



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.
Amherst, Massachusetts
www.hampshirebirdclub.org
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May, 2017.

On a recent day, I was birding one of my typical haunts. As usual, I got out way too late. A biting wind thrashed the tree tops and dispersed what song there was, and I had managed to rub the top off a heel blister from yesterday. Piled on top of those irritants was the fact that overnight northerlies had meant a relatively quiet morning. It was all set to be an inauspicious morning. But birding at this time of year has a way of giving you things, even when you are unprepared for, and undeserving of, them.

Within minutes, the first Common Yellowthroat of my year had announced itself, along with a tentative Chestnut-sided Warbler and a querulous Nashville buried deep in a flowering crab. An Orchard Oriole attracted my attention because I can never get that song so I guess, in a way, I “got” that song. A Pine Warbler sang from the tippy-top of the same pine where I had heard it all week, and I reflected on the miracle of neo-tropical migration. This might be the same bird that had nested in this pine last year and it may well continue to do so for years. For a moment, I thought the miracles of the morning were spoiled by a quartet of Brown-headed Cowbirds, displaying avidly for one another. After I had hissed the villain for a moment, it suddenly struck me that here too was a miracle. How does a bird that has never seen its biological parents and has been raised by another species, know how to speak cowbird, and to court its own kind? Let’s face it folks, it is a month of miracles and we just have to get out there and let them wash over us. I think I even forgot about the blister.....

In this edition you will find an introduction to the next program, a reminder about the last program of the year, and the (real) slate for Board of Directors, 2017-2018. Mostly, however, you can peruse a staggering range of opportunities to revel in the migration of May, namely:

- our own **coming trips**,
- a couple of offerings from the **Education Committee**,
- the **Mass Audubon Bird-a-thon**, and
- **Valley Bird Days**, an eclectic week of programs including the annual **Bird Festival**, aimed at bringing birding to a wider audience.

I hope you find some of it useful!

NEXT PROGRAM

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

State Ornithologist **Andrew Vitz** looks at

Bird Conservation in Western Massachusetts: from Cranes to Sparrows

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

COMING PROGRAMS

June 12, 2017. David Spector. Sam Peabody and Friends: A Look at Bird Song Interpretation.

COMING TRIPS

A BEWILDERING array of interesting outings this month....

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)

Sunday, May 14. Mineral Hills Conservation Area. Half day. Marcia Merithew and Betsy Higgins reprise their trip to Mineral Hills. The highlights from last year's trip include calling Barred Owls, a Louisiana Waterthrush, and Prairie Warblers (who are regular there). For those of you who haven't been there, expect wooded trails over moderate terrain. Meet at JFK Middle School parking lot on 100 Bridge Road (Florence, MA) at 7:00 a.m. or in the parking area at the end of Turkey Hill Road at 7:15. Contact Marcia with questions: 413-896-9539. (E/M)

Tuesday, May 16. Fort River Refuge. Morning. George Regmund and Henry Lappen welcome the migrants to Fort River. This is a great time for warblers, flycatchers, tanagers, and grosbeaks. Meet at the lower parking area at 7 a.m. (E/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)

Tuesday, May 23. Fort River Refuge. Morning. George Regmund and Mary Alice Wilson find the migrants at Fort River. This is a great time for warblers, flycatchers, tanagers, and grosbeaks. Meet at the lower parking area at 7 a.m. (E/M)

Saturday, May 27. Knightville Dam. Half day or longer. Marcia Merithew and Betsy Higgins lead their trip to Knightville Dam. Highlights from last year's trip include Bank Swallows, 5 species of flycatcher, and a Yellow-throated Vireo. Expect walking and driving on dirt roads. Meet at JFK Middle School parking lot on 100 Bridge Road (Florence, MA) at 7:00 a.m. Contact Marcia with questions: 413-896-9539. (E)

Monday, May 29, Abandoned Atkins Orchard. CANCELLED

Tuesday, May 30. Fort River Refuge. Morning. George Regmund and co-leaders close out the May weekday walks at Fort River. This is a great time for warblers, flycatchers, tanagers, and grosbeaks. Meet at the lower parking area at 7 a.m. (E/M)

Saturday, June 3. Westover Air Reserve 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. You must register with Mike (413-585-5864 or fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) by May 1 to get the time and place 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 about 2 miles through sandplain and pitch pine habitats, looking for 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." For information, contact Jeremy (jcolemanarch-at-gmail-dot-com). (E/M)

Wednesday, June 7. 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, June 10. Fort River Refuge. Morning. George Regmund and co-leaders look for late migrants and resident nesters at Fort River. Meet at the lower parking area at 7 a.m. (E/M)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The **Annual General Meeting** of the **Hampshire Bird Club Incorporated** will be held on **Monday, May 8, 2017** at the **Immanuel Lutheran Church** (867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst) at **7:15 p.m.** The meeting will immediately precede the May program.

