



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 31, No. 1

September, 2014.

Oh, g'day! The Common Nighthawks streaming over my back yard yesterday evening reminded me that we are poised on the edge of the 2014-2015 HBC membership year.

And we'd like to start off with a BANG!

The HBC Website was first launched in 2001, and, since then, has been through a number of iterations. With the need for a powerful and more functional Website gnawing at us, this spring the Board found a local Web developer to help us, and began working in earnest to build a brand new Website from the ground up. This new Website is due to launch in September. We hope it will usher in a whole new era in communication for the club: allowing us to attract more new members and make participation in our activities more convenient than ever before.

We'd like to express our deepest gratitude to **Merry Cushing** and **David Gross**, Webmasters since 2001, whose hours and hours of patient toil have given us an on-line presence up to now.

Please take a moment to visit www.hampshirebirdclub.org in the next few days, and say a word of farewell to our existing Website, then watch your inbox for details about the new launch!

We think you will be pleased.

AHEM! A WORD ABOUT MEMBERSHIP.

Well, more than just one actually.

OK, so we have a snazzy new Website, a wonderful (if still developing) line-up of programs for the coming year and a beaut new fall Field Trip Schedule. Lots for you, dear member, to look forward to. But there is, as you well know, a price to pay for all these wonderful bird club offerings, and WE ALL have to pay it!

I refer, my friends, to our **annual membership dues**, unchanged since last year, but no less in need of paying THIS year than they were LAST year. The sooner this financial nonsense is taken care of, the sooner we can all get down to birding, and the sooner I can stop using 70's adjectives.

Please Join or Renew Your Membership **NOW**

- Complete the **Membership Form** (including your membership contribution for this year) and its reverse side (the **Field Trip Release Form**),
- Throw in a donation for the work of the **Education Committee** if you wish,
- Fill out the **HBC Member Skills Survey**, and
- Mail** the above forms (with your check if needed) to the address on the Membership Form, or bring them along on September 8.

Please renew before October 1 by mail, or at the September meeting. Thanks

NEXT PROGRAM

Monday, September 8 at 7:15 p.m.

Sam Fried presents **Birding Brazil: The Pantanal and Iguassu Falls**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Take a journey with Sam Fried, deep into the largest freshwater marsh system in the world, enjoying all the wildlife this huge wetland has to offer, including a staggering variety of birds, caimans, capybaras and the jaguars that stalk them! Then travel further south to the border with Argentina to witness one of the great wonders of the world - Iguassu Falls. The broad Rio Cuiaba plunges mightily over an escarpment on both sides of the border, creating a towering waterfall system that is among the largest on earth, at over two miles long and with over 250 separate cataracts!

Sam Fried has had over 1000 photographs and 56 feature articles published in field guides, books, newspapers and magazines worldwide, including *National Audubon*, *National Geographic*, *Birder's World*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *Birding and Living Bird Quarterly*. He wrote several chapters of the Insight Guides book on birding in North America, published by The Discovery Channel. Sam is the founder of Flights of Fancy Adventures, LLC, a birding, photography and natural history travel company offering small group, low cost, high quality trips throughout the Americas and now to Africa. He is also a past president of Hartford Audubon Society.

COMING PROGRAMS

Here is the provisional schedule for this year.

October 20, 2014. Bill Burt. Rare & Elusive Birds of North America.

November 10, 2014. Ian Davies. Arctic Shorebird Research.

December 8, 2014. HBC Members Meeting.

January 12, 2015. Don Kroodsma. Birdsong: The Hour Before Dawn.

February 9, 2015. Scott Surner. The Big Chicken Run.

March 9, 2015. TBA

April 13, 2015. John Van de Graaff. Fabulous birds!

May 11, 2015. Jonah Keane. New Visions for Arcadia Sanctuary.

June 8, 2015. Mario Cohn-Haft. What's so Special about Amazonian Birds?

ONLINE NEWSLETTER: FAQ

The membership form asks you to select either “on-line” access to the newsletter this year, or the tried-and-true “hard copy” delivered to you via the United States Postal Service.

“Why choose “on-line?”

You can archive our publication digitally, without accumulating paper files, or print at home if you like. You reduce postage and printing costs for HBC, which keeps dues down for all of us.

“How does on-line access work?”

The newsletter is posted on the HBC website. Participants receive an email notification, whereupon they can view and/or download the newsletter from the website at their leisure. You need to give us an email address on the membership form in order to get the on-line version.

“What if I encounter technical difficulties?”

The system is pretty easy to use if you have email access, are accustomed to downloading content from the Internet. In the event that you find the system does not work for you, a simple communication with the Membership Secretary will get you back on the “Hard Copy” mailing list.

“What are the software requirements?”

The newsletter will be posted on the Website in PDF format. This means you will need to have .pdf-reading software on your system. If you do not have it already, Adobe Acrobat is available FREE via a link at the club Website.

“How do I sign up?”

Sign up in the upper right hand corner of the Membership Form.

“I signed up last year. Do I need to sign up again?”

