at the Tolman Wing of the Springfield Science Museum (The Quadrangle).

Cape Cod Bird Club. Brewster, MA. Field Trips/Programs. www.massbird.org/ccbc

Programs held at 7:30 PM at Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, 869 Rte. 6A, in Brewster, MA.

**** **May 9, 2011. Jim Fenton - “Birds of Plymouth Beach through the Seasons: A Photographic Journey”**

Brookline Bird Club. Brookline, MA. Field Trips. www.brooklinebirdclub.org

Athol Birding and Nature Club: Athol, MA. Field Trips/Programs. www.millersriver.net/events/index/html

**** **Wednesday, May 11. 7 – 9 p.m. Birding the Rio Grande: Josh Rose**

Hoffmann Bird Club. Berkshire County, MA www.hoffmannbirdclub.org/events/html.

Meetings at 7 p.m. in Pittsfield or Lenox, MA. Check schedule for monthly location.

**** Friday, May 5. 5 p.m. Annual Meeting at Cork and Hearth, Rt. 20, Lee, MA.

Wayne Petersen. The Birds of Cuba.

Sallymeandering

Two boll weevils grew up together in South Carolina. One went to Hollywood and became a famous actor. The other remained behind in the cotton fields and never amounted to much. The second one, naturally, became known as the lesser of two weevils.

TRUSTEES OF RESERVATIONS PROGRAMS

Barn Birds

May 14, 2011. 9:30 a.m. Bullit Reservation, Ashfield (TTOR).

Come learn why and how old barns serve as valuable habitat for barn swallows, and what you can do to nurture them while protecting your barn. FREE.

HBC members: call to register with Trustees of Reservations (413.628.4485) and check out TTOR website for map (www.thetrustees.org).

Directions

Route 116 west through the town of Conway. About half a mile after the Ashfield town line, turn left/south on Bullit Road: first uphill, then downhill, then at the sharp corner, there will be the green TTOR sign will be straight ahead of you.

Volunteer Bird Surveyors Wanted

The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR) are planning to conduct grassland surveys on all their properties, for more information, contact Julie Richburg (jrichburg@ttor.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!

Athol Bird and Nature Center Programs/Field Walks

ABNC is located at 100 Main Street, Athol, MA.

Mt. Auburn Cemetery: *Leader TBA*

Saturday, May 7. 6 a.m. start from Athol, 7:30 a.m. at the cemetery.

Call Joan/Larry Duprey for details (978-249-4964)

Early Bird Birding (North Quabbin): *Jeff Johnstone*

Sunday, May 8. 7 a.m. start. Meet at ABNC. Call Jeff for details (978-249-9052.)

Accessible Birding with Joe: *Joe Superchi*

Tuesday, May 10, 8-10 a.m.

Open to birders of all abilities. Meet at ABNC. Call ahead for wheelchair van access, 978-248-9491.

Birding the Rio Grande: *Josh Rose*

Wednesday, May 11, 7 p.m. ABNC.

Northfield: *Bob Coyle and Mark Taylor*

Saturday, May 14, 6:30 a.m. from ABNC in Athol or 9 a.m. from the Country Club in Northfield. Call Bob for details (978-249-6083)

ABNC Programs/Walks (continued)

Early Bird Birding (North Quabbin): *Jeff Johnstone*

Sunday, May 15. 7 a.m. start. Meet at ABNC. Call Jeff for details (978-249-9052.)

Evenings with the Birds: *Larry Dupre*

Wednesday, May 18, 5:30 p.m. Meet at Alan E. Rich Environmental Park, Athol.

Info: Larry Duprey, 978-235-6581 or Larry_Duprey@hotmail.com.

Birding Lite (Beginners Encouraged): *Cindy and Chuck Hartwell*

Friday, May 20, 8 - 10 a.m. Meet at ABNC. Info: Cindy and Chuck Hartwell, or cindyhartwell56@gmail.com.

Spring Birds with the Springs: *Ann and Jeff Spring*

Saturday, May 21, 7:30 a.m. Bicentennial Park (455 Holtshire Rd., Orange).

Info: Jeff Spring, 978-544-2912.

Early Bird Birding (North Quabbin): *Jeff Johnstone*

Sunday, May 22. 7 a.m. start. Meet at ABNC. Call Jeff for details (978-249-9052.)

Early Bird Birding (North Quabbin): *Jeff Johnstone*

Sunday, May 29. 7 a.m. start. Meet at ABNC. Call Jeff for details (978-249-9052.)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ellen & Chris Pile

Amherst

Ann Barber

North Hatfield

James Mallet & Jennifer Southgate

Hadley

Peter Allison

Hatfield

Sallymeandering

“For a limited time only it is my privilege as representative of the HBC Board to inform you, the discriminating bird watcher, about an amazing once-in-a-lifetime back to school special offer. By acting NOW you can become a member of the Hampshire Bird Club for the unbelievably low price of \$9.00, \$15.00, \$30.00, \$50.00 or \$100, depending on the choice of membership category. But, don't delay! This offer will be valid only up to and including the firm deadline of October 1, 1992, after which the cost of membership will be \$9.00, \$15.00, \$30.00, etc., etc., etc. Although technically this may sound the same, if you join before the deadline you can measure your savings in terms of freedom from personal guilt, remorse and self-reproach that comes with procrastination and indecision. You will also be spared the horrible dunning “reminder letter I send to members who have not renewed.”

August 23, 1992.

That's it for now.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org