



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.
Amherst, Massachusetts
www.hampshirebirdclub.org
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April, 2016.

Please note that the **date** of the **May program** has **changed** since it was initially published. Andrea Jones will be joining us to talk about bird conservation in California on **Monday, May 16** (third Monday in May), instead of on the ninth. We apologize for any inconvenience.

NEXT PROGRAM

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

Gary Langham looks into **Audubon's Climate Modeling Project**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Everyone reading this knows, by now, that climate change is going to affect every bird species on the continent to some extent. But understanding the details and how to be a bird-lover during a time of such daunting change is confusing and even demoralizing. Do not despair!

The National Audubon Society, with its access to vast amounts of citizen science, is at the forefront of attempts to pin down these effects and translate general concerns into specific research and conservation priorities. Audubon's latest study encompasses 588 species of North American birds. For each of these, researchers have first attempted to nail down the relationship between climate and the distribution of the bird. From this starting point, the study makes startling conclusions about:

- The impact of projected climate change on overall bird diversity in North America,
- The locations of "stronghold" sites: areas which will remain habitable for key species and bird communities through 2080, and
- The impact of projected climate change on individual priority species.

If we are serious about our love for birds, we must at least attempt to understand this, one of the most daunting challenges faced by all bird species in our time. Gary Langham is as well placed as anyone to help us do that.

Gary Langham, Ph.D., is the Vice-President and Chief Scientist for the National Audubon Society.

Gary directs Audubon's wide-reaching scientific initiatives and studies, including innovative climate modeling, extensive avian research and high-priority bird conservation. His work connects Audubon's extensive network of supporters by creating free digital citizen science avenues, authoring local and state-specific reports and producing cutting edge climate science to be leveraged by Audubon's policy advocates. Langham's background in local conservation drives his commitment to grassroots-level conservation science.

Before joining the National Audubon Society, Langham served as the lead scientist for Audubon California for almost five years. In that role he supervised many state programs, including Important Bird Areas, Migratory Bird Conservation Program, Seabird Conservation, Landowner Stewardship Program, Kern River Preserve, Starr Ranch Sanctuary and Audubon Bobcat Ranch. Previously he taught Ornithology at UC Berkeley, completed postdoctoral research through an NSF grant at Berkeley, and founded the Neotropical Grassland Conservancy. He received his Ph.D. from Cornell University.

COMING PROGRAMS

Please note that the **date** of the **May program** has **changed** since it was initially published. Andrea Jones will be joining us to talk about bird conservation in California on **Monday, May 16** (third Monday in May), instead of on the ninth. We apologize for any inconvenience.

May 16, 2016. Andrea Jones. A Perspective on Bird Conservation in California.

June 13, 2016. Mike Braun. The Red Siskin Project.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Connecticut River Valley (Leader's Choice). Saturday, February 27

Josh Rose led this joint venture with the Athol Bird and Nature Club. The group started out in Hadley and worked its way as far north as Greenfield during the course of the day. Highlights included:

- a **Pine Siskin** at Pete Yeskie's feeders in far western Hadley,
- two Horned Larks flying over Aqua Vitae Road,
- several early migrants including Common Grackles along Aqua Vitae Road, a Red-winged Blackbird at the USF&WS offices in Hadley, a Northern Flicker at That's A Plenty Farm, and a Turkey Vulture over the Meadow St Fields in north Amherst,
- the continuing Snow Goose at the UMass campus pond,
- a **Peregrine Falcon** perched on the UMass library,
- a stonking drake **Barrow's Goldeneye** at the Turners Falls Rod & Gun Club (found by Scott Sumner about 2 hours earlier) with a drake Bufflehead and several Common Goldeneye and Common Mergansers,
- at least 6 Bald Eagles, scattered widely up and down the valley,
- a Sharp-shinned Hawk streaking through the residential neighborhood near Riverview Drive, and
- four drake Ring-necked Ducks near Riverview Drive on the Gill side of Barton Cove.

Josh Rose



Connecticut River Waterfowl. Sunday, March 20.

Josh Rose led a joint Hampshire Bird Club/Athol Bird & Nature Club trip with an emphasis on finding migratory waterfowl.

