



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 30, No. 10

June, 2014.

NEXT PROGRAM

We at Hampshire Bird Club have a pretty hefty series of programs most years. But even by our standards, this month's offering may be one of the most important conservation-related programs we have offered in years. We do hope you can join us.

Please note that Dr. Kress' program introduction, printed here, did not arrive in time for the printed newsletter deadline but you, the dedicated on-line viewer, have the benefit of his own words....

Monday, June 9 at 7:15 p.m.

Steve Kress presents

Restoring Endangered Seabirds: Lessons from Puffins and Terns

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Humans have devastated seabird colonies in many parts of the world by excessive hunting for food and feathers and by introducing mammals such as cats and rats to otherwise secure nesting islands.

Worldwide, 29% of all seabird species are now globally threatened as marine pollution, coastal development and effects of global warming are growing concerns. Although seabird nesting islands seem safe due to their remoteness, they are intimately connected to human activities. For example, Maine seabird nesting islands are affected by large populations of Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls that benefit from garbage and fisheries waste practices hundreds of miles from nesting islands. As scavenging large gulls increase, they deter smaller, migratory seabirds, such as puffins and terns from nesting on many of their historic nesting islands. And ironically, other wildlife restoration success stories such as the recovery of Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons now threaten rare Maine seabirds such as Great Cormorants and Roseate Terns.

Dr. Stephen Kress, Director of National Audubon Society's Seabird Restoration Program, will review how techniques developed on Maine islands have led to the restoration of puffins and terns to historic nesting islands in the Gulf of Maine. Dr. Kress will also discuss how techniques developed in Maine are helping seabirds worldwide. His lecture includes reviews of several case studies in seabird restoration including restoration of Common Murres in California to relocation of Short-tailed Albatross off of an active volcano in Japan and efforts to save the endangered Bermuda Petrel from rising oceans and increased frequency of hurricanes.

Stephen Kress is Vice-President for Bird Conservation for the National Audubon Society, Director of the Audubon Seabird Restoration Program and Director of the Hog Island Audubon Camp. His career has focused on developing techniques for managing colonial nesting seabirds. In this role, he manages 13 important seabird nesting islands in Maine that are home to more than 42,000 seabirds of 27 species. Each year his program trains about 20 interns and hundreds of professional seabird biologists can trace their first interest in seabirds to Stephen Kress's program. Methods first developed in Maine such as chick translocations and social attraction are now standard practice worldwide. Dr. Kress received his Ph.D. from Cornell University and his Master's and undergraduate degrees from Ohio State University.

G'day. Just back from a purely fortuitous encounter with a Brewer's Sparrow on Monhegan Island and realized I'd better get this here newsletter out. As the songbird migration wraps up and those birds who stopped here get down to the serious business of raising families, take a moment to check out the last newsletter of the year.

In this Edition

- our last **program** for the year,
- **trip reports** from rare and exotic locales,
- the **summer field trips**,
- the new **Board** (same as the old Board, only the beards are different...),
- **Hitchcock** summer programs, and
- A great **volunteer opportunity** right in our back yard.

I hope you find some of it useful.

Enjoy your summer, whatever it may include. Look for another edition of this thing in mid-August.

COMING PROGRAMS

As in so many things, good things come to those who wait.....

There are some tantalizing offerings on Geoff's program clipboard for next year, but the schedule is not yet final.

Look for details in the September edition of this rag, which will make its way to you some time in mid-August.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Sunday, May 4. Poet's Seat Tower and Highland Park, Greenfield.

It was cool and overcast as six of us gathered in the parking area of the grandiosely-named Rocky Mountain Park. Instead of hiking up a 14,000-foot peak, though, we set out on our journey up the 492-foot lump known also as Poet's Seat. In spite of its small size, however, the hill is known as a good place to see warblers. Conditions were almost perfect for seeing migrants, with most trees yet to fully leaf out. On the way up the road, we encountered a sprinkling of small migrants, including Blue-headed Vireo, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Ovenbird (great looks as it foraged on the ground), Black-and-White Warbler, Pine Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Black-throated Green Warbler. As we got to the top of the hill, the wind was blowing hard, which made ideal conditions for the three Red-tailed Hawks hanging motionless in the air just off the cliff face. A Common Raven attacked one of the hawks as we watched, and a Broad-winged Hawk sailed by on the breeze.

