

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB - January, 2000

It is the first Monday of the first full week of the new century and time for the annual Hampshire Bird Club January postcard written by your thoroughly holiday-weary but happy secretary who wishes you all the very best days ahead. Whew - Long sentence!

On January 10, 7:30 p.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst, James Baird, the Mass Audubon representative to Belize in Central America will be with us to present a program titled *Belize: the Ecotourists' Paradise*. He is involved with "The Programme for Belize," a non-profit conservation organization that holds 287,000 acres of land in trust for the people of Belize. The property is maintained through a sustainable development program which includes some logging, ecotourism, and educational programs that bring students to Belize. The long-term goal is to pay for the conservation of the entire area by wise use of its natural resources. There are over 300 species of birds in the country and Baird has promised beautiful slides as well as some fascinating information about the fine work being done to preserve the natural beauty and ecology of the area.

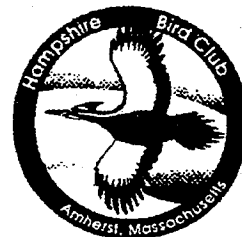
Field Trips: Sat. 1/8, *North Shore* (Bob Bieda at 527-2623); Wed. 1/12, *"Morning Sweep"* (CANCELLED); Sat. 1/22, *"Winter Finches - Western Massachusetts"* (Shirley Hilborn at 253-6462); Sat. 1/29, *"Saturday Morning Birding"* (Mary Alice Wilson at 548-9078); and Sat. 2/5, *"Maine's Southern Shore"* (Scott Sumner at 253-7496). Please refer to the Field Trip list sent last month for descriptions.

May your 2000 be one of bird-filled woodland walks and undreamed of delights!
See you January 10th. Sally

Hampshire Bird Club
Amherst, Massachusetts

<http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>

February, 2000



"Honey, I'm home for the winter!" I called to husband, Bill. (I've just returned from Shirley Hilborn's winter field trip and it's 5°.) "Winter finches can jolly well exist without me! Throw another log on the fire! Pass the hot chocolate! I'm not budging from this house 'til spring arrives! Oh, by the way, the February Newsletter is due."

"Oh, Oh," he mumbles.

But – before getting down to business, I have a couple New Millenium thoughts to pass on. With passage of time I find I

am experiencing some memory challenges, the most frustrating of which is putting names to people I have known for ages. I can call to memory my friend's longings, deepest secrets, and the SAT scores of all her children, but her name just won't pop out. Perhaps I could take a lesson from the recent company mergers such as the Exxon/Mobil and the AOL/Netscape deals. I think that the resulting name may be of help in recalling the individual merging units. Take for example the most recent merger of Times Warner and EMI. This could become "tis War Emy", thus, tricking

the mind into remembering all the parts. Carrying this method one step further, suppose Honeywell, Imasco, and Home Oil merge. The resulting name could be "Honey, I'm Home." (Note opening sentence.) Or if Polygram Records, Warner Brothers and Keebler Cracker should merge would it become "Polly-Warner-Cracker?" I haven't successfully applied the method to people's names as yet, but that's just a breath away. However, the HBC NEWSLETTER deadline is NOW! ---

So — let's get informed.

PROGRAMS

All meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst.

On Monday, February 14, the Hampshire Bird Club's Valentine's Day gift to birders is the husband-and-wife team of Clay and Patricia Sutton. This "great couple" (according to Jan Ortiz who has traveled with them) has over forty years of experience as professional naturalists and authors between them. In their presentation, *How to Spot Hawks and Eagles*, they will share with us their love of these birds and offer practical advice for finding and studying them.

They live near Cape May, New Jersey, a world-renowned migratory crossroads famous for its hawk migration. Through them we will experience the excitement of the fall migration at Cape May and of migrations at many other hotspots they have visited. We will also learn about lesser-known hotspots nearby and how to find raptors throughout the year.

How to Spot Hawks and Eagles is a slide program based on their recent book of the same name. It will cover raptor basics, where to find hawks and eagles both near and far, and when to go. We'll hear about their fascination and experience their excitement when searching for, studying and enjoying our spectacular birds of prey.

The Suttons have published extensively and will be happy to do a book signing before (starting at 7:00 p.m.) and after their presentation. Bring your own copies or you can purchase *How to Spot Hawks and Eagles* and *How to Spot an Owl* at the meeting. Pat's specialty is butterflies and they have co-authored the newest title in the "How to" series, *How to Spot Butterflies* which will also be available for purchase at the meeting. So come early, bring your Sutton books, purchase new ones, have them signed and

Enjoy this special event!

Programs to Come:

March 13: Susan Smith – *Traveling and Birding Papua New Guinea*.

April 10: Bill Barber – *Birding the Adirondacks: A Boreal Bonanza*.

May 8: Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll – *Worcester: Birding an Urban Environment*.

June 12: Pete Westover – *Special Habitats and Open Space in Amherst and Surrounding Towns*.

FIELD TRIPS

The HBC offers field trips 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 that 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 driving expenses. Transportation costs are calculated on the basis of 20 cents per mile per car plus tolls and parking fees. It is expected that all persons in the car, including the driver, share costs equally. Shawn Smolen-Morton, Field Trip Chair, can be reached at (413)665-5196 or by email at bachman@complit.umass.edu should you have questions or suggestions.

Northampton Christmas Bird Count Report

Jan Ortiz and Mary Alice Wilson thank all who participated in the 1999 Northampton CBC and thought you might be interested in a quick rundown of the results. 20 owlers began their work at midnight. During the day, there were 71 participants in the field and another 11 counting at the feeders. There were 91 species recorded (for a total of 46,476 individual birds). The most commonly reported birds were the American Crow (3,714), Black-capped Chickadee (1,783), Dark-eyed Junco (1,394), American Goldfinch (756), and Tufted Titmouse (476). There were record numbers of Canada Goose (7,977), American Robin (2,727), Northern Cardinal (509), Eastern Bluebird (264), Northern Mockingbird (238), Red-tailed Hawk (105), Red-bellied Woodpecker (48), Cooper's Hawk (16), and American Wigeon (10). The owl counts included Eastern Screech (50), Great Horned (30), Barred (6), Short-eared (1), and Northern Saw-whet (1). The most surprising bird was a female Spotted Towhee which, at last report, was still skulking in the fields of North Hadley.

If you would like more information, you can go the CBC website, www.BirdSource.com/cbc and follow the prompts where you can look up our count (MANO - for Massachusetts, Northampton) since 1934. If you prefer a print version, check out one of the two copies of the 1934-1999 Northampton CBC from the HBC library at the Hitchcock Center.

Trip Reports

On Saturday, January 8, Bob Bieda led a group of five to the *North Shore: Cape Ann to Plum Island*. Forty-two species were counted. Highlights included a male Eared Grebe, and male King Eider, a Barrows Golden-eye and ninety Harlequin Ducks.

On Saturday, January 22, Shirley Hilborn and seven hardy souls searched for winter finches on what had to be the coldest day recorded so far. The skies were clear and fortunately the serious wind held off until afternoon (the prediction was for wind chill reaching -35°). The group began in *Hadley* where the Spotted Towhee was seen enjoying seed provided by birders. Many other species, including a Redwing Blackbird, were also feasting on the spread. From *Hadley* the group slowly made its way to *Petersham* where the generous Jim Baird (last month's speaker) and his wife

Carol invited us into the warmth of their home. Pine Siskins and Redpolls and a Red-breasted Nuthatch were observed at the feeders by the grateful tea-sipping birders. The frigid day's tally was twenty-four species of birds and great looks at a porcupine lunching on tender young tree bark at the side of the road.

On Saturday, January 29, Mary Alice Wilson initiated the first in a new series of monthly trips entitled *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding*. The group of seven began the 2° sunny morning at the *Hitchcock Center* where large flocks of Robins and Cedar Waxwings, a pair two Orange-crowned Kinglets, and a pair of Carolina Wrens searching the leafy nests in the tree by the formal garden were the highlights. At the *Campus Pond* the group watched Pintail Ducks and Black Ducks among the Mallards and Tundra Swans. And in the *Honeypot* section of *Hadley* just across the road from the model airplane field a flock of Common Redpolls was being harassed by a male Harrier who, in turn, being harassed by a Peregrine. A total of 21 species were tallied. Not bad pickings for a cold Saturday morning.

Coming Up

Please refer to the blue Field Trip list sent to you with the December Newsletter or call the leader for additional information or to register.

On Saturday, February 12, Al Richards will lead a full-day trip to the *Plymouth and Falmouth area of the Massachusetts South Shore*. (Seventy species were tallied on this trip last year.) Bring warm clothing, lunch and snacks. Leave from the Hitchcock Center at 5:30 a.m. Call Al at (413)665-2761.

On Wednesday, February 16, the *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley* led by Harvey Allen will be searching for early migrants. Call Harvey (413)253-7963.

On Saturday, February 26, the second of the *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* series will be led by Shawn Smolen-Morton (413)6258688. Meet at the Hitchcock Center at 8:00 a.m. and expect to bird until 11:00 a.m.

Monhegan Island

is is your first notice of the annual *Monhegan Island Memorial Day Weekend* trip, the hallmark of HBC Field Trips since the Club's beginnings. The trip, led by Stacy Adams, runs from Friday, May 26 to Monday, May 29.

The group leaves from New Harbor, Maine (a new spot for us, closer than Port Clyde) on Friday and spends all day Saturday and Sunday on the Island. We enjoy the migrating birds, the spring wild flowers, hiking, eating, laughing and having a wonderful "escape," returning to the mainland on Monday, May 31.

The cost is approximately \$250.00 per person (includes transportation from New Harbor, breakfasts and dinners) plus shared mileage cost if you carpool to New Harbor, plus tips, lunches, snacks and an optional lobster dinner on the Island. A \$50.00 deposit is needed to save a spot. A second leader will be added if many sign up. Call Stacy NOW (or as soon as possible) at (413)367-0177 or e-mail her at lovett@student.umass.edu for more information or to sign up. She'll need to make reservations soon.

Would a 3M, J.C. Penny and the Canadian Opera Company merger become "3 Penny Opera?"

(or)

If 3M and Goodyear merge would it be called MMMGood?

CARE and FEEDING of YOUNG BIRDERS

In keeping with our interest in the wonders of the natural world, our own particular focus on birds and our desire to pass this passion on to the next generation, we would like to introduce a new section to the Newsletter that celebrates what is already being done. The "good" news is that there are wonderful things going on out there. The challenge is that you, enlightened readers, are going to have to let us know what and where they are.

One of the obvious places to begin this time of year is in the classroom where students are actively participating in feeder watch programs. For example, here is one of two we already know about.

Patricia Redfern's fourth grade class at the Donahue School in Holyoke is participating in Cornell's Classroom FeederWatch. Every two weeks they identify and count birds at the feeder at school, enter the data into the computer, send it over the Internet to Cornell and participate in a variety of data analysis and reporting activities. Sound simple? Pat's classroom looks out on the playing area, not an ideal place for bird feeders. The class decided that the other side of the school, where there are trees and shrubs would be a better feeder site (the Donahue School is very near the Holyoke Mall.) Pat's husband built a sturdy metal-pipe rack with wheels that can be rolled into the school at the end of the day and rolled out again in the morning. Three seed feeders and a suet feeder hang from the rack.

Teams of four children with the four pairs of classroom binoculars and an adult supervisor leave the classroom and go to the windows near the feeder to make the count.

Pat is very pleased with the student's increased awareness of the birds around them – they report birds they see on the weekend and coming to school, bird programs on TV, and read books about birds. As part of the project each year, the students produced a newspaper with researched articles, poetry, stories and drawings.

For more information about this program, contact Pat at the Donahue School, Whiting Farms Road, Holyoke, 01040. For more information about the Cornell Project, contact Cornell directly (607)254-2403 or www.birds.cornell.edu or Cornell's student newsletter, *Classroom Birdscope*.

Next month we will tell you about a bird identification and behavior program in Rowe, Massachusetts that involves grades 4 – 6 as part of the science curriculum. Help us to celebrate other programs and activities for young people. If you know of any, please contact Mary Alice at (413)548-9078 or Sally Venman at (413)549-1098.

John Deere and Abitibi-Price merge and become Deere Abi!

LIBRARY

The HBC Library, created and maintained by Anne Cann, is located in the main room on the first floor of the Hitchcock Center on South Pleasant Street in Amherst. Hours are 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Saturday but it's best to call first if you are making a special trip as the schedule sometimes changes. For those who have access to the Internet, there is a listing of titles on the HBC webpage. There is also a list you can examine at meetings.

Anne reminds us that this is a good time of the year to plan your spring and summer birding trips. There are guides to local and

distant birding hot spots and suggestions for B&Bs and restaurants. If you want to read more about attracting birds to your feeder, or specific bird species such as rails, owls or chickadees the books are there for your winter reading. If you want to learn about the history of the Northampton Christmas Count check out one of the two copies of the 1934-1999 Northampton CBC.

Anne is happy to pick books up for you from the Center and bring them to the meeting if you call her at (413) 253-7753 or e-mail at cann@uhs.umass.edu by the Friday prior to the Monday meeting.

***If Zippo Manufacturing, Audi Motors, Dofasco, and Dakota Mining get together
it would become Zip Audi Do Da!***

CONSERVATION

Join with National Audubon Society and Cornell Lab of Ornithology for the 2nd Annual Great Backyard Bird Count. On February 18-21, 2000, birders from Nome to Key West will be counting birds and entering their sightings online. In last year's first-of-its-kind survey some 14,000 citizen scientists across North America reported more than half a million birds they had seen at

their feeders and other local areas. Please join in this historic endeavor. Your observations will contribute to another year of information, which will become a vital tool for determining the status of North American birds in the century ahead. Participate by visiting <http://birdsource.org/gbbc> or older web browser <http://www.birdsource.org>

***Let's see now - Fairchild Electronics and Honeywell Computers - of course --
Fairwell, Honeychild***

MISCELLANEOUS

It is with sadness that I report the death of Dee Allen, wife of Harvey and mother of Craig, both avid birders, members of the club since its inception and friends to all who know them. Our sincere condolences go out to them and to their families.

Rare Bird Alert: Jim Marcum wishes to remind you that if you wish to be added to (or removed from) the e-mail listing notifying and giving directions to rare birds in the area all you need to do is ask him. For the first time, an electronic list (HBCRBA) is being utilized and is operating very well. We are still using the telephone tree for those who wish to be notified in that manner but

that will not be revised until next fall. Jim can be notified by e-mail marcums@fnr.umass.edu or by phone at (413)549-1613.

Birds Eye View in the Village Commons in South Hadley and **Backyard Birds** at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton, two local shops specializing in all sorts of goodies to interest birders, are offering a 10% discount to all HBC members for all purchases. You can find equipment from feeders and seed to binoculars and scopes plus books and tapes and videos and many, many gift items. Check them out!

Should Federal Express and UPS merge would we be FED UP?

The Membership List as of 12/02/99 was enclosed with the December Newsletter. Anyone who has ever compiled a similar list knows the checking and the rechecking it entails. I know that Dottie Barnes (Communications Secretary) spent hours upon hours on that task. She asks you to look at your own information

to make sure it is accurate. If by chance there is an error and it is not reported below, please let one of us in on it so we can correct it on the master list and in the next Newsletter. If you need a membership list you can pick one up at the meetings or call me (Sally) at (413)549-1098.

Corrections:

Helga Beatty, address should read 9 Baldwin Lane

Chris Ellison, HPh should read (413)477-8326

Mark Fairbrother, e-mail should read mfairbro@k12s.oit.umass.edu

Additions:

Paul and Tracey Champlin, 6C Thayer St., South Deerfield MA 01373-1137 HPh (413)665-5574,
e-mail – capito@hotmail.com

Mary Hurley, 4 Warren Ave., Easthampton MA 01027, HPh (413)527-6430, WPh. (413)781-6045

Ezekiel S. Jakub, 43 Wildwood Ave., Greenfield MA 01301, HPh (413)733-7906, e-mail – zmducks@juno.com

Seth Kellogg, 377 Loomis St., Southwick, MA 01077-9715, HPh (413)569-3335

Mary McDermott, 412 Long Plain Rd., Leverett MA 01054, HPh (413)548-9332, WPh (413)774-3111x301,
e-mail – MaryMcDermott@webtv.net

Rick McNeil, 101 Briggs St., Easthampton MA 01027, HPh (413)529-9197, WPh (413)586-3300

Ruth Perlow, 57 Lilly St., Florence MA 01062 HPh (413)584-1561

Timothy Young, 8 Setback Lane, Gill MA 01376, HPh (413)863-4706, WPh. (413)774-7061

Catherine Youngen, 46 Clapp St., Eastampton MA 01027.
HPh. (413)527-6870

Robert Zimmerman, 549 North Farms Rd., Northampton MA
01062, HPh (413)585-0405, WPh (413)5450936,
e-mail – zimmermann@biochem.umass.edu

***Knott's Berry Farm and National Organization of Women will merge and become
Knot NOW!***

HAVE A GREAT FEBRUARY

Sally

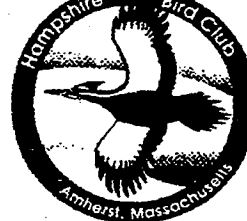
Sally Venman, Newsletter Editor
(413)549-1098
venman@external.umass.edu

***Suppose Hale Business systems, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Fuller Brush, and WR Grace Company merge
The resulting name?***

Hale Mary Fuller Grace

Hampshire Bird Club
Amherst, Massachusetts

<http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>



March, 2000

March came in like a lamb this year. To those of us with a bit of the superstitious to our nature this means that March will go out like a lion. Whether you are drawn to fact or legend you have to agree that March is fickle. Just when you are about to put your mucklucks in storage, we get a huge snow storm like the 38

inches recorded in Boston on March 4, 1717, or the 40 inches that fell on March 11, 1888 (Boston), the 36 inches on March 13, 1993 (again Boston) and the 59 inches predicted on March 32nd this year (Northampton). I ran into this poem by Edward Thomas that gives us the bird's eye view:

Over the land freckled with snow half-thawed
The speculating rooks at their nests cawed,
And saw from elm-tops, delicate as flowers of grass,
What we below could not see, Winter pass.

Upon reading the February Newsletter concerning mergers and what to call them, the nimbler (or some would say twisted) minds out there in birdland began to generate merger steam. I prefer not to name names but those who composed them will know that I know! I am reminded of early radio days and the menacing whis-

pered question: "Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? Answer: The Shadow (and Sally) knows! The names of these shadowy authors remain my secret – for now. You can find their murky merger mania scattered throughout the letter.

PROGRAMS

All meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst.

Monday, March 13, "*Traveling and Birding Papua New Guinea*" will be the featured program. This is one of those very special "in-house" presentations we are so lucky to be able to offer. Our guide to this fascinating part of the world will be long-time club member and author Susan Smith, returning as speaker for the eighth time. Charter members will recall her first appearance in the Club's first year (1984) when her program was titled *Flock Switching in Black-capped Chickadees*. She returned two years later to speak on *Removal Experiment on Winter Black-capped Chickadee Flocks*, followed in three years as a panel member discussing *Birding Ethics*. She gave us a Chickadee update in 1992 and then switched her focus to her trips with *Birding Antarctica* in 1994, *Birding in Peru* in 1996 and *Birds of Arctic Canada* in 1998.

Last summer Susan took a three-week trip to Papua New Guinea, the center for the Birds of Paradise, with Field Guides, Inc. She was able to see a remarkable number of endemic birds on this beautifully organized trip and since Papua is so close to Australia, many Australian and Australasian birds were on the list as well. She says that it was wonderful seeing so many species she has taught about but had not seen.

Smith is a Professor in the Department of Biology at Mount Holyoke College. For the past twenty years she has studied a color-banded population of Black-capped Chickadees in South Hadley. She has authored two books about Black-capped Chickadees. *The Black-capped Chickadee: Behavioral Ecology and Natural History* was the first comprehensive synthesis of published information about the tiny bird. *Wild Bird Guides: The Black-capped Chickadee* contains numerous color photographs and is written for a general audience. Smith has also done the species account for Black-capped Chickadees for the *Birds of North America* series.

Please note: we have not asked Susan back repeatedly just because she pays her yearly dues. Be there! You won't regret it!

To Come:

April 10: Bill Barber – *Birding the Adirondacks: A Boreal Bonanza*.

May 8: Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll – *Worcester: Birding an Urban Environment*.

June 12: Pete Westover – *Special Habitats and Open Space in Amherst and Surrounding Towns*.

I understand that Denison Mines, Alliance and Metal Mining plan to merge to become Mine All Mine

FIELD TRIPS

Trip Reports

On Saturday, February 5, Scott Sumner and eight other observers had a great time exploring Maine's southern shore, one of Scott's favorite birding destinations. Thirty-three species were tallied with highlights being fifty Harlequin Ducks, two Iceland Gulls, one Red-headed Woodpecker, and seventy-five Bohemian Waxwings. The waxwings and the woodpecker were life birds for many in the group!

On Saturday, February 12, Al Richards and six other birders explored Orleans, Fairhaven and Wareham finding fifty-one

species in "pretty good" weather. Nice looks at Harlequin Ducks and all three Merganser species were among the twenty species of waterfowl observed. The big bird of the day was the Western Tanager which had been visiting a feeder.

