



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 30, No. 3

November, 2013.

Oh, g'day. Sorry. I was just perusing Tony Abbott's shopping list on the NSA website when I realized it was time to get another newsletter to the press. So here goes.

In this edition:

- The **program** for this month and the coming schedule,
- A **field trip report** and the slate for the remainder of the year,
- An exciting presentation from the **Education Committee**,
- A plug for the **Christmas Count**,
- **Hitchcock** and **Broad Brook Coalition** programs, and
- One or two other tidbits.

I hope you find some of it useful.

If the cover of this newsletter is orange, we need your membership renewal NOW, (please)!
Otherwise, read on.

NEXT PROGRAM

Monday, November 11 at 7:15 p.m.

John Van De Graaff presents **Birds Across Europe II**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

John brings us another round of photographs from his travels in Europe. If past programs are anything to go by, both the locations and the subjects will be eclectic and out-of-the-ordinary. There are likely to be landscapes here ranging from grand to bucolic, and images of birds ranging from awe-inspiring to quaint. One thing is for certain: John's photographs never disappoint.

John Van de Graaff began photographing birds seriously in 2001, and has travelled all over the world plying this craft in the years since. He has made frequent digital slide presentations to birding and photography groups, including the CCBC and other major bird clubs in Massachusetts. John's photography has appeared in galleries and other venues all over the valley for many years. We are indeed blessed that he is able to share his unique creations with us on a semi-regular basis. John is a member of Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists (PVPA) and has an easily-remembered website which showcases some of his work: www.birdsbyjohn.com. John posts one (and only one!) current photo per day, at www.blipfoto.com/vandegraaff.

COMING PROGRAMS

December 9, 2013. Members' Meeting.

January 13, 2014. Don Kroodsma. Bird by Bird by Bike 3.

February 10, 2014. Geoff LeBaron. Hummingbirds at Home.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Saturday, September 28. Migrants Along the River.

Eighteen people joined **Josh Rose**, starting out at the Fort River Division of the Silvio O. Conte NWR. The fields around the old stables were astonishingly birdy in the morning fog, with uncountable gobs of Savannah Sparrows and liberal scatterings of Swamp-, Field-, and White-throated Sparrows and Palm- and Yellow-rumped Warblers. We eventually tore ourselves away from the masses up there and walked down into the woods near the river, enjoying some of the new boardwalks and observation decks. On our way out we stopped to chat with the USF&WS staff and volunteers who were continuing construction of the rest. The birding was slower down there but we added several more species including Wood Duck, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Blue-headed Vireo. We also admired what we think were American Woodcock tracks in some muddy patches and the **Nodding Ladies'-tresses** (orchids) that I had found last week, which were still in bloom. Particularly entertaining was one large tree with three dead limbs sticking up from its crown, which had a different species of woodpecker on each: Northern Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

About half of the group walked up and back on Moody Bridge Road. We crossed paths with an **American Kestrel** in the big field on the hill, then encountered a group of warblers in the woods beyond including Pine, Blackpoll, and Black-and-White, plus another Sapsucker.

Our next stop, with the group only slightly smaller, was Aqua Vitae Road. We spotted our only Red-eyed Vireo of the day here but nothing else of note.

The last few remaining birders straggled over to the Hadley Honeypot. I had a close encounter with a **Vesper Sparrow** but, sadly, it disappeared before the rest of the group came around the corner. We then tracked down some very cooperative **American Pipits** and all had great looks. The last few birders disbanded at that point, though I picked up one more species for the day's list after they left: a **Fish Crow** that was calling from somewhere within a flock of 40+ American Crows. Regrettably, none were left to sample the flavors of Cook farm.

Josh Rose

COMING TRIPS

Saturday-Monday, November 9-11. Cape Cod. Overnight. Scott Sumner leads the club on a trip to Cape Cod for late migrants, waterfowl, seabirds, and more. This trip is limited to 12 participants, and you must be a Hampshire Bird Club member to go on this trip. Call Scott (413-256-5438) for details and cost. (M)

***Saturday, November 16. Dead Creek WMA and Lake Champlain Valley.** All day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) travels to the premier Snow Goose staging area in New England and looks for other seasonal specialties along the shore of Lake Champlain. Meet at Stop & Shop on King St. in Northampton at 5 a.m. for carpooling. (E)

The East Quabbin Trip in late November is full.

A Limerick, Dearie

A reclusive thrush is the Veery,
Of humanity clearly quite leery.
It denies being shy
Claiming "It's just that I
Have been migrating and I am weary."

Ed.

The **EDUCATION COMMITTEE** presents
North American Birds of Prey with
Julie Collier of WINGMASTERS
Sunday November 10, 2013 at 3p.m.
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Amherst, MA

WINGMASTERS is a partnership of two people dedicated to increasing public understanding and appreciation of North American birds of prey. Julie Anne Collier and Jim Parks are both licensed raptor rehabilitators based in Massachusetts. Together they care for injured birds of prey. Most of the birds they rehabilitate can ultimately be released back into the wild, but in some cases the birds are left permanently handicapped. Julie and Jim are further licensed to provide a home for these non-releasable raptors, and to use them for educational programs. Since 1994 WINGMASTERS has presented over 5000 programs at schools, libraries and museums throughout New England.

Further information: WINGMASTERS.net or education@hampshirebirdclub.org.

You are cordially invited to the
BROAD BROOK COALITION
2013 Annual Meeting

featuring

Dr. Robert Askins, Professor of Zoology and Director of the Goodwin-Niering Center for Conservation
Biology at Connecticut College.

speaking on

The Prospect for Birds in the Eastern Deciduous Forest
Sunday, November 17 at 5:00 p.m.

