

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB - JANUARY 1996

MONTHLY MEETINGS: Our speaker on Monday, January 8, at 7:30 p.m. at the Hitchcock Center will be Beth Goettel, Wildlife Biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Her program is entitled "The Silvio Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge: What's In It for the Birds?" She'll discuss the mission and organization that led to acquiring this newest Fish and Wildlife watershed refuge, what is being accomplished and what the future holds. She'll speak about ways to meet the challenge of reversing the decline of migratory bird populations in the Connecticut River watershed. It promises to be an informative and interesting program, focusing on positive steps being taken to protect environment in our own back yard.

On Monday, February 12 our own infamous team of Ortiz and Page (Jan and Chris) will tell us about their trip to the Arctic. And on Monday, March 11, Mark Blazis will talk on "Birds of the Forest Islands of Bolivian Amazonia."

FIELD TRIPS: Bob Bieda (527-2623) will lead a trip to the North Shore on Saturday, January 6. Meet at the Hitchcock Center at 6:00 a.m. On Saturday, January 27, Al Richards (665-2761) searches for waterfowl from Falmouth to Plymouth. Meet at the Hitchcock Center at 6 a.m. or at the Ames parking lot near the Palmer Turnpike entrance at 6:30 a.m. And on February 4 Scott Sumner (253-7486) will be birding Southeast Maine. Meet at the Hitchcock Center at 5:00 a.m. All are full-day trips. Wear warm clothes, bring lunch and snacks.

Don't forget to check the HBC Voice (253-2218) for up-to-date news about what birds are being seen and where to see them.

Sally Venman, Sec'y.

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB

February, 1996

AH, FEBRUARY -- the month of the Snow Moon, the month when we look to the groundhog for springtime hope, the month when skunks emerge to mate, when snow fleas can be found at the base of tree trunks, when we begin see signs of the maple sap run. It can be a very long cold month. We could get out there and experience nature's early signals of warmer days to come, or we could sit in front of the fire and create diversions that are a little less athletic and a lot less cold. For example, we could open a package of M&Ms, sort by color and determine the percentage of the new BLUE morsel comparing it to the more familiar RED, GREEN, and YELLOW. We should probably open many packages for more accurate and convincing data. Results could be tabulated and I would be happy to publish them.

OR

The truly creative winter birder might like to think along the lines of, say BARBIE. Barbie has been a ballerina, torch singer, equestrienne, stewardess, business woman, nurse, doctor, poet and an astronaut in a pink space pants outfit. She has been Talking Barbie, Tropical Barbie, Twist 'n Turn Barbie and Living Barbie. What's wrong with this picture? Something is obviously missing! I ask you

WHERE IS BIRDING BARBIE ??????

Think of the miniature binoculars, a tiny KOWA scope, that cute little pink backpack with a miniature HBC logo lovingly sewed to the front pocket. What a marketing opportunity! How and where would Ken fit in this picture? Really blows the mind, doesn't it?

OR

You could read on and find some HBC offerings that will speed the days to spring in a most pleasant and informative manner --

PROGRAMS

"Experiencing the Arctic --- Life on the Edge." Jan Ortiz and Chris Page will present a slide show on their trip to Baffin Island in the eastern Arctic. Last June, Jan, Chris and four other HBC friends traveled in snowmobile pulled *komatiks* over the frozen sea from the Inuit village of Pond Inlet to the tundra of Bylot Island and on to the drama and beauty of the floe edge. The floe edge is where frozen ocean ends and open water begins as it reaches across to Greenland. It is in this changing "river" of open water and pack ice that marine and bird life congregate. Sound recordings of Ivory Gulls, Thick-billed Murres, Narwhals and others will be used during the presentation in an attempt to convey something of the wondrous quality of "living on the edge." Jan and Chris will also share their stories and slides of the land, its people and the plant and animal life that they experienced on this incredible journey. One of the founding members of the HBC, Jan is now president of the Board. She teaches birding through the Hitchcock Center and is responsible for giving many of our members their birding start. A long time HBC member and former Board member, Chris is the artist who created the HBC Pileated Woodpecker logo.

Be sure to save March 11 when Mark Blazis will talk on "Birds of the Forest Islands of Bolivian Amazonia;" and April 8 when Seth Kellogg will present a program about the breeding birds in Granville, Massachusetts.

FIELD TRIPS

- 2/17: Winter birds in the Berkshires with Tom Gagnon (584-6353). Meet at the Northampton Stop and Shop at 6:30 a.m. Half day.
- 2/24: Winter Owls with Harvey Allen (253-7963). Number of participants is limited. Call Harvey for the time and to reserve a place. Weather must be very calm for the trip to run.
- 3/9: Southeastern Massachusetts with Jim Marcum (549-1613). Full day.
- 3/30: Waterfowl of the Connecticut River Valley with Al Richards (665-2761). Meet at the Hitchcock Center at 6:30 a.m. Half Day.

There are three spots still open in Tom Gagnon's trip to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem in July (July 13 - 23). He will need to finalize reservations very soon and asks that you let him know NOW if you are considering taking the trip. He can be reached evenings at 584-6353. The deadline for signing up is a serious February 15.

The Field Trip Committee with Bob Bieda (527-2623) as chair is meeting on Tuesday, February 6. The group is looking for additional trip leaders. Bird identification skill is not the most important requirement. Familiarity with a good birding location is. If you know of a good spot that would lend itself well to a birding group, please consider leading a trip there. If this interests you or if you have any suggestions regarding possible future spots to visit please give Bob a call.

LIBRARY UPDATE

Anne Cann reports that *Shadowbirds: A Quest for Rails*, by William Burt is now available in the HBC library. Bill presented a program to the HBC in March, 1994. A review of the book by David Spector was sent to you in October. Also new in the collection is a subscription to *Bird Watchers' Digest*. Anne calls your attention to two ABA supplements you may not be aware of. There is a directory of volunteer opportunities for birders covering North America and Hawaii and if you are in the market for new optics, books, field guides, videos, etc. you might find the annotated catalog and pricelist helpful. The Library is located on the first floor of the Hitchcock Center which is open Wednesday through Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

HITCHCOCK CENTER OFFERINGS

(call the Center at 256-6006 for fees and registration)

"Owling with an Expert - I" will take place on Saturday, February 17, 8:00 - 11:00 p.m. Craig Allen, experienced birder and long time HBC member, will lead an owl prowl designed specifically for those who have never been out in search of these elusive night predators. And on Sunday, March 10, 3:00 a.m. - 6:00 a.m. "Owling with an Expert - II" will find Craig again leading a prowl, this one designed for people who are looking for a challenge.

MISCELLANEOUS

Enclosed is the 1995-1996 membership list as of February 1. If you find errors, please let Tom Carpenter (584-0779) know. I will pass on any additions to the list as I receive them.

Bird News of Western Massachusetts subscribers can be expecting the first issue to arrive in late winter. The Winter, 1996, issue contains the records for the Fall, 1995.

I am extremely happy to announce that I finally got the New Members' Packet together and it is being sent this week. If you are a new member and you don't receive it soon, please give me a call. Included in the Packet are the By-laws, the Dead Bird Sheet (Does anybody have a use for this dead bird?), the HBC *Field Trip Policy* sheet, a copy of the ABA *Code of Birding Ethics*, the North American Rare Bird Alert, an HBC library information sheet, the HBC Feeder Checklist and a copy of Scott Sumner's favorite game -- The Eight Question Birding Game, or "How to Keep Your Friends While Showing Off Your Birding Knowledge" as told to and translated by Lynn Rubinstein. Should anyone desire an extra copy of any of these, I'll always have them at the meetings or would be happy to send one to you.

The Board of Directors received a letter from Blake Geryk, a fourteen-year-old HBC member from Hatfield requesting Club sponsorship and support in his application for scholarship help to attend Camp Tejano in Texas in June. This camp and an Arizona based camp which Blake attended last summer on a partial ABA scholarship is run for the ABA by Victor Emanuel Nature Tours. These camps provide an opportunity for young people (twelve to seventeen) with intense interest in birds and nature to learn from some of the best in the field and to share their experience with other young people. For the past two years Blake has demonstrated an unusual level of ability, enthusiasm and maturity as he has pursued his birding interests. He has been an active member of our birding community. Because the Board feels it is very important to encourage young people who demonstrate these abilities and enthusiasm it has voted to sponsor Blake on behalf of the local birding community with a \$100.00 donation.

BACKYARD BIRDS at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton is happy to offer a 10% discount for ALL PURCHASES to all HBC members. Since we do not have membership cards, the store has agreed to accept as proof of membership either a letter or a postcard with mailing labels showing that it has been sent to you by the HBC. Simply take the latest mailing to the store and show it when you make your purchase. This offer is good starting with this mailing and going through July, 1996. And you thought that these mailings were just for sharing information. Well, think again! Aren't you lucky to be a member?

Hope to see you February 12!



Sally Venman, Secretary

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB
March, 1996

Dear Friends,

Remember wind? Remember rain? Remember the first sights, sounds, and smells of early spring? I guess we each have our own way of waking to the poetry of this season. Hearing the mournful "oowoo - woo - woo - woo" of the Mourning Dove, discovering the cracks in the earth as the crocus pushes through to the surface, smelling the night rain that sends the salamander lover the signal that says "get up and get going."

Soon the woods will be filled with the sounds of "pssht", "tsuc-tsuc", "whshee whshee", "tseeet", "rrrrrk", sibilant kissing of back of hand, projecting squeaks and generic warbles as Birders (*Homo avephilus*) experience and respond to their own inner cravings.

Let the HBC help you on your quest --

MEETINGS

On Monday, March 11, 7:30 p.m. at the Hitchcock Center, our speaker will be Mark Blazis, a man of many talents and interests who could easily give us a full year of programs on different subjects. This month he will present a slide program on "The Birds of the Forest Islands of Bolivian Amazonia". Mark is a biology teacher, a recipient of the Roger Tory Peterson Nature Educator of the Year award, a writer, Land Trust conservationist, international field trip organizer and co-leader. He is a Masterbander and researcher working on Lyme disease and neotropical migrant productivity and survivorship. It sounds like a great evening to drive away the chill of late winter.

Be sure to save April 8 when Seth Kellogg will present a program about the breeding birds in Granville, Massachusetts.

FIELD TRIPS

The spring/summer (1996) Field Trip List will be sent to you with next month's Newsletter. For now plan on meeting spring head-on by sampling the following:

- 3/9: Jim Marcum (549-1613) will lead a full-day trip to Southeastern Massachusetts.
- 3/30: Find the waterfowl of the Connecticut River Valley with Al Richards (665-2761). Meet at the Hitchcock Center at 6:30 a.m. for this half-day trip.
- 4/13: Bob Bieda (527-2623) will be searching the Ashley Reservoir for early warblers and other spring migrants. Meet at the Holyoke Holiday Inn parking lot at 7:00 a.m. for this three hour quest.
- 4/20: Morris Lainer (527-9412) will again be leading an all-day trip to Plum Island searching for the Ruff, hoping for the male in dramatic breeding plumage.
- 4/27: Harvey Allen (253-7963) searches for rails found locally this time of year. Meet him on the west side of the UMass stadium at 7:00 a.m. for the three hour search.
- 5/2: And -- starting Thursday, May 2, and continuing every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the month, the Club sponsors an early morning bird walk through Wildwood Cemetery in Amherst. No need to register - just meet the leader at

the gate at 6:30 am. The walk is designed to finish at about 8:00 am. so you can catch some warblers before work.