We started on Aqua Vitae Road, which had very little in the waterfowl department beyond a few Common Mergansers on the adjacent river, but we enjoyed seeing an adult Sharp-shinned Hawk streak across the road knee-high just in front of our car, and not far away a swarm of sparrows which was mostly Song- but included some Tree- and Savannah-.

Our next stop was the Norwottuck Rail Trail. We were totally oblivious to the rail report from there, hearing about it only just before we left the location. The wetlands along Hop Brook harbored a half-dozen **Green-winged Teal** and a drake Wood Duck among several other waterfowl. Early-returning migrants included a pair of **Tree Swallows**, 3 **Eastern Phoebes**, and 2 high-flying **Belted Kingfishers**. We had a nice close encounter with a **Brown Creeper** here as well. A striking adult Cooper's Hawk was perched in a tree along Station Road nearby.

Volunteers Needed: 2016 Valley Bird Festival (see page 4)

Please contact Jim Lafley, 413-323-5892 home; 413-221-1941 cell; jimlafley-at-gmail-dot-com if you can help and/or if you need more information.

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Connecticut River Waterfowl. (continued)

We could not add any new waterfowl at UMass Campus Pond, but the resident Peregrine Falcon pair put on a great show, flying around the top of the library, vocalizing, going in and out of the nest box, and generally making a high-altitude public spectacle of themselves. An American Kestrel was perched on a road sign right at the side of Route 47 in Sunderland. Tri-town Beach harbored at least 24 Common Mergansers.

A drake Bufflehead was the highlight at the Rod & Gun Club in Turners Falls. From the boat ramp in Gill we saw about 20 Cedar Waxwings in the trees, and at least 5 Bald Eagles and 30-plus Tree Swallows over Barton Cove. This was also the only place we recorded a Carolina Wren all day. We left that area and headed east into Wendell State Forest to check the neighborhood Great Blue Heron rookery. One heron was present here, along with 4 Hooded Mergansers, 4 Black Ducks, and at least 14 Wood Ducks. We also heard a Barred Owl hooting in the distant woods.

Acting on local intelligence, we visited the Branch Bridge Road crossing on Lake Rohunta in New Salem. We tallied 173 Ring-necked Ducks, exceeding the original report. The hike from Gate 33 to Bassett pond yielded 2 Red-breasted Nuthatches, 2 Brown Creepers and some more ducks. Several Common Goldeneye and some previously-seen waterfowl graced Harvard Pond toward the close of the day.

Josh Rose

COMING TRIPS

***Saturday, April 9. Ashley Reservoir: Early Warblers.** Half day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) looks for early migrants like Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Northern Waterthrushes. Meet in the Holyoke Elks parking lot (250 Whitney Ave.), near Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7 a.m. (E/M with one optional S section)

***Sunday, April 10. Look Park.** Half day. Betsy Higgins (413-586-7585) reprises her annual spring trip to Look Park to find warblers and other early migrants, including Louisiana Waterthrushes. Meet at the JFK Middle School parking lot (100 Bridge Road, Florence) at 7 a.m. (E/M)

***Wednesday, April 13. Fort River Refuge: Early Spring Migrants.** Morning. George Regmund and others lead birders in looking for early migrants at the Fort River Refuge. Contact George (413-255-0628) for information. Meet at the main refuge parking area (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley) at 8 a.m. (E/M)

***Saturday, April 23. Fort River Refuge: Spring Migrants.** Morning. George Regmund and others seek out warblers, vireos, and other neotropical migrants at the Fort River Refuge. Contact George (413-255-0628) for information. Meet at the main refuge parking area (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley) at 8 a.m. (E/M)

***Sunday, April 24. Mitch's Way: Spring.** Morning. Mike Locher continues with the second of his seasonal series to Mitch's Way, this time looking for warblers, vireos, flycatchers, all the local woodpeckers, and other spring migrants. Contact Mike (413-585-5864 or mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org) for more information. Meet at Mitch's Marina parking area, near the gate, at 7:00 a.m. (E/M)