And on Saturday, February 26, the second of the *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* series, a group of five led by Shawn Smolen-Morton saw thirty-five species of birds in cool and drizzly weather. Highlights were one Pine Siskin, one Dark-eyed Junco, Oregon race, fifteen Common Redpolls and one brief look at a Hoary Redpoll which was not seen by all.

March Trips

(Refer to the blue Field Trip list or call the leader for additional information or to register.)

On Wednesday, March 15, the half-day *Morning sweep of the Connecticut River Valley* led by Harvey Allen will be searching for early migrants, probably focusing on waterfowl. Call Harvey (413)253-7963.

On Saturday, March 18, the half-day *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* series will be led by Stacy Adams and will

be searching for early migrants. Call Stacy (413)367-0177.

On Saturday, March 25, Al Richards will be searching the Valley for ducks and geese on this half-day trip. Call Al (413)665-2761.

Monhegan Island: Listen-up!!!

This is your last chance to sign up for the annual *Monhegan Island Memorial Day Weekend* trip, the hallmark of HBC Field Trips since the Club's beginnings. The trip, led by Stacy Adams, runs from Friday, May 26 to Monday, May 29.

The group leaves from New Harbor, Maine (a new spot for us, closer than Port Clyde) on Friday and spends all day Saturday and Sunday on the Island enjoying the migrating birds, the spring wild flowers, hiking, eating, laughing and having a wonderful "escape," returning to the mainland on Monday, May 31. The cost is \$230.00 per person (*this is lower than estimated in last month's announcement*) and includes transportation from New Harbor, lodging, breakfasts and dinners on the island. Add to this tips for the island staff, lunches, snacks, an optional lobster dinner on the island and incidentals plus shared mileage cost if you carpool to New Harbor and you have a rough idea what the cost will be. A \$50.00 deposit is needed to save a spot. A second leader will be added if enough sign up.

If you have never been on this trip, you should know that birds (and they are plentiful) are just one part of the Monhegan experience. Take an island eleven miles off the mainland. Take wildflowers and ocean and blue skies and night skies filled with starlight, not city light. Take hiking and sitting on rocks looking east over the ocean searching for whales. If the weather does not cooperate there is the comfort of warm fireplaces and lots of books. Add good food, good company, lots of laughs and a skilled leader to show you around and help you identify the many birds you will see and you have a better idea of what's in store.

Call Stacy **NOW** at (413)367-0177 or e-mail her at lovett@student.umass.edu for more information or to register. She needs to make reservations.

Entrepreneurial Birdwatcher (EB for short) attempted to bring high-quality musical entertainment to the Valley but met with utter failure. Bill Cosby, Beverly Sills, Johnny Cash and Connie Chung all expressed interest in performing together at an upcoming Hampshire Club event. In recent weeks, however, EB intercepted a series of especially irate phone calls from Ahmet Ertegun of Atlantic Records. He was distressed to learn that the name of the ensemble – Cosby, Sills, Cash and Chung – bore an eerie similarity to that of another ensemble on the Atlantic label. A truly sad story.

CARE and FEEDING of YOUNG BIRDERS

One month a new section to the Newsletter was introduced celebrating projects that are being done in the schools and homes to introduce the next generation to the wonders of the natural world through birds. We described the feeder watch project in Patricia Redfern's fourth grade class in the Donahue School in Holyoke and reported an increased awareness and excitement about birds.

This month I have a report from the Rowe Elementary School in Rowe, Massachusetts where bird identification and behavior are part of the science curriculum in grades 4 – 6. Three feeders containing thistle, black oil or sunflower seeds and a suet feeder were observed and bird activity recorded. The students reported that "the hulled seeds were by far the favorite" but that "Goldfinches and Pine Siskins also loved the thistle." In the spring the "Red-wing Blackbirds figured out how to get seed out of the feeders by hitting them and then eating the seeds off the ground. The Mourning Doves also capitalized on the help." The group listed the birds frequenting the feeders and described other happenings: birds dying by hitting the window by mistake or by being chased by a Red-tail Hawk or "One of the doves mysteriously dying under the picnic table. A crow or raven picked it up and flew off with it." They saved wings and tails from the happenings and were in other treasures by a local hunter.

As weather warmed, the class reported "a Kildeer nesting out in the open in our school yard. There is a picture of her on our web page. It took four shots to get a good picture because she blended in so well. We also have a Robin sitting on her eggs at the front door of the school and swallows in their wonderful mud nest at the back!!!"

For more information about this project contact Wanita Siour Laffond through email laffond@k12s.phast.umass.edu or go to the school website (www.rowe.k14.mass.edu) and select Mrs. Laffond's classroom.

Coming next month – an exciting local (Amherst) 4H project envisioned and actualized by one of the Bird Club members! It may even have a photo (if I can figure out how to scan that into my machine).

Help us celebrate other programs and activities for young people. If you know of any, please contact Mary Alice at (413)548-9078 or Sally Venman at (413)549-1098.

It seems that Xerox and Wurlitzer will merge and begin manufacturing reproductive organs.

CONSERVATION

Development on The Mount Holyoke Range: Reveille or Requiem?

Valley residents have recently been given a call to action. Last November, developer Ron Bercume announced plans to build 40 luxury homes on a 106-acre parcel of land on the northern slope of the Mount Holyoke Range in Hadley. This residential development would extend to within 2 miles of the Summit House at Skinner State Park and will dramatically alter the appearance of the entire valley and seriously degrade significant local watershed and natural habitat. The Mount Holyoke Range, comprising over 8000 acres, is one of the largest remaining tracts of contiguous forestland in Massachusetts. Many species that require large areas of unbroken woodland are found only in areas such as this. The Range is an area of critical environment for many resident plant and animal species and an important stopover for migratory birds in spring and fall.

Mount Holyoke Range is the defining feature of our landscape, and is of key value to the fortunate residents of the Pioneer Valley, as well as an important feature of the area's attraction for

visitors. It has been a constant on our horizon since the last Ice Age. It is felt that the Bercume development would seriously and adversely affect this constant.

If you care to register your concerns you can write to local newspapers, elected officials and to Bob Durand, Secretary, Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, 100 Cambridge Street 19th Floor, Boston, MA 02202; send a donation of any size to the Conservation Trust (at the same address), earmarked for use on the Mount Holyoke Range; or join and support *Save the Mountain*, Box 511, Hadley, MA 01035 (telephone 584-3490; web page www.savemtholyokerange.com). The next meeting will be held on March 6 at 7:15 p.m. at the Food Bank Farm on Bay Road (Rt. 47) in Hadley.

The Marsh Bird Monitoring Project

A new project in the Deerfield River Watershed that was mounted last year, might interest you. The goals of the project are to increase knowledge of the wetland wildlife communities within the watershed, and to encourage public participation in natural resource management.

Last year, the monitoring season ran from May 1 to July 7. It was a good first year, considering that many of the birds are rare and are listed species in Massachusetts. Twenty wetlands were surveyed for birds and about the same number for calling amphibians. Ten volunteers participated in the project. They found marsh

birds (Virginia and Sora Rails, Least Bittern, American Bittern) at five sites. Many of the wetlands were on private property and eighteen landowners gave permission to monitor. The sites were located in Greenfield, Deerfield, Shelburne, Conway, Hawley, Savoy, Leyden and Ashfield.

Pat Serrentino is directing the project, which is being conducted with the support of the Deerfield River Watershed Association. She is looking for people who would be interested in becoming one of the volunteers. She can be reached at (413)772-0520 or by e-mail pserr@crocker.com.

I heard that the cartoonist Hergé has a deal with Spaulding to produce basketball hoops under the brand name of Rim Tintin.

BIRDING WITH HITCHCOCK

Spring Birding for Beginners:

The Hitchcock Center is offering a birding class to be taught by teacher-naturalist Ted Watt. The Center and his many friends are very happy to welcome Ted back in the area after a number of years' absence, and the birding community is going to benefit by his teaching skills and birding knowledge. This introductory course will acquaint the beginner with the birds of the Connecticut Valley during the spring migration and will concentrate on improving ID skills through field marks, songs and habitat. Ted's style is relaxed, allowing time to observe individual birds and their fascinating behavior and to listen carefully to their vocalizations.

Classes will meet on Saturday mornings 7:00 – 10:00 on April 1, 8, 15, 22 and May 13 and 27 and on Wednesday mornings 7:00 –

8:30 on April 26 and May 3. Included in the course will be a trip to Plum Island (5:00a.m. – 8:00 p.m.) on May 20.

For fee schedule and to register call the Center at (413)256-6006

Iceland – A Fantastic Country:

Of special interest to us is a slide presentation on Iceland given by HBC members Marion Gorham and Al Shane, travelers extraordinaire. They will be showing slides and photos depicting their June, '99 adventure when they boxed their tandem bike, packed their panniers and flew to Iceland for a month of bicycling, hiking and camping. This program is free to Hitchcock members

MISCELLANEOUS

Butterflies

Roger Tory Peterson once said, "Butterflies are very interesting. Here these things are little grubs for a while. Then they go into a little coffin. There they are in a sarcophagus, and then they come out and dance with the angels."

Would you be interested in learning more about butterflies? Would you like to be able to identify them, learn their habits and habitats? Maybe it's time to take up a second (or third or fourth) hobby. As Tom Gagnon reminded us at the last HBC meeting, butterflies are out there when the sun is up. You don't have to set

the alarm for the middle of the night and you can turn over in bed if it is pouring rain.

The Massachusetts Butterfly Club is sponsoring the 2000 Butterfly Institute, seven classroom sessions and seven field trips to help us learn to "dance with the angels." Classes will be held at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst on Wednesday nights starting May 3 at 7:00. Field trips begin on May 6. There is a fee.

Call Tom Gagnon at (413)584-6353 for more information.

Birding Class

This Experienced Birder's Class to be led by Andrew Magee is for those who know that black and white and magnolia refer to warblers or for those who have found warblers or sandpipers on their own, all the way to those who wonder if that immature gull really could be a Lesser Black-backed.

There will be five classes meeting every other Saturday and all will be field trips. March 25 and April 8 will begin at 7:00 a.m., April 22 and May 6 will begin at 6:00 a.m. and May 20 will begin

at 5:00 a.m. All classes will take place in the Amherst - Northampton area and will run until noon.

Andrew has a wide-ranging appreciation of birds and birding and brings a decades-long combination of professionalism, intuition, book knowledge, field experience and enthusiasm to his teaching. So - bone up and have fun with a few enthusiastic peers in the spring! Any questions or to register call him at (413)369-9920. There is a modest fee.

From the HBC Board

HELP !!! Now that we are a 501(c)(3) organization we will need to set up a new bookkeeping system. Is there anyone out there who has experience in this and would be willing to help us? We are *not* looking for someone to take over the job, just someone that could advise us as to how to go about it. If you could help please contact Treasurer Mark Mount at (413)253-5169, or by e-mail at

msmount@pltpath.umass.edu or Dottie Barnes at (413)549-5476 or by e-mail at dbarnes@chem.umass.edu.

The Board is in the process of reviewing the by-laws of the organization and will present changes at the April meeting for a follow-up vote at the annual meeting in May.

Membership Update

The Membership List as of 12/02/99 was enclosed with the December Newsletter and an addendum was sent last month. Following are the latest additions and corrections. I remind you to contact Dottie Barnes at (413)549-5476, or by e-mail at dbarnes@chem.umass.edu if you know of any changes or errors. If you need a membership list you can pick one up at the meetings or call me (Sally) at (413)549-1098.

Changes or additions:

Stacy Adams, new WPh (413)774-3111x160

Delga Beatty, add e-mail HIBeatty@aol.com

Joel Benton, new address: 87 Locks Pond Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072

Bruce Callahan, new address: 175 Ryan Rd., Florence, MA 01062, HPh (413)584-6353.

New members:

Margaret Army and Janice Doppler, 120 Lovefield St., Easthampton, MA 01027, HPh (413)527-1890, e-mail: margaret.army@bhs.org

Jeanne M. Bell, 10 Eden Trail, Bernardston MA 01337, HPh (413)648-8978

Rebecca Frank, 232 North East St., #B16, Amherst MA 01002, HPh (413)256-0921, e-mail: re_frank@hotmail.com

Watch out for the blizzard predicted for March 32!

Happy Ducking!

Sally

Sally Venman, Newsletter Editor

(413)549-1098

svenman@external.umass.edu

The New York City Ballet was in debt. At first it tried a joint venture with a brewery to become (drum roll) Balanchine Beer. When that fell through it decided to merge with the Joffrey. The combined company had so many dancers that communication became a problem. The new joint ballet venture solicited bids on a new communications system. American Telephone and Telegraph and International Telephone and Telegraph merged and submitted the winning bid, a clear case of TT & TT for tutu and tutu.

Hampshire Bird Club
Amherst, Massachusetts

<http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>



April, 2000

One of our members whose "nom de plumage" is a deep, dark secret sent me the following:

A large pizza chain opened a franchise in northern New England. Unfortunately, the grain used to make the pizzas was infected with an insect pest. Surprisingly, though, the Mainers enjoyed the antics of the frolicsome insect, so that now --- drum roll ---

Uno's wheat weevil larks in the hearts of Maine.

Now, friends, with that out of the way, heed my warning! Hang on to your binoculars This is a long one. Take a very deep breath, and read just as fast as you possibly can and you might just make it through this newsletter before the April meeting. On your mark - Get Set - GO !!!!

PROGRAMS

All meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst

On Monday, April 10, "Birding the Adirondacks: A Boreal Bonanza" will be the featured program. We are invited to bird with Bill Barber as he shows slides and talks about his 40 years experience birding, hiking and wilderness backpacking in the 4,000-acre Adirondack Park in upstate New York.

Though its southern border is only 50 miles north of Albany, the Park contains 1,000,000 acres of true wilderness, 90% of all the wilderness east of the Mississippi and north of the Mason Dixon Line. Diverse habitats make the park the home for 90% of all plants and animals that exist in the Northeast, including 194 species of breeding birds. These include the Gray Jay, Spruce Grouse, Bicknell's Thrush, Northern Raven, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, White-winged Crossbills, Red Crossbills, Black-backed Woodpeckers and Three-toed Woodpeckers. Embellish this diversity with thousands of lakes and ponds, mile after mile of streams and rivers and breathtaking mountain vistas and you have a park that many frequent visitors to the Adirondacks believe combines natural elements more harmoniously than anywhere else on earth.

Bill is past president of the West Chester Bird Club in West Chester, Pennsylvania, one of the oldest continuously operating bird clubs in the United States, and writes a newsletter column for the Birding Club of Delaware County (PA). He is a member of the Maryland Ornithological Society and High Peaks Audubon, the Adirondack/Champlain chapter in New York State.

And - every once in a while something special comes along. At the end of the meeting last month, some of us who lingered were led to just that. One of our members, Walter Basara, Jr., had with him several art pieces he had created over the past year. I for one was seriously blown out of the water (so to speak.)

Walter is from Hadley where he graduated in 1972 from Hopkins Academy, attended Springfield Tech and settled in his hometown doing autobody service on Railroad Street.

His two deep interests have always been nature and art and for as long as he can remember, he has made projects using natural materials. Then, a year ago, his need to create became clear and he began to sculpt some common birds out of milkweed pods, so easily found in the fields of Hadley. He took some of his early works to people in the business of knowing art and was encouraged by their response. He decided he needed to take time off to work on his art full time so closed his autobody shop in October.

Walter's birds are created entirely from the milkweed pod except for the eyes (seeds from the Sweet Pea) and skull (galls from the Golden Rod). Other materials include Black Locust branches and Mountain Laurel roots. The birds are preserved with resin spray. He emphasizes that all materials used are from nature and that none are gathered live.

Walter recently entered the Northampton Paradise Arts Festival, one of the top 200 shows in the nation. He was picked as an alternate, a great honor for a first time entrant. He will be at the meeting on Monday with some examples of his work for us to see. He is hoping for your input - impressions, reactions, and perhaps suggestions of where he should go from here.

To Come:

May 8: Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll - Worcester: Birding an Urban Environment.

June 12: Pete Westover - Special Habitats and Open Space in Amherst and Surrounding Towns.

FIELD TRIPS

At a recent Board meeting it was decided that the practice of calculating shared transportation costs for field trips at 20 cents per mile for gas (as has been the practice for many years) was a bit outdated. It has been changed to a much more realistic 30 cents per mile. Please read the following paragraph to remind yourself of the Club's policy.

The IIBC offers field trips 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 that 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 driving expenses. Transportation costs are calculated on the basis of 30 cents per mile per car plus tolls and parking fees. It is expected that all persons in the car, including the driver, share costs equally. Shawn Smolen-Morton, Field Trip Chair, can be reached at (413)665-5196 or by email at bachman@complit.umass.edu should you have questions or suggestions.

Trip Reports:

On **Wednesday, March 15**, Harvey Allen's *Morning sweep of the Connecticut River Valley* found six late winter birders exploring the Chicopee River at Chicopee Falls, Route 47 at the Hockanum section of Hadley and the Hadley Cove. Although cloudy and cool, it was still a nice day to be out birding. A total of twenty-five species were seen, twelve of which were waterfowl. Other highlights were two Bald Eagles, one on the nest, two nesting Redtails and two Redwing Blackbirds fighting in the water on the Chicopee River. Harvey reports that the birds did not drown.

On **Saturday, March 18**, the *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* series led by Stacy Adams saw three birders braving a very cold morning. The intrepid group checked out fields in Sunderland and then made its way to Turner's Falls to view ducks. All told, forty-one species of birds and two Red Foxes were seen. Highlights included nice views at American Widgeon, Common Goldeneye, close looks at ten or more Fox Sparrows and very long looks at Gadwall. Best of all were close looks at over one hundred Bohemian Waxwings in Turners Falls. Seven Cedar Waxwings, also in the flock, gave the group a chance to make excellent comparisons between the two species.

April Trips:

(Refer to the Field Trip list or call the leader for additional information or to register.)

On **Saturday, April 15**, the half-day *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* series will be led by Bob Bieda. Not strictly local this time, he'll take a group to the Ashley Reservoir in search of the first spring warblers and other early arrivals. The group will meet at the Holiday Inn parking lot, exit 15 off I91 (the Holyoke Mall exit) at 7:00 a.m. Check with Bob for details (413)527-2623.

By **Wednesday, April 19**, the spring hawk migration should be in full swing for Harvey Allen's *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley*. Last year's trip netted thirty-one species of birds with singing Winter Wren, Northern Waterthrush, the Hadley

Bald Eagles and the Red-tailed Hawks on their nests and migrating hawks viewed from the top of the mountain. Anything can happen in the middle of April! This half-day local trip meets at 7:00 a.m. Call Harvey (413)253-7963 for details.

On **Saturday, April 22**, Stacey Adams will be leading an all-day trip to Bartholomew's Cobble searching for the Black Vulture specifically but also watching out for other migrating raptors and early tropical migrants. Call Stacy (413)367-0177 for details and meeting place.

Starting on **Tuesday, May 2** and continuing every **Tuesday and Thursday Morning** during the month of May, the Club sponsors an *Early Morning Bird Walk through Wildwood Cemetery*. In the mornings the warblers are dripping from the trees and other mornings it's just a nice walk in good company. No need to register. Meet the leader in the parking area inside the entrance at 6:30 a.m. These walks usually last until 8:30 a.m. Walks will cover various parts of the cemetery and conservation area.

I remind you that Wildwood is private property and we must always remember 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. 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.

There are still a few places open on the annual *Monhegan Island Memorial Day Weekend* trip, the hallmark of HBC Field Trips since the Club's beginnings. The trip runs from **Friday, May 26 to Monday, May 29**. There are a some changes since the description in the March newsletter. Andrew Magee will be along to share the leadership role with Stacy Adams, the departure point has been moved back to Port Clyde and the price (\$230.00) may need to go up ten to twenty dollars to cover the cost of insurance. A \$50.00 deposit is needed to save a spot. Call Stacy at (413)367-0177 or e-mail her at lovet@student.umass.edu for more information or to register.

CARE and FEEDING of YOUNG BIRDERS

"On Super Bowl Sunday we carpooled to North Amherst to release our friend the Barred Owl with the help of Julie Collier, our Rehabilitator. It was a very successful release, because the owl seemed to have no problems (although the surrounding songbirds were quite displeased!)"

The above was written by a group of six 9 – 11 year olds, members of a local 4-H Nature Club in Amherst.

"Our goal was to let the owl go in the exact spot where it collided with John Root's car."

The Club meets twice a month with its leader, Lesli Scott, who is also one of our members. Although the group has many interests, the main focus is animals in nature, and the release of the Barred Owl was the first major event since it began meeting in January. Lesli reports that the owl hit the family car and was treated at the Tuft's Center for Wildlife Rehabilitation in Grafton.

"The owl will probably wait until dusk to start hunting because he had a good dinner of microwaved mouse the evening before. (YUCK!)"

The group also had Barred Owl sightings in South Amherst and some of the group got to see a Screech Owl in South Hadley.

"We hope the owl won't be hindered by the deep snow. Julie told us that if the snow is too deep, the owl can't hear the voles and mice tunneling under the snow. Good luck to the Barred Owl back in the wild!"

The 4-H group will be displaying their photos and drawings of the Barred Owl at the Hitchcock Center in April. Thank you so very much, Lesli for sharing your love of birds and nature with the children and thank you for letting us know about it. Keep us posted.

Help us celebrate other programs and activities for young people. If you know of any, please contact Mary Alice Wilson at (413)548-9078 or Sally Venman at (413)549-1098.