- 5/4: Seth Kellogg (569-3335) will be leading a new trip to a wonderful birding spot. He will be taking us to the marshes of South Windsor, CT for early warblers and possibly a Least Bittern. Meet at the corner of Barkhaul Rd. and Rt. 5 in Longmeadow, MA at 6:30 a.m. for this half day trip.

BIRDING with HITCHCOCK

Jan Ortiz, HBC president, experienced birder, field trip leader and teacher will again be teaching the Spring Birding Class for the Hitchcock Center. There will be two sessions. Session One will run for 8 consecutive weeks (except for Easter Week), two times a week starting on March 20 (Wednesday evenings at the Center, 7:00 - 9:00 and a choice of Saturday or Sunday mornings in the field, 7:00 - 12:00). There will be an all-day trip to Plum Island. Session Two will run for four consecutive weeks starting April 25. (The class will meet on Thursday evenings at Applewood from 7:30 - 9:00 with the field work on Friday mornings, 8:00 - 11:00). Jan offers this description: "The classes are geared to birders of all levels, but the pace will be leisurely. Ample time will be given to view and discuss the birds we see. Using slides and bird mounts in the classroom sessions, we will discuss migration, behavior, identification, song and species we expect to see in the field. We will also take some time each week to note the progression of spring and how it relates to bird migration." Call Jan at 549-1768 if you have questions. Call the Center at 256-6006 for fee information and to register.

MISCELLANEOUS

Enclosed with this mailing is an update on the HBC Lending Library from Anne Cann. I remind you that the Hitchcock Center is open Wednesday - Saturday from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. should you want to use the library at a time other than at our Monday night meetings. Anne has done wonderful work setting up the library and keeping it current and filled with all kinds of materials to interest birders.

First call for HELP from the "BIRDERS' FEEDER": For the past four years the very same Anne Cann has also been organizer and dispenser of goodies around the food table before, during and after our monthly meetings. Because four years is above and beyond the call Anne has asked to pass on the hot pot and cookie jar. Members are very generous in providing the goodies (there is a place on the membership form to indicate willingness to do so) and Anne asks that I thank all of you kind providers once again most sincerely. What is needed now is coordination and set-up. Two or more co-chairs would be ideal. If you think you would be willing to help keep the birders' stomachs happy, give Anne (253-7753) or Sally (549-1098) a call.

REMINDER

BACKYARD BIRDS at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton is happy to offer a 10% discount for ALL PURCHASES to all HBC members. Since we do not have membership cards, the store has agreed to accept as proof of membership either a letter or a postcard with mailing labels showing that it has been sent to you by the HBC. Simply take the latest mailing to the store and show it when you make your purchase. This offer is good through July, 1996. And you thought that these mailings were just for sharing information. Well, think again! Aren't you lucky to be a member?

Guess that's it for March.
Happy Duck Hunting!

Sally Verman

Bird Club Library News

Thanks to the generosity of the Board, \$100 has been donated for additions to the Bird Club Library. The following books have been ordered and are now available to members in the Hampshire Bird Club Library at the Hitchcock Center.

1. Birdfinder - A Birder's Guide to Planning North American Trips by Jerry A. Cooper. With this book you will be able to organize your own trips to many different sections of the United States and also know what birds you might expect to see while you are there as well as what the trip might cost.

2. The Birds of New Hampshire, a brand new guide to the birds of our neighboring state.

3. The Birds of Southeastern Arizona for those of you who bird in this region and those who would like to.

4. Warblers of the Americas, An Identification Guide, by Jon Curson, David Quinn and David Beadle, 1994. This is a detailed identification guide summarizing much information about warbler species of North, South and Central America with many plates and diagrams.

Please take a look at the library and see what would enrich your birding fun. It is easy to check books or magazines out during our monthly meetings and return them the next meeting.

If you have books, tapes or videos you no longer need which might be of interest to other club members, please consider donating them to the Hampshire Bird Club Library. And if there are books you think the club should have, please let me know.

Anne G. Cann

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB

April, 1996

MEETINGS:

On Monday, April 8, 7:30 p.m. at the Hitchcock Center, our speaker will be Seth Kellogg, whose face is well known to Western Massachusetts birders and whose name is well known to those who subscribe to *Bird News of Western Massachusetts* for which he has been Editor since 1985. Seth began birding in 1968. He is the Massachusetts editor of the National Audubon's magazine *Field Notes* and the Field Trip Chair and Executive Board member for the Allen Bird Club. He has served as Editor for *The Hawk Migration Association Journal* and has been its Continental Editor since 1991. He has been a member of the Massachusetts Records Committee since its inception in 1992. Seth's program for us will be on the breeding birds in Granville, MA, where he has been conducting a roadside point survey for the past fifteen years. This is an especially interesting rural area where the habitat has not changed, so if there is a change in status of breeding birds, it is because of changes in wintering or migration habitat. Come welcome Seth and learn about an unspoiled area that is producing interesting and important information.

Save May 13 when Susan Smith (of Chickadee fame) will return to give us a slide program on Alaska, and June 10 when Bob Prescott, Director of Wellfleet Sanctuary on Cape Cod will talk to us about the birds of Cape Cod, featuring Monomoy Island.

FIELD TRIPS:

Enclosed with this letter is the spring/summer Field Trip List. You'll find a few new ventures along with the old favorites. For April and May check out --

- 4/13: Bob Bieda (527-2623) will be searching the Ashley Reservoir for early warblers and other spring migrants. Meet at the Holyoke Holiday Inn parking lot at 7:00 a.m. for this three-hour quest.
- 4/20: Morris Lainer (527-9412) will again be leading an all-day trip to Plum Island searching for the Ruff, hoping for the male in dramatic breeding plumage.
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- 5/2: Starting Thursday, May 2, and continuing every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the month, the Club sponsors an early morning bird walk through Wildwood Cemetery in Amherst. No need to register - just meet the leader at the gate at 6:30 a.m. The walk is designed to finish at about 8:00 a.m. so you can catch some warblers before work.
- 5/4: Seth Kellogg (569-3335) will be leading a new trip to a wonderful birding spot. He will be taking us to the marshes of South Windsor, CT for early warblers and possibly a Least Bittern. Meet at the corner of Barkhaul Rd. and Rt. 5 in Longmeadow, MA at 6:30 a.m. for this half-day trip.

I remind you to call the HBC VOICE (253-2218) to learn what birds are being seen in the area especially now that the spring migration is under way.

BIRDING with HITCHCOCK: (Call the Center at 256-6006 to register.)

There is still time to sign up for the second session of the Spring Birding Class taught by Jan Ortiz. This session will run for four consecutive weeks

starting on Thursday, April 25. The evening presentations run from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. The field work will be on Fridays starting Friday, April 26 from 8:00 am - noon. Due to a near-terminal attack of early spring fever I gave inaccurate information in the March letter. (OOPS) The class meets AT THE HITCHCOCK CENTER, not Applewood.

Jan will also be leading a "Woodcock Watch" on Thursday, April 11 at 6:30 pm sharp (rain date Friday, April 12). She will start with a brief slide presentation on the Woodcock at the Center. Shortly before dusk the group will travel to a nearby site to view this unique courtship display.

And don't forget the GREEN SCENE, the spring fund-raiser and auction on Friday, May 3, 5:30 - 8:00 pm at the Red Barn at Hampshire College.

CONSERVATION:

PROJECT TANAGER will continue for the third year in our area. It is a national project to test whether four species of North American tanagers are able to nest successfully in forest patches of different sizes. We have been studying 10 forest sites of various sizes in the Amherst, Northampton and Granby areas to determine whether Scarlet Tanagers are nesting. Small groups of two or four make two visits to each site in May and June. If you are interested in participating, please call Anne Lombard (586-7509) for the Northampton area or Micky McKinley (367-9791) for the Amherst area.

The NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT is a nationwide count held on one day, the second Saturday in May (May 11 this year). It is like the Christmas Count in that you count all birds seen/heard on that day, but is different in that entire counties are count areas, it has no fees, and it occurs in warm weather at the height of spring migration. Individuals and groups can participate, so if you plan to be out birding that day, all you will need is to keep count. Recording sheets will be available at the April meeting or by calling Anne Lombard (586-7509).

AND:

I had pretty well decided not to finish with any "asides" this time because of Newsletter Writer's Block (NWB) and had completed the letter ready for copying and sending tomorrow. Routinely reading the newspaper and listening to the radio news tonight I was really pulled down by all the dismal stuff that we seem to hear over and over. For some reason this time all the negativity really got to me. I took my limp emotions out for a slow walk in a field near my home. Before long I heard the "peent" and witnessed the spiral antics of the Woodcock, to me one of the great comics in nature. A listen to the left brought me spring peepers - the first of the year for me. As I moved toward home with a much lighter step I looked up and saw once again the fuzzy ball of the comet Hyakutake with its tail trailing far behind (was that just my imagination?). Hey folks -- we have picked ourselves a pretty wonderful hobby! If it rains tonight and the salamanders go, you'll never get this letter!

GET OUT THERE AND EXPERIENCE SPRING-----THAT'S AN ORDER!!!!!!!!!!

Sally

Sally Venman, Secretary

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB -- May, 1996

In order that the hands behind the word processor can be better employed as the hands behind the binoculars, this letter will be short! ("Oh sure -- Promises, promises," mumbles the reader.)

PROGRAMS:

The HBC fledged fully in the fall of 1984. One of the first members and one of the first presenters made the long trek over the Holyoke Range from South Hadley to give an absolutely delightful program on her "addiction" -- the Black-capped Chickadee. The title of the program, "Flock Switching in Black-capped Chickadees" got lots of attention and was the first of roughly biannual visits updating her research. Her last update in November, 1992, was after the publication of her well received and very readable book, *The Black-capped Chickadee*. She also participated as a panel member in an HBC program concerning birding ethics. In May of 1994 she focused on a spot far from her backyard mist nets and banded chickadees when she presented a program on "Antarctica." Now, two years later, HBC member Susan Smith, Professor of Biological Sciences at Mount Holyoke College, returns to inform and entertain us once again. On a recent trip to Alaska where she was presenting a paper at the American Ornithological Union convention she took time to explore the Pribilofs, Point Barrow, the Yukon Territory and Denali National Park. She will be showing slides of the scenery, the birds, the mammals and the flowers as she shares her adventures with us. Please note: we have not asked her back repeatedly (this will be her sixth visit) because she pays her yearly dues. Be there! You won't regret it!

A short business meeting will precede the program. We are required by our By-laws to elect Board officers and members for the coming year at our May meeting. The nominating committee (Sue Emerson, Pat Lynch and Jim Marcum, chair) will present the following slate for your approval: Shirley Hilborn (President), Dennis McKenna (Vice President/Program Director), Mark Mount (Treasurer), Sally Venman (Communications Secretary), and Dianne Quilty (Membership Secretary), with Bob Bieda, Susan Emerson, Pat Lynch, David Norton, Jan Ortiz (Immediate Past President), and Scott Sumner as Members at Large. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor, if seconded.