Florence Community Center, Florence, MA

Migratory forest birds are threatened by fragmentation of their breeding habitats in the north, destruction of their winter habitats in the tropics and a variety of other challenges. Understanding the history and ecology of deciduous forests is critical for sustaining their biological diversity, including the large array of birds that are restricted to forests. This talk is based on a book that Professor Askins is completing on the ecology and conservation of deciduous forests.

You may contact Bruce Hart: bhart2000-at-aol-dot-com, 584 4176

A short business meeting, refreshments, and a chance to socialize will follow the talk.

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

Morning Nature Walk for Seniors: *John Greene*

Wednesday, November 6, 9am-11am

Parenting and Climate Change Discussion: *Colleen Kelley, Ruthie Ireland, Casey Beebe*

Thursday, November 14, 6pm-8pm

Natural Heritage Walk: *Pete Westover*

Sunday, December 1, 1pm-3pm

Tracking Intensive: *Susan Morse*

(Spans October, 2013 - April 2014)

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.

CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Look forward for a moment to 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 15. The denizens of the Pioneer Valley will be engaged in a variety of pursuits, befitting our diverse little valley. Some of us will be hunkering down for hour five of the Sunday football marathon on TV, some may be fruitlessly cruising the furthest parking lot at the local mall in vain pursuit of a parking space, and some may be just now getting down to fitting the snow tires on the aging Camry.

Eschewing these more mainstream pursuits, there will be a bunch of folks straggling in to the Hitchcock Center in Amherst and slumping into chairs with bowls of steaming chili and mugs of hot cider. They will range in appearance from relatively clean and fresh to mud-spattered and exhausted, but they will all have two things in common.

- 1) They will all have been proud to be part of the largest citizen-science project in the world, and
- 2) They will be glad it is (almost) over.

Every December, participants in the Northampton count get together to count all the birds in a **BIG** circle around some point in Hadley. The count circle is divided up into smaller areas, each counted by an experienced leader or leaders, with assistants. Groups plan who will participate, for how long, and how to divide up the count area. The die-hards start at night counting owls, the more temperate spend part of the day driving/walking to count diurnal species, and there is even a feeder count to complete the picture. The event concludes with the pot-luck/compilation event at the Hitchcock Center when we tally up the numbers. Believe it or not, there is also a count in the Quabbin region for those who want better birds and cushy weather!

You can be part of one or both of these noble and enjoyable endeavors. Just contact the coordinators and they will put you in touch with a team that needs help.

Northampton Count: Sunday, December 15.

Jan Ortiz, 413 549 1768, jtortiz-at-aol-dot-com, OR

Janice Jorgensen, 413 585 0145, janicejorgensen-at-charter-dot-net

Quabbin Count: Saturday, December 28.

Scott Sumner (413 253 5999; ssumner-at-aol-dot-com)

Christmas Count Compilation Pot Luck

Fine Dining at the Hitchcock!

Just a "heads -up" as we are gathering names and a list of snacks, main dishes, salads and desserts to be consumed on December 15, 2013 at the Hitchcock Center, Amherst at 4:30 pm. before the Northampton count compilation begins. A time to warm up, count your birds of the day and enjoy fellowship as your tummy gets filled!

Please advise me as to what you would like to contribute. I will be asking again at both the November and December meetings -- need to ensure we have plenty to go around. Sue Emerson (413-588-6900) or spe33-at-charter-dot-net --- Sue and her wonderful elves.

That's it for now!

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

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newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org

Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.
Field Trip Guidelines for Field Trip Participants and Drivers: 2013-2014

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."

All Participants:

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 or check the "Join" section of the HBC Website.

Please call the trip leader at least a few days before the trip. It helps the leader plan the trip and you learn about any special ~~arrangements or any change of plans.~~

Please do not bring pets and 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.)

Be on time at the meeting place. If you need to meet the group at the birding location, please offer to be early so the group can start promptly upon arrival. If you plan to leave the trip early, you must inform the leader in advance.

Carpooling is essential to allow the group to park when space is limited, reduce delays, reduce the likelihood of auto accidents and to reduce the chances of the group becoming separated. Carpooling from the valley is best. Carpooling once the trip location is reached is the next best option.

The participants (not the leader) are responsible for making all carpool arrangements.

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.

Please share costs with courtesy. We recommend a cost of \$0.50 cents per mile plus tolls and parking to be shared equally among the driver and all passengers, but the rate for your vehicle is entirely up to the driver and passengers.

Please agree on a mileage rate or flat contribution BEFORE the trip leaves to avoid misunderstandings. Please bring cash or checks and be prepared to reimburse the driver at the time of the trip.

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.

While birding, please stay close to the group unless you have some specific reason to separate, and inform the leader if you are doing so. This reduces delays and distractions for the entire group.

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. Please note that HBC liability insurance does NOT cover individuals who drive or allow the use of their own vehicles on club trips.
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. Headlights on.
 - 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.
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.

American Birding Association's
PRINCIPLES OF BIRDING ETHICS

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

1(a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.

1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.

Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area;

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1(c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1(d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.

2(a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.

2(b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

2(c) Practise common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

3(a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.

3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a **Group Member**.

4(a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.

4(b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

4(c) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.

4(d) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and does not interfere with others using the same area.

4(e) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practises this code.

4(f) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g. no tape recorders allowed).

4(g) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

PLEASE FOLLOW THIS CODE AND DISTRIBUTE AND
TEACH IT TO OTHERS