CONSERVATION

We will be continuing the **Birds in Forested Landscapes (BLF)** project linking volunteer birders and professional biologists nationwide in a study of the habitat requirements of the seven species of forest thrushes as well as the Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks. Although thrushes may be common and conspicuous in most forest habitats, many of their populations are thought to be declining. By collecting critical data on distribution and nesting success of these species, participants will directly aid in the development of conservation strategies for these birds.

This is the fourth year of the accipiter/thrush study that is based on a protocol originally developed for the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's Project Tanager which we also participated in. We will be surveying our three nesting thrush species and the hawks in ten forest sites in the Amherst and Northampton areas. Small teams of two to four make early morning visits to each site on the third week in April, May and June. If you are interested in participating in the Northampton area please contact Anne Lombard (413)586-7509 (annelombard@mediaone.net). If you are interested in the Amherst area please contact Mary Alice Wilson (413)548-9078 (mwilson@k12s.phast.umass.edu). *Note that both e-mail addresses are new from the ones used last year.*

The **Amherst Breeding Bird Census** will go into its eleventh year of gathering data in June. Because people go on vacation and

move away there may be a few circuits not covered this year. Pete Westover and David Ziomek are looking for people who are qualified and interested. Almost 95% of the data are gathered by ear so it is necessary that the person have a good knowledge of local bird song. If you are interested in learning more, please call Pete (256-4045) or Dave (413-863-3221).

The **Marsh Bird Monitoring Project** in the Deerfield River Watershed, directed by Pat Serrentino with the support of the Deerfield River Watershed Association was mounted last year. The goals of the project are to increase knowledge of the wetland wildlife communities within the watershed, and to encourage public participation in natural resource management. (A more detailed description of the project can be found in the March Newsletter.) Pat is looking for people who would be interested in becoming one of the volunteers. She can be reached at (413)772-0520 or by e-mail pserr@crocker.com.

The **Topping Farm in Belchertown**, close to Lawrence Swamp in Amherst, is available for conservation purchase. This beautiful property is important both for aquifer protection and for bird habitat. Funds are urgently needed. Contact the Kestrel Trust or the Belchertown Conservation Department for details.

BIRDING WITH HITCHCOCK

Birding with Hitchcock: It is not too late to sign up for *Spring Birding for Beginners* taught by teacher-naturalist Ted Watt. This introductory course will acquaint the beginner with the birds of the Connecticut Valley during the spring migration and will concentrate on improving ID skills through field marks, songs and habitat. Ted's style is relaxed, allowing time to observe individual birds and their fascinating behavior and to listen carefully to their vocalizations. Classes will meet on Saturday mornings 7:00 – 10:00 on April 1, 8, 15, 22 and May 13 and 27 and on Wednesday mornings 7:00 – 8:30 on April 26 and May 3. Included in the course will be a trip to Plum Island (5:00a.m. – 8:00 p.m.) on May 20. For fee schedule and to register call the Center at (413)256-6006.

Butterflying at Hitchcock: Would you be interested in learning more about butterflies? Would you like to be able to identify them, learn their habits and habitats? Maybe it's time to take up a second (or third or fourth) hobby. As Tom Gagnon reminds us, butterflies are out there when the sun is up. You don't have to set the alarm for the middle of the night and you can turn over in bed if it is pouring rain. The *Massachusetts Butterfly Club* is sponsoring the 2000 *Butterfly Institute*. There will be seven classroom

sessions and seven field trips. Classes will be held at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst on Wednesday nights starting May 3 at 7:00. Field trips begin on May 6. Call Tom Gagnon at (413)584-6353 for more information.

The Green Scene: Fundraising Auction and Party on Friday, April 28, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Red Barn at Hampshire College (Rt. 116). This annual fundraiser for the Hitchcock Center for the Environment features the opportunity to bid on many goods and services, including natural history books, gift certificates to local businesses, and weekends at wonderful vacation homes. Great food!! Great music!! Great bargains!! Great people!! You can't miss and you'll helping to support this important environmental organization.

Biothon: On Saturday, May 13, from midnight to midnight the Hitchcock Center will hold its first ever Biothon to raise funds for environmental education. Count birds, butterflies, bacteria, or any other biota that you choose for 24 hours. Contact David Spector (413-323-4885) for details or to sign up.

THE HBC BOARD

The last few Board meetings have seen several policy changes and decisions that I would like to pass on to you.

It has been decided that the HBC should become the official sponsor of the Northampton and Quabbin Christmas Counts. This will centralize the organizational tasks and the expenses incurred.

The Board has been in the process of reviewing the by-laws of the organization and will present changes at the April meeting. Some changes reflect clarification of practices that we simply forgot to put in earlier versions. Some reflect changes in the descriptions of officers' duties as required by our new 501(c)(3) status. And some reflect grammatical or stylistic changes, thus ensuring that the by-laws read like pure poetry. The proposed revisions will be presented at the April meeting and voted on in May. For those interested, copies of the by-laws with the proposed changes clearly marked will be available at the meeting. If you are not going to be able to attend the April meeting but would like to read the proposed changes please contact Sally Venman (413)549-1098 or e-mail svenman@external.umass.edu. She'll be happy to see that you get a copy.

May is the month we elect board officers and members for the coming year. A nominating committee of David Peake-Jones

(Chair), Harvey Allen and Merry Cushing are in the process of drawing up a slate for your consideration. If you wish input, now would be the time to get in touch with one of them.

HELP – REALLY – HELP! Now that we are a 501(C)(3) organization we will need to set up a new bookkeeping system. Is there *anyone* out there who has experience in this and would be willing to help us? We are *not* (underline *not*) looking for someone to take over the job, just someone who could advise us as to how to go about it. If you could help please contact Treasurer Mark Mount (413)253-5169, or e-mail msmount@pltpath.umass.edu or Dottie Barnes (413)549-5476, or e-mail dbarnes@chem.umass.edu.

Lastly, due to ever-increasing costs and knowledge that the price of stamps is going up again, it is going to be necessary to raise the price of membership starting September, 2000. This is just a bit of a forewarning. It has been many years since the price was last raised and we are not talking big bucks here so you don't have to consider putting another mortgage on the house. Remember also that your membership is now tax deductible!

MISCELLANEOUS

There is still room in the **EXPERIENCED BIRDER'S CLASS** led by Andrew Magee and described in last month's newsletter. There will be five classes meeting every other Saturday and all will be field trips. April 8 will begin at 7:00 a.m., April 22 and May 6 will begin at 6:00 a.m. and May 20 will start at 5:00 a.m. All classes will take place in the Amherst/Northampton area and will run until noon.

Andrew has a wide-ranging appreciation of birds and birding and brings a decades-long combination of professionalism, intuition, book knowledge, field experience and enthusiasm to his teaching. So – bone up and have fun with a few enthusiastic peers in the spring! Any questions or to register call Andrew at (413)369-9920. There is a modest fee.

The **VOICE OF AUDUBON** has gone state-of-the-art! There is new toll-free number that will put you in touch with the statewide

system at Lincoln and covers four separate Rare Bird Alert areas in Massachusetts. Call 1-888-224-6444 and then press the # of the area in the state that you are interested in (# 1 for Eastern Massachusetts, #2 Western (us), #3 for Cape Cod, and #4 for Nantucket.) Observers can even leave messages. Just follow the simple directions. And it's free!

Birds Eye View in the Village Commons in South Hadley and **Backyard Birds** at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton are two local shops specializing in all sorts of goodies to interest birders. Each offers a 10% discount to HBC members for all purchases. You can find equipment from feeders and seed to binoculars and scopes plus books and tapes and videos and many, many gift items. Check them out!

The **MEMBERSHIP LIST** as of 12/02/99 was enclosed with the December Newsletter with addendum sent as new information reaches me. Following are the latest additions and corrections. I remind you to contact Dottie Barnes at (413)549-5476, or by e-mail at dotties@chem.umass.edu if you know of any changes or errors. If you need membership lists plus additions call me at (413)549-1098 or use e-mail svenman@external.umass.edu.

Changes

Anne Lombard has a new e-mail address annelombard@mediaone.net

Ben Zuckerberg and Frieda Veliz have moved to 81 South Silver Lane, Sunderland, MA 012375, HPh (413)665-6936

New members

Todd Allen, 157 Frank Williams Rd., Shelburne Falls MA 01370; HPh (413)625-8645, WPh (413)863-0200; e-mail tallen@crocker.com

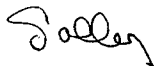
Walter Basara, 53 Breckinridge Rd., Hadley, MA 01035; HPh (413)586-6690, WPh (413)586-6690.

Linda M. Besse, 230 Daniel Shays Highway, Belchertown, MA 01007; HPh (413)323-9325

Keith Gamage, 33 Cedar St., Greenfield, MA 01301; HPh (413)772-2287

Mary Jo Maffei, and Jeff Quackenbush, 533 W. Pelham Rd., Amherst, MA 01002; HPh (413)259-1263, WPh (413)545-6453

Sincerely,



Sally Venman, Newsletter Editor
(413)549-1098
svenman@external.umass.edu

Hampshire Bird Club
Amherst, Massachusetts

<http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>

May, 2000



PROGRAMS

All meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst

Some time ago, a very prominent birder and field ornithologist (who shall remain nameless, but is known to all Massachusetts birders) referred to Worcester County as an "avian wasteland." Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll, the team featured this month, challenged this inflammatory statement and went about debunking its claim. Their program "Worcester: Birding an Urban Environment" will be presented on **Monday, May 8.**

Mark and Sheila have made a mission of promoting an interest in the ecology of the urban environment, where most people live and where the greatest opportunity for environmental education exists. They focus on birds primarily and Worcester in particular. Worcester is on no major flyway and not on any ocean, yet migrants seemed to utilize the few remaining green and blue spaces every year. About ten years ago Mark asked a very basic question: "Do migrants utilize this very small pocket of green that is smack in the middle of an intensely urban environment?" To begin to get some answers he started a program at Broad Meadow Brook (Massachusetts Audubon Society) where volunteers counted migrants every spring and fall and the answer was "you bet!" The numbers and varieties that had been utilizing the sanctuary were amazing. Attention was then turned to Worcester's many abused, ignored, and undervalued ponds and lakes, and systematic monitoring has been taking place in these areas for the past five years. The data from monitoring these areas are truly too significant to be ignored and are being used to help make management decisions for the few remaining green spaces in the city.

According to my records this will be our naturalist friends' seventh time behind the HBC slide projector. For Mark I add an eighth. He was one of the panel members in a program dealing with Birding Ethics. I could say I sure hope they get it right this time (why else would we keep asking them back?) but I don't think that would pass. They are just plain good! Their photography, knowledge and humor make them very popular presenters. Come learn about all that can be found just east of us in the 'big city.'

Mark teaches courses and co-leads field trips with Sheila on Massachusetts birds for Broad Meadow Brook MAS where he is also an ecological monitor studying how neo-tropical migrants utilize this urban sanctuary. He has just completed a five-year study of how waterbirds utilize city ponds. He is also a teacher and docent at the Worcester Art Museum and hosts an interview show on the

arts and sciences on the NPR affiliate WICN. He is one of the founding members of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee. And - he birds like his life depended on it. Sheila is Senior Vice President of Human Resources for Liberty Funds Group as well as an accomplished bird photographer. The photos you see in all of Mark's lectures are hers. According to Mark she, too, is a hardcore birder, but much more sane than he.

The last meeting before we break for the summer will take place on **June 12** and will feature Pete Westover, Amherst's Conservation Head, who will be presenting a program titled "Special Habitats and Habitat Protection in the Connecticut River Valley."

A BUSINESS MOMENT

A short business meeting will precede the program in order to elect Board officers and members for the coming year and to approve the proposed changes in the By-laws presented last month. The nominating committee of David Peake-Jones (Chair), Harvey Allen and Merry Cushing will present the following slate for your approval. The officers: Mary Alice Wilson (President), Stacy Adams (Vice President/Program Director), Mark Mount (Treasurer), David Peake-Jones (Communications Secretary), Joanne Parker (Membership Secretary), and members at large: Sue Emerson, David Gross, Jim Marcum, Dennis McKenna, Jan Ortiz and Scott Sumner.

The Board has been in the process of reviewing the by-laws of the organization and presented the proposed changes at the April meeting to be vote on May 8. Some changes reflect clarification of practices that we simply forgot to put in earlier versions. Some reflect changes in the descriptions of officers' duties as required by our new 501(c)(3) status. And some reflect grammatical or stylistic changes, thus ensuring that the by-laws read like pure poetry.

There will be copies of the By-laws with proposed changes clearly marked at the meeting. If you would like a copy before the meeting, please contact Sally Venman (413)549-1098 or e-mail svenman@external.umass.edu.

FIELD TRIPS

The IIBC offers field trips to spots easily reached and explored in one day. No costs other than travel, meals and incidental fees involved. Please call the trip leader to register so that 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 driving expenses. Transportation costs are calculated on the basis of 30 cents a mile per car plus tolls and parking fees. It is expected that all persons in the car, including the driver, share costs equally. Shawn Smolen-Morton, Field Trip Chair, can be reached at (413)665-5196 or by email at bachman@complit.umass.edu should you have questions or suggestions.

With all the birds returning I remind you to use the *Voice of Audubon* to learn what birds are being seen across the state. There is a new toll-free number that will put you in touch with the statewide system at Lincoln that covers four separate Rare Bird Alert areas in Massachusetts. Call 1-888-224-6444 and then press the # of the area in the state that interests you.

Trip Reports:

On Saturday, March 25, five birders led by Harvey Allen searched the Valley for ducks and geese and early spring. Weather conditions ranged from 26° to 60°. The group saw forty-five bird species under clear windless morning skies followed by a cloudy and windy afternoon. Highlights were viewing more than seventy Bohemian Waxwings in Turners Falls at eye level and on the ground, an adult Bald Eagle catching a fish in Hatfield and great views of ducks in good light.

On Saturday, April 15, Bob Bieda led the *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* trip to the Ashley Reservoir. Ten people enjoyed seeing early migrants on a warm, clear dry day. Four Ring-necked Ducks, an Osprey, and three Ruby-crowned Kinglets were spotted. The group had great looks at five Hermit Thrush. Many Pine Warblers were heard with four being seen well. Other birds viewed included one Palm Warbler, one Louisiana Waterthrush singing on its territory, a Rufous-sided Towhee and several newly arrived Chipping Sparrows.

May and June Trips

(Refer to the Field Trip list or call the leader for additional information or to register.)

Starting on Tuesday, May 2 and continuing every Tuesday and Thursday Morning during the month of May, the Club sponsors an *Early Morning Bird Walk through Wildwood Cemetery*. No need to register. Meet the leader in the parking area inside the entrance at 6:30 a.m. These walks usually last until 8:30 a.m. Walks will cover various parts of the cemetery and conservation area. I remind you that Wildwood is private property and we must always remember 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. 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.

On Saturday, May 6 the monthly half-day *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* series will be led by Shirley Hilborn (413)253-6462 and Anne Lombard (413)586-7509.

On Sunday, May 7 explore the east side of Quabbin Reservoir and experience spring with Tom Gagnon (413)584-6353.

On Wednesday, May 17 join Harvey Allen (413)253-7963 for his monthly *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley*.

On Saturday, May 20 Shawn Smolen-Morton (413)625-8688 will explore Ned's Ditch in Arcadia, walk through the old Kelley line and hit other warbler hot spots on this half-day *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding*.

On Friday, May 26, the group leaves for Monhegan Island. The trip is FULL.

On Saturday, June 3 Al Richards (413)665-2761 and Bob Bieda (413)527-2623 are off to the Poor man's Monhegan: Plum Island and vicinity. Ninety-four species counted last year!

On Saturday, June 10 Stacy Adams (413)367-0177 will lead an all-day exploration for local specialties on Mount Greylock.

Wednesday, June 14 is Harvey Allen's monthly *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley*. (413)253-7963.

On Saturday, June 17 (Note the change of date) Bob Bieda will lead his annual *Grassland Birds at Westover*. The number of people who can make up a group is limited so call Bob at (413)527-2623.

LIBRARY

The HBC Library, created and maintained by Anne Cann, is located in the main room on the first floor of the Hitchcock Center on South Pleasant Street in Amherst. Hours are 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

Anne reminds us that this is a good time to brush up on the birds we'll be seeing over the next six weeks. There are two great warbler books, for example, and if you need a refresher course in bird song, borrow the song tapes to listen to on your way to your fa-

vorite birding spot. There are great birding guides for much of the eastern areas and to hot spots right across the country to the West Coast. If you are not an ABA member, enjoy the Club copy of *Birding and Winging It*. And, if you missed a Club meeting, there

are audiotapes of many of the presentations. The April taping of Bill Barber's program would be of great help if you are planning a trip to the Adirondacks.

For those who have access to the Internet, there is a listing of titles on the HBC WebPages. There is also a list you can examine

CARE AND FEEDING OF YOUNG BIRDERS

"On the subject of birding with two-year-olds let me first say that they are *not* the best birding partners! No, two-year-olds are generally fast moving and noisy! But most people appreciate a nice bird and I have found that small children are no exception."

These words start the report from another HBC member, Betsy Higgins, who operates a daycare for children ages two through five out of her home and who wishes to pass on her love of birds to the next generation.

She continues, "With children it's all about awareness. I like to take a few pictures of my backyard birds and stick them on the wall or at eye level on the refrigerator for the children to see. We talk about the birds' names and colors and what they like to eat. Outside, I often stop and say, 'Do you hear that bird?' then I'll imitate the crow, or jay, titmouse, or whatever, and name it. Then I'll ask, 'what do you think that bird is talking about?' When we go inside, we'll look at the bird's picture and recall its song.

"Just as with adults, some kids are interested and some are simply not. It really makes me happy when a two-year-old comes run-

ning to me and says 'Did you hear that?!!' That was a wood pecker!!' And, sure enough, off in the distance I can hear drumming.

"The very best was the day one of my daycare *big kids*, Leela, who is five years old, went outside and suddenly got very excited. She called 'Betsy! Do you hear those crows? What's that all about? Oh, look! I see a hawk!!' And sure enough, there was a Red tailed Hawk overhead, being harassed by crows. All those years of saying to her 'What are those birds talking about?' paid off. Talk about gratifying! I was thrilled and so was Leela. You never know. One of those kids just might become a *BIRDER*!"

Thank you so much, Betsy, for sharing your love of birds and nature with your young students and for telling us about it. You and Lesli, who was featured last month, are inspirations to us all.

Help us celebrate other programs and activities for young people. If you know of any, please contact Mary Alice Wilson at (413)548-9078 or Sally Venman at (413)549-1098.

UNTITLED

This is the first article in a new, as yet unnamed category. I recently talked to Merry Cushing about the possibility of her writing an occasional paragraph for those members who have access to the World Wide Web and hence to the HBC's own web site. We had two ideas in mind. First, we want to demystify the process for beginners. Second, we want to bring other web-based birding sites to the attention of our members. Merry is our very capable *webmaster* - the person who is in charge of the site. With more and more people becoming involved with computers, the Internet and browsers, this seems a good addition to make. (A big plus for me is that maybe I will begin to understand what it's all about myself!) Merry is happy to oblige.

First, does one call a female *Web Master* a *Web Mistress*? Is the word *Master* masculine or not? What is politically correct? And then, what should the title of this section be? *The Master's Voice*? *Words from the Master*? I brought this up at a family gathering over the weekend. My family is large and not always as reverent as I should be in things avian. While some took my problem seriously, others could barely keep a straight face. But there were a lot of suggestions, some of which I pass on to you: *Net Notes*, *NET NOTES*, *Bird Food for BirdBrains*, *Owl Barf - Pellets of Wisdom*, *Webbed Feet from the Web Head*, *Head Webber*, *WorldWide Warbles*, *Web Warbles*. Get the idea? Perhaps the

perfect title is being born in your brain this very moment. Send me a birth announcement. And now, a note from Merry -

You need to use your favorite Web browser (Netscape, Internet Explorer, or whatever to view the Hampshire Bird Club's Web site). The url (universal resource locator) for the Hampshire Bird Club is: <http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>.

Once you get to the Hampshire Bird Club's Home page, there are links that you click to take you to the following pages: "About the Club," "Field Trips," "Related Links," "Membership Form," "Lending Library List," "Photo Page," and "Notes of Interest." The HBC's Home page lists the programs for the current year and Merry makes a program link when she receives the press release. Some of the most interesting links currently are to the Eagle site at Barton's Cove (their 2 eggs hatched this week) and a Barred Owl site in Eastern Massachusetts which have 3 eggs about to hatch. Go to "Related Links" and click on the one you want.

Enjoy the Hampshire Bird Club's Web site. Merry always welcomes comments and suggestions. You can reach her at (413)545-1831 or by e-mail at cushing@oit.umass.edu

CONSERVATION

The Amherst Breeding Bird Census will go into its eleventh year of gathering data in June. Because people go on vacation and move away there may be a few circuits not covered this year. Pete Westover and David Ziomek are looking for people who are qualified and interested. Almost 95% of the data are gathered by ear so it is necessary that the person have a good knowledge of local bird song. If you are interested in learning more, please call Pete (413)256-4045 or Dave (413)863-3221.