The last program before our summer recess will take place on Monday, June 10. Bob Prescott, Director of Wellfleet Sanctuary on Cape Cod will talk to us about the birds of Cape Cod, featuring Monomoy Island.

FIELD TRIP REMINDERS:

May being the big migration month that it is and Wildwood Cemetery in Amherst being one of the big bird refueling areas, I have been asked to remind you that Wildwood is private property and we must remember always that we are guests on its paths. We have maintained a good relationship with the management over the years, and have been assured that birders are always welcome. Although it may seem obvious, remember to respect the privacy of people visiting grave sites. Park only in the appropriate places -- do NOT park on the lawns. Please respect the management's simple wishes and use common sense and courtesy when birding the facility so that we will continue to be welcome.

Starting Thursday, May 2, and continuing every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the month, the Club sponsors an early morning bird walk through Wildwood Cemetery. No need to register - just meet the leader at the gate at 6:30 a.m. The walk is designed to finish at about 8:00 a.m. so you can catch some warblers before work.

On Saturday, May 4 Seth Kellogg (569-3335) will be leading a new trip to a wonderful birding spot. He will be taking us to the marshes of South Windsor, CT for early warblers and possibly a Least Bittern. Meet at the corner of Barkhaul Rd. and Rt. 5 in Longmeadow, MA at 6:30 a.m. for this half-day trip.

Saturday, May 11 is the date for the Annual North American Migration Count, described below.

Saturday, May 18, is the date for the 1996 Massachusetts Audubon Birdathon. Join a team traveling to many parts of Massachusetts. Call Tom Gagnon at 584-6353 for more information.

Friday, May 24, is the start of the Spring Monhegan Weekend led by Scott Surner (253-7484).

On Saturday, May 25, Al Richards will lead a group to Plum Island searching for shorebirds and warblers. Call Al at 665-2761.

On Saturday, June 1, an attempt will be made to find the Golden-winged Warbler if one of these increasingly rare birds is located in the area. Al Richards (665-2761) will lead the trip which is limited to ten people.

Saturday, June 1 also marks the opening of the Massachusetts Audubon Society Art Show at the Smith College Museum of Art. The show continues through July 28.

On Saturday, June 8, Don Kroodsma will be leading a group interested in "Dawn Birding by Ear" starting at 4:30 a.m. This trip is limited to twelve people. Call Don at 253-5519 for more information.

Also on Saturday, June 8, a group led by Charlie Quinlan (634-0334) will try to answer the question "Are there Mourning Warblers in Cummington?" A search for the American Bittern will also take place. Meet the group at the Old Berkshire Snow Basin Ski Area on Rt. 9 in Cummington at 7:30 a.m.

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The NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT is a nationwide count held on one day -- Saturday, May 11. It is like the Christmas Count in that you count all birds seen/heard on that day, but is different in that entire counties are count areas, it has no fees, and it occurs in warm weather at the height of spring migration. Individuals and groups can participate, so if you plan to be out birding that day, all you will need is to keep count. Recording sheets will be available at the May meeting or by calling Anne Lombard (586-7509).

PROJECT TANAGER will continue for the third year in our area. This is a national project to research whether four species of North American tanagers are able to nest successfully in forest patches of different sizes. We have been studying 10 forest sites of various sizes in the Amherst, Northampton and Granby areas to determine whether Scarlet Tanagers are nesting. Small groups of two to four make two visits to each site in May and June. If you are interested in participating, please call Anne Lombard (586-7509) for the Northampton area or Micky McKinley (367-9791) for the Amherst area.

I remind you again to call the HBC VOICE. By calling this recorded telephone service, operated and updated weekly by Scott Sumner, you will learn what birds have been seen in the area and hear about events of interest not covered in the mailings. To receive this information call 253-2218. Check it regularly.

HITCHCOCK CENTER:

On Monday, May 6, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m., Hitchcock offers a program entitled **NATURE POETS of the CONNECTICUT VALLEY: EMILY DICKINSON and OTHERS** presented by Ted Sargent, Professor of Biology at the University. Author of *Legion of the Night: the Underwing Moths*, he is currently working on a book about the depiction of birds by American poets. He will discuss Emily's nature poetry and introduce us to some of the worthy, if lesser known, poets of our valley.

EXPERIENCING THE ARCTIC - LIFE ON THE EDGE on Wednesday, May 29, 7:30 p.m. Jan Ortiz is going to present a slide show on her recent trip to Baffin Island in the eastern Arctic. Last June Jan and friends traveled over frozen sea from the Inuit village of Pond Inlet to the tundra of Bylot Island and on to experience the drama and beauty of camping on the floe edge (where frozen ocean ends and open water begins). In this changing "river" of open water and pack ice marine and bird life congregate. Sound recordings will be used to help convey something of the wondrous quality of "living on the edge." If you missed the presentation in February or if you long to see it again here's your chance.

Both programs are free and open to the general public.

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Oh, Oh, ... done with the letter ... still space left ... what to do with it ... must do something ... can't just toss out unused space ... the conservation police would get me

Well - In the *PASSING ON THE IMPORTANT DATES YOU SHOULD KNOW AND CELEBRATE* category I remind you that in my February letter I told you about the skunks emerging to mate on February 8 and 9. Well --- birth announcements are in order. The mother skunks are due to deliver on May 10. Raise the champagne glasses! What a wonderful time to have a baby!

Or I could tell you about the Calaveras Jumping Frog Jubilee (sort of a contest of the Amphibian Armadas) taking place in Angels Camp, California on May 19.

And I just read about a very important advance in culinary cutlery, one that is sure to catch the imagination of the eating community. It is called the **X-Tenda Fork**, a new telescoping fork that reaches up to **two feet**. It is suggested for use in dessert-sharing. Look for its use in your favorite restaurant. It's only \$10.00 and can be found in kitchen stores.

Sally

Ooops ... Out of space ... have a GREAT birding May! ... Sally the Secretary

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB -- June, 1996

SPECIAL TRIBUTE:

Several years ago, the HBC Board wished to honor one of its members for his outstanding contributions to birdwatching in the Connecticut River Valley and his long-time friendship to the birding community. We presented Rudd Stone an *Honorary Life Membership* in the HBC as a way of showing our respect for him. At that time Rudd was unable to accept our tribute in person.

Early this year the Board expressed interest in honoring Gerry Bozzo in the same manner, recognizing his role in introducing many young people to birdwatching during his years as a public school educator.

Both men have distinguished themselves in their contributions to the birdwatching community and both have made a real difference in the lives of many of our members. Both will be able to attend our June meeting to accept our praise and appreciation. Come join us in the tribute.

PROGRAMS:

Our last program of the year is on Monday, June 10, 7:30 p.m. at the Hitchcock Center. Bob Prescott, who is Director of the Massachusetts Audubon Society Wellfleet Sanctuary on Cape Cod, will talk to us about the birds of Cape Cod, including those found on Monomoy Island. A graduate of UMass, Bob has been the Director of the Sanctuary for fourteen years. He runs an extensive program including field trips to Monomoy Island and Nauset Marsh. He also does research on box turtles and sea turtles. Cape Cod is a favorite vacation spot for many of us. One of the Club's most popular summer field trips is the trip to Monomoy (sign up early for this - it fills quickly). Come learn more about the entire rich area.

While on the subject of Cape Cod, I remind you that there is a CAPE COD NATURAL HISTORY HOTLINE (508-349-9464), a recorded message, updated weekly, reporting recent sightings of birds, butterflies, dragonflies, and other natural history events occurring on Cape Cod.

While on the subject of HBC programs, I want you to know that HBC has *DUNN(E)* it again. For you new members, one of the biggies in the birding world, Jon *Dunn*, presented a program on warblers last fall. This fall it's Pete *Dunne*, often described as "America's Second-Best-Known Bird-watcher," who will be speaking to us. Director of the Cape May Bird Observatory, author of *Tales of a Low-Rent Birder*, *The Feather Quest*, *Hawks in Flight* (with David Sibley and Clay Sutton) and others, Pete is a well-known and much sought-after speaker. He will be with us on Monday, October 21. You might want to pick up one of his books (great reading for non-birders as well as birders -- especially the first two if the non-birder is really a non-birder). Make note of the date.

FIELD TRIP REMINDERS:

Thursday, June 6 marks the opening of the Massachusetts Audubon Society Art Show at the Smith College Museum of Art. The show continues through July 21.

On Saturday, June 8, Don Kroodsma will be leading a group interested in "Dawn Birding by Ear" starting at 4:30 a.m. This trip is limited to twelve people. Call Don at 253-5519 for more information.

Also on Saturday, June 8, a group led by Charlie Quinlan (634-0334) will try to answer the question "Are there Mourning Warblers in Cummington?" The group will also search for the American Bittern. Meet at the old Berkshire Snow Basin Ski Area on Rt. 9 in Cummington at 7:30 a.m.

On the evening of Saturday, June 15 Al Richards (665-2761) hopes to be searching for Whip-Poor-Wills. This trip depends on calm weather and continued access to the Montague plains. Call Al for current information.

On Saturday, June 22, Bob Bieda will be leading a trip to Westover Air Reserve Base to search for grassland birds. The trip is limited to 16 participants. Call Bob (527-2623) for reservation, time and meeting place.

Saturday, July 13 is the date for the start of the Yellowstone National Park trip led by Tom Gagnon (584-6353).

On Monday, July 22, Bob Bieda will be leading the first of four Monday morning trips to the Longmeadow Sandbar looking for shorebirds. The trips (from 7:00 to 9:00 a.m.) will run only if the sandbar is exposed so check with Bob (527-2623) before going. The group will meet in the vacant lot across from the leaf dump on West Street in Longmeadow. Other sandbar dates are August 5, 19, and 26.

Saturday, August 3 starts a week-end in Delaware led by Scott Surner (253-7486). This is a new trip for the Club. Great shorebirds show up in the Delaware refuges this time of the year.

On Saturday, August 24, Al Richards (665-2761) and Bob Bieda (527-2623) will be leading a trip, limited to 12 people, to Monomoy Island, Cape Cod. Call for details and to reserve a place.

MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON at TANGLEWOOD! In celebration of the Society's centennial, the Boston Pops is dedicating a concert to the Society on Monday, August 26. Festivities start at 6:00 p.m. with a Garden Party in the Formal Gardens Tent and a Family Picnic on the Great Lawn. The concert starts at 8:00 p.m. We will try to arrange a "field trip" if there is enough interest. If this appeals to you, contact Sally Venman (549-1098).

On Wednesday, September 11 Harvey Allen (253-7963) will lead a local three hour trip in search of fall warblers. Call him for meeting place.

On Saturday, September 14 Jim Marcum (549-1613) goes to Plum Island for shorebirds and warblers.

Harvey Allen (253-7963) claims that Wednesday, September 18, will be "THE BEST DAY OF THE FALL TO WATCH HAWKS". He will meet people at the Summit House of Mt. Holyoke at 8:00 a.m.

On Saturday, September 21, Bob Bieda (527-2623) will be helping us to sort out the fall warblers. Meet for this three hour search at the Northampton Bowling Alley at 7:00 a.m.