The agenda for the meeting is to elect the Board of Directors for 2017-2018.

The **Nominating Committee** includes **Bill Benner, Lissa Ganter and David Peake-Jones** and has nominated the following for election to the Board of Directors for 2017-2018:

President: Scott Sumner

Vice-President/Program Chair: Geoff LeBaron

Treasurer: Stephen Baker

Membership Secretary: Lissa Ganter

Communications Secretary: Sharon Dombeck

Board Members at large:

Bruce Hart
Mike Locher
Carol Mardeusz
David Peake-Jones
Josh Rose
Jaap van Heerden

If this looks suspiciously like the slate for 2016-2017 it is because it is, in fact, identical. Every one of this stalwart group has opted for another year on the board.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Two walks co-sponsored by the Hampshire Bird Club Education Committee and Broad Brook Coalition.

Mother's Day Bird Walk: Laura Beltran

Sunday, May 14: 7:30–9:30 a.m.

Fitzgerald Lake Conservation Area, Florence, MA, North Farms Rd. entrance

This will be a beginner/intermediate bird walk at the height of songbird migration. Join Laura Beltran, long-time birder and an educator at Arcadia Wildlife Refuge, as we walk the woodland and lakeside trails at Fitzgerald Lake, looking for warblers, thrushes, vireos, swallows, and herons. We will continue on to the dam and Cooke's Pasture, where orioles, tanagers, bluebirds, and hummingbirds are likely. All ages are welcome. Bring binoculars if you have them.

Birding for Children at Fitzgerald Lake With Dan Ziomek and friends from HBC

Saturday, May 20, 2017: 8:30 a.m.

Fitzgerald Lake Conservation Area, Northampton, North Farms Rd entrance

Fresh off his six-week Birding for Children program (see below) Dan Ziomek offers a one-day opportunity for young people to get a taste of birding in the company of one of the premier birding teachers in New England.

This program will support the growth of children's awareness of birding, habitat and the great outdoors. To enhance the experience, extra binoculars, a spotting scope, and other technical resources will be available.

Co-Leaders and Publicity Wanted

If you would like to accompany Dan and the group as a co-leader for this experience, please contact Bruce Hart at the number below.

Please publicize this event with any children's groups or educational institutions you think might include interested children.

For further information, please contact Bruce Hart at 413-320-2841 or bhart2000@aol.com.

The Education Committee continues its financial support of the children's birding summer camp program at the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, and has made another generous contribution to the 2017 Bird Festival.

The Beat Goes On (Non-bird humor)

In 2009, a passenger on the New York subway collapsed and was kept alive for over twenty minutes by two co-passengers who performed CPR until emergency medical responders could reach him. In the wake of these events, New York Presbyterian founded a website to increase community awareness and capability in CPR. One of the biggest questions people have when they are trying to decide whether or not to administer chest compressions is, "How fast?" The answer, according to New York Presbyterian, is about 100 beats per minute. The hospital started a list of popular songs which have 100 beats per minute, and suggest that people imagine the songs playing in their head to achieve the correct rhythm.

The website includes a very moving account of the rescue and is a fabulous resource for people wanting to learn more about CPR. You can find the song list at <http://www.nyp.org/cpr/para/#cprsongs>. The list is well suited for folks with a well-developed sense of irony. It features the unquestionably apt, "Stayin' Alive" by the Bee Gees. It also includes "Heartbreaker" (Mariah Carey), "Quit Playin' Games with my Heart" (the Backstreet Boys) and, my personal favorite, "Another One Bites the Dust" (Queen).

MassAudubon Bird-a-thon, 2017

Support Arcadia's new Climate Action Center: The Connecticut River Valley Sanctuaries has built a reputation for quality environmental education in the Pioneer Valley for over 70 years. We have now been selected as one of three pilot Mass Audubon Climate Action Centers. For more information or to give using your credit card, please go to www.massaudubon.org/Arcadia, then look for Bird-a-thon 2017. Or send checks made out to Mass Audubon, with memo: Arcadia Bird-a-thon 2017 to Jonah Keane, Arcadia Sanctuary, Mass Audubon, 127 Combs Road, Easthampton, MA 01027.

