



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

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In this edition:

- the **next program** and the up-coming schedule,
- a **field trip report** and the **Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule**, and
- a few other odds and sods.

Hope you find some of it useful.

NEXT PROGRAM

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

Connie Sanchez

looks at the links between

Conservation and Art: The Federal Duck Stamp Program

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Weather-related cancellations announced via the HBC email list and local media.

In 1934, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act, requiring all waterfowl hunters to buy and carry a Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp. Today this stamp is better known as the Federal Duck Stamp. The Duck Stamp Program has evolved through the years, bringing together hunters, stamp collectors, and conservationists, and has contributed significantly to wetlands conservation over the years. In this evening presentation, you'll hear about the history and conservation value of the Federal Duck Stamp Program, a program that has raised funds to protect more than 5.7 million acres of habitat. You'll learn about the Federal Duck Stamp Art contest and get a glimpse of the selection process from Connie Sanchez, who served as a judge for the 2015 contest.

Constance Chen Sanchez is the Director of the Important Bird Areas Program for National Audubon Society. Since 2002, Connie has been involved in national-level coordination of this habitat conservation program, part of a global initiative aimed at conserving sites critical to birds throughout their life cycle. As director of the U.S. program, Connie focuses on facilitating communications, creating linkages across local conservation efforts, developing strategies for the protection of these priority places, and the engagement of local communities and conservation partners in maintaining and protecting this network. In addition to her efforts in conservation, Connie has served as an educator, teaching science and technology to various age groups. She holds a M.S. in Biology from Fort Hays State University in Kansas and a B.S. in Ecology and Evolution from the University of Rochester in New York. In 2015, Connie served as a judge for the Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest.

COMING PROGRAMS

February 13, 2017. Dave Wiley. Great Shearwater Migration.

March 13, 2017. Chris Fisher. Images of South Africa.

April 10, 2017. Alyssa Rosemartin. The National Phenology Network.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Moran WMA and environs. Sunday, December 4, 2017

Mike Locher and **Josh Rose** led a group led a trip into the Berkshires and batted a thousand despite the notorious bleakness of the area in winter. The main goal was to visit Moran WMA in Windsor for shrikes and other visitors from the boreal. On our way in, we failed to find a shrike, but Jonathan Pierce was there and assured us that he had seen one before we arrived. We wandered into the spruce forest, getting good looks at Red-breasted Nuthatch and hearing a Golden-crowned Kinglet, while a Common Raven or two called and flew over. On our way back out, a **Northern Shrike** appeared and, thanks to a couple of group members who had carried their scopes in, everyone had a decent look.

From there, we headed to Gael Hurley's neighborhood in Dalton. Gael herself joined us not long after we arrived. After a short stakeout, she helped get us on a **Harris' Sparrow**, which was ultimately very cooperative, providing great looks and photos. We also observed a Pileated Woodpecker flying over, and a Belted Kingfisher by the nearby Housatonic River.

While we were there, Jonathan posted via social media that he had found an Iceland Gull just a few miles away. After we had basked enough in the Harris', we drove over to the Pittsfield McDonald's, the best spot in Berkshire County for observing Fish Crows. No crows yesterday, but sure enough, a flock of roughly 100 gulls was there, mostly Ring-billed but a few Herring, and, with Gael's help yet again, we all had good looks at the **Iceland Gull**, an immature Kumlien's.

Josh Rose

COMING TRIPS

Please see the enclosed Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

At our January 9th gathering, the education committee will host a complete collection of federal duck stamps dating from 1934 to the present. This exhibit is in conjunction with the presentation by Connie Sanchez on the Federal Duck Stamp Program. Buying duck stamps is a simple but highly effective way of protecting habitat for birds and other wildlife. Ninety eight percent of all funds raised are used to acquire and protect wetland habitats and purchase easements for the National Wildlife Refuge System. Duck stamps can be purchased at the American Bird Association, select National Wildlife refuges, and post offices.

Bruce Hart

GREAT FALLS DISCOVERY CENTER PROGRAMS

Donald Kroodsma presents

Listening to a Continent Sing:

Birdsong by Bicycle from the Atlantic to the Pacific

Join birdsong expert Donald Kroodsma as he recounts the ten-week, ten-state bicycle journey he made from the Atlantic to the Pacific, lingering and listening to our continent sing as no one has before.