We then crossed the road to Highland Park. Because of the wind, we kept to the woods and looked (futilely) for thrushes. We did see several small groups of birds, which allowed us to add Red-eyed Vireo, Northern Parula, and Blackburnian Warbler to our tally. We also added two Bald Eagles and a Great Crested Flycatcher. It had started to sprinkle occasionally, so we decided to turn back to our cars and go our separate ways. Overall tally: at Poet's Seat, 21 species; at Highland Park, 18 species.

Mike Locher



Saturday, May 17. Bartholomew's Cobble, Sheffield, MA.

As the night's showers gave way to a brilliant blue morning, three of us headed out to the southwest corner of the state. Famous for its Black Vultures, wildflowers, and ferns, the cobble is a gem in the holdings of the Trustees of Reservations.

continues ►

Bart's Cobble (continued)

En route, we got our first Common Raven scavenging food at a rest stop on the Turnpike. Our first birding stop was at a muddy field near our destination, where we saw a few shorebirds (Killdeer, Solitary Sandpiper, Wilson's Snipe), a few swallows (Rough-winged-, Tree-, and Barn-), and had two Black Vultures soar low right over us, clearly showing us their silvery primaries.

We headed next for the Cobble, where the birds seemed scarce. We detected a fair number of species there (58), but often just one or two of any given species, and the birds were often singing out of sight in the leafy canopy. Among the highlights were six more Black Vultures, at least eight Bobolinks displaying in the field across from the Visitor's Center, a colony of Bank Swallows along the Housatonic River, a Mallard mother with ducklings in tow, a Ruffed Grouse drumming followed immediately by a Barred Owl hooting (we saw neither), two American Redstarts tending a nest, Baltimore Orioles collecting beakfuls of dandelion fluff, and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Perhaps not as many species, nor such clear views as we might have wished for, but the views around the cobble helped make up for the shyness of the birds. Columbine and Mitre's Cap were blooming in profusion, and the variety of ferns was, as ever, astonishing.

Mike Locher

Saturday, May 24. The Hilltown Ramble. Cummington, Worthington and Hawley, MA.

Bob Zimmermann and Dave Gross scared up 69 species. The highlight of the trip was a nearly hour-long viewing of two **Sandhill Cranes** in the field at the intersection of Radiker Road and Old Post Road in Worthington. The birds called to each other, danced, displayed head bowing, and did coordinated grooming using grass blades pulled from the marshy field. It was a sight to behold.

Other lovely sightings and hearings included a set of trees dripping with Least Flycatchers at the Cummington Marsh, at least five singing **Alder Flycatchers** in the marsh along Spruce Corner Road in Ashfield, which seemed like a motel with adjacent rooms for Alders every few hundred yards, and six **Painted Trillium** in bloom just south of the Cummington fairground.

Dave Gross & Bob Zimmermann

COMING TRIPS**Saturday, June 7. Westover Air Force Base.****REGISTRATION CLOSED**

Half day. Bob Bieda and Mike Locher host the HBC's annual trip to New England's premier grassland habitat, looking for Upland Sandpipers, Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks.

***Saturday June 14. Wentworth Farm.** Half day. Josh Rose leads an easy walk looking for breeding Orchard Orioles, Brown Thrashers, Bobolinks, Green Herons, and whatever else we can find. If the weather is suitable we will also probably look at butterflies and dragonflies. Possible extensions for lunch and/or Amherst College Wildlife Sanctuary. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the head of the Harvey Allen Trail, next to the ball fields and park (near 137 Stanley St., Amherst). Questions to Josh (413-835-0093 or opihi-at-mindspring-dot-com). (E)

Tuesday, June 17 – Wednesday, June 18**Mount Mansfield, Vermont. Bicknell's Thrushes in Vermont.****REGISTRATION CLOSED**

Mike Locher and representatives from the Vermont Center for Ecostudies will look for Bicknell's Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler, Sandhill Crane and Black-billed Cuckoo, amongst other species in a trip which combines traditional birding with a visit to the VCE banding operation on the mountain. continues ►

Coming Trips (continued)

Wednesday, July 2. Bobolinks and Baltimore Checkerspots at Bullitt Reservation. Tom Gagnon leads the Massachusetts Butterfly Club and the Hampshire Bird Club to look for birds and butterflies at a 265 acre old New England farm now managed by The Trustees of Reservations. The farmhouse is now open to the public as a showcase for energy-efficient technologies that work for New England homeowners. This property is a crucial link to almost 3,000 acres of protected lands. We will explore some of the many fields and trails. There should be plenty of Bobolinks and gorgeous Baltimore Checkerspots. Rest rooms available. Contact Tom at (413) 584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com for more information or to register for the trip. (M)

From points South

- 1) From I-91, Exit 24, take Route 5 North.
- 2) After 1.1 miles, turn left onto Route 116 West.
- 3) Drive West on 116 approx. 10 miles through Conway and into Ashfield.
- 4) Turn left onto Bullitt Road. Proceed approx. 1 mile to driveway and white buildings on right where road turns sharply left. Note: Do not try to take the impassable North Poland Road to Bullitt Road.