Saturday, April 30. Quabbin Gate 5 and Lake Wallace. Full day. Aidan and Devin Griffiths visit two Belchertown hotspots, looking for spring migrants and anything else they can find. Meet at Gate 5 at 6:30 a.m. Contact Devin (413-323-8417) for more information. (M/S)

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Coming Trips (continued)

Sunday, May 8. Belchertown Ramble: Herman Covey WMA, Reed Conservation Area, Scarborough Brook. Full day. Aidan and Devin explore Herrnan Covey WMA and introduce the uninitiated to several other Belchertown birding spots. Be prepared for migrants galore, and Blue Jays with unusual talents as ventiloquists. Contact Devin (413-323-8417) to get meeting details and for more information. (M/S)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The 2016-2017 Board will take up their exalted positions officially on June 14, 2016.

There are two (2) positions that will fall vacant before that date and the Nominating Committee is charged with finding qualified and willing candidates for those positions.

If you are eager to serve on the Board, please contact any member of the committee.

Here are their contact details:

Bill Benner: billb55-at-aol-dot-com

Bruce Hart: brucehart-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org

Ann Lombard: aslombard-at-comcast-dot-net

David Peake-Jones (Chair): newsletter-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org

Valley Bird Festival Help Wanted, Urgent

We need volunteers for the 2nd annual Valley Bird Festival on May 7. See the enclosed flyers for details.

We urgently need folks to help with:

- **parking,**
- **the HBC information tent,**
- **assisting families with bird crafts,**
- **explaining and directing participants to the Wood Thrush story walk.**

Please contact Jim Lafley, 413-323-5892 home; 413-221-1941 cell; jimlafley-at-gmail-dot-com if you can help and/or if you need more information.

Kestrel Trust Help Wanted American Kestrel Nest Box Monitoring

Enhance your spring birding by giving a few hours in support of the American Kestrel! Volunteer Nest Box Monitors spend one hour per week observing bird activity at assigned box(es) to determine which are being used by breeding pairs. Monitoring begins now and can run into May or June, depending on what you see! Your data will contribute to an ongoing project that has welcomed more than 30 kestrels into the world and contributes to a statewide study of this species.

You can read details of what is required at:

http://kestreltrust.org/PDF/436/Kestrel_Nest_Box_Monitor.pdf.

For more information, contact Kestrel Land Trust: chris@kestreltrust.org or call 413-549-1097

Did we mention that the **May program** will be on the **THIRD Monday** of the month? Andrea Jones will be joining us to talk about bird conservation in California on **Monday, May 16**, instead of on the ninth. We apologize for any inconvenience.

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

Exploring Larch Hill – All Welcome Monthly Sunday Nature Walk

April 24: 1-3 p.m. Pete Westover

May 22: 1-3 p.m. John Green

Morning Nature Walk for Seniors: John Green

At Silvio Conte NWR: Fort River Division: 69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley

Thursday, April 14, 9-11 a.m. Free. Registration required.

Spring Fling – Mitch’s Way, Hadley: Nancy Goodman

Saturday, April 30, 12-3 p.m. Fee. Registration Required.

Beginning Birding for Youth and Families: Dan Ziomek

For young people ages 8-13

Saturdays, April 9, 16, 23, 30 and May 7, 14

7:30a.m.-10 a.m. Fee. Registration Required.

Birding By Ear: Rattlesnake Gutter: John Green

Saturday, April 23, 7 a.m.-10 a.m. Fee. Registration Required

Opening to the World of Birds: Pete McLean

Saturdays, May 7, 14, 21 & 28, 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Book & Plow Farm – 425 South East St., Amherst. Fee. Registration Required.

Low Maintenance Design with Native Plants: Owen Wormser

Saturday, April 30, 1-4 p.m. at Nasami Farm Nursery, Whately. Fee. Registration Required.

Understanding Residential Solar Options: Sally Pick

Thursday, May 5, 7 p.m. Free. Registration Required.

Hitchcock’s new “living” building site tour

Fridays, April 1, May 6, June 3. 12:30p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Meet at Red Barn Parking Lot, Hampshire College .

Net Zero Water and the Living Building Challenge: Chris Chamberland

Thursday, April 14, 7 p.m. Free. Registration Required.

Explore a Vernal Pool: Ted Watt

Saturday, April 9, 9:30 a.m. – noon. Fee. Registration Required.