Saturday, January 21 at 1 PM. Great Falls Discovery Center. 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls

For more information call 413 863 3221 or visit greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org

That's all for this month.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor
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Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.

Winter/Spring/Summer Field Trip Schedule, 2017

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), Moderate (M), or Strenuous (S) 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 website.*

JANUARY

Saturday, January 21. Cape Ann Winter ducks. All day. Aidan and Devin Griffiths go to the chilly north shore to look for ducks, alcids, gulls, and all the other good birds of winter. Dress for the weather (many layers). The inclement weather date is Saturday, February 11. Contact Aidan (413-323-8417 or aidan-underscore-griffiths-at-yahoo-dot-com) or Devin (413-323-8417 or devingriffiths-at-yahoo-dot-com) to register and get meeting information. (M)

Fort River Refuge. The Friends of the Fort River Refuge and the Hampshire Bird Club will again offer trips to the Fort River Refuge this spring. The dates are being finalized as the newsletter goes to press, but expect two per month (one Wednesday and one Saturday) except for May, when walks will be weekly. Check the HBC website and future newsletters for dates and times. (E/M)

FEBRUARY

Saturday, February 4. Coastal Rhode Island. All day. Geoff LeBaron scours the shores of Rhode Island for winter ducks, marsh raptors, and other seasonal specialties on his annual all-day trip. Dress for the weather. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) to get information, to register, and get meeting information as the date approaches. (M)

MARCH

Wednesday, March 15. Timberdoodles at the Abandoned Atkins Orchard. Evening. Join Jim Lafley on a ramble through the old Atkins Orchard on Sabin Street in Belchertown. Over the last 20 years this has been a good spot for observing the American Woodcock display along the edge of the orchard and the large open field. Also possible are flocks of migrating Robins; Great-horned, Barred, and Saw-whet Owls calling; Canada Geese settling in for the evening; and Whip-poor-wills a little later in the season. Come to see what's active on this evening walk. Meet at Jim Lafley's house, 28 Sabin St., Belchertown at 6 p.m. and take the quarter mile walk up to the old orchard for the show. (M)

APRIL

Sunday, April 9. Ashley Reservoir. Morning. Mike Locher (413-585-5864 or fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) looks for early migrants like Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Louisiana 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).

Tuesday, April 11. Mt. Tom Reservation. Late morning. Join Tom Gagnon on a wildlife walk on Mt. Tom State Reservation in search of a few warblers and early season butterflies. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at Bray Lake on Mt. Tom State Reservation off Route 5 in Holyoke. Contact Tom for details (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com). (M)

Sunday, April 23. Whiting Reservoir. Morning. Continuing the “Reserv...” theme in April, Mike Locher returns to one of his breeding bird atlas sites, looking for spring migrants and possibly lingering ducks. Meet at the base of Mountain Park Road, in the parking area across the bridge, at 7 a.m. Contact Mike (413-585-5864 or fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) for details. (M)

Monday, April 24. Hawkwatching at Mt. Tom. Morning. Join Tom Gagnon for a hawk watch at Bray Tower on Mt. Tom State Reservation. Meet at old park headquarters at 9:00 a.m. Contact Tom for details (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com). (E/M)

Saturday, April 29. Podick and Catherine Cole Conservation Areas. Morning. Mike Locher initiates new his “Neglected Amherst Conservation Areas” series by braving the mosquitoes to look for warblers and other spring migrants. Meet at 6:30 a.m. in the parking area off Route 116. Bring insect repellent. Contact Mike (413-585-5864 or fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) for details. (E/M)

Sunday, April 30. Quabbin Gate 5 and Lake Wallace. Full day. Aidan Griffiths leads birders to two of Belchertown’s prime locations, looking for both spring migrants and hangers-on from the long winter (like the Red-headed Woodpecker?). Meeting time will be 6:30 a.m., place to be determined. Contact Aidan (413-323-8417 or aidan-underscore-griffiths-at-yahoo-dot-com) or Devin (devingriffiths-at-yahoo-dot-com) for details. (M)

MAY

Wednesday, May 3. Whip-poor-wills at Montague Plains WMA. Evening. Al Richards heads to the Montague Sand Plains to listen for whip-poor-wills. As the sun sets, Eastern Towhees and Prairie Warblers may be singing. Meet at Al’s house (7 South Main St., Sunderland) at 7:30 p.m. Contact Al (413-665-2761) for further information. (E)