And starting Friday, October 11 Bob Bieda (527-2623) and Scott Surner (253-7486) will lead their first long week-end trip to Cape May, NJ. No area of the country has a richer birding history. The fall hawk and warbler migration is legendary. Numbers of participants are limited. They asked to be called to save a place by May 18th. That date has passed, but if interested call for updated status of trip.

Remember to call WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS VOICE OF AUDUBON, the HBC VOICE, operated by Scott Sumner at 253-2218. The EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS VOICE OF AUDUBON can be reached at 617-259-8805

NAMES AND SUCH:

Back in February I sent all members a 1995/96 membership list. Many folks have joined since that time and should have received a copy from me. If I missed you please pick one up at the June meeting or contact me and I'll be happy to send you one. There is one error that I know of -- Marty Ortiz's home phone number is 369-4076.

Following are the additions to the list that have come to us since February. Should there be mistakes, or should I have somehow left you out altogether, please let me know.

Dorothy Barnes, 109 Mt. Warner Rd., Hadley, MA 01035

HPh: 549-5476

Paul & Marilyn Duval, 4 South Sycamore Knoll, South Hadley, MA 01075

HPh: 536-3545

Jeff Farrington, 10F Brandywine Dr., Amherst MA 01002

HPh: 549-7493

Moe Flannery, 19 Moorland St., Amherst, MA 01002

HPh: 549-1337 WPh: 585-3239

Dana Gillette & Vicki Kucia, 22 Maple St., South Hadley MA 01075

HPh: 535-2394

Libby Hopkins, 219 Montague Rd., Leverett, MA 01054

HPh: 548-9941 WPh: 253-8506

Russell Hudson, 54 Fort St., Northampton, MA 01060

HPh: 586-9610

Dodie Jones, 10 McIntosh Dr., Amherst, MA 01002

HPh: 256-1842

Alice Mertz, Applewood #239, 1 Spencer Drive, Amherst, MA 01002

HPh: 256-0793

Shulamith Oppenheim, 41 Arnold Rd., Pelham, MA 01002-9757

HPh: 253-5773 WPh: 256-0803 (home office - try first)

Mike Posner, 43 Maple Ridge Rd., Northampton, MA 01060

HPh: 586-7224

Bill Sweet and Jane Kaufman, 19 Perkins Ave., Apt. #3, Northampton, MA 01060

HPh: 584-0260 WPh: 788-1285

Katherine W. Taft, Applewood, 1 Spencer Drive, Amherst, MA 01002

HPh: 256-3029

And while doing names and numbers --

I thought you might appreciate having a list of the new Board. Please feel free to call on any of us with questions or comments. Board meetings are open to the general membership. Call one of us if you are interested in attending. We plan on meeting once this summer -- probably in July.

President:

Shirley Hilborn, 46 Rolling Ridge Rd., Amherst, MA 01002-1419

HPh: 549-1362

Vice President/Program Director:

Dennis McKenna, 535 South Pleasant St., Amherst, MA 01002-2550

HPh: 256-8439 WPh: 532-3246

Treasurer:

Mark Mount, 71 Mt. Holyoke Drive, Amherst, MA 01002-2921
HPh: 253-7580 WPh: 545-2771

Secretary/Communications:

Sally Venman, 43 Ridgecrest Rd., Amherst, MA 01002-1417
Hph: 549-1098

Secretary/Membership:

Diane Quilty, 831 Main St., Amherst, MA 01002-2401
HPh: 253-7568 WPh: 545-2545

Members at Large:

Bob Bieda, 21 Pomeroy St., Easthampton, MA 01027-2719
HPh: 527-2623 WPh: 527-7680

Sue Emerson, 37 West St., Box 286, Hadley MA 01035-9551
HPh: 584-6736

Pat Lynch, 9 Edgewood Terr., Hadley, MA 01035-9609
HPh: 549-5850

David Norton, 19 Bayberry Lane, Amherst, MA 01002-1668
HPh: 256-1767 WPh: 594-3111

Jan Ortiz, 536 Market Hill Rd., Amherst MA 01002-1246
Hph: 549-1768 (*Immediate Past President*)

Scott Sumner, 123 Wilson Rd., Belchertown, MA 01007-9372
Hph: 253-7486 WPh: 256-0559

Extra birding bits for your bliss:

BACKYARD BIRDS at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton is happy to offer a 10% discount to all HBC members for ALL PURCHASES. Since we do not have membership cards, the store has agreed to accept as proof of membership an HBC Newsletter with mailing label showing that it has been sent to you by the HBC. Simply take this mailing to the store and show it when you make your purchase. This offer is good through August, 1996. And you thought that these mailings were just for sharing information. Well, think again! Aren't you lucky to be a member?

That should just about do it for another HBC year. You'll next hear from me in August when I come after your money. (The membership year runs from September 1 - August 31.)

HAVE A WONDERFUL, PEACEFUL, BIRD-FILLED SUMMER!!!

Sally

Sally, the Communicating Secretary

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB

BIRDS  US



(elegant and understated)

August 19, 1996



For a limited time only it is my privilege as representative of the HBC Bird Board to tell you, the discriminating bird watcher, about an amazing once-in-a-year-time, back-to-school special offer. By acting NOW you can become a member of the Hampshire Bird Club for the unbelievably low price of \$10.00, \$17.00, \$30.00, \$50.00, or \$100.00, depending on choice of membership category. But, **DON'T DELAY!** This offer will be valid only up to and including the firm deadline of October 1, 1996, after which the cost of membership will be \$10.00, \$17.00, \$30.00, \$50.00, or \$100.00. Although the two appear to be identical, you measure your savings in terms of freedom from personal guilt, remorse, and self-reproach that comes with procrastination and indecision if you join by the deadline. You will also be spared the truly horrible dunning "reminder" letter I send to previous members who have not renewed.

The Club is a good source of information for beginning bird watchers as well as for those who are avian-possessed. We welcome anyone interested in birding regardless of experience or level of expertise. Monthly mailings describe regular programs, field trips, news of happenings of interest to birders, and whatever else the imaginative Bird Board comes up with. As a member you earn the privilege of getting frostbite by participating in local Christmas Bird Counts (not mandatory); a place on the Rare Bird Alert telephone tree (if desired); and access to an ever expanding lending library. Through the VOICE (an up-to-date recorded telephone service) you will learn what birds are being seen, what trips are being planned and any other bird news fit to broadcast. All this, and as a new member, you receive the treasured and truly amazing MEMBERSHIP PACKET filled with membership-only kinds of information. (And you thought this was just another bird club.)

As we go into our twelfth year as a Club, I have been looking over the programs and field trips that have been offered and am really amazed at how we have grown into the active and exciting Club we are today. Our speakers (many of our own people) have been some of the best academic and field ornithologists and nature photographers of our time. We have been informed, challenged and entertained by them. Our first two programs this fall will feature Don Kroodsma in September and Pete Dunne in October -- not chopped liver, these two. Our field trip

offerings have taken us to local spots for morning birding or further afield for all-day trips to Plum Island and the like. Among our longer trips we have spent weekends on Monhegan Island off the coast of Maine and at the Connecticut Lakes in New Hampshire. Full weeks were spent in Arizona and in Yellowstone. All these trips have been led by our own knowledgeable people. We have also gone outside our club and arranged with professional groups to take us to Trinidad and Tobago and to Costa Rica.

One of the goals of the HBC is to keep cost of membership as reasonable as possible. As with any community organization there is a whole lot of volunteer time that goes into making things happen, but the Club still has two main expenses - the cost of bringing quality programs to the community and the cost of mailings to keep members informed. Both of these costs are on the rise. Our ONLY income is from membership dues. As expenses rise, our budget gets tighter and tighter. We do want to continue to bring you the quality of programs we are known for. So ---

Oh, oh! --- QUICK --- RUN --- it's the

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PITCH

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Our membership year runs from September through August. We are not raising the price of membership. Simply stated, however, **IF THERE IS ANY WAY THAT YOU COULD JOIN AT A SUPPORTING LEVEL (Birder, Big Birder or Rare Birder) IT WOULD BE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED.**

That's it! Wasn't that easy? Didn't hurt a bit, did it?

Enclosed with this letter are all the forms. They should be filled out and sent to Dianne Quilty, membership secretary, along with a check for the appropriate amount.

Now to the business at hand --

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monthly meetings are held at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst on the second Monday of the month, September through June, at 7:30 pm. Because of holidays there are two exceptions -- October 21, not 14 and November 18, not 11. People come early (and stay late) to socialize, immerse themselves in the "The Taste of HBC" (goodies provided by the Club and by members), and peruse the HBC Library. All programs are free and open to the public. I've been asked to remind you that if you need to park along the driveway do so on the north side only. Carpooling is a good idea when possible.

To start the year right, HBC member Don Kroodsma will be behind the slide projector on Monday, September 9 to share with us his recent trip to the Falkland Islands. We are so fortunate to have Don living in our midst. His work with birdsong is internationally recognized, and you don't have to thumb through many birding magazines before finding an article he has written on the subject. He is an excellent teacher and I

am sure that you will come away from the evening with knowledge and an appreciation of Don's work plus the satisfaction of having enjoyed yourself. Please note that we have not asked him back repeatedly (this will be his fifth visit) just because he pays his yearly dues. Be there! You won't regret it!

Looking ahead, be sure to save October 21 for what we believe will be an exceptional evening. You may remember that last October we brought one of the "biggies" of the birding world, Jon *Dunn*, to speak to us on warblers. This fall we "*done*" it again (sorry about that) by arranging to bring Pete *Dunne*, a man who has been described as "America's Second-Best-Known Bird-watcher," to our area. Director of the Cape May Bird Observatory, author of *Tales of a Low-Rent Birder*, *The Feather Quest*, *Hawks in Flight* (with David Sibley and Clay Sutton) and others, Pete is a well-known and much-sought-after speaker. You might want to pick up one of his books (great reading for non-birders as well as birders -- especially the first two if the non-birder is really a non-birder). This meeting is being co-sponsored with the Allen Bird Club. Because we expect this special speaker to draw a large audience, the meeting will be held at a larger facility. More details including directions to the facility will be given in the next Newsletter.

FIELD TRIPS

The HBC offers two different types of trips: regular and fee-based. Regular field trips will be to spots easily reached and explored in one day. No costs other than travel, meals and incidental fees are involved. Please call the trip leader to register so plans can be made for the size of the group and you can be notified if a change is necessary. We carpool whenever possible and share in driving expenses. Transportation costs are calculated on the basis of \$.20 per mile per car plus tolls and parking fees. All persons in the car share costs equally. Fee-based trips are generally for a longer period, where costs are predetermined and participants pay in advance.

Field Trip Chair Bob Bieda is always happy to hear your suggestions of places you would like the Club to visit, or to talk to you if you would be interested in being considered as a trip leader. Contact him at 21 Pomeroy Street, Easthampton, MA 01027; 413-527-2623. The complete fall and winter field trip schedule will be ready soon. Meanwhile here are several trips that may interest you:

On Wednesday, September 11 Harvey Allen (253-7963) will lead a local three-hour trip in search of fall warblers. Call him for meeting place.

On Saturday, September 14 Jim Marcum (549-1613) goes to Plum Island for shorebirds and warblers.

Harvey Allen (253-7963) claims that Wednesday, September 18, will be "THE BEST DAY OF THE FALL TO WATCH HAWKS." He will meet people at the Summit House of Mt. Holyoke at 8:00 a.m.