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.

Fitzgerald Lake Conservation Area Programs

Spring Birding at FLCA: Mike Locher

Saturday, April 30: 7:00–10:00 am (rain date: May 1). Free.

North Farms Rd. entrance. Further information: fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org.

The Bobolink Project

Wanna put your money where your mouth is, or use your network of contacts with local farmers to promote bird conservation? **MassAudubon** has a way for you to do one or both of these things!!

The majority of grasslands in New England are hay fields. In many cases, these fields are cut for hay before nestling Bobolinks and other grassland birds can fledge. Many farmers want to assist in the conservation of grassland birds, but those who delay their harvests long enough to allow Bobolinks to successfully nest will lose money. The Bobolink Project collects donations from conservationists and distributes those funds to cooperating farmers, allowing these farmers to delay their harvests, thus “buying” the precious few weeks needed by grassland birds to complete their nesting cycle.

While we certainly welcome any financial contributions you might wish to make, **just as important is your help in getting the word out to regional farmers who might be interested in participating.** If you know farmers who work fields that support Bobolinks or other grassland birds, please ask them to consider whether they might want to participate (<http://www.bobolinkproject.com/farmers.php>).

Our deadline to receive donations and identify cooperating farmers this year is April 22. Go to: <http://www.bobolinkproject.com/> to participate. Thanks.

Monhegan Island, 2016 with Scott Surner Memorial Day Weekend (Friday, May 20 to Monday, May 23) The WAIT LIST!!

You can see the spring migration almost anywhere, but if you have ever wanted to steep yourself in the glorious warblers of May, while losing yourself in the gentle rhythms of an idyllic island, Monhegan is for you.

We will travel to Port Clyde, Maine on Friday morning and take the ferry during the mid – afternoon. From here on, we immerse ourselves in the gentle rhythms of island life. We’ll stay at the rustic Trailing Yew, which will lay on breakfast and dinner each day, including a local lobster dinner. This is the perfect opportunity to slow down, REALLY learn the birds, and remember what life *should* be about. A week-end out of time, and one you may remember for a life-time.

The trip is FULL, but we are looking for some folks to be on the wait-list in case of cancellations. If you have flexibility and could jump in at the last moment, contact **Mike Locher** (fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org; 413 585 5864)

That’s all for this month. Two flyers for the **Valley Birding Festival** are enclosed. One is for you and one is to post or distribute anywhere you think it might catch the attention of others.

You can print a much nicer looking flyer with groovy graphics etc. from the festival blurb on the HBC homepage at hampshirebirdclub.org/

Don’t forget that the **May program** has been moved to **May 16**.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor
529 9541

newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org

CELEBRATE BIRDS

The 2nd Valley Bird Festival

Saturday, May 7, 2016 from 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Join environmental organizations from throughout the valley for a fun-filled and family-oriented day of learning about our feathered friends. The festival will feature events at Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (Fort River Division)* in Hadley and then later at Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary** in Easthampton. Both venues are **accessible** to all.

At Conte Refuge (Fort River) from 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.

- **Early morning bird walk with George Regmund of Friends of Fort River**

At Conte Refuge (Fort River) from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

- a **bird banding** demonstration, and
- a **falconry** demonstration by Chris Davis

At Arcadia Sanctuary from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.:

- **games, information and activities** for all ages, and
- **“Eyes on Owls.** 11 a.m. AND 1 p.m.

This wonderful demonstration of six (6) species of **live owls** from New England and beyond will occur at 11:00 a.m. and AGAIN at 1:00 p.m. Don't miss this unique opportunity to learn about these amazing birds.

The venues are:

*The Silvio Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (Fort River Division)
69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley
AND

**Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary (Massachusetts Audubon Society)
127 Coombs Road, Easthampton.

Festival organizers include:

- ◆ Hampshire Bird Club,
- ◆ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
- ◆ Mass Audubon,
- ◆ Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife (MassWildlife),
- ◆ Kestrel Trust
- ◆ Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation,
- ◆ Hitchcock Center for the Environment,
- ◆ Hitchcock Center for the Environment, and
- ◆ Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center.

Hope to see you there!

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