Saturday, May 6. Herman Covey WMA. Full day. Aidan Griffiths beats the bushes of Herman Covey Wildlife Management Area for spring migrants and local residents. This reserve has it all: fields, woods, wetlands. Meeting time will be 6:30 a.m. at a place to be determined. Contact Aidan (413-323-8417 or aidan-underscore-griffiths-at-yahoo-dot-com) or Devin (devingriffiths-at-yahoo-dot-com) for details. (M)

Saturday, May 13. East Quabbin Reservoir. Full day Tom Gagnon leads participants into the wilds east of the Quabbin. You MUST be a member of the Hampshire Bird Club to go on this trip. The trip will start at 7:00 a.m., and the meeting place will be decided later. Contact Tom to register and get information (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com). (M)

Wednesday, May 17. Mt. Holyoke. Morning. Join Tom Gagnon for a hike from the main gate to the top of Mt. Holyoke via the road in search of migrant warblers and local nesting warblers (think Worm-eating and Cerulean). Meet at the main gate to Mt. Holyoke at 7:00 a.m. Contact Tom for more information (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com). (M)

Sunday, May 21. Sweet Alice Conservation Area. Morning. Mike Locher leads the second “Neglected Amherst Conservation Area” trip, and this one shouldn’t have mosquitoes. Ticks, maybe, but no mosquitoes. Now that everybody is super-excited to come, I’ll mention that Sweet Alice CA is a low brushy habitat that won’t give you “warbler neck” when you look for the birds. Last year I saw Blue-winged Warblers, a Prairie Warbler, and a Ruby-throated Hummingbird nest. Meet at Atkins Farms side parking lot at 6:30 a.m. Contact Mike (413-585-5864 or fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) for details. (M/S)

Monday, May 29, Abandoned Atkins Orchard. Morning (7-9 a.m.) Jim Lafley leads a morning trip into an abandoned orchard with two distinct biozones. This is the site where the White-eyed Vireo was seen two years ago, and is a great habitat for a variety of species. Meet at Jim’s house (28 Sabin St., Belchertown) at 7 a.m. For information, contact Jim (413-323-5892). (M/S)

JUNE

Saturday, June 3. Westover Air Force Base. 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. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Contact Mike (413-585-5864 or fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) at least two weeks ahead of time to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E)

Sunday, June 4. Montague Plains WMA. Morning. Jeremy Coleman writes, “We will meet on West Mineral Rd just off Millers Falls Rd (this is just south of the Turner's Falls Airport) at 7 AM sharp! We will scout the adjacent field and then head over to the Sandplain by car. We will walk approximately 1 mile on flat terrain in the scrub oak section of the Sandplain, and then venture into the Pitch Pine forest for another mile or so of walking on flat terrain. Expected birds will be Prairie, Black and White, Blue-winged, Chestnut-sided and Pine Warblers, Redstart, Ovenbird, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Hermit Thrush, Eastern Towhee, Brown Thrasher, Grasshopper and Field Sparrow, and many other breeding species, with the possibility for late migrants such as Mourning or Canada Warbler. If it's cloudy we may hear Whip-poor-wills still singing, and we could flush a Woodcock or two. Of course we'll stay tuned to the possibility of Hooded Warbler, which has been observed here as a probable breeder in 2012, although not since. There should be opportunities for good looks at many of these birds.” For information, contact Jeremy (jcolemanarch-at-gmail-dot-com). (E/M)

Saturday, June 17. October Mountain. All day. Bob Bieda goes west in search of Mourning Warblers, but that’s not all. A Brookline Bird Club trip at this time last year netted 46 species! The date on this trip may change (to June 18) depending on the weather. Contact Bob (413-527-2623 or blbieda-at-gmail-dot-com) to register and get meeting information. (E/M)

Other trips are being planned, but were unready for publication. Check the website and newsletter for possible trips for Plum Island (March), waterfowl migration (March), boreal species in VT’s Northeast Kingdom (April), local trips to Look Park, Wentworth Farm, Mineral Hills, and other sites (April-May), Mount Mansfield, VT for Bicknell’s Thrushes (June) and others.