Calling all Birders: Peter W. Houlihan, together with Gini Traub of the Mount Holyoke Range State Park is organizing a species census for Hadley and South Hadley. This event, which takes place on Friday, June 9 and Saturday, June 10 coincides with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs statewide census "*Biodiversity Days*" in which standardized data on the presence of species will be collected at various locations throughout the state. Given the high level of public interest in conservation in the region, it seems timely to gather experts and volunteers together recording the biological diversity in the Pioneer Valley. The objective is to gather reliable data for checklists, and to enhance public education about biological diversity at the same time.

The general format of the census is to have biologists and expert amateur naturalists lead groups of volunteers on 1-3 hour walks at pre-determined locations around the Mount Holyoke Range, the adjacent floodplains of the Connecticut River, and Mount Warner. Other locations can certainly be surveyed, and other formats tried, depending on your suggestions and the number of participants. Each group will survey for a particular type of taxonomic group, including plants, herps, mammals, birds, insects, and aquatic invertebrates. During these walks, biologists will demonstrate standard census methods and engage volunteers in assembling a list of all the species seen during the survey. Data sheets for recording finds will be distributed, data will be entered into spreadsheets, and a volunteer data manager (David Marlin) will tabulate the data. Both Friday and Saturday will begin with an early morning bird walk (5:30 to 8:00 a.m.), continue with a morning session (9:00 a.m. to noon), a lunch break (noon to 1:00 p.m.) and an afternoon session (1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.). Saturday will end with a celebration for field foray leaders and volunteers in the late afternoon.

We are looking for expert birders to lead groups who might have an interest in helping to record the presence of species living in the Hadley and South Hadley area. If you're an expert birder who can lead a group, please contact Peter Houlihan, Program Coordinator, Center for Environmental Literacy, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA 01060-1459, at (413)538-3091, e-mail: phouliha@mholyoke.edu. Other birders can join the group leaders in this census.

Orphaned Wood Ducks are almost impossible to raise in captivity is the word from Barbara Skelly who is a wildlife rehabilitator and

who operates the bird store Whistling Crow in Shelburne Falls. She goes on to say however that the orphans will readily accept different female Wood Duck as a new adoptive mother. She receives several ducklings every summer (mostly due to the adult being run over by a careless driver) and would like to try placing these young with adoptive families. If anyone sees a Wood Duck family (female with young) she would appreciate an e-mail with the following information: Exact location, date, approximate age of ducklings, time of day, and if possible a phone number to contact for further information. And, since she receives orphans of different ages throughout the breeding season, updates of previous sightings or reports of any new sightings would be great.

She would also like to receive the same information about Killdeer and Mallards. She is not sure if Killdeer, Wild Turkey, American Woodcock or other precocial birds would accept adoptive young (or if the young would accept the adult), so any leads to information on this subject would be appreciated. Contact Barbara Skelly at The Center for Rehabilitation Of Wildlife (C.R.O.W.) : (413)339-6637 or e-mail corvus57@yahoo.com

Those with access to the HBC Web site can get more information by going to the HBC Home page and clicking on "Notes of Interest."

Bluebirds: I expect many of you saw the article in the *Green* and the *Amherst Record* about HBC member Haleya Priest who is doing her part in helping bluebirds make a comeback. She has recently completed a "Bluebird Trail" erecting twenty-three nest boxes from North Amherst to Hadley that has been accepted by the North American Bluebird Society (NABS) as part of its Transcontinental Bluebird Trail to be launched officially next month.

You are cordially invited to meet with her and fellow Massachusetts bluebirders for the first meeting of the newly formed Massachusetts Bluebird Association where you'll have the opportunity to contribute your ideas on organizing and about affiliating with NABS. As this is being written, Haleya is planning to have talk given by gifted Massachusetts birder, Lillian Lund Files, New Hampshire NABS affiliate Bruce Burdett, and the founder of the previous Tri-State Bluebird Association, Hank Coleman. There will be displays and a round table discussion to share stories about bluebirding.

The meeting is free and takes place on May 13 at 1:00 p.m. in the Community Room at Cherry Hill Co-Housing, 120 Pulpit Hill Road, North Amherst, MA. If you cannot make this meeting and are interested, please contact Haleya or Jim Bowe so that you can be included in future mailings and events. You can contact Haleya at (413)549-3937, e-mail hpandtL@crocker.com, or Jim at (413)584-3398, e-mail jfbowe@hotmail.com.

HITCHCOCK CENTER

Butterfly flying at Hitchcock: There are still a few places left in the Butterfly course. The seven classroom sessions and seven trips in the field begin in early May. You can refer to last month's letter for more detail. Call Tom Gagnon at (413)584-6353 to register.

The first ever **Hitchcock Biothon** to raise funds for environmental education will be held on Saturday, May 13, from midnight to midnight at the Hitchcock Center. Count birds, butterflies, bacteria, or any other biota that you choose for twenty-four hours and then celebrate at a compilation potluck dinner at the Center on Thursday, May 18. David Spector is in charge and will be happy to give you more information and a list of all you might be counting.

He will also be one of the counters and he's looking for people to sponsor him. His goal is to identify one hundred species in twenty-four hours in Hampshire county and to have a total of \$10.00 per species pledged for his efforts. He tells me that "probably won't quite make either goal, but any help would be appreciated." If enough of us pledge our help on the second goal we might just prove him wrong. The one hundred species is his responsibility.

Contact David Spector (413)323-4885 or e-mail at spectord@ccsu.edu for details, to sign up to count, to pledge, or to RSVP the potluck.

MISCELLANEOUS

A word from Janis LaPointe concerning the health of HBC's extraordinary honorary member **Rudd Stone**: "For many of us in Western Mass who admire Rudd Stone tremendously, here is an update on his health. Many know he was extremely ill this winter, in and out of the hospital about 7 times with the flu and subsequent complications. He has spent the last two months in the rehabilitation wing of Heritage Hall nursing home where he lives. As of this afternoon (4/20) he is moving back to Heritage Hall North, the assisted living building where he was living before he became ill. This is a remarkable recovery, one even the medical staff did not expect Rudd to make. He has even been out birding several times and expects to be at the Allen Bird Club annual meeting on May 1." Thanks, Jan, for passing on the good news!

Birds Eye View in the Village Commons in South Hadley and **Backyard Birds** at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton, two local shops specializing in all sorts of goodies to interest birders. Each offers a 10% discount to HBC members for all purchases. You can find equipment from feeders and seed to binoculars and scopes plus books and tapes and videos and many, many gift items. Check them out!

The **Membership List** as of 12/02/99 was enclosed with the December Newsletter with additions and corrections sent as new information reaches me. I remind you to contact Dottie Barnes at (413)549-5476, or by e-mail at dbarnes@chem.umass.edu if you know of any changes or errors. If you need membership lists plus additions call me at (413)549-1098 or use my e-mail svenman@external.umass.edu.

Changes and Additions:

Bob Bieda: add e-mail lbieda@massed.net

Laura Davenport has moved to 67 Village Hill Road, Williamsburg MA 01096

Geoff Le Baron: new e-mail GleBaron@mediaone.net

New members:

Jeff Demarest, 90 Union St., PO Box 745, Barre MA 01005, HPh (798)355-0139

Sarah Goodwin & Matthew Service, 1040 N. Pleasant St. #315, Amherst MA 01002; HPh (413)549-6058, WPh (413)478-0208; e-mail sarahge@student.umass.edu

Tom Pelletier, 382 Middle St., Amherst MA 01002; HPh (413)253-2991; e-mail tpell@mediaone.net

Naomi Reece, Amherst College, Box 380, Campus Center, Amherst MA 01002-5000; HPh (413)542-3331; e-mail nsreece@amherst.edu

Daniel Russell, 28 Meadowbrook Dr., Easthampton MA 01027, HPh (413)527-7323, e-mail boodanny@aol.com

Bill Stack, Bald Head Rd., HC33, Box 157, Arrowsic ME 04523, HPh (207)442-8256, WPh (207)729-1199.

William T. Sweet, 75 South St., Northampton MA 01060; HPh (413)582-7094, WPh (413)772-6506; e-mail bsweet@javanet.com

Have a terrific birding spring!

Robins flew to the ground and found a nice plot of plowed ground full of worms. They ate and ate and ate and ate, 'til they could eat no more. "I'm so full I don't think I can fly back up to the tree," said the first one. "Me neither," said the second one. "Let's just lie here and bask in the warm sun." "OK," said the first. They plopped down, basking in the sun. No sooner had they dozed off, when a big fat tom came and landed on them and gobbled them both up. As he sat washing his face after his meal, he said to himself,

"I just love baskin' robins."

Sally

Newsletter Editor

Hampshire Bird Club

Amherst, Massachusetts

<http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>

June, 2000



At the end of June I return to my roots, Grand Rapids, Michigan, to attend my 50th (fiftieth!) high school reunion. Last fall this seemed like a great idea. Now I'm quaking in my boots. In order to prepare myself for the journey back (aside from putting names to yearbook headshots of seventeen-year-olds, adding fifty years and trying to lock it into memory) I am memorizing a few facts that I can casually drop into the conversation. You know, the sort of

thing that makes friends say – "My, oh my, Sally has really made her life a success – so bright, so interesting, so amusing!" (Note that I've left out "skinny" and "beautiful.") Perhaps some of my findings will also be of use to you on your summer adventure. You will find them scattered throughout this long, long, last Newsletter of the HBC year. (My ploy to hold your attention to the bitter end.)

PROGRAMS

All meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst

On Monday, June 12, we are proud to welcome Pete Westover, Amherst's Conservation Director and long-time HBC member, who will present a program titled "Special Habitats and Habitat Protection in the Connecticut River Valley." He'll give us an overview of land protection in the Valley from Warwick and Wendell down the valley to Longmeadow. He will give us background information and review the progress of various state agencies and land trusts protecting habitat, especially as it relates to birds and birding but also including information on amphibians, wildflowers and other wildlife. He'll talk about how land protection works, the role of trails, the people doing the work and how all of this relates to us as birders and what we should be doing to protect these habitats from disappearing.

Pete has been the Conservation Director for the town of Amherst since 1974. He is a founding board member of the Valley Land Fund (three-county land trust) and advisor to the Kestrel Trust (nine-town land trust). He has received open space protection awards from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions. In 1998 he received the first Governor's Award for Open Space Protection.

He was editor for *Birding Western Massachusetts: The Central Connecticut River Valley*, published by the Kestrel Trust and the Hampshire Bird Club in 1996. He is currently working with a group putting together a complete birding guide, the new *Western Massachusetts Birding Guide* which will cover the area from east of the Quabbin, north to the Vermont/New Hampshire border, west to the New York State line and south to the Connecticut line. This guidebook is to be published within the next year.

And speaking of next year – perhaps a preview of programs being planned will leave you eager (well maybe not *too* eager) for the summer to pass and September to begin. Jan Ortiz's leadoff program on September 11 is about birding in Veracruz, Mexico and is titled "River of Raptors." October 16 brings Brian Harrington to the Valley to talk about the Red Knot. On November 13 Becky Field's topic will be on suburban wildlife. December 11 is the holiday party with members showing slides. January 8 will bring us Geoff LeBaron on Antarctica. And on

February 12 Clay and Pat Sutton will help us improve our skills in "How to Spot Owls." Other programs are being planned for March 12, April 9, May 14 and June 11 for those who might wish to make note on the calendar.

A BUSINESS MOMENT

At our May meeting the nominating committee of David Peake-Jones (Chair), Harvey Allen and Merry Cushing presented a slate of offices and members at large for the membership's approval. A vote was taken and the following slate was elected: Mary Alice Wilson (President), Stacy Adams (Vice President/Program Director), Mark Mount (Treasurer), David Peake-Jones (Communications Secretary), Joanne Parker (Membership Secretary), and Members-at-Large: Sue Emerson, David Gross, Jim Marcum, Dennis McKenna, Jan Ortiz and Scott Sumner. We welcome the new members and wish them well in the year ahead. If you should have concerns or wish input in Club operations feel free to contact one of them. You are welcome to attend Board meetings and can get information by calling Mary Alice Wilson (413)548-9078 or e-mail mwilson@12s.phast.umass.edu.

And – we certainly thank those who are leaving the Board. Dottie Barnes retires as Membership Secretary leaving the complicated lists of names and particulars in great shape. Sue Fletcher leaves as Communications Secretary having performed her own magic by making sense out of the complex, not always "in complete agreement", discussions as the Board went through the steps pursuing 501(c)(3) status and updating the By-laws. Dottie was also a very important resource in dealing with these processes. And – a very special thanks to Shirley Hilborn who served on the Board as Vice President/Program Director for two years, President for two and Member at Large for two. I believe all three have earned more birding time! Jim Marcum is NOT leaving the Board, just stepping down as President, an office he filled (for the second time) for two years during a complex period.

Also at the May meeting the proposed changes to the by-laws were voted on and approved unanimously. I have enclosed a copy of the revised by-laws with this letter.

To Inoculattee is to take coffee intravenously when you are running late.

FIELD TRIPS

The HBC offers field trips 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 that 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 driving expenses. Transportation costs are calculated on the basis of 30 cents per mile per car plus tolls and parking fees. It is expected that all persons in the car, including the driver, share costs equally. Shawn Smolen-Morton, Field Trip Chair, can be reached at (413)665-5196 or by email at bachman@complit.umass.edu should you have questions or suggestions.

Trip Reports

On a good weather Wednesday, May 17, eleven birders led by Harvey Allen counted forty species of birds in the area leading off from the parking area across from Atkins Farm. The group did not need to move far to see ten warbler species with especially good looks at Blue-winged, Chestnut-sided, Wilson's, Black and White, and Canada. All enjoyed the opportunity to spend a lot of time studying the birds and the habitat. Long looks at a Rose-breasted Grosbeak were especially gratifying.

On Saturday, May 20 Shawn Smolen-Morton and three other birders explored Arcadia tallying sixty-nine species (including twelve warbler species) in a thankfully cool morning (fewer mosquitoes). Among the total, Horse Shoe Loop Trail gave them eight Empidonax Flycatchers (no sound at all), one Eastern Wood Peewee, four Great-crested Flycatchers, two Eastern Kingbirds, one Eastern Phoebe, one Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, one singing Tennessee Warbler, fifteen Yellow-rumped Warblers and seventeen American Redstarts. After the 'official' trip the Yellow-bellied was again observed with vocalization - frequent "pur-wee" inflected like a question. At Old Springfield Road on the bridge they found one Blackpoll Warbler, one Canada Warbler and two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, on the nest, defending it from a Gray Catbird. At Ned's Ditch, where the old trolley line crosses, one

Mourning Warbler was seen three-quarters down the path atop the old trolley line.

Monhegan Island: Leaders Stacy Adams and Andrew McGee secretly believed that the old-timer's "warblers on the beach" claim was just a myth, a fable created by highly imaginative HBC veterans. No longer so - this trip put back the truth in trip advertising. Nineteen participants saw a total of 124.5 species (2 male 'Blallard' - part Black, part Mallard - accounts for the .5) in fine weather on an extremely relaxed and happy trip. The quality and quantity of birds were way up. Twenty warbler species were seen including a beautiful Yellow-throated, a breeding plumage male Dickcissle, three or four Mourning Warblers, and, yes, the Blackburnians on the beach - two females and one male that allowed people to get very close! I suspect that many photos will be circulating at our next meeting. There were excellent looks at Flycatchers, an immature male Summer Tanager sporting a bright red head, an adult Red-headed Woodpecker and Black-throated Cuckoos. A good Atlantic Puffin trip also produced lots of people Sandpipers, Dunlins, Common, Arctic and Roseate Terns and a probable Cory's Shearwater. Care to sign up for next year's trip now?

Did you know that Reintarnation means to come back to life as a hillbilly?

June Trips

On Saturday, June 3 Al Richards (413)665-2761 and Bob Bieda (413)527-2623 are off to the Poor man's Monhegan: Plum Island and vicinity. Ninety-four species counted last year!

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Remember to use the Voice of Audubon during the summer to learn what birds are being seen across the state or to make a report. A toll-free number will put you in touch with the statewide system at Lincoln that covers four separate Rare Bird Alert areas in Massachusetts. Call 1-888-224-6444 and follow directions.

Did you know that the bird with the fewest feathers is the Ruby-throated Hummingbird - only nine hundred and forty? Count them if you doubt me. On the other hand, the Tundra Swan has the greatest number - twenty-five thousand, two hundred and sixteen! (Anyone have a Hummingbird and/or a Tundra Swan feather they could lend me for a visual the last week in June?)

LIBRARY

The HBC Library, created and maintained by Anne Cann, is located in the main room on the first floor of the Ilitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant Street in Amherst (413)526-6006. Summer hours are 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

During the summer hours (above) you can borrow from our collection of field guides to birds in the U.S., Canada and selected locations in other parts of the globe, books on general birding topics, and books dealing with literary or scientific aspects of birds. You may also borrow videos, audiotapes, periodicals and birding journals. This is a varied and unusually rich collection. If you have not checked it recently, you'll be pleasantly surprised. For those who have access to the Internet, there is a listing of titles on the HBC WebPages. There is also a list you can examine at

meetings. If you wish to purchase birding equipment or a bird guide that the library does not have, borrow the ABA sales catalog.

Anne is happy to answer any questions or take suggestions of books you feel might be good additions to the collections. You can reach her at (413) 253-7753 or e-mail at cann@uhs.umass.edu.

I understand that a new species of Swallow was seen and studied this past spring at the Ballard Locks in Seattle, Washington. The chief characteristic is that the bird collects moss from around the base of the lock walls and gates, then builds its nest mainly out of this material. It has tentatively been named the Lock Moss-nester.

CONSERVATION

The Amherst Breeding Bird Census will go into its eleventh year of gathering data in June. Because people go on vacation and move away there may be a few circuits not covered this year. Pete Westover and David Ziomek are looking for people who are qualified and interested. Almost 95% of the data are gathered by ear so it is necessary that the person have a good knowledge of local bird song. If you are interested in learning more, please call P (413)256-4045 or Dave (413)863-3221.

The HBC has adopted one of the trails, the Lake Trail, at the Fitzgerald Lake Conservation Area in Northampton. Twice a year several hours are spent doing trail maintenance. June 24 and/or June 25 are the dates this year. If you are able to help please call Anne Lombard (413)586-7509 or e-mail her at annelombard@mediaone.net.

MISCELLANEOUS

The BOB and HARVEY DUO (or is it duel?) Two of our most active and respected long-time members are long-time friends, Bob Bieda and Harvey Allen. They were recently featured on the Monday morning WFCR program, Field Notes, hosted by Laurie Sanders. These formidable birders are looking for birds in an additional way now. A little background:

Bob is newly retired and when he knew that retirement was truly going to happen he promised himself a year dedicated to birding and vowed that he would see as many species of birds in Massachusetts as he possibly could. This meant regular trips on a daily and weekly basis to old stomping grounds, more frequent trips to the coastal areas and being on the ready at a moment's notice to go after the unusual, the rare and the exceptional spotted within the State's borders.

I'm not sure when Harvey signed on. These friends have been swapping big bird stories for years and have enjoyed each other's company on many quests, so to see them birding together is not unusual. According to Bob, if you work really hard you can see 250 to 275 species in Massachusetts during one year. It is possible to see 300 but you would have to be very lucky as well as work hard. Being in Western Massachusetts is a disadvantage and a hindrance to the difficulty because most of the really good birds are found on the Coast. So - this Undauntable Duo just keep going to

the Coast. Since the beginning of the year they have logged more than 5,000 miles.

So where do they stand right now? In spite of lost birds as in "you should have been here five minutes ago" and "there it is, just going over that hill ... oops" the tally stands at Bob - 261 and Harvey - 246! I'll keep you posted as the days pass swiftly by.

Good Luck Bob and Harvey on your serious search from all your birding buddies!

HELP!!! The HBC Board is looking for someone who might be interested in becoming the publicity chair. Nancy Buchanan has filled this spot for several years now and would like to retire. She has done a fabulous job and has organized the work so that it is well defined. The publicity person keeps in contact with the program coordinator, writes a publicity release from materials (and pictures) provided by the speaker and sends it to the news media and to Merry Cushing for inclusion on the HBC web-site. Basically, what is needed is a person who is well organized and is able to meet deadlines. If you would be interested in becoming more involved in the workings of the HBC you might want to talk to her to get a first hand report on what is involved. You can reach her at (413)773-8523 or by e-mail buchanan@gcc.mass.edu.

Thank You: In the last two issues of the Newsletter, the Board issued an SOS in search for someone who could advise us in setting up a new bookkeeping system now that we are a 501(c)(3) organization. Long-time member **Judy Smith** has come to the rescue. Many, many thanks, Judy.

Refreshment Head **Sue Emerson** sends a very special thank you to all the kind commissary providers out there for helping to make the food table an outstanding part of the evening festivities. Birders require more than slides and bird talk to keep them quiet and happy and this year's collection of homemade brownies and cookies and other goodies was especially good! Thank you very much!

We thank **Birds Eye View** in the Village Commons in South Hadley and **Backyard Birds** at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton for offering a 10% discount to all HBC members for all purchases.

The **Membership List** as of 12/02/99 was enclosed with the December Newsletter with additions and corrections sent as new information is received. I remind you to contact the new Membership Secretary, Joanne Parker or me, Sally Venman if you know of any changes or errors. She can be reached at 549-7446 or by e-mail at parkrjm@yahoo.com. If you need membership lists plus additions call me at 549-1098 or use my e-mail svenman@external.umass.edu.