On Saturday, September 21, Bob Bieda (527-2623) will be helping us to sort out the fall warblers. Meet at the Northampton Bowling Alley at 7:00 a.m. for this three-hour search.

Due to unforeseen scheduling problems, the October trip to Cape May has had to be cancelled.

HITCHCOCK NEWS OF INTEREST TO BIRDERS September

FALL BIRDING CLASS: Beginning on Wednesday, September 4 well-known local birder Jan Ortiz returns to the Hitchcock to teach her popular class during her favorite birding season. She notes that more birds can be seen in Massachusetts in September than during any other month in the year. Jan is a seasoned, dedicated birder with a special gift for communicating her love and knowledge of birds. Her first teaching objective is for you to enjoy the birds and enjoy learning about them. Her approach is comprehensive yet comfortable and will accommodate the beginning as well as more experienced birder. This sixteen-session class (eight Wednesday evening lectures starting September 4 followed by eight Saturday field trips starting September 7) will include all-day trips to Plum Island and to the North Shore and one half-day trip to Quabbin. If enrollment is high you may have a choice of Saturday or Sunday for the field trips. There is a fee. Registration through Hitchcock is required. The Center will re-open for business after summer break on August 28 but if you have questions before that time, leave a message (256-6006) on the tape and someone will get back to you. And as always you are welcome to call Jan (549-1768) for class information.

One program of particular interest is an event marking the completion of a task which has involved many HBC members. The long awaited bird-finding guide *Birding Western Massachusetts: The Central Connecticut River Valley* which has been penned, proofed, polished and finally published with help from the birding community will be present for perusal and purchase at a slide show and booksigning at the Center on Thursday, September 19, 7:00 p.m. Come join authors Harvey Allen, Marci Marchello (artist), Jan Ortiz, Al Richards, David Spector, Scott Sumner, David Ziomek et.al. Bring your questions, share the excitement, buy the guide, and get it signed by the authors and artist who created it.

An interesting series, *Becoming a Naturalist*, brings together six of the region's leading environmental educators in five evening workshops focusing on the skills, training, and methods needed to become an effective naturalist. The series is hosted and one session led by Claudia Dery. Other presenters include David Spector, Jan Ortiz, Ted Watt and Scott Jackson. John Green will begin the series at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 26.

Be sure to pick up the Hitchcock newsletter with complete programming information. It will be available at our September meeting.

and FINALLY ---

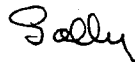
Congratulations! You have arrived at the end of this letter! Now the moment has come for you to avoid the aforementioned personal guilt, remorse, and self-reproach that comes with procrastination and indecision.

Take pen in hand, fill in the blank spaces on the membership form (if you want to be a member), sign the release form (if you want to go on field trips), sign the Rare Bird Alert form (if you want to be alerted), and sign a personal check or equivalent (if you want us to take you seriously). Place all in a stamped envelope and send to Dianne Quilty, 831 Main Street, Amherst, MA 01002-2401. PRESTO --- your YEAR OF THE BIRD, 1996 - 1997, will become a reality!

If you prefer to join at the first meeting, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE bring your completed forms with you. We'll say THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

If by any chance you could possibly have any questions after plowing through the above illumination, other than "why does she write so much?" please feel free to call me at 549-1098, or Dianne at 253-7568.

Sincerely,



Sally Venman, Secretary

I feel I would be remiss if I were not to make mention of the sad passing of Roger Tory Peterson on July 28. Simply said, we thank him whenever we enjoy experiencing the birds at whatever level touches us. Reflecting on the man, two quotes of his seem appropriate. "In a world that seems so very puzzling, is it any wonder birds have such appeal? Birds are, perhaps, the most eloquent expression of reality." And, not moved by birds only -- "Butterflies are very interesting...Here these things are little grubs for a while. And then they go into a little coffin. There they are in a sarcophagus, and then they come out and dance with the angels."

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB
RARE BIRD ALERT
1996-1997

A telephone tree is used to alert interested members to rare birds in the area. Last year the "big" local bird was the Hermit Warbler. Some others that the tree alerted people to included the Hooded and Kentucky Warblers, the Buff-breasted Sandpiper, and the Least Bittern. Birds seen further afield were the Great Gray Owl, the Hoary Redpoll, the Vermilion Flycatcher and the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher to name a few.

As was true last year, the VOICE will be used to report local sightings of interesting birds. This should meet the needs of many of us. For those of us who are more interested in going after rare or unusual birds, the Rare Bird Alert telephone tree will be activated. There will be two categories:

- A. For rare birds in the Pioneer Valley only.
- B. For rare birds in the Pioneer Valley and beyond.

Signing up for either category implies that you want to be called and are willing to call at any time. The secret to making the tree work is individual commitment to passing along the word.

It is *absolutely essential* that you call the next person on the list immediately. If unable to reach that individual personally, you keep going down the list until you do reach someone. *It is still your responsibility* to see that those not contacted are reached later on. Please do not sign up if you are only casually interested. We have learned that the tree falls apart when even one person does not cooperate.

People responding by October 1 will be included on the tree. The tree will be updated in January if new people wish to be added.

The Alert is for HBC members only. If you want to be on the RARE BIRD ALERT telephone tree, please fill out the following form, detach and return with your membership form to Dianne Quilty, 831 Main St., Amherst, MA 01002-2401.

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER -- October, 1996

If you take a deep breath and read really fast, you may be able to finish this letter before the October meeting. Go for it!

PROGRAMS

We are thrilled to be able to offer a very special event on Monday, October 21, 7:30 p.m. when Pete Dunne, a major figure in the bird watching world will be the speaker at our regular monthly meeting. The title of his presentation is "Small-headed Flycatcher. Seen yesterday. He didn't leave his name". This meeting is being co-sponsored with the Allen Bird Club. Those who were privileged to hear Pete last November when he was the featured speaker at the Seventh Annual Massachusetts Birders' Meeting speak glowingly of his presentation. Please read the enclosed notice for more information.

Because we expect to draw a large audience (and because the Amherst Town Meeting will be holding its fall meeting in the Junior High School) we have arranged to hold the meeting at **MOUNT SAINT VINCENT NURSING HOME**, an easily accessible, easy off I-91 near the Ingleside Mall where there is plenty of room for parking and seating. I emphasize that this is an uncomplicated place to reach. You might want to call a friend and arrange to car pool. If you need a ride or would like to offer a ride to someone else call Sally Venman (549-1098) or Jan Ortiz (549-1768) for help with the arrangements. Enclosed with this letter is a map with easy directions.

Pete will be signing his books before and after the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m. Bring your own Dunne books or you can purchase them there. Cash or checks only, please. -- We don't do credit cards.

Then, back to the Hitchcock Center when on Monday, November 18 David Spector will speak on the "Evolution of Field Guides." Save Monday, December 19 for the annual holiday "show and tell," "bring and brag" extravaganza when members show their own natural history slides, plans are made for the Christmas Bird Counts and we start our annual personal training program striving for excellence in holiday food consumption.

FIELD TRIPS

You should have already received the completed list of field trips through March 22, 1997. Let me know if you were missed. I'll have extra copies at the meeting. I'll be reminding you of the monthly trips in each newsletter, but you might want to take a moment to mark your calendars for those that especially interest you. Call the leader if you have questions or to register. For now --

Sunday, October 13: All-day trip to Quabbin Reservoir with Tom Gagnon (584-6353). Bring lunch, snacks, warm clothes. This trip is limited to 16 people. Call Tom.

Saturday, October 19: Three-quarter-day trip to Great Meadows Wildlife Refuge in Concord with Morris Lainer (527-9412). Bring lunch, snacks, warm clothes. Meet at 6:00 a.m. in Sunderland at the Center.

Wednesday, November 6: Mid-week, half-day local trip with Harvey Allen (253-7963). Call him for time and meeting place.

Sunday, November 10: Full-day trip to the Berkshire Lakes and Berry Mountain with Tom Gagnon (584-6353). Bring lunch, snacks, warm clothes. Meet at the Northampton Stop and Shop at 6:15 a.m.

I remind you to call the HBC VOICE (WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS VOICE OF AUDUBON), at 253-2218 to learn what birds have been seen in the area. To report sightings, call 256-1836, leave your name and phone number, identify the bird(s), and say when and where spotted and how many. To receive information about birds being seen in Eastern Massachusetts Call the EASTERN VOICE at 617-259-8805.

Monhegan Island - Memorial Day Weekend: It is not too early to think about the Club's annual trip to the Island. We leave from Port Clyde, Maine, on Friday, May 23 and spend all day Saturday and Sunday on the Island enjoying the migrating birds, the spring wild flowers, hiking, eating, laughing and having a wonderful "escape." We return to the mainland on Monday. The cost last year was \$220.00 per person plus shared gas costs to Port Clyde, parking, baggage fees, tips, lunches and snacks, and an optional lobster dinner on the Island.

Places to stay on Monhegan are limited, and reservations need to be made the first of the year. This is an extremely popular trip and fills quickly. Scott Surner (253-7486) will be making the arrangements. Morris Lainer (527-9412) will be the on-island leader. If you plan on going or if you think you would like to go, insure a spot for yourself by making a \$25.00 deposit by January 1. Make the check out to the Hampshire Bird Club and send it to treasurer Mark Mount, 71 Mt. Holyoke Dr., Amherst MA 01002. Call Scott or Morris if you have questions.

LIBRARY

The HBC library, ably handled by Anne Cann, is located on the first floor of the Hitchcock Center, which is open Wednesday through Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.. It is for the benefit of HBC members. Please enjoy it. Three new titles have been added over the summer: *Stokes Field Guide to Birds, Eastern Region*, and *Stokes Field Guide to Birds, Western Region*, both by Donald & Lillian Stokes, and *A Birders Guide to Maine* by Elizabeth C and Jan E. Pierson, and Peter Vickery. If you have any suggestions for books which you would like to see added to the resources, please let Anne know. If you have birding books you no longer use which you would like to contribute to the library, they will be accepted with appreciation and made available to all HBC members. You can see Anne at the monthly meetings or call her at 253-7753.

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

You don't have to be a fan of Gilbert and Sullivan or David Spector to enjoy a rather unusual (!) evening combining ornithology and light opera. You will need a ticket to the Valley Light Opera's presentation of *The Mikado* for either Friday, November 1 or Saturday, November 2. An hour before the 8:00 p.m. performance David will give one of his delightful lecture and slide show combinations, "Ornithology of *The Mikado* focusing on "On a tree by a river ...," a song coming at a critical turn of the plot. This free lecture can be experienced at the Amherst Regional High School at 7:00 p.m. For ticket information contact VLO at P.O.Box 2143, Amherst, MA 01004-2143. (Or I bet Sally or Bill Venman could also give you information at 549-1098).

MISCELLANEOUS

The Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary has programs that our members might wish to check out. On Thursday, November 7, 7:00 p.m. Chris Leahy will be at the Beyond Words Bookstore in Northampton with a slide presentation and lecture based on the book *The Nature of Massachusetts*. He will then stay for questions and signings.

If you missed Don Kroodsma when he spoke to our Club on the "Birds of the Falkland Islands," you will have another chance when he presents his program on Thursday, November 21, 7:00 p.m. at the Sanctuary.