Bird-a-thon Birding, Friday 5/12 6:00 PM - Saturday 5/13 6:00 PM:

To reduce our carbon footprint, we are birding ONLY HAMPSHIRE COUNTY. (This is a simplifying change from the April Newsletter where we mentioned doing three counties.) Please contact one of our Bird-a-thon team leaders(see below) if you would like to participate as a birder or if you have questions about reporting your findings. For more information about the actual birding go to www.massaudubon.org, then Search Bird-a-thon Resources. Unlike the Christmas Count, overlapping of territories is fine since we are looking for as many species as possible. If you see a rare bird, you may be asked for ID details, so please have at least one other birder with you when birding. Enjoy. It has always been a fun day of birding!

I'll have more Arcadia Bird-a-thon 2017 pamphlets with more detailed information at the May Hampshire Bird Club Meeting. The Bird-a-thon team includes: Phil Doyle, Chuck Horn, Janice Jorgenson, Jonah Keane, Anne Lombard, and Patti Steinman.

Thank you for your interest in birds, our climate, and our natural world,
Chuck Horn.

Bobolinks and Poetry

David Spector will give a talk on Bobolinks and poetry at the William Cullen Bryant Homestead on Sunday, May 21.

For more details visit <http://www.thetrustees.org/things-to-do/pioneer-valley/event-31705.html>

That's all for this month.

Two flyers for Valley Bird Days follow: one for you and one to distribute for maximum visibility.

You can also get the same information online with nicer formatting at:

valleybirddays.wixsite.com/valley-bird-days/day-by-day

That's all for this month.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org

VALLEY BIRD DAYS

May 5-13, 2017

Details at: valleybirddays.wixsite.com/valley-bird-days/day-by-day

Springfield's Urban Bird Treaty City Designation Celebration

Friday May 5; 10:00 a.m.

Springfield Museum Quadrangle Green, 21 Edwards Street, Springfield, MA

This unique partnership between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the City of Springfield and ReGreen Springfield will help birds and people by creating bird friendly and healthy habitats throughout Springfield.

Featured Presentation: Tom Ricardi's Live Birds of Prey.

Questions: Daniel Agustino, Museum Aquarist, Springfield Museums, 413/263-6800, ext. 404

Bird Festival

Saturday, May 6: 9:00 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Mass Audubon Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary

127 Coombs Road, Easthampton, MA

Feature Presentations:

11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.: **Tom Ricardi's Birds of Prey**

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (ongoing)

- Bird Banding with Neighborhood Nest Watch
- Stories, Games and Art
- Guided Bird Walks
- Bird camera Viewing.

Bring a picnic or a snack and make a day of it.

Sunday, May 7: 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Bird Walk at the Fort River Wildlife Refuge with Ted Watt

69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley, MA. (Accessible trail)

Mist or drizzle we proceed. Heavy rain cancels.

Daily Early Morning Bird Walks at Arcadia Sanctuary

Monday, May 8 – Friday May 12

127 Coombs Road, Easthampton, MA.

Ages 16 and up. Binocular, field guide if you have them. Prepare for the weather and insects.

Free for members. \$5 for non-members.

Saving American Kestrels and other Avian Migrants to the Valley with Dave King

Tuesday, May 9: 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Hitchcock Center for the Environment; 845 West Street, Amherst, MA

Suggested donation \$5. Pre-registration with Hitchcock is appreciated.

Montague Plains Wildlife and Ecology Walk (evening) with MassWildlife**Friday, May 12: 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

Sponsored by Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary. Ages 16 and up.

Learn about this unique area and how fire is used as a management tool.

A chance to hear whippoorwills and woodcocks as dusk descends.

Please pre-register with Arcadia. \$8 members. \$10 non-members.

Welcome to the Warblers (Walk and Talk) with Geoff LeBaron**Saturday, May 13: 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.**

At Fort River Wildlife Refuge; 69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley, MA

Presented by Kestrel Land Trust.

Pre-registration required at <http://www.kestreltrust.org/calendar/warblers-walk/>. Meeting time will be sent to you upon registration.**Bluebirds and Bluebird House Building with Ted Watt and David Dunn.****Saturday, May 13: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.**

Presented by and at Hitcock Center: 845 West Street, Amherst, MA

Bring your own Phillips-head screwdriver and come prepared to take notes!

Recommended for adults and families including young people 4th grade and up

Pre-registration required; limited to 20 families. Members \$20 per family/per house/Non-members \$30. \$5 additional fee for walk-ins; all materials included.

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