Changes and Additions:

Ruth Bowman will have a new e-mail address soon. To reach her in the interim use manes@math.umass.edu and cite "For Ruth" as the subject.

Laura Davenport: add e-mail twobirds@javanet.com

Joanne Parker: add e-mail parkrjm@yahoo.com

Ronnie Williams: new address - 7 Mieczkowski Circle, South Deerfield MA 01373-9627

New members:

North Cairn, 5 Bridgeman Lane, South Hadley MA 01075, (413)533-3845, mcairn@mtholyoke.edu

Kent W. Faerber: 11 McIntosh Dr., Amherst MA 01002

Rebecca Field: 369 Strong St., Amherst MA 01002, HPh (413)253-0539, WPh (413)545-4888, field@forwild.umass.edu

Blake Geryk: 12 Plantation Rd., Hatfield, MA 01038, (413)247-3380, bgeryk@rcn.com

Janet Heller: 20 Kettle Pond Road, Amherst MA 01002, (413)256-6743

Meghan Lout: 24 River Terrace, Holyoke MA 01040

Dorothy Rosenthal, 235 Maple Ridge Road, Florence MA 01062, (413)586-9876, drosenthal@mailandnews.com

Julie Rypysc and Chris Yerleg: 133 Shutesbury Rd., Pelham MA 01002, HPh 253-7339 (Julie), 259-1605 (Chris), WPh 256-6726 (Julie)

Janice Zepko: 46 Pilgrim Rd., W. Springfield MA 01089, HPh (413)733-3978

We all are familiar with the terms a **gaggle of geese** or a **bevy of quail**. I'm going to try to sprinkle a few others into my casual reunion conversations: a **siege of bitterns** (drama), a **congregation of plovers** (New England history), an **exaltation of larks** (poetry), and a **bazaar of guillemots** (bizarre). I sincerely hope that I live through the fifty-year-old experiences and return to say hello again in August.

Have a wonderful Summer!
Sally

Sally Venman, Newsletter Editor
413-549-1098
svenman@external.umass.edu

And that almost does it for another HBC year. You'll hear from me next in August when I come after your money. (The membership year runs from September 1 - August 31.) I mention this now so that you'll have the summer to think about what is really important in your life and start putting aside large amounts of HBC support money. As I mentioned in the April Newsletter, due to ever-increasing costs and with the knowledge that the price of stamps is going up again, it is going to be necessary to raise the price of membership. The last time this happened was three years ago and the basic membership is going up to only \$15.00 a year. That's for ten first class programs, ten Newsletters and many more than ten free (except sharing mileage costs) field trips and opportunities to learn and experience the great outdoors. We're not talking big bucks here, folks, so you don't have to consider putting another mortgage on the house. Remember also that your membership is now tax deductible!

Thought for June: There is truth of the wise old saying "A Pun is its own Reward"

Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.

Amherst, Massachusetts

<http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>

September, 2000



PROGRAMS

*All meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst
Should bad weather force cancellation, it will be announced on WIIMP-AM 1400*

Veracruz, Mexico is one of the premiere birding destinations in the world. Its fall migration awes birders with its numbers and delights them with its diversity. More than four million raptors flow through the area in a virtual "river" from late August to mid-November. On spectacular flight days the final tally climbs into six figures. The largest flight on record for a single day nudged the million mark. Twenty-one species of raptors can be seen but it is most of the world's population of migrating Mississippi Kites, Swainson's Hawks and Broad-winged Hawks that steal the show and boggle the mind.

Hosting the largest concentration of migrating hawks anywhere in the world, it is no wonder that raptors get top billing, but migrating passerines numbering in the millions use this corridor as well. An early morning of birding can feature thousands of Scissailed Flycatchers and Dickcissels streaming overhead. Near wetlands, cloud forest and coastal plain provide excellent birding in varied habitats and nicely round out a trip list with both resident and migrant species.

On Monday, September 11, Jan Ortiz, a favorite among HBC members, returns for the third time to open our 2000-2001 programming with a slide and video presentation about this wonderful area. She titles her program *River of Raptors - Birding Veracruz, Mexico*, adding that the extraordinary hawk migration is what attracts one to Veracruz, but its richness extends well beyond the birds to its people, culture and natural beauty.

Jan is past president of the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. and one of its founding members. She taught birding classes at the Hitchcock Center for ten years and has led numerous birding trips. Many HBC members owe their start in birding to Jan. She has taken part in many local migrant and breeding bird censuses, is the compiler for the Northampton Christmas Bird Count, and is the new *Voice of Audubon for Western Massachusetts*. She is currently completing her sixth year serving on the Massachusetts

Avian Records committee and is working with a group putting together a new Western Massachusetts Birding Guide. Jan's love of birds has inspired her to travel from the high Arctic tundra to neotropical rain forests. Come see and hear her describe one of her latest adventures. You'll not regret it.

Food: There are some of us attending HBC meetings who consider good food almost equal to good programs and we have had an ample supply of both over time. Although a great cook and organizer in her own right, our Commissary Chief, Sue Emerson, needs help, both in getting goodies and in help at meetings. There is a place on the Membership Form to check your willingness to donate edibles. She will also be at the September meeting passing around a sign-up sheet. If you are willing to help in other ways (serving as Co-Chair, sharing the calling, helping with set up and/or clean up) you can reach her by phone at (413)584-6736 or by email at wemerson@javanet.com. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

I am pleased to be able to give you some of the programming for the coming year. Take some time to "ooh" and "aah" over what's in store, then mark your calendars!

To Come:

October 16: Brian Harrington (The Red Knot).

November 13: Becky Field (Suburban Wildlife).

December 11: Holiday Party (Members' Slides, Christmas Count Planning and Party Food).

January 8: Geoff LeBaron (Antarctica).

February 12: Clay and Pat Sutton (Owl Spotting Skills).

Other dates to save: **March 12, April 9, May 14 and June 11.**

An animal that eats without stopping is a hippobottomless.

FIELD TRIPS

The HBC offers field trips 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 that plans can be made for the size of the group and you can be notified if a change is necessary. We recommend that participants carpool whenever possible and that all persons in the car (driver included) share costs equally on a basis of 30 cents per mile plus tolls and parking fees. Shawn Smolen-Morton, Field Trip Chair, 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 leader. He can be reached at (413)863-4569 or by email at bachman@complit.umass.edu

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, the 9th: Join Bob Bieda on his annual half-day search around *Northampton's East Meadows* for warblers and other fall migrants. Last year the group had a nice mixed flock of migrants containing Red-eyed Vireo, Blackpoll and American Redstart, Northern Waterthrush, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. They also had a singing Yellow-throated Vireo, a Warbling Vireo and a very actively singing Carolina Wren. Meet at the Northampton Bowl, 525 Pleasant Street (Routes 5 & 10), just off I-91, exit 18, at 7 a.m. Expect to bird until 10:00 a.m. Call Bob for further details at (413)527-2623.

Wednesday, the 13th: the first in the monthly *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley* series. This is a leisurely-paced, mid-week, three-hour trip led by Harvey Allen focusing on seasonal birds and any rarities recently discovered. This month's destination will likely be *Skinner Mountain* to watch for hawks and other migrants. Meet Harvey at 9:00 a.m. across the street from Atkins Farms on the corner of Route 116 and Bay Road in Amherst. Call him (413)253-7963 for more information.

Saturday, the 16th: the first in the monthly series, *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding*. This is a half-day trip to favorite local birding spots planned and led by one of our outstanding trip leaders. This month's leader, Scott Sumner, will be searching for migrating hawks and warblers in the Connecticut Valley. Since hawk migration is so weather dependent, he will have a rain date, **Sunday, the 17th**. Call Scott (413)253-7486 for the place and time of departure.

OCTOBER

Sunday, the 1st: A *NEW TRIP* for the Club will be a full-day *Pelagic Bird Trip* led by Susan Carver (you may remember her from the 1999 Monhegan Trip). She has made preliminary arrangements aboard the Yankee Fleet whale watching boat out of Gloucester, Massachusetts, and while the boat searches for whales, Susan will help the group locate and identify ocean-going birds that tend to follow the whales. Possible birds include Northern Fulmar, Cory's, Greater and Manx Shearwaters, Leach's Storm-Petrel, Northern Gannet, and Pomarine Jaeger. Cetaceans possible include Humpback, Minke, and Right whales, and Atlantic White-sided Dolphin. You are asked to make your own reservations with Yankee Fleet (800)942-5464 for the afternoon whale watch (1:30 PM) on Sunday and provide your own transportation to Gloucester. Of course, you can arrange car pooling by asking Susan who else is going. The cost is \$27/person for the four hour trip. Meet Susan and the group at

the boat. Call her (978)887-5758 for more information, directions and to register.

Saturday, the 7th: Tom Gagnon will again be leading the popular all-day fall trip to *Quabbin Reservoir*. The group will travel to the remote areas of the Reservoir on roads which are all that remain of the lost towns. They'll look for late migrating warblers on land and early migrating waterfowl on the water. Last year, the group braved the rain to see, among other birds, Pine Siskins and calling Common Loons. They were also lucky to observe a Bull Moose. Plan to bring lunch, snacks, water and appropriate clothing. The trip is **limited to 15 people and you need to commit to the whole day**. Knowing Tom, birds are only one aspect of the natural world to be experienced on the trip. Call him at (413)584-6353 for more information and to reserve a spot.

Wednesday, the 11th: Harvey Allen heads for the *West Meadows* of Northampton on this month's *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley* to search for migrating sparrows, late warblers, blackbirds and hawks. Last year, his group had wonderful looks at a Nelson's Sharp-tailed sparrow. Meet Harvey at the Northampton Bowl, 525 Pleasant Street, Northampton at 8 a.m. Call him (413)253-7963 for further information.

Other Field Trips are available through the Hitchcock Center in Amherst. On **Sunday, September 17** (8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.), there will be a *Hawk Watch on the Summit (Skinner Park)* with Harvey Allen. Bring snacks, lunch and water. The group will meet at the Hitchcock Center for car-pooling. You are also welcome to meet the group on the mountain. This is open to Hitchcock members (small fee to non-members). Pre-registration requested. (Call the Center 413-256-6006 for more information and to register).

And at *Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary*, *Early Morning Bird Walks* will be held on **Saturdays, 8:00 – 9:30** (at Arcadia on **September 9**; at Marion Sherman Lynes Wildlife Sanctuary on **September 16**; and at Graves Farm on **September 23**). A *Full Moon Night Hike/Owl Walk* will take place on **September 15**. Leader Mark Skinner will tour Arcadia's woodlands and wetlands, listening for mammals, bugs and birds (not just owls). On **September 17**, Dan Russell will conduct a *Hawk Watch* from Mount Tom. And on **October 2, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00**, there will be a *Fall Migration Walk* at Arcadia led by David McLain. Some of these offerings are free to MAS members. Others have small fees. (Call the Sanctuary 413-584-3009 for more information and to register).

A hen is an egg spurt at what she does.

LIBRARY

The HBC Library, created and maintained by Anne Cann, is located in the main room on the first floor of the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant Street in Amherst (413)526-6006. Hours are 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

The HBC Library has an ever-growing collection of books, journals and tapes for use by the members. Anything borrowed needs to be signed out – directions are posted on the front of the book-

case and can be returned to the Center or at the meetings. The collection has bird guides to local, regional and worldwide areas arranged by geographic area. Most are up-to-date guides

published by the American Birding Association (ABA). The Club is a member of the ABA and the ABA journals, *Birding* and *Winging It* are available for borrowing. Books on bird characteristics, feeding and attracting birds and planning birding are just a few of the subjects available. There are also audio and video tapes to enhance your birding pleasure. The library's catalog is posted on the HBC website and is available for your perusal at meetings.

Anne brings a small selection of books to the monthly meetings

for those who may be unable to get to the Hitchcock Center. If there is something you would like her to bring, please contact her at home a few days before the meeting. She is happy to answer any questions or take suggestions for books you feel might be good additions to the collection. You can reach her at (413) 253-7753 or e-mail at cann@uhs.umass.edu. She would also appreciate the donation of useful books, tapes and videos which you may no longer need and others might enjoy.

Can honeybee abuse lead to a sting operation?

CONSERVATION

Conservation is an important function of the Club. This past year members collected data for the Christmas Bird Count, the Hitchcock Biothon, the Birds in Forested Landscapes project, the Marsh Bird Monitoring Project in Deerfield and the Amherst Breeding Bird Census. They also helped with trail maintenance on the Lake Trail at the Fitzgerald Conservation Area in Northampton. Members are alerted to conservation concerns and projects through the Newsletters and are told how to get more information. If this is a special interest of yours there is a place on the

Membership Form that you can check. Anne Lombard is Chair of the Conservation Committee. If you have questions you can contact her at (413)586-7578 or by e-mail at annelombard@mediaone.net.

Did you know that the pet store had a bird contest with no perches necessary?

MISCELLANEOUS

Rare Bird Alert (RBA): In the past there has sometimes been a problem starting the Rare Bird Alert when the people responsible for starting it have not been available. Now, a new policy states *any member of the Board can take the responsibility*. So, if you find a bird that you feel should be on the RBA, you have eleven people you can contact. The Alert will be started as soon as the following criteria have been met. (1) The ID of the bird has been positively established. (2) The directions are clear and accurate. (3) There is a likelihood that the bird will remain long enough to be seen by others or it is such a rare species that people will want to look for the bird even if its present location is not firmly established. And (4) if necessary, permission has been given by the property owner. A list of Board Members can be found at the end of this letter. A copy of the RBA form is enclosed with this letter. If you are interested in being included on one of the trees, fill out the form and mail it with your membership materials.

The HBC Web Page has grown considerably under the magical touch of Merry Cushing, our skilled Webmaster – or is it Webmistress? – or Web Head? – Web Warbler? I'm still a Webnovice but I do check the site often. There is a whole lot of good stuff to be found. If you have access and have not checked it recently it is well worth a revisit. The address is part of the Newsletter letterhead.

The Bob and Harvey Duo: Some of you will remember the article in the June Newsletter featuring the infamous duo of Bob (Allen) and Harvey (Allen) and their quest for Massachusetts birds. This all started when Bob retired. He promised himself one year dedicated to birding. Counting species to see how many he could come up with in a year sounded like fun. I'm not sure when Harvey came into the picture. He may have felt that Bob

needed someone to make sure he really saw the birds he said he saw. (Thanks, Harvey for keeping Bob honest.) However it happened, this Undaunted Duo was formed. This meant trips on a daily and weekly basis to old stomping grounds, more frequent trips to the coastal areas and being on the ready at a moment's notice to go after the unusual, the rare and the exceptional. According to Bob, if you work really hard you can see 250 to 275 species in Massachusetts during one year. It is possible to see 300 but you would have to be very lucky as well as work very hard. Being in Western Massachusetts is a disadvantage and adds to the difficulty because most of the *really good birds* are found on the Coast. So – this Persevering Pair just keep going to the Coast. And at the time of the June letter the tally stood at (*drum roll*) Bob 261 – Harvey 246!

The plot thickens! (*loud drum roll*) Some time during the summer Al Richards managed to join them and the duet became a trio. Hmm! All was going well for this tireless trio except for small details like rain, flooded fields, and little or no local sandbars to catch the rare migrating shore birds. Then they happened to meet up with friend Shawn Smolen-Morton (*loud threatening drum roll*) who ever so casually mentioned that they would have a long road to travel before they surpassed *his* best year, *the year he listed 305!* Well – our trio was quick to let him know that his 305-year simply does not count in this contest! The year 2000, *this year*, is the only year when counting really counts!

So folks, four months to go and the tally as of August 14, 2000 stands at: Bob – 291, Al – 279, and Harvey – 277. Shawn's 305 was unfortunately in the nineteen hundreds so does not apply. Continued good luck on your search, Bob and Harvey and Al. And Shawn – just keep lining up the great field trips! I'll keep

you posted.

Thank you to Nancy Buchanan who has filled the spot of publicity chair for several years. Through her good work the word has been spread near and far and as result, our meetings are well attended by newcomers as well as members. She has earned a very sincere thank you and a deserved break. And - Welcome to Marion Gorham as her able replacement. Should you need to contact Marion, she is listed in the People to Contact list at the end of the Newsletter.

David Sibley, author and illustrator who has been described as the heir apparent to Roger Tory Peterson, will be at the Odyssey Bookshop at the Village Commons in South Hadley to sign copies of the new *National Audubon Society Sibley Guide to Birds* on Saturday, October 14th at 10:00 a.m. The book has 544 pages, with 6,500 illustrations by Mr. Sibley, who is co-author (with Pete Dunne and Clay Sutton) of *Hawks in Flight*. A birdwalk will take place prior to the signing if weather permits. Space is limited for the walk, so interested people should call the Odyssey (534-7307) for further details.

O.K., Stop Squawking, It's Dinner Time (Chirp). There is an animal film for adults that is stunning movie goes every place it is being shown. The Swedish film, "Kestrel's Eye" is an extraordinary documentary that views the world through the eyes of two kestrels that make their home in a Swedish church steeple overlooking an idyllic village cemetery. While the cycle of life and death and seasons plays out below them, the birds are followed in exceptional intimacy as they survey their domain, chatter, hunt, feed, mate, tend their eggs and raise six tiny chicks. In short, they do all the things that birds do. A spectacularly gorgeous movie, "Kestrel's Eye" uses no mood-music, nor does it anthropomorphize the birds' lives. Rather, we're treated to the bird's eye view of human life set to sounds of their own and of that which drifts up from below.

I have been hearing about this film for some time now. Descriptives like *extraordinary*, *remarkable*, *old-fashioned wonderful*, and *spectacularly gorgeous* are liberally sprinkled in the reviews. I thought you would like to be informed. The movie will be shown at the Pleasant Street Theatre in Northampton, September 1 - September 7. There is only one showing a day at 5:00 p.m. Check the paper or call (413)586-0935 for more information.

We thank **Backyard Birds** at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton for offering a 10% discount to all HBC members for all purchases. **Birds Eye View** in the Village Commons in South Hadley has changed hands and focus and is now called **Dabbles**. According to the new owner, Cindy Labrecque, the plan is to continue carrying bird seed, feeders and homes and is happy to continue the 10% discount on bird-related products. For those of you who like a bargain, there is still birding equipment available at a good price, and books on birding at half price. You might want to check it out.

Authors in jail have their prose and cons!

People to Contact to answer questions or make suggestions:

Officers:

Mary Alice Wilson, *President*, (413)548-9078,
mwilson@k12.oit.umass.edu
Stacy Adams, *VP & Program Chair*, (413)367-0177,
lovett@student.umass.edu
Mark Mount, *Treasurer*, (413)253-5169,
msmount@pltpath.umass.edu
Joanne Parker, *Membership Secretary*, (413) 549-7446,
parkrim@yahoo.com
David Peake-Jones, *Communications Secretary*, (413)529-9541

Members at large:

Sue Emerson, (413)584-6736, wemerson@javanet.com
David Gross, (413)253-2897, dgross@biochem.umass.edu
Jim Marcum, (413)549-1613, marcums@fnr.umass.edu
Dennis McKenna, (413)256-8439
Jan Ortiz, (413)549-1768, jortiz@aol.com
Scott Sumner, (413)253-7486, ssurner@aol.com

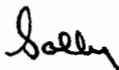
Others to contact:

Anne Cann, *Library*, (413)253-7753, cann@uhs.umass.edu
Sue Emerson, *Refreshments*, (413)584-6736,
wemerson@javanet.com
Marion Gorham, *Publicity*, (413)548-9435,
alnmarion@juno.com
Anne Lombard, *Conservation Comm. Chair*, (413)586-7509,
annelombard@mediaone.net
Shawn Smolen-Morton, *Field Trip Chair*, (413)863-4569,
bachman@complit.umass.edu
Sally Venman, *Newsletter Editor*, (413)549-1098,
svenman@external.umass.edu
Mary Alice Wilson, *Rare Bird Alert*, (413)548-9078,
mwilson@k12.oit.umass.edu

So friends, the time has come for that final motivational paragraph, the one that makes you eager to hand over bundles of money and your first born thus assuring the continuing outflow of superb programming, wonderful trips, terrific food and terrible puns courtesy of the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.

Remember also that your membership is now tax deductible.

Please join us for another year.



Sally Venman, Newsletter Editor
(413)549-1098
svenman@external.umass.edu

Enclosed: Membership Form/Release Form, Rare Bird Alert Form

Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.
Amherst, Massachusetts



Rare Bird Alert
2000 - 2001

Interested members can be alerted to rare birds in the area in one of two ways: through a telephone tree or electronically through e-mail. Last year because of the RBA people saw the Varied Thrush, MacGillivray's Warbler, Iceland, Glaucous and Lesser Black-Backed Gulls, a Spotted Towhee, Northern Wheatear, White and Brown Pelicans, Bohemian Waxwing, Boreal Chickadee, Hoary Redpoll, Harris's Sparrow, Black-headed Grosbeak, Sandhill Crane, Yellow-throated Warbler, Wilson's Plover, Arctic Tern, White-rumped Sandpiper, and Blue Grosbeak.

As has always been the case, the *VOICE OF AUDUBON* (1-888-224-6444) 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 are **two categories**:

A: For rare birds in the Pioneer Valley only (or) **B:** For rare birds in the Pioneer Valley and beyond.

Signing up for either category implies both that you want to be called and are willing to call at any time. The net 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 person, 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.