I thought it might be useful for you to know the names and phone numbers of the HBC Board members and other individuals you might wish to contact. Board meetings are open to all members. Let us hear from you.

Officers:

President: Shirley Hilborn (549-1362).
V. Pres. & Program Chair: Dennis McKenna (256-8439).
Treasurer: Mark Mount (253-7580).
Membership Sec'y: Diane Quilty (253-7568).
Communications Sec'y: Sally Venman (549-1098).

Members at Large:

Bob Bieda, (527-2623).
Sue Emerson (584-6736).
Pat Lynch, (549-5850).
David Norton (256-1767).
Jan Ortiz, Immediate Past President, (549-1768).
Scott Sumner, (253-7486).

Others:

Conservation Committee Chair: Ann Lombard (386-7509).
Decals and Patches: Diane Quilty (253-7568).
Field Trip Chair: Bob Bieda, (527-2623)
Library: Anne Cann (253-7753).
Rare Bird Alert: Shirley Hilborn (549-1362).
Refreshments: Laura Barr (772-2839) and Sue Emerson (584-6736).
T-Shirts: Joanne Parker (548-9512) and Margaret Brown (323-5150)

Many of you were present at the Hitchcock Center last month at the event marking the completion of the long awaited bird-finding guide *Birding Western Massachusetts: The Central Connecticut River Valley* which was penned, proofed, polished and finally published with help from the birding community (mostly our own members). If you missed the fun but would like to purchase the book it is available at our meetings, at local book stores and at *BACKYARD BIRDS*.

When there is space in the Newsletter, it has been our policy to help HBC members as follows:

FOR SALE -- Kowa 7x40 fully multi-coated binoculars in excellent condition (used only eight or nine times). The owner, Ged Dorman, has found the binoculars heavier than she is comfortable with and would like to purchase a compact version. Call Ged at 253-9850 for more information.

When there is space in the Newsletter, it is my policy to provide thought nuggets for pondering:

If a book about failures doesn't sell, is it a success?
If a parsley farmer is sued, can they garnish his wages?
When it rains, why don't sheep shrink?
Why are there interstate highways in Hawaii?

AND --

If you're in a vehicle going the speed of light, what happens when you turn on the headlights?

Hoping to see you all on the 21st —

Sally Venman, Secretary

Sally

Hampshire Bird Club

Amherst, Massachusetts



Pete Dunne is coming!

The Hampshire Bird Club will be joined by the Allen Bird Club in co-sponsoring a major personality in the bird watching world, celebrated nature author and speaker **Pete Dunne**, on Monday, October 21, at the Mount Saint Vincent Nursing Home in Holyoke. The 7:30 meeting will be preceded by a book signing at 7 p.m. The topic of Pete's talk —

"Small-headed Flycatcher. Seen yesterday. He didn't leave his name."

A word about his program . . .

This is a tale of the rediscovery of the bird that both Alexander Wilson and John James Audubon claimed to have discovered nearly 200 years ago. It was then, and remains today, the epitome of the rivalry, even the enmity, that existed between these twin pillars of American ornithology.

About Pete Dunne . . .

In September 1975, Pete Dunne made a trip to Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania on what would prove to be the best hawk flight of the season. As the last of the several thousand Broad-winged Hawks that passed that day enveloped the North Lookout in a living tornado, the 25-year-old Dunne made a promise to himself. Somehow, he vowed, he was going to spend the rest of his life watching birds.

Twenty years, six books, five continents and nobody knows how many species of birds later, Pete Dunne has more than lived up to his promise. In 1978 Dunne became Director of the Cape May Bird Observatory. In 1984 he organized the World Series of Birding -- a 24-hour birding competition that attracts teams from the U.S. and abroad. He now holds the post of Director of Natural History for the New Jersey Audubon. He has become one of birding's best known figures and most eloquent spokespeople -- a "Renaissance birder" in the words of the American Birding Association's founding director, Jim Tucker.

Pete is a master story teller with wit and wisdom leading readers to the wonder and discovery of

wild America and the joys of birding. He is author of *Tales of a Low-Rent Birder*, *More Tales of a Low-Rent Birder*, *The Feather Quest*, *The Wind Masters*, *Before the Echo: Essays on Nature* and co-author of *Hawks in Flight*. His column, "In the Natural State," appears biweekly in the New Jersey section of the Sunday *New York Times*. He appears regularly in *American Birds*, *Birding*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *Living Bird Quarterly*, *NJ Audubon* and *Wildlife Conservation*.

A committed conservationist, Dunne served on the American Birding Association Board of Directors from 1988 to 1995. An authority on birders and their equipment needs, he is consulted by many of the world's top optics producers.

Remember — we've moved the meeting!

Pete is traveling from his home in Cape May, New Jersey, to be with us at this special meeting. We expect him to draw a large audience, so we have arranged to move this one meeting to the **Mount Saint Vincent Nursing Home** in Holyoke. You will find easy directions on the back of this flyer.

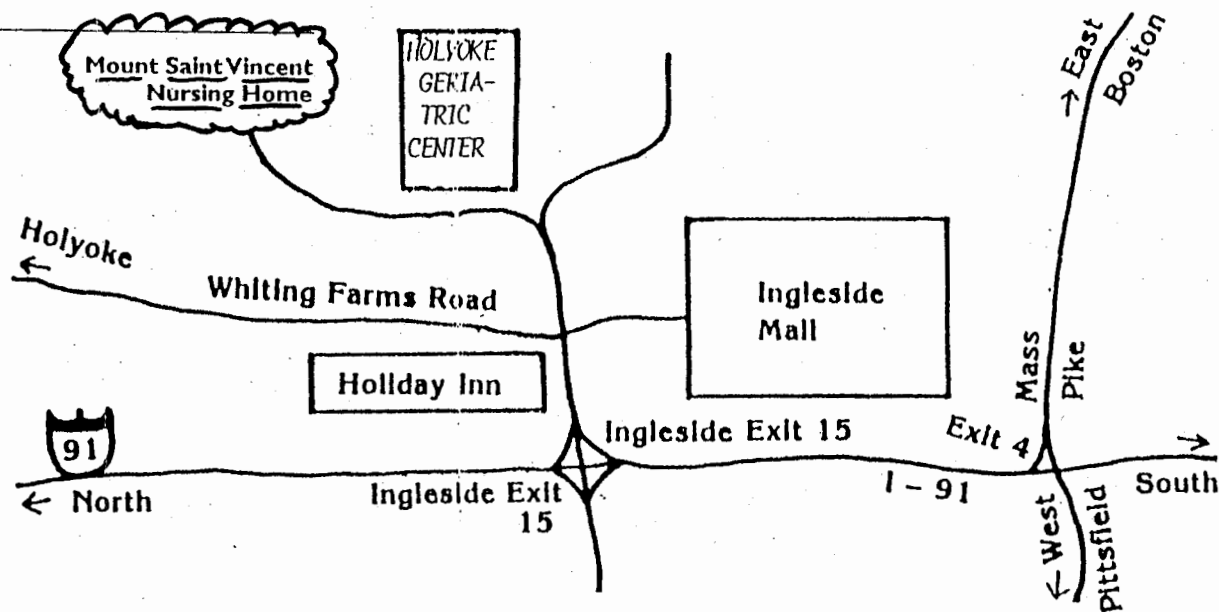
Book signing

Pete will be signing his books at 7 p.m. and again after the program is over. Bring your own Dunne books or purchase them there. Cash or checks only, please. No credit cards.

For more information, contact Shirley Hilborn (413-549-1362) or Dennis McKenna (at home at 413-256-8439 or at work at 413-532-3246).



35 Holy Family Road
Holyoke, MA 01040



DIRECTIONS TO MOUNT ST. VINCENT NURSING HOME

FROM THE NORTH:

I-91 SOUTH TO EXIT 15 (INGLESIDE)

AT END OF THE EXIT PROCEED LEFT

AT ~~FIRST~~ ^{second} STOP LIGHT (SHELL STATION ON LEFT) PROCEED STRAIGHT

TAKE FIRST LEFT AFTER THE CHRISTMAS SHOP

3RD RIGHT IS MOUNT ST. VINCENT NURSING HOME

FROM THE SOUTH:

I-91 NORTH TO EXIT 15 (INGLESIDE)

AT END OF EXIT BEAR RIGHT

AT ~~FIRST~~ ^{second} STOP LIGHT (SHELL STATION ON LEFT) PROCEED STRAIGHT

TAKE FIRST LEFT AFTER CHRISTMAS SHOP

3RD RIGHT IS MOUNT ST. VINCENT NURSING HOME

PROGRAMS

Since the formation of the HBC in the spring of 1984, there are a few individuals who keep coming back as program presenters. I could say cute things like "we keep hoping they'll get it right this time," but the truth is that they interest, teach and entertain us so well. On Monday, November 18 David Spector, ornithologist, teacher, writer, President of the Board at the Hitchcock Center and long-time member of the HBC will be returning for the sixth time. His approach has been sometimes straight (*The Life and Songs of the Yellow Warbler*, his subject of concentration as a PhD candidate, and *Bullfinches and Bulldozers, The Wildlife of Grand Caymen Island*), and sometimes unusual (*Naturalists and Novelists* and *How to Misidentify a Bird*, the subject of his article in the September/October, 1996 issue of *Bird Watcher's Digest*). He also served as the Moderator for our panel discussion on *Birding Ethics*. His program for this month is entitled "*The Evolution of Field Guides*." David received his PhD from UMass and went on to do three years of post-doctoral research at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. He is now teaching Biology at Central Connecticut State University. Come let David challenge your mind and delight your birding senses with his extensive knowledge and wry sense of humor.

Save Monday, December 9 for the annual holiday "show and tell," "bring and brag" extravaganza when members show their own natural history slides, plans are made for the Christmas Bird Counts and we start our annual personal training program striving for excellence in holiday food consumption.

The new year will bring us Les Campbell on January 13 (slide show on Quabbin); Scott Hall, graduate student at UMass on February 10 (Puffin restoration project in the Gulf of Maine); Chris Rimmer, Director of the Vermont Institute of Natural Science on March 10 (Bicknell's Thrush); and Ethan Temeles on April 14 (Hummingbirds, a multi-media presentation).

FIELD TRIPS (etc.)

On Sunday, November 10 Tom Gagnon (584-6353) will be leading a full-day trip to the Berkshire Lakes and Berry Mountain. Bring lunch, snacks and wear warm clothes. Meet at the Northampton Stop and Shop at 6:15 a.m.

On Friday, November 29 Al Richards (665-2761) leads the annual "HBC Turkey Trot to Cape Anne and Plum Island." Meet at the Dairy Mart in Sunderland where Rts. 47 and 116 cross at 5:00 a.m. It's a full-day adventure so bring lunch and snacks and plenty of warm clothing.

December brings us (among other events) the annual Christmas Counts. The Springfield Count (Bruce Kindseth at 745-9593) will be on Saturday, December 21; the Northampton Count (Jan Ortiz at 549-1768) on Sunday, December 22 and the Greenfield Count (Mark Fairbrother at 367-2695) on Sunday, December 29.