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB, INC.
FIELD TRIP POLICY
Last Amended February 2, 2012.

1. Field trips are an essential activity of the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. (HBC). They are an important way to increase members' interest in and knowledge of birds, birding, and bird habitat. Field trips are announced in the HBC newsletter, on the website and at monthly meetings.
2. Each year, all HBC members are asked to sign the HBC Release Form. Minor children (under 18) must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or another adult who has written authorization to be responsible for the child's care and conduct. Please request a form from HBC if you want to authorize another adult to accompany your child.
- 3 The HBC conducts two different types of field trips: Day Trips and Overnight Trips.

Day Trips are planned by the Field Trip Committee, who prepare the schedule and select leaders. Day Trips generally do not require extensive planning by the trip leader. No costs other than travel (see #4 below), meals, and incidental fees will be involved. If requested to do so in the newsletter, participants must call the trip leader in advance to express interest in the trip. This allows the leader more flexibility and the opportunity to change the trip itinerary should that seem desirable. Day trips are open to both HBC members and non-members unless restricted to members by the host site.

Overnight Trips (one or more nights, reasonable driving distance) are planned by the Field Trip Committee and approved by the HBC Board at least 3 months in advance (see #5 below). Such trips generally require more planning by the trip leader, including, for example, arranging for lodging and travel. Participants will be charged an amount equal to actual predetermined costs (including liability insurance) plus a prorated amount to cover reimbursement of the leader's expenses (see #5 below). All fees, including the trip deposit, shall be paid to the HBC Treasurer. In the event of a cancellation, if the vacancy can be filled, the trip fee will be refunded, less a 10% processing charge. If the vacancy cannot be filled, the trip fee will be refunded, with the following exceptions:

- a) the portion of the trip fee that that covers a share of the leaders costs,
- b) the portion of the fee that covers the insurance charge, and
- c) any portion of the fee which has already been paid to another party and cannot be recovered by the club.

Any excess fees remaining after costs have been met will be refunded, unless they are less than twenty dollars (\$20) per person, in which case they will revert to the HBC treasury. Overnight trips are open only to HBC members who have signed a release form and who have completed a medical information form.

4. The HBC Board recommends that passengers reimburse owners of vehicles used on HBC trips for costs associated with vehicle operation. The maximum recommended reimbursement is the federal government employee mileage reimbursement rate, rounded down to the nearest 10 cents, plus tolls and parking to be shared equally by all persons in the car including the driver. The participants (not the leader) are responsible for making carpool arrangements.

5. Leaders of Overnight Trips shall:
 - a. Submit a trip plan to the Field Trip Committee, which must be approved by the Board at least 3 months in advance of the trip. The plan should describe in writing the nature of the trip as completely as possible. Include an itinerary, estimated cost, conditions of lodging and lead time needed for reservations, roughness of terrain, pace of the trip, extra costs not covered by the fee, date of deposit and final payment, date after which fee is not refundable, and provide a list of any specialized items that participants should take on the trip. Repeat trips led by the same leader need only submit necessary changes to the previous plan. The Board can waive the 3-month planning time if there is a special birding opportunity.
 - b. Consult with the membership secretary before the trip to make sure that all participants have signed the HBC Release Form and obtain a signed Medical Information Form from each participant.
 - c. Be reimbursed for all costs associated with planning (i.e. long-distance calls, postage), lodging, and transportation during the trip. The maximum reimbursement for automobile travel shall be one quarter of the costs incurred by a single vehicle under clause 4 of this policy.
 - d. Upon return, provide the HBC Board with an itemized account of all income and expenses related to the trip including receipts for major expenses.
6. The Field Trip Chair will send all participants in overnight trips the Field Trip Evaluation Form and a Medical Information Form. The completed evaluation form, to be returned to the Field Trip Chair, will help the Field Trip Committee plan future trips and provide feedback for leaders. Participants should give their signed Medical Information form to the trip leader prior to departure.
7. Leaders of both Day and Overnight Trips are asked to submit a Trip Highlights Report to the newsletter editor for publication in the next HBC newsletter.
8. HBC may ask professional bird touring organization to organize trips further away than the Overnight Trips. All responsibilities for planning the trip and all liability will be assumed by the touring organization. Such trips must be approved by the Board at least 6 months in advance.