Yes, please! We ask all members to decide each year how they want to receive the newsletter. Regardless of how you got the newsletter last year, please make your choice of how to receive the newsletter this year on this year’s membership form! Thank you!

No Pun Intended

You can follow Hampshire Bird Club now on Twitter @HampshireBird

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Due to limited space, the **Crown of Maine** trip report will be published in a later issue.

COMING FIELD TRIPS

Please see the **2014 Fall Field Trip Schedule**.

LIBRARY

The **HBC Library** is located at the **Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst**.

Hours are those of the Hitchcock Center:

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. from Tuesday through Friday, and

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

The collection is catalogued on-line at www.hampshirebirdclub.org.

The library contains birding resources in various media, including field guides, bird-finding guides to almost every major birding destination in the U.S., and overseas, natural histories, periodicals and videos. Items can be signed out and borrowed for a period of up to one month, or longer by arrangement. Our librarian, **Henry Lappen**, is happy to bring items to meetings, if you give him a few days in advance. You can reach him at library@hampshirebirdclub.org or (413) 549 3722.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Sparrow Identification Workshop

Scott Sumner

Sparrows often end up in the “too-hard” basket for many birders. If you have to pretend someone else saw them first, or claim the binoculars fogged up at the critical moment, or if you just avoid weedy fields in October on principle, this is the workshop for you.

There are two (2) sessions:

Thursday, October 2. 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Classroom session (slides and discussion) at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst.

AND

Sunday, October 5. 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Field session in the Hadley area, meeting at Hitchcock.

The **cost** for one or both sessions is \$15 per person.

Participation is **limited to 15 people**.

Registration and prepayment are required to reserve a space.

Register first with Scott Sumner at ssurner@aol.com, or (413) 427 8896, then

Pay by mailing your check for \$15 (“Hampshire Bird Club Inc.” to:

HBC Treasurer

Hampshire Bird Club Inc.

P.O. Box 716

Amherst, MA 01004-0716.

Aidans’s Thank-You.

The HBC Education Committee, funded with donations from members like YOU, supported club member Aidan Griffiths to attend an ABA camp for young birders in Colorado this summer. He writes:

“My trip to Colorado was amazing. Through camp, I met other gifted young birders whom I now call friends. This trip may well have given me opportunities that I will use for my career! I thank the education committee and all of the Hampshire Bird Club members who contributed to my bird-a-thon and gave support and inspiration! Among the highlights of the trip were White-tailed Ptarmigan, American Dipper, Northern Goshawk, and Golden Eagle, all of which were life birds. Hope I can give a presentation on my experience to all of you! Good birding, and I’ll see you all at the next meeting!

Sincerely,

Aidan Griffiths”

That’s all for this month. The current Membership/Release/RBA form is attached, along with the Fall Field Trip Schedule and the Member Skills Survey..

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org

FIELD TRIP RELEASE FORM.

Required if you will participate in field trips.

We need members to share responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others during field trips. The signed release will be filed with the club secretary. For family memberships, all participating members should sign.

Release Of All Demands - Hold Harmless

I hereby acknowledge that as a participant in field trips with the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. (HBC) I may be exposed to significant risks. These may include, but are not limited to, vehicular travel over land and water, foot travel over difficult terrain, and hazardous weather conditions. I may also encounter poisonous plants, dangerous wildlife, and/or disease-carrying insects. In the event of injury, I understand that I may face considerable delays in reaching professional medical help.

I/we fully accept these risks and agree to hold the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc., its officers, directors, volunteers, employees, and agents free from any and all liability for injuries and/or loss which I/we may incur, directly or indirectly, while on field trips run by HBC within one (1) year of the date below.

EXECUTED freely and voluntarily this day:.....,,,
(month) (day) (year)

All participating family members, please sign and print name:

- 1)..... print name▶
- 2)..... print name▶
- 3)..... print name▶

RARE BIRD ALERT FORM: Optional

The Rare Bird Alert is an email-only alert system that informs you when and where rare birds are sighted in the valley, or, in some cases, the broader region. To join, you will need to provide us with at least one (1) active email address.

To join via this form

Complete the form and return it with your membership form or turn it in at the Sept./Oct. meetings.

To join online:

Provide name/s and email address/es to membership@hampshirebirdclub.org

You may provide as many email addresses as you like (within reason, please). Participants automatically receive all RBA announcements. Please email membership@hampshirebirdclub.org if your email changes.

I would like to receive RBA alerts . email address/es (1) _____
(2) _____

Return with membership form to HBC, P.O. Box 716, Amherst, MA 01004-0716 or turn in at the September/October meetings.

Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Fall Field Trip Schedule, 2014

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 – mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org) 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 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, and look for updates on our new website (to be launched early this fall).*

SEPTEMBER

***Sunday, September 14. Look Park.** Half day. Betsy Higgins offers a fall version of her usual spring walk as she seeks southbound migrants in Look Park. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) for details. Meet at 7 a.m. at the John F. Kennedy Middle School (100 Bridge Road; Florence, MA). (E)

***Sunday, September 21. Hawkwatching at the Mountain House.** Half day. Join Mike Locher on top of Mount Holyoke for what he hopes is a glorious fall day with a wind blowing south. Either meet at 7 a.m. at the main parking area on Route 47 to hike up and look for woodland migrants, or take the easy option and drive to the top after 8:30 to meet us on the deck to look for migrating raptors. Contact Mike (413-585-5864 or mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org) for details. (M/E)

Sunday, September 28. Quabbin Reservoir: Fall Migrants. All day. Tom Gagnon and Craig Allen head into the Quabbin wilderness to find southbound birds (and residents), late season flowers, butterflies, and mammals. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members. Participation is limited to 12 people in 3 cars, so carpooling is a necessity. Contact Tom (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com) well in advance to register, and to get meeting information. (M)

OCTOBER

***Thursday, October 2 and Sunday, October 5. Sparrows!** Thursday evening and Sunday half day. Scott Sumner leads a workshop on sparrow identification to benefit the Hitchcock Center and the HBC's Education Committee. Meet on Thursday evening (6:30-8 p.m. at the Hitchcock Center) for instruction, then test your skill during a field trip on Sunday (meet at the Hitchcock Center at 7 a.m.). There is a fee for this event, and it is limited to 15 participants. Contact Scott at ssurner@hampshirebirdclub.org for information and to register. (E)

***Saturday, October 4. Knightville Dam.** Half day. Betsy Higgins and Marcia Merithew explore Knightville Dam for late migrants and local residents. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) for details. Meet at 7 a.m. at the John F. Kennedy Middle School (100 Bridge Road; Florence, MA). (E)

***Wednesday, October 15. Fort River Division of the Silvio O. Conte NWR.** Morning. Harvey Allen, Janice Jorgensen, and George Regmund lead birders through the former Bri-Mar Stables property to find late fall migrants (especially sparrows). Meet at 7 a.m. at the Stables parking area (69 Moody Bridge Road in Hadley). This trip is co-sponsored by the HBC and the Friends of Fort River Refuge. Call Janice (413-585-0145) for details. (E)

October (continued)

***Saturday, October 25. Halloween Extravaganza: Satan's Kingdom, Hell's Kitchen, and more.** All day. Joshua Rose birds Massachusetts' northern stretches of the Connecticut River Valley from Northfield to Turner's Falls in his annual Halloween trip. Call Josh (413-835-0093) for details and meeting information. (E)

NOVEMBER

Saturday, November 1. Leader's Choice. All day. Join Geoff LeBaron on this all-day trip. A decision about the destination will be made about a week before the trip. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) to get information about destination(s), to register, and get meeting information as the date approaches. (M)

***Sunday, November 2. Donut Run to the Berkshire Lakes (or, Donuts and Ducks).** All day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com) goes into the hills to find the best cider donuts in Berkshire County and also visits the lakes and ponds of western Massachusetts to look for migrating waterfowl and anything else he can find. Meet at Stop & Shop in Northampton (228 King Street) at 6:15 a.m. Dress warmly and bring lunch and water. (M)

Saturday, November 15. East Quabbin. All day. Craig and Harvey Allen lead our annual trip to the east side of the reservoir to look for waterfowl and winter finches. You must be a Hampshire Bird Club member to go on this trip. Contact Mike Locher (413-585-5864 or mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org) *well in advance* to register, because participation is limited, and to get meeting information. (Sorry, no donuts on this trip.) (M)

***Sunday, November 16. Dead Creek WMA and Lake Champlain Valley.** All day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864 or mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org) continues his quest to find the elusive Ross' Goose among the hundreds of Snow Geese at the premier staging area in New England. After the geese, he'll look for other seasonal specialties along the shores of Lake Champlain. Meet at Stop & Shop in Northampton (228 King Street) at 5:30 a.m. for carpooling. (E)

HBC Member Skills Survey

You just might be one of those people with a set of specific technical abilities we need to help HBC thrive. If so, we would love to be able to ask for your help on an occasional basis or even as a board member at some time in the future. With this in mind, we ask that you complete the survey below. In doing so, you are not making a commitment of any kind. The information simply allows us to reach out to you in the future if and when the need arises.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone _____

Email _____

I have the following skills and could consider volunteering for HBC in the future:

- Working with audio-visual technologies such as digital slide projectors, Power-point presentations, PA sound systems, microphones, computer interfaces etc. (Set-up chair)
- Financial management/accounting/small business management (Treasurer).
- Financial auditing (small non-profit).
- Website development and maintenance (Webmaster).
- Legal and/or insurance consulting (especially with regard to the needs of small non-profits).
- Spreadsheet data entry and maintenance (e.g. Excel) (Membership Secretary).
- Ornithology/birding networking (extensive range of contacts amongst potential speakers) (Program Chair).
- Environmental education/presentations (Education Committee).
- Newsletter editing and distribution (Newsletter).

Other skills and/or
comments? _____

Please return this to HBC with your membership form: either in person at the September/October meetings, or by mail to:

Hampshire Bird Club, P.O. Box 716, Amherst, MA 01004-0716