Monhegan Island - Memorial Day Weekend reminder: Details of the trip were in the October Newsletter. If you plan on going or if you think you would like to go, insure a spot for yourself by making a \$25.00 deposit by January 1. Make your check out to the Hampshire Bird Club and send it to treasurer Mark Mount, 71 Mt. Holyoke Dr., Amherst, MA 01002. Scott Surner (253-7486) will be making the arrangements. Morris Lainer (527-9412) will be the on-island leader. Call Scott or Morris if you have questions.

Enclosed with this Newsletter is a blue sheet containing on one side the new **CODE of BIRDING ETHICS**, recently adopted by the American Birding Association Board

of Directors. It is not copyrighted and the ABA encourages both individuals and groups of birders to adopt it or adapt it for their use. On the other side of the sheet you will find the **HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB FIELD TRIP POLICY** statement. Please take a moment to read both.

The new Rare Bird Alert has been activated. So far we have been directed to a Ruddy Duck, a White-fronted Goose, a Dickcissel and a Boreal Owl. Not a bad start! I remind you that the tree will be updated in January if enough people wish to be added. Shirley Hilborn (549-1362) is the person to call.

I again remind you to call the HBC VOICE (WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS VOICE OF AUDUBON), at 253-2218 to learn what birds have been seen in the area. To report sightings, call 256-1836, leave your name and phone number, identify the bird(s), and say when and where spotted and how many. To receive information about birds being seen in Eastern Massachusetts Call the EASTERN VOICE at 617-259-8805.

Also enclosed with this letter is a green sheet with the updated list of Rare Bird Alert numbers to call across the country. Whether you're planning a trip or just fed up with even anticipating New England in the winter, it's fun to find out what is being seen in far-away places.

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

Jan Ortiz will be offering a birding class, *WINTER BIRDING: at the feeder and beyond*, through the Hitchcock Center. The six week, Saturday morning sessions begin on January 18 and run through February 22.

Jan describes this unique class as a perfect way to start birding if you are a beginner and an ideal way to hone your skills if you're more experienced. Because there are not as many birds around in the winter, it is a perfect time to study the area's more common species, learning them well and developing good basic birding skills. The class will study behavior, manner of flight, what birds eat and how they survive the winters. There are also "irruptive" species, wanderers that grace our feeders and fields some winters and are scarce or nonexistent in others.

Classes begin at 7:00 a.m. inside the Center where the feeder birds are watched and discussed while the feeder watchers watch each other feeding on breakfast goodies. Besides that, Jan will have slides, mounts, cassette tapes, video tapes, guest speakers, whatever -- any and all will be used in an effort to learn and have fun doing it. Later in the morning it's out into the field to discover what this winter has to offer, be it Snowy Owls, Rough-legged Hawks, or winter finches. Or the group may take part in a raptor survey or decide to spend time sorting our area's gull population. Field outings will be local unless an extremely exciting bird tempts the group to a more distant spot.

According to Jan, "We'll just have to see what birds this winter has in store for us. We never know, but then, that's part of the fun!"

Call the Center (256-6006) for fee information and to register.

MARC

In the fall of 1991 the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (MARC) was formed. The purpose of the Committee was "to evaluate and document reports of unusual occurrences of birds in Massachusetts, to provide a means by which such reports can gain acceptance as valuable scientific data, and for maintaining an official Massachusetts state bird list." Seth Kellogg, the Editor of *Bird News of Western Massachusetts* was one of the nine initial members of the Committee, the others being Kathleen Anderson, Brad Blodget, Richard Forster, Mark Lynch, Blair Nikula, Simon Perkins, Wayne Peterson (Chair), and Robert Stymeist, with Marjorie Rines as non-voting Secretary. MARC has been kept busy examining and in some cases

reevaluating old Massachusetts bird records, along with processing more recent records that had not previously been subjected to rigorous scrutiny.

The Committee takes action on reports of birds defined in the Bylaws as: (a) any species recorded in Massachusetts fewer than ten times overall or fewer than five times in the last twenty years; (b) any rare and/or difficult to identify species as designated by the Committee; or (c) any record of a species that is judged by the MARC to be geographically or temporally rare. In May of 1994 this Committee produced a state bird list that should prove interesting and useful to anyone with an interest in Massachusetts birdlife.

I have given this background sketch which I have condensed from information in *Bird News of Western Massachusetts* for two reasons. First, I feel it is an interesting and an important aspect of the hobby we enjoy so much. And, second, because Jan Ortiz, past President of the HBC, teacher and program presenter has just been named to the MARC replacing Seth Kellogg whose term has expired.

Congratulations, Jan!

Good luck, Jan!

And ----

Do I have a bird for you, Jan !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

MISCELLANEOUS

If you missed Don Kroodsma when he spoke to our Club on the "Birds of the Falkland Islands," you will have another chance when he presents his program on Thursday, November 21, 7:00 p.m. at Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary in Easthampton.

Many of you were present at the event marking the completion of the long awaited bird-finding guide *Birding Western Massachusetts: The Central Connecticut River Valley*. Published jointly by the Kestrel Trust and the Hampshire Bird Club, the book was penned, proofed, polished and finally published with help from the birding community (mostly our own members). If you missed the fun but would like to purchase the book it will be available at our meetings, at local book stores, and at *BACKYARD BIRDS*. The price is \$12.00.

BACKYARD BIRDS at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton is happy to offer a 10% discount to all HBC members for ALL PURCHASES. Since we do not have membership cards, the store has agreed to accept as proof of membership an HBC Newsletter with mailing label showing that it has been sent to you by the HBC. Simply take this mailing to the store and show it when you make your purchase. The offer is good through August, 1997 and is for members only. And you thought that these mailings were just for sharing information. Well, think again! Aren't you lucky to be a member?

Sadly I need to tell you of the death of Gerry Bozzo. Recognizing his role in introducing many young people to birdwatching during his years as a public school educator at the Amherst Regional Junior High School, our Club honored Gerry by making him an Honorary Life Member of the Club at our June, 1996 meeting. Many of our members benefited greatly from Gerry's teachings and leadership. He will be missed. The Club has made a memorial contribution to the Massachusetts State Audubon Society in his memory.

Hoping to see you at the November meeting --

Sally

Sally Venman, Secretary

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER

December, 1996

The rapid approach of the "giving" season is giving your *all-purpose, there for you* secretary fits of anxiety. She feels the pressure of each passing day and senses DANGER --- plunging immune systems --- shattering of "cool." Your *all-purpose, there for you* secretary feels she can't possibly be alone in her panic and has found a way to be of assistance to herself and to others similarly impaired. While involved in post-Thanksgiving procrastination she was thumbing through one of the many catalogs that her house seems to attract. The answer became clear. She should share with her friends some of the perfect gift selections available from the catalog. Simply call 1-800- ---....., state your wishes for Mom, Aunt Desdmona and Cousin Jasper, and TA-DA --- anxiety melts away to nothingness, immune systems strengthen and "cool" returns. Here follow some suggestions:

For those attracted to things gastronomical how about the only **Remote Controlled Gas Barbecue** for cooks who tire easily? A hand-held remote control ignites the flame and controls temperature and cooking time from up to 30 feet away! Or for the cook who has everything try the **Pop-up Hot Dog Cooker**. Simply take this toaster, drop two wieners into the center slot, two buns in the toaster baskets at either end and press down. Up pop "dogs" for two in two minutes! WOW!

For people who have overdone the remote control (no exercise) and hot dogs (calories cholesterolic) a perfect gift might be found at a **Diet and Fitness Center** where a program can be bought for two weeks for a mere \$5,195.00. Or, for the do-it-yourself home aerobic exercise fan, sooth those injured, aching muscles and inflamed joints with a **Warm Wax Home Therapy System**. Reusable paraffin wax has a wintergreen scent and slips easily away from your skin after treatment.

Don't forget that your pet also enjoys being remembered. The **Original Waxed Dog Jacket** is a unique jacket designed to keep your dog dry and warm while protecting him from the rain, wind and cold. **Waxed Leggings** are also available. Your Kitty-Kat would really enjoy a **Cat Play Center** or an **Indoor Cat Playground**. If your feline is of a fastidious and modest nature, the perfect gift might well be the **Self-Cleaning Litter Box** which has a built-in microprocessor-controlled system that senses when your cat has left the box and signals a sifting comb which moves through the box depositing the waste into a PVC plastic holding cartridge for easy removal.

I sincerely hope this has taken away some of your holiday anxiety. Now to move on to the purpose of a *Birding* newsletter.

MEETINGS and FIELD TRIPS

The meeting on Monday, December 9, at the Hitchcock Center at 7:30 p.m. is the holiday event when members show their own natural history slides (no more than ten, please) and we start our annual personal training program striving for excellence in holiday food consumption. Everyone is asked to bring a snack or dessert to share. Christmas Count planning will follow the meeting.

The Christmas Bird Count is a census of birdlife taken annually at the end of the year across the Continent. It was started in 1899 as an alternative to the traditional Christmas "side hunt," a time when hunters would go out after Christmas dinner, choose sides and compete to see which group could shoot the most birds. The count is sponsored by the National Audubon Society and is undertaken by volunteers who count not only the different species of birds but also the actual number of individuals. Thousands of birdwatchers participate in this major information-gathering event. Data fed into the computer show densities of wintering bird populations and help to point out cyclical movements and evidence of changes in populations.

You don't have to be an expert and you don't have to count all day. If you are a beginner, you can be put with an experienced birder. You can participate simply by counting birds at your feeders in the warmth of your home.

Our local count (Northampton Christmas Count) is being organized by Jan Ortiz and will take place on Sunday, December 22. It covers an area on both sides of the river. Immediately following the Count participants will meet at Arcadia for the compilation. A \$5.00 fee to cover costs of compiling and publishing the results is required from all field observers. The fee does not apply to feeder watchers unless they wish to be listed with participants in the special CBC issue of *Field Notes* published by the National Audubon Society. If you are interested in participating in this local count but can't attend the meeting, please call Jan Ortiz (549-1768) for information and assignment. Important note from Jan: She was away for 10 days last month during which her answering machine malfunctioned. If you called and have not had your call returned --- please call her again. Other counts: Springfield, Saturday, December 21 (call Bruce Kindseth at 745-9593); Greenfield, Sunday, December 29 (call Mark Fairbrother at 367-2695) and Quabbin, Saturday, January 4 (call Scott Sumner at 253-7486).

A new year of programs will bring us Les Campbell on January 13 (slide show on Quabbin); Scott Hall, graduate student at UMass on February 10 (Puffin restoration project in the Gulf of Maine); Chris Rimmer, Director of the Vermont Institute of Natural Science on March 10 (Bicknell's Thrush); and Ethan Temeles on April 14 (Hummingbirds, a multi-media presentation).

Three January field trips are planned to give you a good start on your year list. On Saturday, January 11 Bob Bieda (527-2623) will lead an all-day trip to the North Shore. Meet at the center of Sunderland at 6:00 a.m. Wear warm clothes, bring lunch and snacks. On Saturday, January 18 Morris Lainer (527-9412) will lead a morning of winter birding in the Northampton/Amherst area. Call him for details. And on Saturday, January 25 Al Richards (665-2761) searches for waterfowl from Falmouth to Plymouth. Meet at the Hitchcock Center at 6:00 a.m. or the Ames parking lot near the Palmer Turnpike entrance at 6:30 a.m. Wear warm clothes, bring lunch and snacks for this full-day trip.