Those of you on e-mail might prefer to receive your RBA announcements electronically. (You cannot be on both the phone and e-mail trees.) If so, please add your e-mail address to the list below and check **E-Mail Only**.

If you are interested in being on one of the trees, please fill out the following and return it with your membership form to Hampshire Bird Club, Inc., P.O. Box 716, Amherst, MA, 01004-0716. ~~People choosing the telephone tree must respond by October 1~~ to be included. The e-mail tree can be added to any time.

Date: _____

Category: A _____

B _____

E-Mail Only: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____ (ZIP) _____

Phone: Home _____

Answering Machine? Yes () No ()

Work _____

Answering Machine? Yes () No ()

E-Mail Address: _____

Date received:	Payment: <input type="checkbox"/> cash, <input type="checkbox"/> check, \$	Release Form signed:	Data entered:
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For administrative purposes only.

HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB, INC. MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name(s): _____

 Address: _____

 City: _____
 State: _____ ZIP: _____
 Home Phone(s): [] _____
 [] _____
 Work Phone(s): [] _____
 [] _____
 E-mail(s): _____

Please check the activities listed below in which you would like to participate:

☐ Lead field trips
☐ Occasionally provide refreshments
☐ Occasionally help set up/take down
☐ Attend Board meetings
☐ Publicity Committee
☐ Conservation Committee
☐ Field Trip Committee
☐ Refreshments Committee
☐ Other (describe) _____

(Information will only be distributed to members)

Everyone please be sure to fill out and sign the Release Form on the opposite side of this sheet.

Please choose a level of membership from the options below. Funds generated through supporting membership categories aid in financing the outstanding programming for which our club has become known. **All membership contributions are tax deductible.**

MEMBERSHIP - REGULAR: Tax deductible

Individual @ \$15.00

\$
\$

Family @ \$25.00

MEMBERSHIP - SUPPORTING: Tax deductible

Downy Woodpecker @ \$35.00

\$
\$
\$
\$
\$

Northern Flicker @ \$50.00

Red-bellied Woodpecker @ \$100.00

Pileated Woodpecker @ \$250.00 or more

Other

Please make checks payable to the **Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.** and send along with this form to:

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

Reminder: fill out and sign the Release Form on the opposite side.

OVER PLEASE

RELEASE FORM

We ask (at the suggestion of our legal advisor) that you complete the release form below if you intend to go on field trips or think you might participate in the future. We need members to share responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others during field trips. The signed release will be filed with the club secretary. For family memberships, all participating members should sign.

RELEASE OF ALL DEMANDS - HOLD HARMLESS

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

I fully accept these risks and agree to hold the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc., its officers, directors, volunteers, employees, and agents free from any and all liability for injuries and/or loss which I may incur while on field trips run by HBC during the 2000-2001 membership year. I also agree to hold the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc., its officers, directors, volunteers, employees, and agents harmless as a result of any such injury or loss.

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

.....
(Signatures of all participating family members)

Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.

Amherst, Massachusetts

<http://www.unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>

October, 2000



October! --- Ah! --- Autumn! --- HMMMMM! --- The fall of the year, harvest time! The season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, frosty mornings, crisp sun-filled afternoons, wood fires, tart apples, children dancing around carved pumpkins, singing merry pumpkin songs and, and, and -----

-----Christmas Catalogs!!!!-----But, more on this in a later Newsletter ----- and, for now

isn't it comforting to receive a *PERSONAL* letter with an actual 35 cents stamp on it from a caring Bird Club that understands your needs and puts you first in *ALL* seasons? You'll note that the writing is small, and the writing is condensed in order to keep it at 35 cents. Just bring out your magnifying glass. And let us make your month by offering the following:

MONTHLY MEETING

*All meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst
Should bad weather force cancellation, it will be announced on WHMP-AM 1400*

On Monday, October 16, we are delighted to bring you a program featuring the work of Brian Harrington, a biologist with Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences since 1971. During his tenure most of his work has focused on shorebirds and their migrations and on conservation issues associated with the long hop migration strategies that many shorebirds employ. His research has been conducted throughout North and South America. The species he has especially focussed on, and the subject of his slide presentation, is the Red Knot, chosen because it illustrates many of the conservation issues he has documented. Much of this work is described in *The Flight of the Red Knot*, the popular book he authored in 1996, describing the spectacular migration of this robin-sized bird between the Canadian Arctic tundra and the Patagonian shorelines.

Brian has been working through the National Conservation Training Center of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service training professional wildlife managers throughout North America in methods of wetland management for shorebirds and waterfowl. He is also coordinator of the International Shorebird Surveys, a project that has enlisted more than eight hundred volunteers throughout North and South America. Observations from this project have been extensively

used in developing the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan.

Come join us on this fall evening for the presentation made by this noted biologist and ornithologist. Come early (not before 7:00 please) to trade big bird stories with friends and learn what's happening in the birding world while enjoying a cookie and cider (or a cheese or a coffee or a ---).

To Come:

November 13: Becky Field (Suburban Wildlife).

December 11: Holiday Party (Members' Slides, Christmas Count Planning and Party Food).

January 8: Geoff LeBaron (Antarctica).

February 12: Clay and Pat Sutton (Owl Spotting Skills).

March 12: David Spector (Birders vs. Ornithologists)

April 9: Irene Pepperberg (Parrots)

May 14: Al and Lois Richardson (Lapland)

June 11: Peter Yaukey

FIELD TRIPS

The HBC offers field trips 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 that plans can be made for the size of the group and you can be notified if a change is necessary. We recommend that participants carpool whenever possible and that all persons in the car (driver included) are costs equally on the basis of 30 cents per mile plus tolls and parking fees. Shawn Smolen-Morton, Field Trip Chair, 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. He can be reached at (413)863-4569 or by email at bachman@complit.umass.edu.

Trip Reports

The trip to South Beach at Chatham on Cape Cod on Saturday, August 26, led by Bob Bieda and Al Richards came off remarkably well. Although the group did not have any great rarities, a huge number of birds were viewed by the twelve participants in weather that was warm with gentle breezes. The group had over two hundred American Oystercatchers in a single flock! Other highlights included several Piping Plovers, hundreds of Red Knots, fifteen species of shorebirds, a full adult Lesser Back-backed Gull and four species of terns.

On Saturday, September 9, Bob Bieda's fall warbler trip to Northampton's East Meadow was a nice walk but disappointing for birds. The group did have a Philadelphia Vireo however and one small flock of migrating warblers.

The first monthly *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley* of the year took place on September 13. Harvey Allen and eight other participants went to Skinner Mountain hoping to experience the hawk migration. The group viewed nine Sharp-shinned hawks, three American Kestrels, two Peregrine Falcons, five Turkey Vultures, Three Ospreys, three

Red-tailed hawks, three Bald Eagles and one Goshawk. The highlight was seeing this bird pass only a few feet right of the heads of the group. Also high on the "special" list was seeing one of the peregrines attacking one of the eagles. This interesting interaction found the eagle giving the attacker just the slightest of glances until the falcon finally pulled away.

The first of the monthly *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* series led by Scott Sumner on September 16 is described as being "just so-so." The early hours were spent in the Northampton East Meadows before heading for Skinner and the hawk migration. Highlights in the Meadows were two Northern Harriers and one Warbling Vireo. For warblers the group tallied two Nashvilles, eight Yellows, two Palms, and fourteen Common Yellowthroats. Skinner produced two Sharp-shinned, twenty-five Broad-winged, and two Kestrels all very high. The group then went to Larch Hill where they saw one Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and one Scarlet Tanager. For warblers they saw one Nashville, three Black-throated Greens, one Blackpoll and one Redstart.

Coming Up

The following contains just the facts. Please refer to the enclosed Field Trip List for tantalizing descriptions.

Saturday, October 7 is the date for the popular all-day annual fall trip to Quabbin Reservoir led by Tom Gagnon. The trip is *limited to 15 people and you need to commit to the whole day*. Knowing Tom, birds are only one aspect of the natural world to be experienced on the trip. Call him at (413) 584-6353 for more information and to reserve a spot.

On **Wednesday, October 11** Harvey Allen heads for the West Meadows of Northampton on this month's *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley* to search for migrating sparrows, late warblers, blackbirds and hawks. Meet Harvey at the Northampton Bowl, 525 Pleasant Street, and Northampton at 8:00 a.m. Call him (413) 253-7963 for further information.

On **Saturday, October 14** Stacy Adams will be searching for migrating sparrows, warblers and whatever else the valley's hedgerows will give up on this month's *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* series. Call her (413) 367-0177 for the time and place of departure.

On **Saturday, the 21st** Al Richards and Bob Bieda

plan to return to the Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area on Lake Champlain in western Vermont after a spectacular all-day trip last year. Bring lunch and snacks; plenty of warm dry clothing. The group will leave from Al's house in Sunderland at 5:00 a.m. Contact Al at (413) 665-2761 for directions, more information and to register.

On **Saturday, October 28**, Zeke Jakub will be leading this month's second *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* to explore locations in the Deerfield and Greenfield areas. The trip will be approximately three hours long and will begin at 8:00 a.m. You will need to call Zeke (413) 773-7906 or (413) 773-5949 for details.

Sunday, November 5 is the date set for this year's annual all-day Berkshire Lakes waterfowl trip led by Tom Gagnon. Bring lunch, snacks, water and plenty of warm clothing! Meet Tom in the parking lot at the Super Stop and Shop in Northampton on King Street (Route 5) at 6:15 a.m. Call him at (413) 584-6353 for more information and to let him know you are coming.

LIBRARY

The HBC Library, created and maintained by Anne Cann, is located in the main room on the first floor of the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant Street in Amherst (413) 526-6006. Hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

For your fall birding Anne suggests you check the library's collection of field guides for the New England states

and the East Coast. There are current guides for Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Connecticut. There are more specific guides to Western Massachusetts, Berkshire County, Amherst and Cape Cod. If you are traveling further down the coast, borrow the guides for New Jersey, Washington D.C., Virginia, Georgia and Florida. Anne can be reached at (413) 253-7753 or by e-mail at cann@uhs.umass.edu.

CONSERVATION

Several people have expressed concern about the new cell phone towers proposed for Westhampton, Northampton and other towns. We have all heard of the numbers of birds destroyed by these towers. It seems that there may be ways to construct these towers to make them less damaging. If you are interested in participating in a group which will research and then make recommendations regarding this issue, please contact Anne Lombard at (413) 586-7509 or anelombard@mediaone.net.

HITCHCOCK CENTER

Call the Center (413) 256-6006 for more information and to register

An Owl Prowl led by David Spector, a member of the faculty at Central Connecticut State University and long-time HBC member will be offered on *Sunday, November 5*, starting at 3:00 a.m. No one finds owls like David. Great Horned, Barred, Saw-whet and Screech are all possibilities. Although there is no guarantee that he will find these denizens

of the night for us, the adventure of the search is guaranteed. Dress warmly because the group will be standing still while listening for owls. If you are interested in owl behavior, breeding biology, calls, survival strategies, or just like to be outdoors in the middle of the night, don't miss this walk. Children ten years and older are welcome. Free to Hitchcock members. For more information and to register call the Center.

BIRDING WITH ARCADIA

For more information and to register call the Sanctuary at (413) 584-3009

"Important Bird Area Program" is a conservation, education and advocacy project all rolled into one being put together by the Massachusetts Audubon Society. This program will require community input. Presently, criteria are being determined for what constitutes an important breeding or migrating habitat. Andrea Jones, Bird Conservation Biologist, will be discussing this plan at Arcadia on *November 6, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.* The program is free and all are welcome to join Andrea in launching this important work

CARE AND FEEDING OF YOUNG BIRDERS

Last year a new section in the Newsletter was introduced highlighting projects that are being done in schools and homes to introduce the next generation to the wonders of the natural world through birds. We featured Patricia Redfern's fourth grade class in the Donahue School in Holyoke that was participating in Cornell's Classroom FeederWatch program. At the Rowe Elementary School in Rowe, Massachusetts, Wanita Siour Laffond is teaching a bird identification and behavior unit as part of the science curriculum in grades four through six. Much closer to home were two programs being facilitated by two of our own bird club members. Lesli Scott of Amherst leads a 4-H group of nine to eleven-year-olds who with the help of Julie Collier, Raptor Rehabilitator, rehabilitated and released a Barred Owl that had had an untimely encounter with the family car. And, finally, I reported on Betsy Higgins who runs a daycare for children ages two to five out of her home in Hadley. Through pictures and stories and backyard field trips she has managed to truly excite the youngsters into learning to hear and see and wonder about the birds in their own back yards.

I have another local story to tell. Last spring, Linda Donnelly, Head Teacher of Elementary II class at the Common School in Amherst undertook a six-week bird study with her class (ten to twelve-year-olds) using as her guide "Project PigeonWatch," one of the programs put together by Cornell School of Ornithology.

Linda knows that when students become invested in something *real*, and this is an actual study they do along with groups of people around the world, they really respond. They

learned about field marks, coloring, genetics, courtship, interactions between birds and people, and many other aspects of birds in general and pigeons in particular, reporting their findings back to Cornell. They had the opportunity to talk about World War II and the role pigeons played and why some species are extinct today. They discussed what people think of pigeons, and learned the facts behind some of the myths about these birds. They discussed courtship behaviors identified by Cornell Lab and learned about the mystery of morphs, studying the seven main morphs as outlined by the Lab.

Then they were ready to hit the streets - all that was needed was a flock of pigeons to watch. A spot near the Campus Center at UMass where rock doves were courting, nesting and feeding was chosen, but with limited success. All they could track down on their field trip were about twelve of the birds. They were doing their courtship, but on the rooftops of nearby buildings. And the birds could have cared less about the bread bits they were offering. Yet, they got very excited when they were able to identify the morphs and see some of the aerial displays above them. The class did not have very much to offer the Cornell Lab's PigeonWatch study this time, but they learned a lot and gathered some tools and eagerness that will remain with them whenever they view birdlife.

Thank you, Linda for your interest in encouraging young naturalists in such a creative manner. Who knows, maybe one of your students is an ornithologist-in-the-making. Keep us up to date on your projects.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Voice of Audubon is your way of finding out what birds are being seen locally and across the state. It is also a way you can report your sightings. All you need to do is call the toll-free number (1-888-224-6444) which will put you in touch with the statewide system at Lincoln. Then press the number of the area that you are interested in from a menu that includes the four Rare Bird Alerts in Massachusetts (#1 for Eastern, #2 for Western, #3 for Cape Cod and #4 for Nantucket).

Jan Ortiz, who manages the Voice for Western Massachusetts, would like to remind you that your reports *ARE* the Western Voice and urges you to report the birds you are seeing. Her first preference is that if you have access, you email her the reports at jtortiz@aol.com (written reports are much easier to deal with and less time consuming than audio reports). If this is not possible, just follow the directions on the Voice. When you are able, please list your sightings in the same order as is used by the Massachusetts Audubon Checklist. Jan will change the Voice at least twice a week (typically on Friday night and Sunday night – or Monday morning) if there is enough material. In the event of a rarity, she will record it as soon as possible and provide updates.

The Tireless Trio – An Update: Those of you who have been following QMBOY (Quest for the Most Birds in One Year) have undoubtedly been waiting with bated breath for this moment in the Newsletter.

I started following this venture last June when Bob Bieda and Harvey Allen made known (on NPR no less) that a friendly rivalry had been born. Who can record the highest number of bird species in one year (January 1 – December 31) is the question. At that point Bob had 261 on his list and Harvey had 246. The plot got thicker in mid-summer when Al Richards made the twosome a trio. At “press” time in September, the score was Bob 291, Al 279, and Harvey 277.

Now it is October. There are three months to go. Bob reports that “List-wise, I’ve had a September to Remember!” (Good song title?) “It was capped by a call from Harvey that led me to rush to the Longmeadow Sandbar where I saw *Baird’s Sandpiper* (#307) and *Northern Wheatear* (#308)!” Bob has passed the magic number of 300! Al is at 294 and Harvey (who obviously scouts for Bob) is at 289. Bob comments that the other two have “the audacity of trying to live a somewhat normal life this year.” He also says of his wife Lura that “the Pope has already written to her saying she is next in line for Sainthood.”

HBC member Zeke Jakub is back from the Coast Guard and on line by way of a new computer and a new list-serve that you might be interested in. A very active birder covering Franklin County, Zeke records what he sees on the list he has created. He invites you to join in the fun by subscribing to this free service and perhaps by reporting your own sightings. All you need to do to get started is to go to greenfieldbirding@juno.com and type the word SUBSCRIBE in the Subject Heading and your name and email address in the main body. Zeke will send you confirmation and instructions on how to read the list and how to report your own

birds. If you wish to contact Zeke personally you can reach him at (413) 773-7906 or (413) 773-5949 or (413) 218-83 (cell phone).

Important Reminder: If you wish to be on the HBC *Rare Bird Alert telephone tree*, Mary Alice Wilson, (413) 548-9078, mwilson@k12s.phast.umass.edu needs to know by **October 6!** This refers to those interested in being alerted by phone. Those wishing to be alerted by e-mail can join at any time.

Some of you may not be aware of the fact that there is a very nice journal about Massachusetts birding. **Bird Observer** is a bimonthly journal dedicated to enhancing the understanding, observation and enjoyment of birds. There are articles about birds, birding locations, field notes and field studies, book reviews and bird sighting records for the state. Some articles relate to New England and other areas. Subscriptions are \$26.00 for six issues and may be sent to Bird Observer Subscriptions, P.O. Box 236, Arlington MA 02476-0003. For additional information check the web site at <http://massbird.org/birdobserver/>

David Sibley, author and illustrator who has been described as the heir apparent to Roger Tory Peterson, will be at the Odyssey Bookshop at the Village Commons in South Hadley to sign copies of the new National Audubon Society *Sibley Guide to Birds* on Saturday, October 14th at 10:00 a.m. The book has 544 pages, with 6,500 illustrations by Mr Sibley, who is co-author (with Pete Dunne and Clay Suttle) of *Hawks in Flight*. A birdwalk will take place prior to the signing if weather permits. Space is limited for the walk, so interested people should call the Odyssey (534-7307) for further details.

We thank **Backyard Birds** at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton for continuing to offer a 10% discount to all HBC members for all purchases.

Correction: Mary Alice Wilson’s e-mail address in the September letter was incorrect. The correct address is mwilson@k12s.phast.umass.edu.

Should the wanderlust bug be biting you as the cold closes in, I am enclosing the **North American Rare Bird Alert** with this Newsletter. Now, *escape* is just a phone call away. Find out what birds are being seen in warm and exotic places and dream yourself away for a bit. But, don’t forget to come back for the October meeting!

Happy fall migration,

Sally

Sally Venman, Newsletter Editor
(413) 549-1098
svenman@external.umass.edu

Enclosed: **Field Trip List** with the **North American Rare Bird Alert** on the back

DOES ANYBODY HAVE A USE FOR THIS DEAD BIRD?

YES!!! Dead birds are used in scientific collections for research and teaching purposes. Birds are often prepared as study skins from which most of the skeleton and internal organs have been removed. These skins provide a permanent record of the plumage of the bird and can be used to study molt and geographic variation. Some birds are pickled in alcohol. These spirit specimens are used to study the muscles and internal organs. Some birds are prepared as skeletons, which allows the ones of different species to be compared. Specimens of any sort document the occurrence of a species in a given location at a particular time and serve as permanent records of migration dates and unusual occurrences.

WHAT DOCUMENTATION IS IMPORTANT?

Five items should be written down as soon as the bird is collected and the piece of paper with this information should be put in the bag with the bird before it is frozen:

1. The name of the species. (If known - "Swainson's Thrush" or "Sharp-shinned Hawk". If unsure - "Swainson's Thrush?" or "Hawk, sp.?"
2. The date found (day, month and year).
3. The location found (at least the town and state).
4. The collector (person who found the bird and recorded the data).
5. The circumstances of collection (how the bird came to be collected). Do not draw conclusions. It is better to write "dead on road" or "found under window" than "hit by car" or "hit window," unless you know the latter to be true. Other information that seems important can be included.

HOW SHOULD I SAVE THE DEAD BIRD?

The best way to preserve a dead bird until its final preparation as a specimen is to double bag it with the documentation (Zip-lock type plastic bags), squeeze the air out, then freeze it.

CAN I KEEP THIS BIRD?

NO! It is illegal to keep dead or live birds, or parts thereof, without appropriate federal and state permits.

CAN I HELP BY SHOOTING BIRDS FOR SCIENTIFIC COLLECTIONS?

NO! It is illegal to kill birds without federal and state collecting permits. (Rock doves, Starlings, House Sparrows, and game birds in season are exceptions to the above mentioned laws.)

WHO IN THIS AREA CAN USE THIS BIRD?

The University of Massachusetts Museum of Natural History maintains research and teaching collection of birds and welcomes additions. The Museum holds federal and state salvage permits which allows it to keep birds found dead. For information contact Kate Doyle on email (kdoyle@bio.umass.edu) or by phone: 413-577-2303.

Also welcoming specimens is HBC member Susan Smith, Mount Holyoke College biology professor, researcher and author. She can be contacted on email (ssmith@mhc.mtholyoke.edu) or by phone: 413-532-2177 (home) or 413-538-2149 (work).

Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

<http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>

November, 2000



Dear Friends –

If you read this very fast you might make the November meeting (if you actually get the letter before the November meeting). This has not been a wonderfully peaceful two weeks and I am terribly behind! My computer has spent much R&R time at the Computer Wizards Repair Palace. If there were a fan magazine for computer phobics, I would be the Ms. November centerfold. (Scary thought!) And – it has been a seriously complicated period of working with our sixth child, the

Valley Light Opera, making butterflies and dragonflies and crowns and glittery pretend stuff helping to make fantasy happen by opening night. Between the two my life has been very interesting but completely out of control. But now I'm done with *let's pretend* and ready to get serious. But – before you delve into the *serious* letter, do something for me, please. My son sent me the following and I pass it on to you. He says "Every organization should have an Option 7." It seems most appropriate for the HBC.

Go to the phone and dial 1-800-888-3999. Wait for Option 7 (be sure to listen to options 1 - 6). Press 7. It's free. Do it!

MONTHLY MEETING

*All meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst.
Should bad weather force cancellation, it will be announced on WHMP-AM 1400*

Have you ever imagined that you would wake up one morning, glance out of the bathroom window while brushing your teeth only to see a moose in your swimming pool? This really happened to a woman in the Berkshires a few weeks ago. And, this is the sort of thing you will begin to understand if you attend the November meeting.

On Monday, November 13, Dr. Rebecca Field will be talking to the Bird Club about her interests and research in a program titled *Birds and their Habitats in Tundra, Tropics, and Towns*. Much of her twenty years as a research scientist with the U.S. Department of Interior were spent working with birds and other wildlife in remote areas including the tundra of northern Alaska and the tropical forests of Costa Rica. More recently she has become interested in the conflicts between wildlife and people in suburban areas – bears at backyard bird feeders, deer in our gardens, geese (and moose) in the swimming pools. Are these "problems" or just part of the price tag for living far from Boston?

Management and conservation of bird populations depends on a strong understanding of habitat associations. For generations, biologists have been studying this in a wide variety of natural environments and much of what we know today about birds and their habitats is based on these studies in wild areas.

Yet, ironically, many habitats with the greatest problems for management and conservation are not found in wilderness areas, but in our own suburban backyards. Unlike inner cities, the suburbs still provide enough habitat to be attractive to birds and other wildlife, while also being heavily impacted by the presence of people.

Becky was with the Massachusetts Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Department of Interior, for 12 years until last fall. She is now an Adjunct Associate Professor in the UMass Department of Natural Resources Conservation. She continues to teach at UMass and at other colleges and universities in the Northeast, and pursues research on birds at the Harvard Forest in Petersham, MA.

To Come

December 11: Holiday Party (Members' Slides, Christmas Count Planning and Party Food)

January 8: Geoff LeBaron (Antarctica)

February 12: Clay and Pat Sutton (How to Spot an Owl)

March 12: David Spector (How to Spot an Ornithologist)

April 9: Irene Pepperberg (Parrots)

May 14: Al and Lois Richardson (Birding in Lapland)

June 11: Peter Yaukey (Birding Louisiana)

THANKSGIVING WISDOM:

Why Did Pilgrims' Pants Always Fall Down?

Because they wore their belt buckles on their hats, silly.

FIELD TRIPS

The HBC offers field trips 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 that plans can be made for the size of the group and you can be notified if change is necessary. We recommend that participants carpool whenever possible and that all persons in the car (driver included) share costs equally on the basis of 30 cents per mile plus tolls and parking fees.

Trip Reports:

On Saturday, October 7, Tom Gagnon led his annual fall trip to **Quabbin Reservoir**. Sixty-three species of birds were recorded among which were five Snow Geese, forty-two Common Mergansers, five Ruffed Grouse, two Bald Eagles and six species of Warblers. Also counted were five species of butterflies, two Flying Squirrels, two Keen Myotis Bats, three deer and one Green Snake.

On Wednesday, October 11, Harvey Allen and nine participants headed to the **West Meadows of Northampton** where a Le Conte's Sparrow and a Dickcissel had been spotted. Unfortunately these two target birds were not in evidence. Twenty-three bird species were counted on a cloudy, then clear and windy day. Among birds seen were Fish Crow, Yellow-rumped and Palm Warblers, Northern Harrier, Hermit Thrush and lots of Cormorants. The group also spent time with a katydid. Perhaps the best find was a White-footed Mouse family. There were four young, but fully-grown mice resting at home in the nest in a blossom of a Golden Rod gone to seed. Trips with Harvey are always turning up something special!

On Saturday, October 21, Al Richards and Bob Bieda returned to the **Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area on Lake Champlain** in western Vermont. Four birders saw sixty-five species in weather that was variable but primarily pleasant. Highlights included Horned and Red-necked Grebes, between fifteen and eighteen thousand Snow Geese, a Ross' Goose! (with excellent comparative looks with Snow Goose), Brant (a new Vermont record for all), Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Ring-necked Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Black Scoter, Bufflehead and Hooded and Common Mergansers. Also seen were Northern Harrier, Osprey, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Rough-legged Hawk

(two color morphs) and a beautiful Peregrine. Shorebirds included a mixed and late flock of twenty White-rumped sandpipers, thirty Dunlin, two or three Baird's Sandpipers, and eight plus Pectoral Sandpipers. The group also saw an American Golden Plover and a Common Snipe.

On Saturday, October 28, Zeke Jakub led a *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* in and around **Greenfield**. Five participants saw thirty-four species in dreary, blustery, good duck-watching weather. It was the cusp of the change of seasons as both Chipping and Tree Sparrows were seen. Among other birds observed were one hundred Canada Geese, forty-three Mallards, one Bufflehead, two Hooded Mergansers, two American Coots, a Red-bellied Woodpecker, two Ravens, Savannah and Song Sparrows, and eight Dark-eyed Juncos. The group had beautiful close looks at a Belted Kingfisher and at the canal in Turner's Falls, they saw the same female Goldeneye (affectionately named "Dot") that Zeke has been seeing for over three years.

On Sunday, November 5, Tom Gagnon led his annual all-day trip to the **Berkshire Lakes**. Twenty-two participants observed the birds in weather that was punctuated by some rain and snow. According to Tom it was really too mild to produce the large numbers of waterfowl seen in past years. Among birds seen were two Common Loons, seventy-five Buffleheads, one female Common Scoter, one male Black Scoter (seen clearly on a rock), fourteen Ruddy Ducks, around twelve hundred Ring-necked Ducks, four Coots, one Pintail Duck and two Green-winged Teals. Also seen were four Ravens, an adult male Marsh Hawk, two Northern Shrikes, two Copper's Hawks, one Red-tailed Hawk, three Great Blue Herons and one Bluebird. For mammals the group saw a huge porcupine and four deer.

Remember to use the Voice of Audubon to learn what birds are being seen locally and across the state or to make a report. A toll-free number will put you in touch with the statewide system at Lincoln that covers four separate Rare Bird Alert areas in Massachusetts. Call 1-888-224-6444 and follow directions.

The recent World Series reminded me of bits of baseball lore, like the time that the Tanzanian national baseball team was lost in the snows of Kilimanjaro. Fortunately, just at that time there was a Swiss consultant in the country training some native animals in St. Bernard work. One of the trainees, a large bird, made it up the mountain with a keg of brandy around its neck just as the baseballers were giving up hope of rescue. A clear case of ostrich in time saves nine.

COMING UP

The following is just the facts. Please refer to the green Field Trip List (sent last month) for the tantalizing descriptions.

NOVEMBER

Saturday, the 11th: Shirley Hilborn leads this month's half-day *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding* trip. Meet her at 8:00 a.m. in the Hitchcock Center parking lot in Amherst. For more information call Shirley (413) 253-6462.

Wednesday, the 15th: Harvey Allen searches for waterfowl and migrants on this month's *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley*. Meet Harvey at 8:00 a.m. across the street from the Atkins Farms, on the corner of Route 116 and Bay Road in Amherst. Call him (413) 253-7963 for further information.

Saturday, the 18th: Tom Gagnon will lead birders on an annual all-day trip to the **East Quabbin** area. Bring a lunch, snacks and warm clothing. *The trip is limited to 15 participants.* You need to call Tom at (413) 584-6353 to reserve a place and to make arrangements for meeting.

Friday, the 24th: Al Richards and Bob Bieda will lead the *Annual All-Day Turkey Trot* to explore the many caves of **Cape Ann on the North Shore**. Bring lunch, snacks and warm clothing. The group will leave from Al's house in Sunderland at 5:00 a.m. Call Al at (413) 665-2761 for directions and to register. (Actual trotting not required.)

DECEMBER

Saturday, the 9th: Zeke Jakub leads this month's *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding*, exploring locations in the **Deerfield and Greenfield** areas beginning at 8:00 a.m. You will need to call Zeke (413) 773-7906 or (413) 773-5949 for details.

Wednesday, the 13th: Harvey Allen leads the group in this month's *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley*.

Call Harvey (413) 253-7963 for more information about this half-day trip.

Christmas Bird Counts: Saturday, December 16 (Springfield - Bruce Kindseth 860-745-9593), Sunday, December 17 (Northampton - Jan Ortiz 413-549-1768), and Saturday, December 30 (Quabbin - Scott Surner 413-253-7486 and Jim Lafley 413-323-5892).

Shawn Smolen-Morton, Field Trip Chair, 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. He can be reached at (413) 863-4569 or by email at bachman@complit.umass.edu

MORE THANKSGIVING WISDOM: *A turkey crossing the road is poultry in motion.*

LIBRARY

The HBC Library, maintained by Anne Cann, is located in the main room on the first floor of the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant Street in Amherst (413) 526-6006. Hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

A wonderful announcement was made at the last meeting and I am delighted to repeat it now. The Board of Directors of the Hitchcock Center for the Environment has announced that a \$100.00 contribution has been made to the HBC library in the name of **David Spector** for his years of outstanding service as a member of the Board and the Executive Committee. "We appreciate all of David's hard work and his longstanding commitment to the Hitchcock Center. Through this gift we hope to inform future bird enthusiasts of David's commitment to environmental education, community service, and most of all his love for birds." This is a very special tribute to a very special friend. Congratulations, David! And, thank you Hitchcock! Now, the fun part - how do we spend the

money? If you have any ideas as to what books or birding materials should be added to our library would you please get in touch with Anne with your suggestions. She would like the information by Thanksgiving, please.

Anne wishes to remind you that as members of the American Birding Association (ABA) we receive three publications. The ABA journal *Birding* is published monthly. Among many subjects of interest to birders it contains articles of a more technical nature to help us with our identification skills and overall enjoyment. The newsletter *Winging It*, also a monthly publication, has articles on specific birding areas, information on planning trips, book reviews, bird sighting

from the hotlines and other timely birding topics. Here you can also learn about ABA conventions that are held in birding hotspots across the nation. The next one is in April in Beaumont, Texas. Anyone interested? The third journal, *A Bird's Eye View*, published quarterly, is by and for teenage birders. Also from the ABA is a sales catalog offering many birding guides, equipment and other goodies to add to your birding pleasure.

Anne brings a small selection of books to the monthly meetings for your perusal. For those who may be unable to get to the Center she would be happy to bring your selections to the meeting if you contact her at her home by the preceding Friday. She is happy to answer any questions or take suggestions for books you feel might be good additions to the collection. You can reach her at (413) 253-7753 or by e-mail at cann@uhs.umass.edu.

CONSERVATION

Anne Lombard, Conservation Chair, reminds us that Cornell Lab. of Ornithology is appreciative of all those in our club who are participating or have participated in Project Feeder Watch. As a result of this network of bird-feeding enthusiasts, researchers have been able to demonstrate for the first time that a naturally occurring disease can regulate the size of a wildlife population. This resulted from the study of mycoplasmal conjunctivitis in House Finches. Birders of all skill levels are needed to participate in Project Feeder Watch and the House Finch Disease Survey so that bird population re-

search may continue. To sign up, call (800) 843-2473, visit the Lab on the Web at <http://birds.Cornell.edu> or send E-mail to cornellbirds@cornell.edu.

If you have special interest in conservation as it relates to birding, Anne is always happy to talk to you. She can be reached at (413) 586-7509 or by email at annelombard@mediaone.net.

BIRDING AT ARCADIA

For more information and to register call the Sanctuary at (413) 584-3009

Saturday, December 9, 9:00 p.m. to midnight – Night Hike: Owl Prowl with Mark Skinder, Naturalist. Come out for the longest full moon of the year when Arcadia is transformed by the light. Listen for Saw-whet, Screech, Barred, and Great Horned owls after hearing their recorded calls indoors prior to

venturing out. Hot drinks will be provided and warm-up breaks will be taken as needed. Dress very warmly with special attention to warm footwear. Call the Sanctuary to register. There is a fee.

What Do You Call Four Bullfighters In Quicksand? Quatro Sinko, of course!

MISCELLANEOUS

November QMBOY (Quest for the Most Birds in One Year)

Those of you who have been following QMBOY have undoubtedly been waiting with bated breath for this moment in the Newsletter.

We started following this venture last June when Bob Bieda and Harvey Allen made it known that a friendly rivalry had been born to determine who could record the most bird species in one year (January 1 – December 31). At that point Bob had 261 on his list and Harvey had 246. Their involvement was featured on the Monday morning WFCR (public radio) program, *Field Notes*, hosted by Laurie Sanders. I have been told that Laurie is going to be doing a follow up sometime between now and the end of December. The plot thickened in mid-summer when Al Richards made the two-

some a trio. In September, the score was Bob – 291, Al – 279, and Harvey – 277. October increased the numbers to Bob – 307, Al – 294, and Harvey – 289.

Now it is November. Less than two months to December 31, 11:59 p.m. Bob has been a very faithful HBC meeting attendee from the Club's inception. Never before has he missed more than an occasional meeting and never, never, never two meetings in a row! Until this year, that is! He wasn't present at the September meeting – was it that bird on Nantucket, Bob? He wasn't present at the October meeting – that was the bird on the Cape, wasn't it Bob? As of last night (November 5) he assures me that he will be at the November meeting. We'll see.

But, back to the count. The numbers and the order have changed. (Tension rising?) As of yesterday Bob had moved

up to 314 with the Mountain Bluebird. Harvey had moved into second place. His 300th bird was the Black-throated Gray Warbler and he has since upped that to number 307! Congratulations, Harvey. Al has had some tough luck. He missed the LeConte's Sparrow, the Dickcissel and the Goshawk. His present number stands at 298. (Very, very close to the magic number.) Would people care to guess which bird will be Al's 300th? Send me your guesses please. First person with the bird that is Al's 300th is the winner. The prize will be a second trip to the HBC goodie table.

Volunteers are needed to help organize the Northampton Christmas Count Potluck Dinner on Sunday, December 17. If you would like to take part in this traditional event but being out in the elements and counting all those starlings isn't your cup of tea, there is another way you can participate. Some one is needed to be the contact person for those preparing food and to set up the Perry Room at the Hitchcock Center for the dinner. The potluck starts at 4:45 p.m. and precedes the compilation at 6:00 p.m. For more information please contact Jan Ortiz (549-1768) or Mary Alice Wilson (253-9078).

I will be writing all about the Count next month, but I would like to say a brief word to people who may be new to birding and to this wonderful annual event. Field observers are always needed. You don't have to be an experienced birder to

join in the fun. If you are interested in participating you can be placed with someone who has done this before. Please get in touch with either Jan or Mary Alice who would be delighted to talk to you about the Count. Feeder watchers are also needed. This way you can watch and count from the warmth and comfort of your own home.

Many of you who have enjoyed the programs of Tom Martin or who have had the pleasure of chatting with him and Josephine on Monhegan Island will be saddened to hear of the recent sudden death of his son. If you would care to send them a card, the address is Tom and Josephine Martin, 615 E. 14TH Street, Apt. 3C, New York, NY 10009.

Enclosed with this letter is what is affectionately known as the "Dead Bird Sheet." It tells you what to do should you find a dead bird in good condition. This has traditionally gone out with the new members' information packet, but the Board felt that an updated version might be in order for everyone.

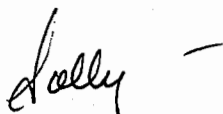
There are some changes and new information on the website that you might be interested in checking out.

We thank Backyard Birds at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton for continuing to offer a 10% discount to all HBC members for all purchases.

HOW DO YOU CATCH A UNIQUE RABBIT? Unique Up On It.

That's about it for the November news. Hope to greet you at the November meeting!

Happy Birding -----



Sally Venman, Newsletter Editor
(413) 549-1098
svenman@external.umass.edu

HOW DO YOU CATCH A TAME RABBIT? Tame Way, Unique Up On It.

That's really it!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.
Amherst, Massachusetts
<http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>
December, 2000



Dear Friends – because of the important enclosures and the need to keep the mailing to thirty-three cents, the news this month is Short and Sweet, Sparse and Pure, Lean and Mean, and “Just the facts, ma’m, just the facts.” (For you Joe Friday fans.)

MONTHLY MEETING

All meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst
Should bad weather force cancellation, it will be announced on WHMP-AM 1400

Members Night! Monday, December 11!

It's time again for the annual holiday meeting when members show their own natural history slides (no more than **ten slides per person**, please), we get started on holiday eating (bring a snack or dessert to share) and the local Christmas Bird Count is plotted and planned. Non-members are welcome as always to enjoy the festivities but we ask that the show-and-tell slideshow extravaganza be **members only**.

The CBC 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 greatest number of birds. In protest to this tradition, ornithologist Frank Chapman, editor of *Bird-Lore* magazine, suggested an alternative: a census of birds held on Christmas day. The first group of counters numbered 27. Today there is over 50,000. Volunteers count not only the different species of birds but also the actual number of indi-

viduals during a twenty-four hour period. Data fed into the computer show densities of wintering bird populations and help to point out cyclical movements and evidence of changes in populations.

BUT – important as the data gathering is – most of us repeat this frosty tradition year after year because it is **just plain fun!** You don't have to be an expert birder. You don't have to count all day. If you are a beginner, you can be put with an experienced birder. Or, you can participate by simply counting birds at your feeders in the warmth of your own home.

Jan Ortiz and Mary Alice Wilson organize our local Northampton Christmas Count, covering an area on both sides of the river. It takes place on **Sunday, December 17**. A \$5.00 fee to cover cost of publishing the results is required from all field observers ages nineteen and over. The fee does not apply to feeder watchers unless they wish to be listed with participants in the special CBC issue of *Field Notes*. If you are interested in participating in this local count either in the field or at your feeder and can't attend the meeting, please call Jan (413-549-1768) or Mary Alice at (413-548-

9078) for information and assignment. For other area CBCs look under **FIELD TRIPS**.

There will be a compilation potluck dinner party for **all** participants after the Count at the Hitchcock Center. Nancy Steeper (413-665-2884) is organizing it and would appreciate a call so that she can plan on numbers and food. She is looking for casseroles, crock-pot goodies and the like. Picking up a pizza, an Atkins pie or a bag of Oreos works just fine as well. The potluck begins at 4:30 as counters come in. Compilation will begin as close to 6:00 as possible. Questions? Call Jan or Mary Alice or Nancy (they know everything!)

Programs To Come – January 8: Geoff LeBaron (Antarctica); **February 12:** Pat Sutton (How to Spot an Owl); **March 12:** David Spector (How to Spot an Ornithologist); **April 9:** Irene Pepperberg (Parrots); **May 14:** Al and Lois Richardson (Birding in Lapland); and **June 11:** Peter Yaukey (Birding Louisiana).

FIELD TRIPS

Please call the trip leader to register so that plans can be made for the size of the group and you can be notified if a change is necessary. We recommend that participants carpool whenever possible and that all persons in the car (driver included) share costs equally on the basis of 30 cents per mile plus tolls and parking fees

Trip Reports: On 11/11, 4 birders, led by Shirley Hilborn went to Quabbin. At Turek's Marsh 6 Hooded Mergansers (the males were doing their courtship thing), 3 Wood Ducks and a Kingfisher were seen.

Gate 52 3 Red-throated Loons and 3 Common Loons were tallied. The only other bird of note was a Long-tailed Duck (Oldsquaw) minus a tail. On 11/15 Har-

vey Allen's mid-week trip to Quabbin drew 11 participants and 20 bird species in nice weather. The group had good looks at Horned Grebe, Common Mergansers, a big flock of Common Goldeneye, Common Loons, 2 Ravens and of course Bald Eagles. On 11/18 Tom Gagnon led 19 birders into the East Side of Quabbin. Among birds seen were 55-five Hooded

Mergansers, 48 Common Goldeneye, 16 Common Loons, 1 Greater Yellowlegs, 10 Bald Eagles, 1 Winter Wren, 6 Fox Sparrows and 150 American Robins. In addition, 5 Porcupines (a family of 3 – Mom, Dad and small offspring in one tree) and 6 Otters were spotted. On 11/24, Al Richards and Bob Bieda led the *Annual All-Day Turkey Trot* to exploring Cape Ann

and the North Shore. In spite of *very* cold N/NW winds the group of 14 saw 50 species. Among the more interesting ones were Eared Grebe, lots of Harlequin Ducks, all the Scoters, both Cormorants, lots of Gannets, a Snow Goose, a fly-over of an American Woodcock, Purple Sandpipers and Black-legged Kittiwake.