From Points North

- 1) I-91 South to Exit 25.
- 2) Turn West on Rt 116, then follow steps 2-4 above.

Thursday, August 7-Monday, August 11. Crown of Maine. Overnight trip. Geoff LeBaron leads his bi-annual trip to the mixed boreal and agricultural habitats of far northern Maine. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Geoff (413-269-9281) for information, and contact Mike Locher (fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) to register and get cost information. (M)

Saturday, August 9. Hummingbird Banding. Half day. Bill Benner and Joe Wiscinski (413-320-4422) host a morning of hummingbird banding at their house. Usually, about 50 hummingbirds are mist-netted and banded. Meet at Bill and Joe's house (55 Webber Road, Whately) at 6 a.m. Parking is limited, so carpooling is appreciated. Raindate: Sunday, August 10. (E)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Here is the current Board of Directors, elected at the Annual General Meeting on May 12.

President: Scott Sumner

Vice-President/Program Chair: Geoff LeBaron

Treasurer: Stephen Baker

Membership Secretary: Sue Emerson

Communications Secretary: Sharon Dombeck

Board Members at large:

Bruce Hart
Mike Locher
Jan Ortiz
David Peake-Jones
Josh Rose
Jaap van Heerden

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Birds and Butterflies in Amherst

Thanks to funding from Fulbright, Canada, funds are available to make a new conservation area in Amherst a destination for birders, school groups and others interested in nature.

Visiting Fulbright scholar Carol Gray is coordinating efforts to install an interpretive trail, butterfly plantings and bluebird boxes in a new five-acre conservation area located along South East Street, Amherst, opposite Mill Lane.

Carol is looking for help this summer in the following areas:

- Bird expertise,
- Plantings for butterflies, and
- Expertise and help to create the interpretive trail.

If you can contribute a few hours this summer, Carol would love to hear from you. Please contact her at: carolgray_2000-at-yahoo-dot-com or call 413 297 1075

LIBRARY

If you need some light reading to while away the long summer days, HBC has a substantial library at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst. **Hours** are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday through Friday. Items can be signed out and borrowed for a period of up to one month, or longer by arrangement. **Henry Lappen** is happy to bring items to meetings, given a few days notice! Call him at **(413) 549 3722**.

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

New England National Scenic Trail Hike: *Ted Watt*

Saturday, June 7, 9:30am-12noon. Waitlist Only.

Native Wildflowers of the Valley: *Nancy Goodman*

Saturday, June 14 – Poet Seat – Greenfield – 10am-2pm

Nature for Wellness: *Cassie Kollman*

Sunday, June 29, 1-3pm

Growing Our Own: Families Working Together for a More Sustainable Life: *Rebecca Reid, Michael*

Dover, Bethany & Seth Seeger, Jess Rocheleau, Jason Rennie

Saturday, July 12, 1-3pm

Open Farm at Bug Hill: *Kate Kerivan*

Sunday, July 20, 11am-1pm (Rain date: Sunday, July 27)

Tour of Food For All Garden

Sunday, July 27, 1-2:30pm

F4A Garden UMass Agricultural Learning Center; 911 North Pleasant St., Amherst

Panel & Potluck: Perspectives on Food Security in Pioneer Valley Food Systems

Wednesday, July 30, panel 5:30-7pm, potluck @ 7pm

Workshop: Local Food & Resilience: Preserving the Bounty

Monday, August 18, 5-7pm. At Not Bread Alone Soup Kitchen, 165 Main St, Amherst

What Makes a Seed Tick? Biology and Adaptations of Seeds: *Elizabeth Farnsworth*
 Thursday, August 21, 6:30pm-8:30pm

Native Wildflowers of the Valley: *Nancy Goodman*
 Saturday, August 23 – Hitchcock center – Amherst – 10am-2pm

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.

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!

The next BOARD Meeting is on Thursday, June 5, 7:00 p.m. at Hitchcock Center.

That's it for this month, and until mid-August
 Until next month, talk softly and carry a big scope!

David Peake-Jones, Editor
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