Scott Sumner (253-7486) reminds us to send in our deposit of \$25.00 to hold a spot on the annual Memorial Day Weekend Monhegan trip. Make your check out to the Hampshire Bird Club and send it to Mark Mount, 71 Mt. Holyoke Dr., Amherst, MA, 01002.

MISCELLANEOUS and RECYCLED INFORMATION

A reminder that Jan Ortiz will be offering a birding class, *WINTER BIRDING: at the feeder and beyond*, through the Hitchcock Center. The six week, Saturday morning sessions begin on January 18 and run through February 22.

Jan describes this unique class as a perfect way to start birding if you are a beginner and an ideal way to hone your skills if you're more experienced. Because there are not as many birds around in the winter, it is a perfect time to study the area's more common species, learning them well and developing good basic birding skills. The class will study behavior, manner of flight, what birds eat and how they survive the winters. There are also "irruptive" species, wanderers that grace our feeders and fields some winters and are scarce or nonexistent in others.

Classes begin at 7:00 a.m. inside the Center where the feeder birds are watched and discussed while the feeder watchers watch each other feeding on breakfast goodies. Besides that, Jan will have slides, mounts, cassette tapes, video tapes, guest speakers, whatever -- any and all will be used in an effort to learn and have fun doing it. Later in the morning it's out into the field to discover what this winter has to offer, be it Snowy Owls, Rough-legged Hawks, or winter finches. Or the group may take part in a raptor survey or decide to spend time sorting out our area's gull population. Field outings will be local unless an extremely exciting bird tempts the group to a more distant spot.

According to Jan, "We'll just have to see what birds this winter has in store for us. We never know, but then, that's part of the fun!"

Call the Center (256-6006) for fee information and to register.

Just for fun and to enhance your winter feeder viewing pleasure I have enclosed a copy of the HBC Feeder Check List. Get copies of the chart made at your local copy place so that you can continue recording throughout the winter.

The bird-finding guide *Birding Western Massachusetts: The Central Connecticut River Valley*, published jointly by the Kestrel Trust and the Hampshire Bird Club will be available for purchase at our meetings. The price is \$12.00. The book is also available through the ABA. Looks like we've made the big time!

Don't forget that *BACKYARD BIRDS* at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton is happy to offer a 10% discount to all HBC members for ALL PURCHASES. Use one of the newsletters as proof of membership.

By this time everyone who has a decal, a patch, and/or a t-shirt coming to them as a membership premium or as purchased at the time of becoming a member should have it (them) in hand. If you do not, please see Dianne Quilty at a meeting or call her (253-7568). Also by this time, you should have received by mail copies of HBC Field Trips through March (yellow sheet), the ABA Principles of Birding Ethics and HBC Field Trip Policy (blue sheet), and North American Rare Bird Alerts (green sheet). If you were missed, or if you want additional copies see Sally Venman at a meeting or call her (549-1098).

I remind you that the Rare Bird Alert telephone tree will be updated in January if enough people wish to be added. Shirley Hilborn (549-1362) is the person to call.

Finally, coming next month (if the computer gods remain friendly), the new members will receive the NEW MEMBERS PACKET with all kinds of wonderful information available only through HBC! And, early in '97 all members will receive a list of all HBC members giving addresses and phone numbers as recorded by you on your membership form. Call Dianne (253-7568) or Sally (549-1098) if you prefer not to be listed or if there are errors or changes we may not have.

When there is room in the Newsletter, it has been the Club's policy to include items of interest to birders submitted by HBC members. The following is a short essay by Henry Lappen.

As birders, we follow changes in nomenclature as we follow changes in the seasons, often feeling we have as much control of one as the other. Sometimes the changes make sense. Species have been misnamed and misplaced in the wrong family. It is nice to communicate easily with faraway birders.


But things are getting out of hand. Eastern Towhee? Forget it! I quit! I'm going back to the names I first started birding with. No longer will I make a mess of my check list crossing out names and scribbling new ones over them. No longer will my lifelist shrink due to lumping. And you won't find me embarrassed next time I blurt out the wrong name in the heat of a field sighting.

Bird names are an integral part of our culture and language. If the A.O.U. or A.B.A or some other group of ornithologists wants to change the scientific (Latin) name of a species, fine. But common names should be just that. The common man or woman knows Orioles are usually found outside of Baltimore as they know that Purple Finches are red. These idiosyncrasies are what make language so interesting. Common names should vary from region to region, as bags become sacks, tonic changes to soda or pop, or as the birds vary themselves.

Up till now, I've grumbled but dutifully used the "correct" names. But, no more. Be prepared. Next time you see me up Mount Tom, you'd better remember what a Sparrow Hawk is, and a Duck Hawk, and a Marsh Hawk, and a --- Blue Darter.

Thank you Henry.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS to all.


Sally Venman, Secretary

North American Rare Bird Alerts

United States

Alabama

Statewide (205) 987-2730

Alaska

Statewide (907) 338-2473
Kachemak Bay (907) 235-7337
Seward (907) 224-2325

Arizona

Phoenix (602) 832-8745
Tucson (520) 798-1005

Arkansas

Statewide (501) 753-5853

California

Arcata (707) 822-5666
Los Angeles (213) 874-1318
Monterey (408) 375-9122;
updates 375-2577
Morro Bay (805) 528-7182
Northern Calif. ~~(415) 521-5592~~
Orange County (714) 563-6516
Sacramento (916) 481-0118
San Bernardino (909) 793-5599
San Diego (619) 479-3400
San Joaquin/S. Sierra
(209) 271-9420
Santa Barbara (805) 964-8240

Colorado

Statewide (303) 424-2144

Connecticut

Statewide (203) 254-3665

Delaware

Statewide (302) 658-2747

District of Columbia

Districtwide (301) 652-1088

Florida

Statewide (941) 657-4442
Miami (305) 667-7337
Lower Keys (305) 294-3438
N. Florida (912) 244-9190

Georgia

Statewide (770) 493-8862
S. Georgia (912) 244-9190

Idaho

Northern (208) 882-6195
Southeast (208) 236-3337
Southwest (208) 368-6096

Illinois

Central Illinois (217) 785-1083
Chicago ~~(312) 671-1522~~
Dupage (708) 406-8111
Northwestern (815) 965-3095

Indiana

Statewide (317) 259-0911

Iowa

Statewide (319) 338-9881

Kansas

Statewide (913) 372-5499

Kansas City (913) 342-2473
Wichita (316) 681-2266

Kentucky

Statewide (502) 894-9538

Louisiana

Baton Rouge (504) 768-9874
SE Louisiana (504) 834-2473

Maine

Statewide (207) 781-2332;
now 24 hrs. 7 days/week

~~Downeast (207) 244-4446~~

Maryland

Statewide (301) 652-1088
Baltimore (410) 467-0653

Massachusetts

Boston (617) 259-8805
Cape Cod (508) 349-9464
Nantucket Is. (508) 228-8818
Western Mass. (413) 253-2218

Michigan

Statewide (616) 471-4919
Detroit (810) 477-1360
Sault Ste. Marie (705) 256-2790

Minnesota

Duluth (218) 525-5952
Statewide (612) 780-8890

Missouri

Kansas City (913) 342-2473
Statewide (573) 445-9115
St. Louis (314) 935-8432

Montana

Statewide (406) 721-9799
Big Fork (406) 756-5595

Nebraska

Statewide (402) 292-5325

Nevada

Southern (702) 649-1516
Northwest (702) 324-2473

New Hampshire

Statewide (603) 224-9900

New Jersey

Cape May (609) 884-2626
Statewide (908) 766-2661

New Mexico

Statewide (505) 662-2101

New York

Albany (518) 439-8080
Buffalo (716) 896-1271
Ithaca (607) 254-2429
Lower Hudson Valley
(914) 666-6614
New York (212) 979-3070
Rochester (716) 425-4630
Syracuse (315) 668-8000

North Carolina

Statewide (704) 332-2473

Ohio

Cincinnati (513) 521-2847
Cleveland (216) 381-8325
Columbus (614) 221-9736
Blendon Woods Park
(614) 895-6222
SW Ohio (513) 277-6446
NW Ohio (419) 875-6889
Youngstown (216) 742-6661

North Dakota

Statewide (701) 250-4481;
5pm-7am weekdays, 24 hrs
weekends and holidays

Oklahoma

Oklahoma City (405) 373-4531
Statewide (918) 669-6646

Oregon

Statewide (503) 292-0661
~~Oregon (503) 255-1212 ext. 5261~~
Northeastern (208) 882-6195

Pennsylvania

Allentown (610) 252-3455
Philadelphia (215) 567-2473
Reading/Bucks County (610)
376-6000, ext. 2473

Schuylkill County (717)

622-6013

Western Penna. (412) 963-0560

Wilkes-Barre (717) 825-2473

~~Central PA (717) 255-1212~~

Rhode Island

Statewide (401) 949-3870;

reporting (401) 949-5454

South Carolina

Statewide (704) 332-2473

Tennessee

Statewide (615) 356-7636
Chattanooga (423) 843-2822

Texas

Statewide (713) 992-2757
Abilene (915) 691-8981
Austin (512) 926-8751
Corpus Christi (512) 265-0377
Lubbock (806) 797-6690
Northcentral (817) 329-1270
Northeast (903) 759-8989
Lower Rio Grande Valley
(210) 969-2731
San Antonio (210) 733-8306

Utah

Statewide (801) 538-4730

Vermont

Statewide (802) 457-2779

Virginia

Statewide (804) 238-2713,
(301) 652-1088

Washington

Statewide (206) 933-1831;
reporting (206) 454-2662
Southeastern (208) 882-6195

Lower Columbia Basin
(509) 943-6957

West Virginia

Statewide (304) 736-3086

Wisconsin

Statewide (414) 352-3857
Madison (608) 255-2476

(except 9-3 M-F)

Northeast (Green Bay)

(414) 469-8165

Wyoming

Statewide (307) 265-2473

Canada

Alberta

Calgary (403) 237-8821
Edmonton (403) 433-2473

British Columbia

Vancouver (604) 737-3074
Victoria (604) 592-3381

New Brunswick

Provincewide (506) 382-3825
Shediac/Moncton (506)
532-2873 (French)

Nova Scotia

Provincewide (902) 852-
2428; (902) 852-5209

Ontario

Oshawa (905) 576-2738
Ottawa (613) 825-7444
Sault Ste. Marie (705) 256-2790
Toronto (416) 350-3000, ext.
2293)
Windsor/Detroit (810) 477-1360
Windsor/Pt. Pelee
(519) 252-2473
Hamilton (905) 648-9537

Quebec

Eastern Quebec (French)
(418) 660-9089
Sagueny/Lac St. Jean (French)
(418) 696-1868
Bas St. Laurent (French)
(418) 725-5118
Western Quebec (French)
(819) 778-0737
Montreal (English)
(514) 989-5076

Saskatchewan

Regina (306) ~~744-0944~~
949-2505
Note: Underlined phone numbers
have been updated since the last
complete RBA listing in *Wing
It* (February 1996 issue). Please
make it your responsibility to no-
tify us of changes by writing to
ABA's Colorado Springs office, or
by calling toll-free: (800) 835-
2473. Rev: 7/15/96