Coming Up: On 12/9 Zeke Jakub leads *Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding*, exploring locations in the Deerfield and Greenfield areas. Call Zeke (413-773-7906) or (413-773-5949) for details. On 12/13: Harvey Allen leads the *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley*. Call Harvey (413-253-

7963) for more information about this half-day trip. **Christmas Bird Counts:** 12/16 (Springfield - Bruce Kindseth (860) 745-9593), 12/17 (Northampton - Jan Ortiz (413-549-1768, and Mary Alice Wilson (413-548-9078), and 12/30 (Quabbin - Scott Sumner 413-253-7486 and Jim Lafley 413-323-5892).

Enclosed with this letter is the **Field Trip List** covering **2001 trips, January through August**. In addition to the old favorites, the Field Trip Committee has come up with some exciting new trips. **Shawn Smolen-Morton, Field Trip Chair**, 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. He can be reached at (413) 863-4569 or by email at bachman@complit.umass.edu

January Trips (Please refer to the enclosed **Field Trip List** for descriptions and more information.): **1/6 (All Day):** North Shore: Cape Ann to Plum Island with leader Bob Bieda. (413-527-2623). **1/10 (Half Day):** Feast or famine winter birding in January with Harvey Allen's *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River*. Meet at 7:30 a.m. Call Harvey (413-253-7963) for the meeting place.

Remember to use the *Voice of Audubon* to learn what birds are being seen locally and across the state or to make a report. A toll-free number will put you in touch with the statewide system at Lincoln that covers four separate *Rare Bird Alert* areas in Massachusetts. Call 1-888-224-6444 and follow directions.

MISCELLANEOUS

QMBOY (Quest for the Most Birds in One Year) Update: With the sighting of the Tropical Kingbird and the Golden Eagle, Bob Bieda still leads the pack with **316**. Harvey Allen is holding onto second place with **308** (Tropical Kingbird) and Al's Tropical Kingbird sighting puts him at **299**. I'll have the final tally for you next month.

LIBRARY: Three additions to the collection: the Ken Kaufman Focus Guide *Birds of North America* (from the gift fund honoring David Spector), the *Sibley Guide to Birds* (National Audubon society), and the *100th Christmas Bird Count - American Birds* (National Audubon). Note: HBC member Geoff Le Baron is National Audubon Society Count Director.

CONSERVATION: Encourage waterfowl awareness among educators and young birders. K-12 students and teachers are invited to learn more by being part of the **Massachusetts Junior Duck Stamp** art project. Art will be reviewed in four categories (grades K - 3, 4 - 6, 7 - 9 and 10 - 12). Prizes go to the top 25 entries in each category. Overall winner will represent Massachusetts at the na-

tional competition in Washington, D.C. More information and forms will be available at the December meeting then moved to the HBC library for your convenience.

HITCHCOCK: (early notice for early planners): Scott Sumner will be returning this spring to teach the *Spring Birding Class*. Plans now are to hold nineteen classroom sessions on Wednesday evenings and ten sessions in the field.

WANT ADS: NEED ADS: HELP! HELP! HELP! ADS: Sue Emerson has been head provision provider at the wonderful goodie table at HBC meetings for several years now. She wants and needs help! I add that she is not resigning from the job but would really like assistance in making it happen. The tasks are not arduous (*shared responsibility* for setting up the table and clean-up after the meeting, phone calls to the many people who volunteer food, and occasional restocking of supplies.) I guess that sampling the goods might be an interesting bonus, but is probably not part of the job description. If you could give Sue a hand please call her at (413) 584-6736.

Enclosed with this mailing is the updated **HBC Field Trip Policy**, the new **HBC Field Trip Guidelines** and the **ABA Principles of Birding Ethics**. The changes in the *Trip Policy* are mostly due to re-organizing the sequence, clarifying murky sentences and matching text to present practice. The *Guidelines* (participants and drivers) has been discussed for years, but never completed. While designed primarily for members new to HBC trips, we hope that all members will read it. (Guaranteed, three minute max per document!) If you have questions or suggestions about ways to clarify any part of these documents, or suggestions about changes in our field trip practices or policies, please contact any HBC Board member or the HBC president, Mary Alice Wilson (413) 548-9078. The Board will discuss all suggestions at their next meeting in January.

We thank **Backyard Birds** at 17 Strong Avenue in Northampton for continuing to offer a 10% discount to all HBC members for all purchases.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Sally

Sally Venman, Newsletter Editor
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Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.
Amherst, Massachusetts
<http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>



FIELD TRIPS
JANUARY – AUGUST, 2001

Field Trip Chair: Shawn Smolen-Morton at (413) 665-5196 or by email at bachman@complit.umass.edu.

The HBC offers field trips 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 that 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 driving expenses. Transportation costs are calculated on the basis of 30 cents per mile per car plus tolls and parking fees. It is expected that all persons in the car, including the driver, share costs equally.

JANUARY

Saturday, the 6th (All Day): *North Shore – Cape Ann to Plum Island.* Bob Bieda will lead birders to look for the “first” birds of the year. Among the myriad possibilities, the group will hope for grebes (including Eared Grebe), scoters, Murrelet’s Goldeneye, both species of eider, Harlequin Duck, Rough-legged Hawk, Purple Sandpiper and late day treats like Short-eared Owl. Meet at Al Richard’s house in Sunderland at 6:00 a.m. For further information call Bob at (413) 527-2623. Dress warmly, pack lunch and snacks.

Wednesday, the 10th (Half Day): *Feast or famine winter birding in January.* Harvey Allen continues his mid-month series, *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley*. Expect to bird for three hours, meeting at 7:30 a.m. Call Harvey (413) 253-7963 for the meeting place. Possibilities include: winter finches (always erratic), Snow Bunting, Horned Lark, and Lapland Larkspur. Dress warmly!

Saturday, the 20th (3/4 Day): Shirley Hilborn will lead the group to search for winter finches in *Western Massachusetts, tentatively the Royalston area*. Meet at the Hitchcock Center at 8:00 a.m. Shirley can be reached at (413) 253-6462. Dress warmly and bring lunch and snacks.

Saturday, the 27th (Full Day): this **NEW TRIP** to *Coastal Rhode Island* will be led by Geoff LeBaron. He plans to explore places like *Ninigret Pond, Point Judith, Napatree Point* and the *Carolina Management area*. The group will seek wintering land birds, oceanic ducks, grebes, loons, and alcids. Meet at the Northampton Stop and Shop, King Street, at 6:30 a.m.. Call Geoff (413) 268-9281 for further details and registration. Dress warmly and bring lunch and snacks.

FEBRUARY

Saturday, the 3rd (Full Day): Scott Sumner will again lead the ever-popular trip to *Maine’s Southern Shore* in search of winter specialties. Last year, the group observed Harlequin Ducks, Iceland Gull, Red-headed Woodpecker, and 75(!) Bohemian Waxwing. Previous trips have been lucky enough to see snazzy birds like Great Grey Owl, Ivory Gull and Tundra Swan. Call Scott Sumner at (413) 253-7496 for the time and place of departure. Wear plenty of warm clothing, bring a lunch and snacks.

Saturday, the 10th (Full Day): The *Plymouth and Falmouth area of the Massachusetts South Shore* is the destination. Al

Richards and Shawn Smolen-Morton will explore the ponds and fields for waterfowl and winter land birds. Last year, the trip tallied 51 species with wonderful looks at a Western Tanager. Highlights from previous years included Yellow-breasted Chat, Eurasian Widgeon, Red-shouldered Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Glaucous Gull, Long-eared and Short-eared Owls, and a Northern Shrike. Call Al (413) 665-2761 or Shawn (413) 863-4569 for further details. Wear plenty of warm clothing, bring a lunch and snacks.

Wednesday, the 14th (Half Day): *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley* led by Harvey Allen searching for

early arrivals. Will this group find the first Red-winged Blackbirds of the year? Meets at 7:30 a.m. Call Harvey (413) 253-7963 for details. Dress warmly!

Saturday, the 24th (Half Day): *Leisurely and local Saturday*

Morning trip led by Zeke Jakub. Zeke will take birders to his favorite spots in Northern Franklin County. Call him (413) 218-8310 for the exact time and place for meeting. Dress warmly!

MARCH

Wednesday, the 14th (Half Day): Duck soup? The March *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley*, led by Harvey Allen looks for waterfowl in the Valley. Call Harvey (413) 253-7963 for details. Meet at 7:30 a.m. Dress warmly!

Call Stacy (413) 367-0177 for the details of time and place. Dress warmly!

Saturday, the 17th (Half Day): *Leisurely and local Saturday mornings* led by Stacy Adams continues this new series for the club by making the most of the ebb and flow of migration.

Saturday, the 24th (Full Day): *Waterfowl migration along the Connecticut River.* Ducks and geese should be on the move and Al Richards will be right behind them. Call Al (413) 665-2761 for the details of time and place. Wear plenty of warm clothing, bring a lunch and snacks.

APRIL

Saturday, the 14th (Half to Three-Quarters Day): *Leisurely and local Saturday morning* at the Ashley Reservoir. Shawn Smolen-Morton and Al Richards will continue the traditional search for the first warblers of spring. Possibilities include Pine and Palm warbler, as well as Chipping Sparrow and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Meet at the Holiday Inn parking lot, exit 15 off I 91 (Holyoke Mall exit) at 7:00 a.m. Call Al (413) 665-2761 or Shawn (413) 863-4569 for more details or better directions. Be prepared for the fickle spring weather. Bring snacks and water.

Saturday, the 21st (Full Day): Stacy Adams will be leading an all-day trip to *Bartholomew's Cobble*. Besides searching specifically for Black Vulture, Stacy Adams will also lead the group in the search for other migrating raptors and early tropical migrants. Meet in the Northampton Bowl parking lot, 525 Pleasant, at 6:30 a.m. Call Stacy (413) 367-0177 for more details. Bring snacks, lunch and water.

Wednesday, the 18th (Half Day): The spring hawk migration should be in full swing for Harvey Allen's monthly mid-week *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley*. Last year's trip netted thirty-one species of birds with singing Winter Wren and Northern Waterthrush, the Bald Eagles and the Red-tailed Hawks on their nests in Hadley and migrating hawks from the top of the mountain. Anything can happen in the middle of April! This local trip meets at 7:00 a.m. Call Harvey (413) 253-7963 for details.

Saturday, the 28th (Full Day): To *Plum Island: Ruff ready?* Geoff LeBaron continues the club's traditional search for early spring migrants. Among the shorebirds, a Ruff occasionally appears in the *Plum Island / Joppa Flats* area. In 1999, at least one was seen irregularly at Joppa Flats during this time. Other highlights from past trips include "first" birds of the year like Snowy Egret, Great Egret, American Bittern and Piping Plover. Call Geoff (413) 268-9281 for the details of time and place for departure. Layer your clothing, bring lunch and snacks.

MAY

On Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout May, the club will continue to offer walks at *Wildwood Cemetery in Amherst*, 6:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. An HBC member will lead from the small parking space just inside the entrance off Strong Street. Walks will cover various parts of the cemetery and conservation area. Bring bug protection, as they can be ravenous.

On Saturday, the 12th (Full Day): Tom Gagnon leads this traditional search of the *Quabbin Reservoir* area for migrating tropical neotropical birds. Due to access restrictions, this trip is limited to five vehicles. Call Tom (413) 584-6353 in advance to make reservations and to get the details for time and place.

On Saturday, the 5th (Half Day): Shirley Hilborn (413-253-6462) and Ann Lombard (413-586-7509) join forces to lead people to one of the local hot spots on the monthly *Leisurely and local Saturday Mornings* trip. This month you may be led to a spot less well trodden - perhaps Grave's Farm? Meet them at 7:00 a.m. at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst.

Wednesday, the 16th (Half Day): Harvey Allen's *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley* goes out at the height of the warbler migration. Call Harvey (413-253-7963) for details. Meets at 7:00 a.m.

Friday the 25th to Monday the 28th: The annual Monhegan Island Memorial Day Weekend trip is again being offered. Details forthcoming.

Saturday, the 26th (Full Day): *Poor Man's Monhegan: Plum Island and vicinity.* Al Richards and Bob Bieda lead the poor souls who are not on Monhegan to a lesser paradise. High-

Saturday, the 9th (Full Day): *Mount Greylock.* Stacy Adams will lead a group up the mountain for local specialties. Possibilities include Winter Wren, the elusive Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, breeding warblers (Blackpoll, Mourning, and Yellow-rumped) and breeding Purple Finch. Contact Stacy (413) 367-0177 for meeting time and location. Bring lunch, snacks and water.

Wednesday, the 13th (Half Day): This month's *Morning Sweep of the Connecticut River Valley* will find Harvey Allen leading the group searching out local nesters and other birds on territory in the Valley. Call Harvey (413) 253-7963 for details. Meets at 7:00 a.m.

JUNE

On Saturday, the 16th: a trip to search for the elusive *Bicknell's Thrush* is in the planning stage. The date is tentative but you might want to make note of it. Bear with the planners as they make arrangements for this **NEW TRIP**.

On Saturday, the 23rd (Half Day): Bob Bieda hopes to take a group once again to *Westover AFB* for grassland birds, an ever popular and successful trip. Past trips have seen Upland Sandpiper, Grasshopper Sparrow and Eastern Meadowlark. Bob will pass along the details, if the arrangements are possible. Reach Bob at (413) 527-2623.

AUGUST

A **NEW** kind of trip offering from the HBC – *New South Beach and Stellwagen Bank – a weekend on Cape Cod.* The club has scheduled two wonderful trips back to back over the **Weekend of August 25.** These are two independent trips and participants may join either or both. Although not an official overnight trip, this arrangement gives participants the option to get the most out of birding Cape Cod and avoid that long trip home in-between. For those birders who do both trips, we will name one or two hotels where other participants and trip leaders plan to stay. Each participant makes his own arrangements for sleeping accommodations, food (dinner and breakfast), and registration on Captain John's whale watch boat out of Plymouth. The Plymouth whale watch has two advantages. It lies along the route home for the participants of the New South Beach Trip, and it is close to the southern end of Stellwagen Bank, where the best birding usually occurs at this time of year.

August the 25th (Full Day): *New South Beach.* Bob Bieda and Al Richards will again lead this always popular all day trip to the National Seashore in Chatham on Cape Cod. Registration is required, since the trip is limited to 12 people. Since there are no facilities on this isolated beach, bring a hat, sunscreen, water, and snacks. Be prepared to get wet as part of the adventure. The shorebird migration brought an impressive number of individuals and species to this outer beach in August 2000. Among birds observed last year were

Piping Plover, American Oystercatcher, Whimbrel, Hudsonian Godwit, Marbled Godwit (not by our group, unfortunately), Red Knot, Lesser Black-backed Gull (unusually high numbers in fall 2000), Common Black-headed Gull, Forster's Tern, and Roseate Tern. Plans now are for the group to depart from the Hadley Stop and Shop parking lot at 5:00 a.m. and meet Bob in Palmer at approximately 5:30 a.m. As the date approaches, call Al Richards at (413) 665-2761 or Bob Bieda at (413) 527-2623 for further details, directions and registration.

August the 26th (Half Day): *Stellwagen Bank, Pelagic Birds.* Susan Carver has tentatively agreed to lead a **NEW TRIP** for the club in search of pelagic birds. Tentatively, the group will join Captain John's whale watch out of Plymouth for the morning trip. As the boat searches for whales, Susan will help the group locate and identify the ocean-going birds, which tend to follow the whales. Possible birds include: Shearwaters (Cory's, Greater, Sooty and Manx), Wilson's Storm-Petrel Northern Gannet (immature) and early Jaegers. Cetaceans could include Humpback, Finback, and Minke Whales and the Atlantic White-sided Dolphin. Make your own reservations for the whale watch and for transportation arrangements to Plymouth. The group will meet Susan at the boat. Further details including departure times, cost and phone numbers will be announced later in the spring.

Field Trip Guidelines for New Field Trip Participants and Drivers: 2000-2001 Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.

Field trips are one of the best ways to help the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. (HBC) achieve its purpose: "to help its members and the general public enjoy birding and to educate them about birds, bird watching and bird habitats."

While these Guidelines are written primarily for new HBC Participants and Drivers, we hope that everyone will review this document, the ABA's Principles of Birding Ethics, the HBC Field Trip Policy, and the HBC Release Form.

All Participants:

1. Most trips described in the newsletter ask you to call the trip leader in advance. Please do so. It helps the leader plan the trip and you learn about any special arrangements or any change of plans.
2. Check with the leader before bringing children on a trip. **Many of the trips are not appropriate for children.** (All minor children (under 18) must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or an adult who has written authorization to be responsible for the child's care and conduct. See the Field Trip Policy for more information.)
3. All HBC members are asked to sign the HBC Release Form each year. If you did not receive a copy, please contact the Membership Secretary.
4. Be on time at the meeting place. If you plan to leave the trip early, you must inform the leader in advance.
5. Be prepared with binoculars, appropriate clothing (including protection from ticks), food and water. Assume the weather will be more extreme on the trip than at home and prepare accordingly.
6. Do not bring pets.
7. HBC encourages participants to carpool, both to reduce the environmental impact of the trip and to make the trip as safe as possible for all participants. We ask that the cost (presently \$.30/mile plus tolls and parking) be shared equally among the driver and all passengers. You should estimate the probable cost of the trip so that you will be able to reimburse the driver at the end of the trip. The participants (not the leader) are responsible for making carpool arrangements.
8. HBC always encourages new birders to participate in trips. It is the responsibility of all trip members, leader and participants, to help new birders learn both identification techniques and bird observing skills.
9. All participants are responsible for their own safety. Use common sense if you feel that any part of the trip is too arduous for you. Always check with the trip leader if you have any questions or medical concerns about the trip.

Drivers:

1. It is the responsibility of the car owner to meet all registration, insurance, and inspection regulations.
2. Please fill up your tank before the trip and set your odometer at the beginning of the trip.
3. If the trip is going to caravan, follow common sense rules to make sure no one is put in danger or lost.

Stay in the same order so that you know which car is in front of you and which car is behind you.

If the car behind you is stopped by a light, pull safely to the side of the road so that you can wait until that car catches up.

If you are driving the car or cars catching up with the group, slow down so that the lead/stopped cars can pull in front of you.

It is a good idea for all caravan drivers to have their lights on.

4. Always have a description of the next major stop from the trip leader so that, should the caravan become separated, you can join the group at the next major stop.

**FIELD TRIP POLICY: 2000-2001
HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB, INC.**

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

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

Overnight Trips (2 or more days, reasonable driving distance) are planned by the Field Trip Committee and approved by the HBC Board at least 3 months in advance (see #5 below). Such trips generally require more planning by the trip leader, including, for example, arranging for lodging and travel. Participants will be charged an amount equal to actual predetermined costs (including liability insurance) plus a prorated amount to cover reimbursement of the leader's expenses (see #5 below). All fees, including the trip deposit, shall be paid to the HBC Treasurer. If a participant needs to cancel, fees (less a 10% processing fee) will be refunded subject to the conditions outlined in the trip description. Any excess fees remaining after costs have been met will be refunded, unless they are less than ten dollars per person, in which case they will revert to the HBC treasury. Overnight trips are open to only HBC members who have signed a release form and who have completed a medical information form.

4. In recognition of the expenses associated with operating an automobile, the HBC Board recommends that passengers reimburse the vehicle's owner for costs associated with vehicle operation. Recommended reimbursement is currently set at \$.30/mile plus tolls and parking to be shared equally by all persons in the car including the driver. The participants (not the leader) are responsible for making carpool arrangements.
5. Leaders of Overnight Trips shall:
 - a. Submit a trip plan to the Field Trip Committee which must be approved by the Board at least 3 months in advance of the trip. The plan should describe in writing the nature of the trip as completely as possible. Include an itinerary, estimated cost, conditions of lodging and lead time needed for reservations, roughness of terrain, pace of the trip, extra costs not covered by the fee, date of deposit and final payment, date after which fee is not refundable, and provide a list of any specialized items that participants should take on the trip. Repeat trips lead by the same leader need only submit necessary changes to the previous plan. The Board can waive the 3-month planning time if there is a special birding opportunity.
 - b. Be reimbursed for all costs associated with planning (i.e. long-distance calls, postage), lodging, and transportation during the trip.
 - c. Upon return, provide the HBC Board with an itemized account of all income and expenses related to the trip including receipts for major expenses.
 - d. Ask participants to complete an anonymous questionnaire at the end of the trip. These forms should be returned to the Field Trip Committee to help them plan future trips and provide feedback to the leaders.
6. Leaders of both Day and Overnight Trips are asked to submit a Trip Highlights Report to the newsletter editor for publication in the next HBC newsletter.
7. HBC may ask professional bird touring organization to organize trips further away than the Overnight Trips. All responsibilities for planning the trip and all liability will be assumed by the touring organization. Such trips must be approved by the Board at least 6 months in advance.
8. Trips not sponsored by the Club: As a courtesy to its members, HBC will announce birding trips organized by members or other organizations, but not sponsored by the club. Such announcements will be made in the newsletter (on a space available basis) and at meetings and HBC will assume no other responsibility for such trips.

American Birding Association's
PRINCIPLES OF BIRDING ETHICS

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

1(a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.

1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.

Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area;

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1(c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1(d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.

2(a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.

2(b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

2(c) Practise common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

3(a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.

3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

4(a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.

4(b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

4(c) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.

4(d) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and does not interfere with others using the same area.

4(e) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practises this code.

4(f) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g. no tape recorders allowed).

4(g) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

PLEASE FOLLOW THIS CODE AND DISTRIBUTE
AND TEACH IT TO OTHERS